[RO] Strategy for the Digital Switchover

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Eugen Cojocariu
Radio Romania International

On 14 May 2013, the Consiliul Naţional al Audiovizualului (National Audiovisual Council - CNA) unanimously issued an opinion in favour of the Government's Draft Decision for the approval of the TV digital switchover and the Strategy for the nationwide implementation of digital multimedia services (see IRIS 2009-9/26, IRIS 2010-3/34, IRIS 2010-7/32, and IRIS 2011-4/33). Originally, the digital switchover was supposed to be accomplished by 1 January 2012, but in August 2012 the Romanian Government decided to postpone the transition for three years, due to the economic crisis (see IRIS 2010-9/35).

According to the Strategy, the state owned radiocommunications provider Societatea Naţională de Radiocomunicaţii (National Radiocommunications Society - SNR) will receive by way of a non-competitive selection procedure one of the five multiplexes designated for the TV digital switchover. The SNR will be obliged to air the two main programmes of the public television TVR (TVR1 and TVR2), along with several commercial TV stations currently broadcasting via analogue terrestrial.

The CNA had already issued an opinion in favour of the same subject on 25 October 2012, asking for two specific amendments: the obligation for SNR to air through the first digital multiplex more private TV stations, not only the public channels TVR1 and TVR2, and a 20 days term of coexistence of the analogue and digital transmissions of TVR2 during the transition towards digital, in order not to affect the supply to the viewers.

The transition towards digital will have to be implemented no later than 17 June 2015. Romania can implement at national level four digital terrestrial multiplexes in the UHF (ultra high frequency) band and one in the VHF (very high frequency) band, using the DVB-T2 standard. Additional digital terrestrial multiplexes could be allocated at regional/local level, according to the technical possibilities.

The minimal technical conditions for the implementation of the UHF band multiplex awarded to SNR are: the use of the DVB-T2 transmission standard, the reception coverage of 40% of the population until 1 July 2014, 70% until 17 June 2015, and 90% of the population along with 80% of the territory until 31 December 2016.

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According to the Audiovisual Law no. 504/2002, the transmission has to be „free to air", under transparent, competitive and non-discriminatory conditions for both public and private TV stations.

Any analogue terrestrial transmission will cease after 17 June 2015. Until then the SNR will ensure the simulcast of the first channel of the public television TVR1.

The remaining four national multiplexes (three in the UHF band and one in the VHF band) will be awarded by the national telecommunications regulating authority Autoritatea Naţională pentru Administrare şi Reglementare în Comunicaţii (National Authority for Administration and Regulation in Communications - ANCOM) in a competitive selection procedure. The same applies to regional and local multiplexes.

Lastly, the Strategy foresees a public information campaign about the digital switchover starting 1 August 2013.

Strategia de tranziţie la TV digitală a fost avizată de CNA: SNR va transmite TVR şi posturi private - Agenţia Mediafax 14 mai 2013

http://www.mediafax.ro/cultura-media/strategia-de-tranzitie-la-tv-digitala-a-fost-avizata-de-cna-snr-va-transmite-tvr-si-posturi-private-10876944

Report about the approval by the CNA; Mediafax News Agency of 14 May 2013

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