

[SE] Report on digital broadcasting

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A report on the introduction of digital terrestrial broadcasting in Sweden commissioned by the Swedish Government has now been published. The report stresses the strategic importance of the development of a terrestrial digital network system that is accessible and promotes free competition, as opposed to a closed private monopolised system which would impair the opportunities of efficiently using digital technology.

In the report it is proposed that the Swedish Parliament decides in spring 1996 on the digitalisation of the terrestrial network. It is also proposed that the development of digital transmitters starts in 1997 at the latest; the first stage should be finalised within two years after Parliament's decision. This first stage should result in eight nation wide broadcasting services, i.e., in addition to the existing three terrestrial channels SVT1, SVT2 and TV4 there would be five new services. In a second stage the digital network system should have the capacity to distribute 24 different broadcasting services.

The total transition period must not be more than 10 years according to the report - after this period the analogue signals must be closed. When this is done the digital network system will be able to distribute approximately 50 channels. The report proposes that a group of experts should be established to work with the introduction of the new network system and to survey the transition.

The financing of the system is a political question which the report leaves unsolved, no proposals are made in this respect. The distribution costs of a digital broadcasting service is less than the costs of distribution of an analogue broadcasting service; the cost is estimated at around 40 - 50 million Swedish kronor. The cost of digital set-top boxes for the households to receive the digital signals is estimated to be 9 - 10 thousand million Swedish kronor.

***Från massmedia till multimedia - att digitalisera svensk television
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offentliga utredningar (SOU), 1996:25***

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