[CY] New Developments in the Field of Digital Television

IRIS 2011-4:1/15

Christophoros Christophorou
Council of Europe expert in Media and Elections

A transitional period and the vote of a new law that will govern digital television are the main elements of arrangements and processes that will lead to the digital switch-over in Cyprus (see IRIS 2010-9/16).

An official announcement of the Office of the Commissioner for Electronic Communications and Postal Regulation (OCECPR) and the Cyprus Radio Television Authority (CRTA), addresses the main questions related to the digital switch-over. The announcement contains information on the rights, obligations and the role of the major actors, the operator of the commercial digital platform Velister Ltd, a consortium of commercial broadcasters and television services companies, the broadcasters and the regulators OCECPR and CRTA. The former is responsible for networks and services of electronic communications, including terrestrial digital television, CRTA is the authority that will grant content licences and monitor the content transmitted. The main provisions for the passage from analogue to digital are:

During the transitional period, Velister is obliged to create and operate a digital television network according to the terms and conditions set down in the authorisation granted to it. The broadcasters will have to come to an agreement with Velister for the transmission of their programmes in digital form. The existing broadcasters will have to get a new or amended licence. Local channels will have the opportunity to operate as island-wide channels by applying for a new licence; island-wide broadcasters will have their analogue television licence changed to digital, while channels providing content in electronic form must apply for a digital licence. The digital network operator is obliged to carry the signals of digital television operators in accordance with their agreement. In the first stage, the network operator must publish a Draft Offer for Access to Services of the Digital Platform. Consultations with the interested parties may start with the involvement of the OCECPR, which has the authority to approve or amend it. The OCECPR has issued orders relating to Application Programmes Interfaces and Electronic Programme Guides, and has decided that MPEG4 is the digital television equipment standard. The Office is also the co-ordinator of the information campaign on digital television. The CRTA is in the process of a public consultation for the introduction of a new law that will govern digital transmission. The existing law covers analogue television only.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

According to official press releases the OCECPR and the Director of Electronic Communications of the Ministry of Communications and Works have granted two authorisations for the “use of radio frequencies and for the creation and operation of a network of terrestrial digital television”.

The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (Ραδιοφωνικό Ίδρυμα Κύπρου) was granted one licence following negotiations in accordance with a decision of the Council of Ministers to lease one of the digital platforms to the public broadcaster. The second was granted to Velister Ltd, which won an auction competition. The public service broadcaster shall provide services of public utility, excluding any commercial exploitation of the digital platform under its authority. The second digital network operator shall have the obligation to offer digital access to all existing broadcasters according to specific rules and range of fees; it will also have the possibility of offering a full range of digital services that will enable the commercial use of the network. The full switchover is to take place on 1 July 2011.

Ανακοίνωση - Σερματισμόσ Αναλογικϊν Σθλεοπτικϊν Μεταδόςεων και Εισαγωγι τθσ Επίγειασ Ψθφιακισ Σθλεόραςθσ (ΕΨΣ) ςτθν Κφπρο

http://www.ocecpr.org.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=3628&tt=ocecpr&lang=gr

Information on the announcement of the OCECPR

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026