[RO] Transition to Digital Television Delayed

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Eugen Cojocariu
Radio Romania International

The switchover from analogue to digital television on 1 January 2012 will be delayed for six months. The Romanian Government is to adopt a Decision on the granting of licences to use radio frequencies within the digital television system. The document was approved by the National Council for Electronic Media (CNA) on 14 January 2010.

The Government Decision modifies the *Strategia privind tranziţia de la televiziunea analogică terestră la cea digitală şi implementarea servicilor mutimedia la nivel naţional* (strategy for the switchover from analogue terrestrial television to digital television and the introduction of digital multimedia services at national level), approved by Government Decision no. 1213/2009 (see IRIS 2009-9: 17). According to the Decision, the licences to use radio frequencies for digital terrestrial broadcasting will be granted according to a comparison-based selection organised by the National Administrative and Regulatory Authority for Communication (ANCOM). Romania has a total of six allocations (multiplexes) which cover the national territory.

The winners of the first two licences will be announced by 31 May 2010 and the licences will be granted by 1 July 2010 (instead of 31 December 2009, the initial deadline). The tax fee amounts to EUR 2.5 Mio each.

The first two digital multiplexes have to be in operation before 1 January 2012 to observe some conditions of territorial and population coverage, free-to-air broadcasting, transparent and non-discriminatory broadcasting of present analogue programmes of the national public television alongside commercial stations with significant market share and geographical coverage according to the conditions, criteria and procedures established by the CNA.

The remaining four multiplexes will be announced by 31 October 2010 and the licences will be granted by 30 December 2010 (initially 1 July 2010), with the possibility of offering digital television broadcasting services starting on 1 January 2012, on the basis of the proposals of an interdepartmental group. Each of the four multiplexes will have to rebroadcast at least seven television channels in standard definition with identical technical broadcasting parameters for each channel or a combination of standard and high definition channels alongside multimedia services.

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As to the other deadlines, the first two multiplexes will have to cover 60% of the population and 50% of the Romanian territory by 30 June 2011 (initially 31 December 2010), 80% of the population and 70% of the territory by 31 December 2011 (initially 30 June 2011), 90% of the population and 80% of the territory by 30 June 2012 (initially 31 December 2011).

The other deadlines of the Strategy remain unchanged.

Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 1213/2009

Government Decision no. 1213/2009

Hotărârea Guvernului privind acordarea a licenţelor de utilizare a frecvenţelor radio în sistem digital terestru de televiziune (proiect)

Government Decision on the granting of licences to use radio frequencies within the digital television system, draft

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