# [IT] Soon a Common Decoder for Pay-TV

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On 21 July 1999 the Consiglio (Council) of the Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni (Italian regulatory authority in the communications sector, hereinafter AGC) approved a draft regulation concerning the definition of common standards for decoders aimed at the transmission of conditional access digital programmes (pay-TV) to the Italian market. As the standard constitutes a «technical rule» under Directive 98/34/CE of 22 June 1998, the draft has been promptly notified to the European Commission. Pursuant to Law no. 78/99 (see IRIS 1999-4: 8) a common decoder will be compulsory in Italy as of 1 July 2000. The draft concerns both set-top boxes and integrated digital TV sets (IDTV), but leaves open the choice between Simulcrypt (interworking between different proprietary conditional access architectures) and Multicrypt (operating through a common interface) systems. In both cases reference is made to digital video broadcasting (DVB) norms, in particular to the MPEG-2 algorithm.

Provided consumers are granted the enjoyment of all conditional access digital programmes and the reception of free-to-air broadcasting by means of the same decoder, the definition of how to pursue this aim is left to the interested parties. Decoders will have to provide for correct service information (SI) by means of an appropriate navigator (ETS 300 468 and DVB-SI norms) so as to allow an automatic tuning of the different channels and an easy consultation of the programme and event information tables. Electronic programmes guides (EPG) will have to furnish information that is not misleading with regard to both conditional access digital programmes and freeto-air broadcasting.

***Schema concernente la determinazione dei decodificatori e le norme per la ricezione dei programmi televisivi ad accesso condizionato, dal 21 luglio 1999.***

*Draft Statutory instrument of 21 July 1999.*

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