

Executive Summary

Case Studies

***Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Macedonia,
Poland, Serbia and Slovenia***

*Transition from analogue to digital terrestrial
television broadcasting in Central and Eastern
European countries*

**Report by
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Senior Broadcasting Expert**

1. Purpose

The elaboration of case studies for the preselected eight European countries with various progress of transition from analogue to DTTV broadcasting is part of the BDT follow-up action on the “Request for a consultancy study on the transition from analogue to digital terrestrial television broadcasting in Central and Eastern European countries”, from 20th of November 2008, submitted by Dr. Plamen Vatchkov, Chairman of the Bulgarian State Agency for Information Technology and Communications (SAITC) to the Director BDT.

2. Background

The BDT, upon informal consultation with the SAITC representative, has decided to split the work load into two streams between Mr. Péter Vári, Senior Broadcasting Expert from Hungary and Mr. Petko Kantchev, Senior Broadcasting Expert from Bulgaria and former Specialist on Sound and Television Broadcasting at BDT/ITU as follows:

- Mr. Vári shall elaborate case studies for Germany (Internet based research), Hungary (on-situ research) , Poland and Serbia (based on short missions of three working days); and
- Mr. Petko Kantchev shall elaborate case studies for Bulgaria (on-situ research), Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia (based on short missions of two and a half to three working days).

3. Brief description of Experts' duties

- 3.1 Discuss with relevant Authorities the issues of transition to DTTV broadcasting and based on the available information, elaborate case studies for each of the said eight countries.
- 3.2 Develop comparison Power Point Presentations about the Case Studies, and
- 3.3 Submit mission report.

4. Mission Findings

In spite of the limited mission duration, the National Authorities concerned were very proactive and supportive to such an extent that they have provided, upon Expert's request, essential information even after the ITU mission being carried out in their respective countries.

For both Experts it was both honour and privilege to participate and actively contribute in such a conducive environment, with team spirit and good will utmost prevailing.

Without exception, this ITU initiative was very highly appreciated and in the opinion of ITU Members being consulted, such approach should become regular and annual until the date of implementation of Analogue Switch Off by prevailing majority of countries from the CEE sub-region. The exchange of latest up to date information was beneficial to Administrations of countries subject to the case studies and to the entire ITU membership of this sub-region later during the ITU Sub-Regional Seminar (CEE Sub-Regional Seminar and Ministerial Round Table, Belgrade, Serbia, 27-29 April 2009, <http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/eur/europe/2009-MRT-Broadcasting/index.html>)

Based on the Legislative information (Laws and Regulations), other pertinent information as well as on the National Plans/Strategies provided and on frank and open discussions with relevant Authorities, it was possible to elaborate case study for every one of the said eight countries. Each Case Study has Annexes where pertinent information is attached for reference and further study by the reader. If latest up to date English version not available, for the sake of consistency, the document is provided in the original country language as well.

Based on the said eight case studies, two comparison Power Point Presentations were developed within the duty descriptions of both Experts. Key mission findings are summarized in concise form, enabling the reader quickly to position himself within the “ocean” of information attached for reference. Indeed, this approach was highly appreciated by the Ministers/Chief Executives at the said CEE Sub-Regional Seminar and Ministerial Round Table.

Both above-mentioned comparison Power Point Presentations, the eight Case Studies and their Annexes are attached for reference to this Report. The documents are available in the attached CD-ROM and can be accessed also from this executive summary via hyperlinks.

Proposals were made to apply similar approach to other sub-regions within RRC-06, in particular to African, Arab and RCC countries, and elsewhere. The above-mentioned case study information provided at the said Seminar/Ministerial Roundtable in Belgrade was highly appreciated and defined as extremely useful to ITU Membership.

Every one of the Case Studies has revealed different “unique” approach by relevant Administration during the transition to DTTV broadcasting complemented by a reach blend of Laws, Secondary Legislation, Strategies, Plans and relevant actions.

Unless legacy problem of early introduction of DTTV and MPEG-2 prevailing, the decisions taken by prevailing numbers of countries where case studies were carried-out were to apply MPEG 4 Part 10 AVC (ITU-T Rec.H-264) and it was having an effect on other Administrations to select this technological future proof option thus enhancing the Digital Dividend benefits like HDTV, Mobile TV etc.

In particular the Administrations, without exception, liked very much the comparison approach on key issues applied in the Power Point Presentations, because it was enabling them quickly to spot points of mutual interest and facilitating exchange of know-how and experiences of substantial value. The transparency and openness demonstrated have contributed to build a climate of mutual trust and good cooperation in the Sub-Region.

Briefly summarizing, it is such kind of field activities that help ITU Members and their appreciation should be taken into account as a model in the ITU-D future follow-up action plans in broadcasting domain.

5. Main recommendations

5.1. ITU-D should organize similar case studies followed by sub-regional seminars, avoiding cost incurred for interpretation/translation, predominantly in Africa, CIS and Arab countries, part of RRC-06 and GE-06 Plan. This approach might be expanded and well appreciated also in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

5.2. ITU-D should organize regularly on annual basis similar case studies followed by sub-regional seminars for Central and Eastern European Countries until the transition to digital successfully accomplished in this Sub-Region.

6. Motion of Thanks

On behalf of both Broadcasting Experts we should like to thank both the ITU and the Administrations/Authorities concerned within the Sub-Region for the exemplary spirit of cooperation and good will, thus significantly contributing to the successful accomplishment of the said eight case studies and the stunning success of the Ministerial Round Table in Serbia.

Annexes

Comparison Power Point Presentations

- Germany, Hungary, Poland and Serbia
- Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia

Case Studies

The said eight country case studies (and their relevant documents annexed to each case study):

- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Germany
- Hungary
- Macedonia
- Poland
- Serbia
- Slovenia