# [GR] Tender for digital television licences held

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The issue of licensing television stations remains of high political importance in Greece. As mentioned in a previous IRIS article (IRIS 2016-5/20), this procedure was not held by the competent independent authority (Ethniko Symvoulio Radiotileorasis - National Council of Radio and Television) but by a special committee the members of which were appointed by the government.

The invitation to tender for the granting of four licences to content providers of nationwide, free-to-air, digital terrestrial, with general informative content, was issued at the end of May by the Minister of State Nikos Pappas. All existing seven channels and four new companies filed an application, but three of the existing channels did not participate in the auction due to deficiencies in the dossier.

The auction procedure lasted three days (30 August 2016 - 1 September 2016), during which the representatives of the candidates were isolated in the building of the Secretary General of Communication, totally cut off from the outside world. The four licences were allocated for EUR 43.6 million to EUR 79.9 million (in total EUR 246 million) to two companies owning active television stations and two new companies. The newcomers not only will have to pay the agreed price within 24 months but will also have to make adequate investments according to the law. There are many persons that seriously question the viability of these companies, given the fact that the Greek economy is still in recession and the price is considered as too high.

All existing broadcasting companies have filed applications for the annulment of the call for tender before the High Administrative Court. These cases were heard during June 2016 and the Court is expected to rule in October 2016. According to government sources, existing operators (four channels of nationwide coverage) who failed to secure a licence will have 90 days after the auction announcement before going off air.

***Minister of State, Invitation to tender number 1/2016 - Invitation to tender for the granting of four (4) licences to content providers of nation-wide free-to-air digital terrestrial television broadcasting in high-definition with general-content information program, for nation-wide coverage of the Greek territory, for a period of ten years, 17 May 2016***

http://www.ypepikrateias.gr/index.php/legislative-activity/109-nvitation-to-tender-

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