[DK] Agreement on the Strengthening of Danish Public Service Television

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On 20 January 1995 the Danish government and the Socialist People's Party came to an agreement on the strengthening of Danish public service television as a result of the increasing competition from foreign television stations.

On the basis of the agreement, Danmarks Radio will be authorized to experiment with a satellite channel using new digital technology. The channel is supposed to supplement the existing programmes that are broadcast terrestrial.

The purpose of this extra channel - which is expected to be a fully developed programme channel by 1998 - is to increase the possibilities for the Danish population to watch Danish programmes all evening, to offer alternatives (information programmes and entertainment) and to broadcast more special interest programmes.

In a limited geographical area, Danmarks Radio will also be authorized to experiment with digital radio broadcasting (Digital Audio Broadcasting - DAB) on the 3 existing radio channels as well as on a new radio channel. For this, Danmarks Radio will be allowed to make use of the vacant FM channel (the so-called P4) until 1 January 1998 for parallel broadcasting of the new DAB programme. The DAB technology, which is now being introduced in a number of European countries, first and foremost implies a considerably improved sound quality (CD quality) compared to the existing FM broadcasts, especially for mobile radios.

During the remaining period of the licence fee agreement, TV 2 (national) will be authorized to use a total amount of DKK 50 million from the TV 2 fund, which amount may be exceeded iif the advertising revenues are higher than assumed in the licence fee agreement.

It is envisaged that these additional means will be used for the production of more Danish high quality programmes so that the competition from foreign channels can be met with quality rather than low-priced series of poor quality.

The agreement implies that in the Autumn of 1995 a Bill will be introduced which authorizes Danmarks Radio (and TV 2) to establish new satellite channels.

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