[LV] Regulations on the Introduction of Digital Television in Latvia Finally Adopted

IRIS 2008-10:1/24

Ieva Bērziņa-Andersone
Sorainen, Latvia

On 2 September 2008 the Cabinet of Ministers of Latvia finally adopted the long awaited regulations on the introduction of digital broadcasting in Latvia. The authorisation to the Cabinet of Ministers to adopt such regulations was provided in 2002 by respective amendments to the Radio and Television Law (31 October 2002). However, it took almost six years and several changes of government to agree on the respective regulations.

The new regulations refer only to the digital terrestrial broadcasting of television programmes, and do not regulate radio broadcasting or digital broadcasting in formats other than terrestrial. Also the regulations are relevant only to the transmission part of broadcasting, and do not provide any rules on content provision or programme packaging. The regulations specify the technical parameters of digital broadcasting (DVB-T and DVB-H technologies to be used, as well as MPEG-2, MPEG-4 or other compression technologies) and provide rules on how the providers of digital broadcasting will be selected.

The provider of digital broadcasting will have to be an electronic communications merchant (as defined by the Electronic Communications Law of Latvia) selected in a tender organised by the Ministry of Transport, running until 15 November 2008. The regulations do not specify the type of tender (open or closed tender, a negotiations procedure, etc.), thus it should be chosen by the Ministry of Transport. The regulations only note that the tenderers must be assessed, taking into account their previous experience, offered terms for the implementation of digital television, plans of geographical availability, number of users, and measures for providing information to the public. The selected provider of digital broadcasting will have to implement digital television and carry out a complete transfer to digital broadcasting by 1 December 2011. The provider has to ensure that public and commercial broadcasters have an opportunity to broadcast their programmes in digital formats in accordance with their broadcasting permits and pursuant to mutual agreements with the provider.

The National Radio and Television Council will have to name certain television programmes, which must be provided in digital format free of charge. The broadcasting permits for digital broadcasting will be issued by the National Radio and Television Council, as it has been done so far. It may be decided that the

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

existing broadcasting permits will remain in force, the regulations provide that the National Radio and Television Council must re-register the permits and amend, if necessary.

It is clear that it will be crucial to select an appropriate provider of digital broadcasting in order to ensure successful transfer. The regulations provide, however, that during the transition period terrestrial broadcasting will be continued in analogue format. The regulations came into force on 27 September 2008.

Kārtība, kādā tiek ieviesta elektronisko sabiedrības saziņas līdzekļu veidoto programmu apraide ciparformātā

http://www.likumi.lv/doc.php?id=181603

Regulations No.714 of the Cabinet of Ministers as of 2 September 2008

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026