# [HU] Consultation on Strategy for Digital Switchover

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*Márk Lengyel*
*Körmendy-Ékes & Lengyel Consulting, Budapest*

On 4 October 2006 the Hungarian National Strategy for Digital Switchover has been published and submitted to public consultation. The elaboration of the national strategy was the consequence of the decision of the Government on the introduction of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) of March2005 (see IRIS 2005-5: 16).

The majority of the preparatory works has been carried out under theaegis of the *Informatikai és Hírközlési Minisztérium* (Ministry of Informatics and Telecommunications), that merged with the *Gazdasági és Közlekedési Minisztérium* (Ministry of Economics and Transport) after the generalelections in May. Based on the original blueprint and contribution of several other ministries and authorities the strategy has been finalised and published by the *Miniszterelnöki Hivatal* (Prime Minister's Office).

The scope of the strategy covers both television and radio broadcasting and transmission. The document takes all programme distribution platforms into account: in addition to terrestrial broadcasting it also considers cable, satellite, mobile and broadband content distribution possibilities.

Beside the available examples taken from the various European national practices the findings of the strategy are based on the detailed analysis of the broadcasting landscape of Hungary. According to the description provided by the document, today there are approximately 250,000 digital households in Hungary. They are almost exclusively receivers of satellite DTH ("direct to home") or similar services. An insignificant number of households have access to digital cable programme packages and the introduction of IPTV is also at an embryonic stage in the country.

As regards DTT, the ongoing experimental broadcasting of *Antenna Hungária Zrt.* (the recently privatised national broadcast distribution company) is worth noting.

The document continues with the stocktaking of frequencies available for the purposes of digital broadcasting in the light of the outcome of RRC06 (the Regional Radiocommunication Conference of the ITU held in Geneva from May to June this year).

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The strategy also defines an inventory of regulatory tools for encouraging digital switchover. The elements of this toolkit are sorted and evaluated by their nature. In this respect are distinguished:

- public policy interventions (e.g. consumer information campaigns or the definition of the role of the Hungarian public service broadcasters in the process of digitisation);

- regulatory measures (media, telecommunication, or copyright law), and

- financial support mechanisms (on a strictly platform-neutral basis, in line with EC regulation)

Proposals to define a centre among state institutions for addressing the challenges of digital switchover and to implement proper monitoring schemes to evaluate the progress to be made are also included in the strategy.

The general aim of the strategy has been defined as:

- strengthening media pluralism;

- contributing to the development of value-added interactive services;

- promoting sustainable and efficient competition in the market of digital broadcast transmission;

- promoting the efficient use of scarce resources;

- increasing the level of awareness and competence among consumers;

- securing the access of disadvantaged social groups to digital television services,

by means of

- a clear regulatory framework consistent with EC law;

- unambiguous public policy efforts;

- purposeful subvention policy consistent with the principle of technological neutrality

in the course of the digital switchover.

The interested parties (market players, professional associations, academic organisations, other authorities concerned, etc.) are invited to comment the strategy until 11 November 2006.

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***Javaslat a televíziózás és a rádiózás digitális átállásának magyarországi stratégiájára***

http://misc.meh.hu/letoltheto/DAS_vitaanyag.pdf

*Proposal for the strategy for the digital switchover of radio and television broadcasting*

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