

*"Working for quality
and diversity in
British broadcasting"*

Founded by Jocelyn Hay in 1983

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PRESS RELEASE **Immediate**

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Jocelyn Hay, Chairman and Founder of Voice of the Listener & Viewer (VLV), which campaigns to promote public service in broadcasting and for editorially independent, high quality media, won a top award honouring women who have made a major impact on the European stage on Friday (July 6).



Mrs Hay, from Gravesend, Kent, received her award in front of 500 executives from all over Europe, and Prime Minister's wife, Sarah Brown, at the European Women of Achievement Awards (EWAA) ceremony at the Grosvenor House, Park Lane London.

Mrs Hay, who joins an eminent list of previous winners, including, athlete Paula Radcliffe, yachtswoman Ellen MacArthur, explorer Fiona Thornewill and broadcaster Angela Rippon, said: "I feel so honoured to receive this award, and I am delighted that the work that I and Voice of the Listener & Viewer do to maintain the principles of public service in broadcasting has been recognised.

"Broadcasting is probably the single most powerful influence on our democracy and culture. It is vital it remains editorially independent and of high quality. That is why I and VLV work to represent the citizen and consumer interests in broadcasting and to help those in other countries share the privilege of having broadcasters who are independent of state or political control."

Mrs Hay set up Voice of the Listener (as it then was) in 1983 to combat plans to turn BBC Radio 4 into an all news and current affairs channel. The organisation added Viewer to its title in 1991 and has now grown to be the leading advocate for the viewer and listener as citizen and consumer in UK and European broadcasting.

Under her leadership VLV has held ten international conferences on the future of public service broadcasting worldwide. Using her contacts she then went on to establish the European Alliance of Listeners' and Viewers' Associations (EURALVA) which has member organisations in seven European countries and associates in Australia and Canada.

Mrs Hay's work in Europe and on the international stage has been instrumental in gaining recognition for the consumer rights of listeners, viewers and new media users. Before VLV took up the cause, only those involved in the industry were consulted about its future, now it is automatically taken for granted that consumers and licence payers should be involved and consulted. She has spoken on behalf of the consumer and citizen interest at many

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conferences in Europe, the Commonwealth and the USA and given oral evidence on the value of public service broadcasting, editorial freedom and high standards in journalism at Hearings of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

Her experience includes serving as chairman of the consumer group of the European Institute for the Media, and as co-chair of the citizen and consumer group of the European Commission's European Information Society Forum. Her work on behalf of listeners and viewers worldwide was recognised in 1999 when she was awarded the Elizabeth R Award for outstanding services to Public Service Broadcasting by the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association.

Mrs Hay is a member of the UK's UNESCO Commission and worked closely with UNESCO on preparing guidelines for citizen groups in different countries and cultures to use when working to develop independent media and public service broadcasting.

She is also trustee of Mediawise (formerly Presswise) which helps train journalists in Eastern Europe and the developing world. She was made a CBE in 2005.

Jane Holdaway, Chairwoman of the EWAA, said: "Jocelyn was one of a cast of superb nominees we had this year and I'm delighted she has joined our list of eminent winners. She thoroughly deserves her success and is a great role model for all women."

Joining Mrs Hay in this year's list of winners were; former BBC newscaster Moira Stuart; Marin Alsop, Principal Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony; Tesco executives, Laura Wade-Gery and Lucy Neville-Rolfe; and Claire Thomas, who heads GlaxoSmithKline's Human Resources Department.

The European Women of Achievement Awards, which are in their 17th year, are given to those whose vision, courage and determination have helped increase the influence of women on European affairs. Mrs Hay won the Humanitarian category.

The Awards were made by the European Union of Women, an independent organisation which has consultative status with the Council of Europe and is represented among the Non-Governmental (NGOs at the Council and the United Nations).

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Voice of the Listener & Viewer (VLV) is an independent, non-profit-making association, free from political, commercial and sectarian affiliations, working for quality and diversity in British broadcasting. VLV represents the interests of listeners and viewers as citizens and consumers across the full range of broadcasting issues. VLV is concerned with the structures, regulation, funding and institutions that underpin the British broadcasting system. VLV does not handle individual complaints.

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