# [ES] Decree Amending the National Technical Plan for Local Terrestrial TV

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In Spain, local terrestrial TV has been regulated since 1995, by means of Act 41/1995. However, this Act has had almost no effect, because it lacked the necessary implementation measures. Many broadcasters took advantage of this situation to enter the market without the required license. In March 2004, the Government put an end to this legal vacuum by approving Decree 439/2004, on the National Technical Plan for local terrestrial TV (see IRIS 2004-7: 8). In accordance with an amendment of Act 41/1995 introduced by Parliament in 2003, local terrestrial TV shall be broadcast using digital technology. The new Government that resulted from March's election has now decided to approve a new Decree that introduces some amendments to the framework established by the Decree 439/2004.

- The Government has decided to increase the number of local terrestrial TV digital multiplexes in some regions, in response to demands of several regional Governments. There will now be 281 digital multiplexes reserved for local terrestrial TV (if divided into 4 TV channels each, there would be 1124 local digital terrestrial TV channels to be allocated).

- The new Decree extends until August 2005 the deadline imposed upon the regional Governments regarding the granting of the local terrestrial TV licences. After the approval of Decree 439/2004, some regional Governments have already granted their local terrestrial TV licences or have invited public tenders to grant them, but other regional Governments had asked for this extension.

- The new Decree also postpones the local analogue TV switch-over until 2008. Local digital terrestrial TV broadcasters are required to start digital transmissions by 2006. The Government has also announced that it intends to approve a bill on urgent measures for the promotion of digital terrestrial TV. This bill, which would also include some provisions related to cable TV and media concentration, should be presented to Parliament in the next few weeks, and it is expected to be approved by summer. The Government is also drafting a new general bill on radio and TV, whose main aims would be to unify the existing regulation of the audio-visual sector; to set up the basic principles concerning licensing, public broadcasting and safeguarding of pluralism; and to create a national independent audio-visual regulatory authority.

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