[CY] Switch-over to Digital Television

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The Republic of Cyprus switched over to digital television transmission on 1 July 2011 and all broadcasters ceased their analogue transmissions.

According to the Office of the Commissioner for Electronic Communications and Postal Services, the operation was successful thanks to the close co-operation of public services, broadcasters and digital networks operators. A period of concurrent digital and analogue transmissions that lasted for several months allowed all actors to adapt and provided a smooth passage to the new era.

The procedure for the digital switch-over essentially started in 2007 and 2008 with a series of consultations and the elaboration of a policy plan as well as of the legal framework regulating the relevant issues (see IRIS 2008-10/10). In 2009, it was decided to adopt the standard DTB-T MPEG4 instead of MPEG2. In accordance with the policy plan the first of two digital networks provided for broadcasting was granted on the basis of negotiations to the public service broadcaster Ραδιοφωνικό Ίδρυμα Κύπρου (Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation - RIK). The second network, for commercial broadcasters, was granted to Velister Ltd. after a multiple-round auction procedure, for a record sum of EUR 10,000,000 per year (see IRIS 2010-9/16).

The new environment led to changes in the broadcasting media landscape with local channels becoming island-wide. The public service network transmits its two television channels and the programmes of the public service channel of Greece NET and Euronews in English, all in Standard Definition. Its High Definition channel has not started transmission yet. RIK's four radio channels are also broadcast by the network.

Velister's private digital network broadcasts the following channels: ANT1, MEGA, SIGMA, TV Plus, EXTRA, CAPITAL, MAD CY and MUSIC TV. The pay TV broadcaster Lumiere (LTV) offers ten different thematic channels, run on its own and other platforms, while its sibling ALFA has cancelled operations.

In addition to digital television platforms, the following television service providers operate in the Republic: CytaVision, Cablenet, Primetel, Lumiere TV, all offering also Internet and telephony services, and Nova Cyprus that offers DBS (Direct-broadcast Satellite), but does not include the Cyprus channels in its programmes. Their operation is still not regulated.

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In the course of the digital switch-over, the Office of the Commissioner for Electronic Communications and Postal Services ran a campaign of information for all actors, including broadcasters, consumers, technicians, television sets sellers and others (see IRIS 2010-8/20).

The Law on Radio and Television Stations L. 7(I) /1998 (Ο περί Ραδιοφωνικών και Τηλεοπτικών Σταθμών Νόμος) was amended in mid-April to prepare the ground so that radio and television organisations can continue their operation in the new environment (see IRIS 2011-5/11). Its new name will be the Law on Radio and Television Organisations of 1998 to 2011. The Cyprus Radio Television Authority issued new digital licences to applicants that wished to continue operating in the digital era.

Ανακοίνωση σχετικά με τις Εκπομπές Ψηφιακών Καναλιών στην Κύπρο

http://www.dtv.org.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=3906&tt=dtv&lang=gr

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