[DE] TV show “Germany’s Next Top Model” does not breach German law

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Ingo Beckendorf
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

The TV show “Germany’s Next Top Model” broadcast by the commercial channel ProSieben does not breach the provisions of the Jugendmedienschutz-Staatsvertrag (Inter-State Agreement on the Protection of Minors in the Media - JMStV). That is the conclusion drawn by a panel from the Kommission für Jugendmedienschutz (Commission for the Protection of Young People in the Media - KJM) following an in-depth review of the programme’s content. The KJM is the central supervisory authority for the protection of minors in nationwide German TV programmes and on the Internet. Its task is to ensure compliance with the legal provisions relating to that protection and to encourage providers to demonstrate responsibility in the context of government regulated self-regulation.

The reason for conducting the review was a study by the Internationales Zentralinstitut für das Jugend- und Bildungsfernsehen (International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television - IZI), which reports to the Munich based Bayerischer Rundfunk (Bavarian Broadcasting Corporation), and by the Bundesfachverband Essstörungen (Federal Association for Eating Disorders). As part of the study, 241 patients were interviewed on the role of television programmes in connection with eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. Almost a third of those affected said the programme had played a decisive part in the development of their own illness. Another third believed the show had had a “slight impact” on their disorder. In addition, viewers had complained that the format of the show could promote anorexia.

The KJM panel therefore examined several episodes of the previous, 10th series and concluded that, based on the provisions of the JMStV, the show had no effect on the development of a disorder. Giving their reasons for reaching this conclusion, they noted that critical comments in the programme relating to the participants’ body weight had always been justified with reference to a model’s professional requirements. The show’s presenter, Heidi Klum, had always made it clear to young models that not eating was not the right approach. ProSieben had pointed to Heidi Klum’s statement in the programme: “A healthy diet and sport are important for a model’s career. A healthy diet and sport are important when an individual faces challenges in school, a competitive situation or working life.” The youth-protection commission criticised the objectionable ideal of a slim body in the world of professional models but ultimately saw no adverse effect on or danger to the development of children and young people.

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KJM-Pressemitteilung 17/2015 vom 3.November 2015: KJM prüft erneut "Germany's Next Top Model": Kein Jugendschutz-Verstoß festgestellt

http://www.kjm-online.de/service/pressemitteilungen/detailansicht/article/kjm-pressemitteilung-172015-kjm-prueft-erneut-germanys-next-top-model-kein-jugendschutz.html

KJM press release 17/2015 of 3 November 2015: KJM re-examines "Germany's Next Top Model" and establishes no breach of the provisions on the protection of minors

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