[IT] A Common Decoder for Pay-TV from 1 July 2000

IRIS 2000-6:1/18

Maja Cappello
Autorità per le garanzie nelle comunicazioni (AGCOM)

After the completion of the procedure (IRIS 1999-8: 10) laid down by the Transparency Directive 98/34/EC of 22 June 1998, on 7 April 2000 the Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni (Italian Communications Authority, hereinafter AGC) approved a regulation concerning the definition of common standards for pay-TV decoders. Pursuant to Law no. 78/99 (IRIS 1999-4: 8) a common decoder will be compulsory in Italy from 1 July 2000. Consequently, the regulation will enter into force on the same day and apply to broadcasters established in Italy according to the provisions of the Television without frontiers Directive 89/552/EEC, as amended. As requested by the European Commission in its detailed opinion delivered to the Italian government under the Transparency Directive, the regulation specifies that all pay-TV decoders lawfully produced and distributed in other EEA countries may freely circulate in Italy. Both set-top-boxes and integrated TV sets (IDTV) are involved, but broadcasters may choose between Simulcrypt and Multicrypt systems, the former interworking between different proprietary conditional access architectures, the latter operating through a common interface. In both cases reference is made to digital video broadcasting (DVB) norms, more precisely 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 through the same decoder, the definition of how to pursue this aim is left to the interested parties, namely the two digital platforms D+, controlled by CANAL+, and Stream, controlled by Telecom Italia. In particular, before 20 June 2000 they have to inform the AGC about how they intend to fulfil this obligation. Decoders must provide for correct service information (SI) by means of an appropriate navigator (ETS 300 468 and DVB-SI norms), so as to allow for automatic tuning of the different channels and easy consultation of the programme and event information tables. Electronic programmes guides (EPG) have to furnish non-misleading information both on conditional-access digital programmes and free-to-air broadcasting. In order to promote the development of digital terrestrial television (DTTV), the minimum technical requirements laid down in Annex A to the regulation will only apply to the reception of free-to-air broadcasting. Before 1 January 2002 the last-mentioned rules will be revised, to take account of the results of the experimentation and the distribution of DTTV services in Italy.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

Determinazione degli standard dei decodificatori e norme per la ricezione dei programmi televisivi ad accesso condizionato. Gazzetta Ufficiale del 21 Aprile 2000, no. 94.

http://www.agcom.it/provv/d216_00_CONS.htm

Regulation of the Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni of 7 April 2000 no. 216/00/CONS, in Gazzetta Ufficiale of 21 April 2000, no. 94.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026