

International Experts Debate in Brazil Public Radio

Contributed by Érica Santana
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Specialists in communication and representatives of major broadcasters in the Americas and Europe have been meeting in Brasília since yesterday at an international seminar, "Public Radio Broadcasting in Development and Citizenship," to discuss radio as an instrument of national development and the exercise of citizenship.

At the encounter, Nélia Del Bianco, a professor at the University of Brasília (UnB) and specialist on Radio Broadcasting Policy, spoke about the political implications of the new digital radio technology.

"These technologies have such a big impact on society, because they expand humanity's intellectual capacity and influence processes of change, even though they don't determine them."

According to Del Bianco, digital radio promises to improve the quality of AM sound, which will become equal to that of FM, and to eliminate noise almost completely.

Brazil is the world's second largest radio broadcasting market in terms of the quantity of sets. Approximately 43.5 million homes in Brazil have radios, and there are around 5 thousand radio stations in operation around the country.

Nevertheless, the digital model that will be adopted has still not been defined.

Three models are being considered: the American IBOC (In-Band on Channel), favored by the Brazilian Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters (Abert) as the "ideal standard for Brazilian radio"; the European 147 DAB, which operates on broad band and cannot be used concurrently with the existing analog stations; and the DRM (Digital Redro Mandrake), with technology developed by 29 countries, including the United States.

For the UnB professor, the DRM is the model that is "appropriate for a country like ours, with a widely dispersed population."

Translation: David Silberstein

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