[DE] Amendments to the State Media Act and WDR Act Adopted

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On 3 December 2009, the *Landtag* (State parliament) of North Rhine-Westphalia adopted the new *Landesmediengesetz* (State Media Act - LMG) and an amendment to the *WDR-Gesetz* (WDR Act). As well as bringing these instruments into line with the provisions of the amended *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag* (Inter-State Broadcasting Agreement), the main changes are designed to amend media concentration rules, tighten youth protection in the media and facilitate radio digitisation.

Firstly, the amendment of Art. 33 para. 3 LMG allows newspaper publishers to own up to a 100% share in a broadcasting company. In order to prevent the creation of a dominant influence over the expression of opinion, and to guarantee diversity, publishers who do so are subject to certain conditions. For example, either a fixed amount of broadcast time must be made available to independent third parties or a programme advisory body must be set up to prevent bias. Media companies can also make individual commitments, which are subject to verification and evaluation by the *Landesanstalt für Medien* (State Media Office).

Secondly, in the field of youth protection, following the abolition of the delaying effect of legal remedies, the instruments designed to combat Internet content that is harmful to young people have been tightened. This means that, if a provider appeals against an injunction, such content cannot remain freely accessible on the Internet until the court has taken a definitive decision.

In addition, the new version of the LMG creates a legal framework for the development of digital radio. The objective is to provide digital radio coverage for the whole population.

The revised LMG also attaches greater importance to the promotion of media literacy: the LMG and the amended *WDR-Gesetz* contain far-reaching transparency and anti-corruption rules for *Westdeutscher Rundfunk* (WDR) and the *Landesanstalt für Medien* .

Gesetz über den „Westdeutschen Rundfunk Köln“ (WDR - Gesetz), Bekanntmachung der Neufassung

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Revised Act on the WDR

Landesmediengesetz Nordrhein-Westfalen (LMG NRW)

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North Rhine-Westphalia State Media Act (LMG NRW)

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