

[CZ] Digital Audio Broadcasting

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Jan Fučík
Česká televize

On 24 August 2016, the Government of the Czech Republic approved Decision no. 730 on the Terrestrial Digital Broadcasting of the public service broadcaster Czech Radio. The Decision allocates frequencies to Czech Radio for the period 2016-2021 in accordance with the rules of procedure under the Electronic Communications Act (Act no. 127/2005 Coll.). Furthermore, the Decision states that Czech Radio has to start a regular digital broadcast. It establishes an advisory body within the Ministry of Culture for coordinating the evaluation process and the preparation of other decisions on the digitisation of radio broadcasting within 6 months of the implementation of the regular digital broadcast. The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with Czech Radio and the Broadcasting Council, should evaluate the ordinary terrestrial broadcasting of Czech Radio and prepare a Development Strategy of terrestrial broadcasting including the regulatory and legislative framework.

The development of digital audio broadcasting in the Czech Republic remains relatively uncoordinated, being composed of various experiments and test broadcasting. Apart from the public Czech Radio, the main drivers of digitisation are the operators of public communications networks for radio broadcasting, existing and new radio stations. In the current situation, almost all available FM frequencies are being used for broadcasting. Presently, Czech legislation provides no comprehensive solution for the digital broadcasting in force. The current developments confirm the plans for the allocation of available capacity networks needed to disseminate programmes and services of Czech Radio. It is necessary to prepare a Development Strategy for radio broadcasting in the country, including analysis and solutions for financing, possibly a parallel provision of analogue and digital broadcasting, and the political adoption of policies on the coordinated introduction of digital radio broadcasting - most likely in 2021, with the resolution of analogue FM broadcasting after 2025.

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