[GR] The Transition Process to Digital Terrestrial Television in Motion in Greece

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The first digital terrestrial transmission in Greece of private television channels of national reach through the digital network provider Digea took place on 24 September 2009 in an area of the North Peloponnese, while current planning envisages the immediate launch of transmissions in big, urban centres as well. Greece has thus officially entered the period of digital transition envisaged in the ministerial decision, published in August 2008, which determined the frequencies on which the existing television stations can digitally transmit their analogue programme. On the institutional level, these stations have already received the necessary license from the *Εθνικό Συμβούλιο Ραδιοτηλεόρασης* (National Council for Radio and Television - ΕΣΡ) for the digital simulcasting of their analogue programming in January 2009, while 42 stations of regional reach have also been issued the same license. Across the country, two digital frequency bands of the public service broadcaster *Ελληνική Ραδιοφωνία Τηλεόραση* (Greek Radio and Television - EPT) have already been in operation since 2006, on which the existing four analogue channels are rebroadcast and three digital channels broadcast. However, the technical method for the encoding of the signal of the private channels of national reach is MPEG-4, while public service television has chosen the MPEG-2 system, a fact that inhibits the dissemination of the new method of transmission among consumers.

On the legislative level, a delay has occurred in relation to the publication of the Presidential Decree with which, according to the recent Law 3592/2007, the process for the issuance of licenses for digital terrestrial television (DTT) will be decided, while the frequencies that will be used for this purpose have not yet been determined. The progress of DTT is meeting with obstacles in the face of the absence of central planning and of a strict timeframe, while the general coordination of the frequencies is also hindered by the fact that not all television stations have a permit. The new political leadership of the Ministries of Internal Affairs and of Transport and Communications, who took office after the recent parliamentary elections in Greece on 4 October 2009, are now called upon to provide immediate answers to these problems.

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