

[TR] Digital Broadcasting to Start in Turkey

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Digital concept studies that were commenced in 1998 on the initiative of the Radio and Television Supreme Council (Supreme Council) in consultation with the relevant public authorities have outlined the framework plan for digital broadcasting in Turkey. The Supreme Council Decision of 3 November 1999 ("Decision") states that Turkey's technical infrastructure is able to deploy digital satellite and digital cable broadcasting starting by the year 2000.

The Decision asserts that T-DAB and DVB-T broadcast need frequency planning and that this planning will be completed within the year 2000. Hence, digital terrestrial broadcasting on a trial basis could start by the year 2001. The Decision foresees the final switch-off for the analogue system for the year 2010.

In the Decision the Supreme Council states that, while the Supreme Council would have the power to decide the matter covered by the Decision on its own, it was considering the broad significance of the issue on the economic level. Based thereupon the Supreme Council has opted for implementing the Decision only after approval by the Communications High Council. The Communications High Council is a government body composed of relevant authorities in the communications sector. It is expected that the Decision will be discussed by the Communications High Council in its June 2000 meeting. The Communications High Council will then pass a government decree, and then the Supreme Council will implement the regulatory framework. Currently a commission within the Supreme Council is preparing regulations on digital broadcasting.

In the meantime two private initiatives for digital platforms are under preparation in order to start digital satellite broadcasting. One of these launched its test operations at the beginning of May and has revealed plans to provide a bundle of channels, online home shopping, banking services, interactive video games and payper-view services.

