[IT] New Deadlines for Television and Radio Digital Frequency Plans

IRIS 2001-2:1/21

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On 23 January 2001, the Italian Government approved decreto-legge (decree-law) no. 5/2001 containing urgent provisions on local radio and television broadcasting (Gazz. Uff. no. 2001/19). The decree postpones and establishes several deadlines concerning analogue and digital television and radio broadcasting. According to Article 77 of the Italian Constitution, a decree-law is an act having the same force of law as an ordinary statute of the Parliament. The Government may only issue a decree-law in exceptional cases, and it must be converted into a parliamentary statute within sixty days of its publication.

As far as television broadcasting is concerned, it must be recalled that the national analogue television broadcasting frequency plan was adopted by the Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni (Italian Communications Authority - AGC) on 30 October 1998 by Regulation no. 68/98 (see IRIS 1998-10: 12) and then integrated on 14 July 1999 by Regulation no. 105/99 (see IRIS 1999-8: 8) in order to define the relevant areas for local broadcasting. Decree-law no. 5/2001 postpones until 15 March 2001 the deadline for the renewal of concessions to local analogue television broadcasters, formerly due to expire on 31 January 2001 according to Law no. 5/2000 (see IRIS 2000-2: 7). Concessions for analogue transmission will be a preferential condition for digital terrestrial transmission (DTT) in the future. Broadcasters not already transmitting but who obtain a concession are entitled to acquire installations that are already working; broadcasters already transmitting but who do not obtain a concession are entitled to continue their broadcasting activity until the adoption of the national DTT frequency plan, the deadline for which falls on 31 December 2002.

As far as radio broadcasting is concerned, the scheme is reversed. The decree entrusts the AGC with the power to adopt the national digital audio broadcasting (DAB) frequency plan before 31 December 2001. Only after the effective realisation of the digital frequency plan, will the AGC adopt the analogue frequency plan.

Finally, the decree contains some temporary provisions concerning existing radio and television installations that have to be transferred according to the new sites established by the respective frequency plans. The Ministero delle Comunicazioni (Ministry of Communications) and the Ministero dell'Ambiente (Ministry of Environment) will decide on the electromagnetic compatibility of the installations

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with human health.

Decreto-legge 23 gennaio 2001, no. 5, Disposizioni urgenti per il differimento di termini in materia di trasmissioni radiotelevisive analogiche e digitali, nonché per il risanamento di impianti radiotelevisivi (Gazz. Uff. 24 January 2001, Serie generale no. 19)

http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/decreti/01005d.htm

Decree-law no. 5/2001 of 23 January 2001 containing urgent provisions on local radio and television broadcasting (Gazz. Uff. no. 2001/19)

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