

**The shareholders of the Institut für Rundfunktechnik terminated the shareholders agreement by the end of the year 2020. Now the prestigious institute for fundamental media research is about to be liquidate. Over a 100 employees are at risk to loose their job.**

We urge the shareholders of the IRT: "Withdraw your notice. Give us – your own know how – a chance shape the future!"

Please help us preserving a corner stone of europe's public service media research and development and give us your signature!

### **Why is that important?**

“Europe has lost his digital sovereignty.” – Ulrich Wilhelm, director of the Bayerischer Rundfunk in an interview with the Süddeutsche Zeitung on the 21 December 2019. – not he best time to sack your own experts.

In Munich-Freimann highly qualified engineers research and develop the broadcasting and media technology of tomorrow. Be it the introduction of stereo sound for television, the Automotive-Driver's-Broadcasting-Information system ARI, the video programming system (VPS), Digital Radio (DAB), the microphone at the speaker's desk in the German Federal Parliament, the "Red Button" feature on the Smart TV and much more. Everybody knows and uses the innovation, but only a few know how is behind it (see also: <https://www.irt.de/en/irt/irts-history/evolution-in-media-technology>).

Now, all of the shareholders of the Institut für Rundfunktechnik (ARD, ZDF, ORF, SRG/SRF and DRadio) have terminated the shareholders agreement with effect from the 31 December 2020.

The decision was entirely unexpected and was triggered by the termination of a single shareholder – the ZDF. All the other shareholders followed as they don't think they are in the position to fill the financial gap the ZDF will leave behind.

Even as late as autumn 2019 a future concept, which was developed by all shareholding broadcasters, was agreed upon. It included measures, to increase the efficiency while simultaneously focusing on the new digital challenges for broadcasting.

- Artificial Intelligence
- 5G
- IP networking of current and future production processes
- New Audio- and Video-Technologies
- accessibility and standardisation in times of catch-up TV

Nevertheless all shareholders have terminated the shareholders agreement at the end of 2019 – without exception. The sudden shutdown is neither comprehensive on a technical nor on a economic level.

If nothing happens right away, not only Germany will loose a joint institution of ARD and ZDF, which had already existed since 1956, but also Austria (ORF) and Switzerland (SRG/SRF) will loose their only technological research centre, which represents the interests

of public service media in national and international committees and ensures open access, interoperability, spectrum use rights and lobbying in their interest.

If the institute will be closed especially Europe will lose an important ally, who resourcefully contributes to International standards and thereby helps to promote fair competition, manufacturer independence and thereby reduce the cost for the public.

With its founding idea „to support the general public and not to support commercial and financial goals“ for over 60 years the independent research institute already pursues a target, which is especially in times of American and Chinese internet giants, fake news and bots, more important than ever and a focused and research based cooperation at European level is thereby essential.

Over a 100 employees will lose their jobs, well-established and internationally acknowledged know how will migrate into the private sector, where it will be very expensive to buy.

**However, there is final opportunity and for this we need your support!**

The decision-makers will confer on the date of the IRT at the end of February.

Until then we want to collect as many signatures as possible to ensure that the decision-makers understand the following:

Dear broadcasting corporations,

We, the over 100 employees of the Institut für Rundfunktechnik,

... are part of the European research landscape  
... are part of public service media  
... are with heart and a passion for research working in your interest  
... are your colleagues.

We urge you: "Withdraw your notice. Give us – your own know how – a chance shape the future!"

**Please help us with your signature to preserve research and development of the upcoming challenges of public service media: <https://weact.campact.de/petitions/das-institut-fur-rundfunktechnik-muss-erhalten-bleiben>**