[DE] New Foreign TV Service

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According to Section 4 of the so-called DW-Gesetz (DW Act), Deutsche Welle (DW), the radio and television broadcaster established under federal law to provide broadcasting services abroad, must offer a comprehensive picture of German political, cultural and economic life to viewers and listeners outside Germany.

In order to fulfil this task, DW, a public broadcasting company, has for several years been stepping up its efforts to provide a more comprehensive and interesting service at a reasonable cost, by working together with other German public service broadcasters. Practical cooperation is now beginning to emerge not only with members of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlichrechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Union of German Public Broadcasters - ARD) and Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF), but also with Deutschlandradio, of which both ARD and ZDF are members. The radio station, Deutschlandfunk, operated by Deutschlandradio, will broadcast radio plays, scientific and news reports free of charge.

Early next year, Deutsche Welle's new German-language channel for North and South America will be launched as a pay-TV service, initially in the USA.

Preparations are also under way for a privately-run foreign TV channel. The Landesrundfunkausschuss (Land broadcasting board) of the Bremen Landesmedienanstalt (Land media authority) has already granted a licence for "Channel D", the operators of which also hope to begin broadcasting a pay-TV channel in South America, Florida and the Caribbean in the next year. They will only be granted a licence to do so if the other Land media authorities are in agreement and if the channel is found to conform with media concentration laws.

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