

## Public broadcasting in Germany

1998

Public broadcasting in Germany. (1998). In Report of the Deutsche Welle-AMIC Workshop on Management of Change for Broadcasters : April 27 to May 2, 1998. Singapore: Asian Media Information & Communication Centre.

<https://hdl.handle.net/10356/79654>

**Paper No. 24**

## **Public broadcasting in Germany**

- **Aim: freedom of the broadcasting media**

Experience with media abuse in the years prior to 1945, particularly during the Nazi period, motivated the decision to make radio and television in West Germany independent of government and interest group influence, and to decentralise responsibility.

- **Constitutional mandate**

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany guarantees everyone the right to inform themselves “from generally accessible sources”. It is the constitutionally based function of the broadcasting media and of the other media to give the people free and ample opportunity to form their own opinions. The “freedom of reporting by means of broadcasts” is a basic freedom written into the constitution.

- **States have parliamentary jurisdiction**

Legislation is needed to implement the constitutional mandate. In the Federal Republic the parliaments of the various states have general legislative jurisdiction with regard to the media. Federal responsibility is limited to the technical side of broadcasting (i.e. provision and management of the telecommunications systems). National legislation (Bundestag) regulates some areas of international broadcasting (Deutsche Welle).

- **Financed from licence fees**

**The public broadcasting system is financed by (practically) everyone on the basis of monthly listener/viewer license fees (about 30 S\$). The amount of the fees is determined by the state parliaments. The public broadcasting organisations also take in some revenue from advertising and sponsoring, but this is a limited (and due to commercial competition) diminishing source of income.**