[IT] AGCOM reviews the national frequency allocation plan for local television

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On 25 June 2015, the Italian Communication Authority (Autorità per le garanzie nelle comunicazioni - AGCOM) adopted through Resolution n. 402/15/CONS the plan for allocating the frequencies allotted to Italy based on the 2006 Geneva Agreement and not assigned to national network operators for the digital terrestrial television service (for previous plans, see IRIS 2012-5/30).

Pursuant to Article 6, paragraph 8, of Act 21 February 2014, n. 9, as amended by Article 1, paragraph 147 of Act of 23 December 2014, n. 190 (Stability Law 2015), the decision of the Italian regulatory authority makes transmission capacity of the new networks available to local media service providers, which will be selected on the basis of regional lists by the Ministry for Economic Development. At a later stage, the Ministry will release the rights of use for the new frequencies exclusively for the establishment of networks operating via an iso-frequential system (single-frequency or multi-frequency) with regional or multi-regional coverage.

The solution adopted by the Authority has taken into account the timeliness and effectiveness of the entry into operation of the new networks, as well as the reduced need for investment, which is limited to the technical constraints set by the planning, with a view to ensuring compatibility between the different networks.

It established that the same frequency shall not generally be used in neighbouring regions, with the exception of particularly favourable orographic settings and/or subject to an increase of the complexity and the manufacturing costs associated to the networks. The aim of this provision was to ensure that the network planning for each region be made in a way that each network ensures a proper reception quality within its region and a high level of compatibility with the existing networks operating in adjacent regions which carry different contents.

As a matter of fact, the use of the same frequency in two neighbouring regions implies the loss (due to the mutual interference) of a more or less extended service area over the border. In this way, it is possible to limit the co-channel interference between regions at levels that ensure that the planned new multiplexes have high percentages of served population and, at the same time,

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provides the possibility of using modulation schemes (so called “system variant”) with less protection (code rate) and higher transmission capacity (up to 25 Mbit/s), compared to multiplexes planned under the previous allocation plans (20 Mbit/s). Furthermore, such choice allows for the achievement of better results in terms of compliance with the reservation of transmission capacity for the broadcasting of local content, which is envisaged by law. The transport capacity of the new networks adds to that which the existing local network operators shall make available to content providers.

The adopted plan is still subject to review in the light of the negotiations made in the context of international coordination, of the potential changes of the National Frequency Allocation Plan and of any need to enhance compatibility between technical areas or neighbouring regions.

Thanks to the adoption of the aforementioned resolution, the Italian method becomes strengthened - that involves AGCOM and the Ministry - towards achieving the goals set out by law, i.e. resolving international disputes due to interferences with neighbouring countries and ensuring that providers of media services at a local level benefit from the right to be conveyed.

Delibera n. 402/15/CONS del 25 giugno 2015, Modifica del Piano Nazionale di assegnazione delle frequenze per la radiodiffusione televisiva in tecnica digitale DVB-T in attuazione dell’art. 6, comma 8, della legge 21 febbraio 2014, n. 9 e successive modificazioni, come modificato dall’art. 1, comma 147, della legge 23 dicembre 2014, n. 190.

http://www.agcom.it/documentazione/documento?p_p_auth=fLw7zRht&p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_kidx9GUnIodu&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_col_id=column1&p_p_col_count=1&_101_INSTANCE_kidx9GUnIodu_struts_action=%2Fasset_publisher%2Fview_content&_101_INSTANCE_kidx9GUnIodu_assetEntryId=2309678&_101_INSTANCE_kidx9GUnIodu_type=document

AGCOM Regulation no. 402/15/CONS concerning the Change of the National Plan of allocation of frequencies for broadcasting digital television DVB-T in the Art. 6, paragraph 8, of the 21 February 2014 law, n. 9 as amended by Art. 1, paragraph 147 of the Law of 23 December 2014, n. 190

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