[DE] Saarland's Draft Single Regulatory Framework For All Types of Media

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In mid-May, the Saarland regional government published a draft Media Bill which, for the first time in the history of German media legislation, would establish a single regulatory framework for the press, broadcasting and new media.

The Bill aims to create a legal framework which emphasises the freedom of all mass media to fulfil their public duties, to lay down common minimum standards for the protection of important social values (particularly human dignity) and interests (mainly the protection of minors and consumers), to promote self-regulation by the media and media supervisory bodies as a means of upholding social values and, finally, to keep legislation in line with the latest technical developments.

The general provisions of the Bill contain standards applicable to all types of media. These are followed by special rules for the press and broadcasters, with general clauses and provisions concerning Saarländische Rundfunk (Saarland broadcasting corporation) and private broadcasting, the allocation of transmission capacities and the Landesmedienanstalt Saarland (Saarland Land Media Authority - LMS).

It is particularly worth noting that the Bill proposes the abolition of local and regional broadcasting licences. Broadcasters would merely need to inform the LMS that they were broadcasting a particular channel and authorisation would be automatic until revoked by the LMS. Accordingly, the LMS' role would change from granting licences to dealing with abuses.

Entwurf eines Saarländischen Mediengesetzes (SMG) vom 17. April 2001

http://www.saarland.de/medien/inhalt/mediengesetz-entwurf.pdf

Draft Saarland Media Act, 17 April 2001

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