

# [MK] Strategy for the Development of Broadcasting 2007-2012

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The Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Macedonia has, at a public session on 27 November 2007, adopted the Strategy for the Development of Broadcasting in the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2007-2012. The Strategy was adopted within the deadline stipulated by Law. The preparation and the adoption of the Strategy was a legal obligation of the Broadcasting Council pursuant to Article 22 of the Law on Broadcasting Activity.

The preparation process of the Strategy has involved all competent institutions in the field of broadcasting, electronic communications and the information society, as well as non-governmental organisations and other entities in the broadcasting industry. Regarding this process, several research projects and analyses were conducted by the Council including on such subjects as media market and audience. Along with this process, the adoption of all necessary by-laws and the completion of the process of transferring previously granted concessions for broadcasting activity into licences were completed by the Council. The draft of the Strategy was the subject of public consultation from 3 September to 18 October 2007.

The main pillars of the Strategy are: "Aims of the public interest in broadcasting", "Development of broadcasting as an industry", "Pluralism and diversity of programme content", "Digitalisation of broadcasting", "Audiovisual services over new technologies" and the "Regulatory framework".

In December, the Council will adopt a distinct Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy over the next five years. The Strategy calls for the process of digitisation of terrestrial broadcasting to commence in 2008. The Council and the Agency for Electronic Communication have created a joint body to develop the procedure for awarding the first multiplexes. The process of regionalisation, i.e. awarding licences to regional broadcasters, which is an obligation of the Council prescribed by Law, is planned to run in parallel with the digitisation, and according to the technical conditions. Regionalisation is important in terms of the need for some media concentration, because so far the market has been heavily fragmented which has prevented a profitable operation of broadcasters, especially TV stations.

Furthermore, in 2008 the Council plans to award the first licences to broadcast programme services by means of other platforms - satellite and cable networks.

In terms of legislation, the Strategy has detected certain deficiencies in the current Law on Broadcasting Activity, pertaining primarily to the loosely defined mandates of the Council to monitor the implementation of the Law and to impose sanctions. The Broadcasting Law should be further aligned with the Law on Misdemeanours, which can also enhance the Council's efficiency in the implementation of the Law. The Strategy also covers the issue of future development of legislation as a necessary part of the process of harmonisation with the new Audiovisual Media Services Directive, but also as a precondition for further technological development of the broadcasting industry.

***Стратегија за развој на радиодифузната дејност во Република Македонија 2007-2012***

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