[DE] Coordinated Introduction of DVB-T and Digital Radio Necessary

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The Direktorenkonferenz der Landesmedienanstalten (Directors' Conference of the regional regulatory authorities, DLM), meeting on 17-18 September 2003, has emphasized the necessity of a coordinated introduction of DVB-T and digital radio.

The Landesmedienanstalten view DVB-T as providing an opportunity to ensure pluralism on the terrestrial platform as well, if a range of regional programmes is offered in addition to nation-wide ones. They welcome the intention to follow up the introduction of DVB-T in the Berlin-Brandenburg region (see IRIS 2002-4: 6) with its introduction in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and in the northern part of Germany. The Landesmedienanstalten said they were also prepared to support the isolated introduction of DVB-T in additional population centres if public-service and private television broadcasters express interest and funds are also available for the establishment and operation of transmission infrastructure by private broadcasters as well. Serving these population centres on the basis of three multiplexes for private broadcasters would involve financial assistance amounting to approx. EUR 20 million annually. In addition to northern Germany and North Rhine-Westphalia, further expansion would also require political backing and adequate funding.

The DLM expects that an impetus towards greater acceptance of digital radio will be generated by a wider choice of nation-wide programmes. It will therefore be calling for the prompt provision of additional nation-wide transmission capacity in band III. The introduction of digital radio would also require long-term financial assistance, with the funding needed just to support the provision of additional transmission capacity in band III amounting to EUR 8 million annually.

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