[FR] High tensions between TF1 and Orange

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TF1 and French television distributors remain at war after the audiovisual group launched a fierce battle with the operators in 2016 in an attempt to obtain payment for its free-to-air channels, which it had previously provided free of charge. TF1's demands follow the creation of its new TF1 Premium service, which combines its unencrypted channels, the MYTF1 catch-up service and new add-on services (start-over, enhanced catch-up, etc.). Whereas new agreements were signed with Altice-SFR in November 2017 and Bouygues Telecom (TF1's parent company) in January 2018, negotiations with Canalsat (Canal Plus), Iliad (Free) and Orange have stalled. As a result, on 1 February TF1 withdrew its MYTF1 TV catch-up service for Orange customers and issued a writ, demanding that Orange cease distributing its channels because it had failed to renew its distribution agreement. Since the writ was not issued under emergency proceedings, there is still time for the parties to reach an agreement. Meanwhile, TV viewers can use the TF1 free-to-air channel catch-up service at MYTF1.fr and via the MYTF1 app for mobile and tablet. The channels are also still available for all television viewers on digital terrestrial television.

Gilles Pélisson, CEO of the TF1 group, referring to other examples of European operators paying audiovisual groups for their content (for instance, Orange and Altice pay for the TF1 signal in Belgium), explained: "We are asking for a few cents per subscriber. Orange has 10 million subscribers and is nine times the size of TF1."

Although the national audiovisual regulatory authority (CSA) does not believe it should interfere in commercial agreements between two private companies (especially while TF1 remains available via free DTT), it expressed "its concern and willingness to help facilitate these discussions, taking into account viewers' interests and the economic situation of the operators concerned".

The case continues.

TF1, communiqué de presse du 1 février 2018, Fin des accords de distribution du service MYTF1 et des chaînes en clair du groupe TF1 avec Orange

https://www.groupe-tf1.fr/fr/communiques/activit%C3%A9-du-groupe-d%C3%A9veloppement-acquisition-cession-diversification/fin-des-accords-de-

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