

Abstract

Public Access Channels

An investigation about the public access channels in Rhineland-Palatinate with special consideration of their relationship to the political culture.

This investigation first deals with the theoretical reflexion about tasks that public channels fulfill and their potential. For this reason, we will be purposely emphasizing their function in a democratic, political culture. The following reflection about television rules in Germany as a framework for the operation of public access channels clarifies, on the one hand, the differences in the inherent logic of both partial systems. On the other hand, we will be describing the increasing regionalization of television programmes and we will be demonstrating their influence on the development of public channels.

The empirical analysis of the public access channels begins with a brief revision of its history at home and abroad, and also makes considerations about the shaping of public channels and their political steerability.

After making a recording of the current, scientific information about public access channels, the tense relationship among the goals concerning the audience and the ones of the free and equal access to transmission spaces will be formulated as a thesis, on the basis of a typology of its possible manifestations.

This "hardening thesis" constitutes the background of the descriptive analysis made about the public channels in Rhineland-Palatinate, that takes place at the level of producers, contents and audience. In this respect, we will be giving special attention to the conflict of goals between equal access and programme planning suitable for the audience, and we will be investigating the influence that commercial interests exercise on public channels.