

# MEASURES CONCERNING ACCESS OF VISUALLY AND HEARING-IMPAIRED PEOPLE TO TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

## *Italy*

### **1. Subtitling for deaf and hearing-impaired viewers**

#### **1.1. Are there legal provisions on the use of subtitling?**

There are no legal provisions on the use of subtitling, but the new law on broadcasting no. 112/2004, so-called Gasparri law (available at <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/04112l.htm>), encourages, at art. 4, para 2, the reception of programmes by disabled viewers:

*Art. 4, para 2, law no. 112/2004*

*È favorita la ricezione da parte dei cittadini con disabilità sensoriali dei programmi radiotelevisivi, prevedendo a tale fine l'adozione di idonee misure, sentite le associazioni di categoria.*

#### **1.2. Are there obligations on Public Service Broadcasters concerning subtitling?**

If so, what are these? (types of programmes, percentage of programming, etc.)

Law no. 112/2004 imposes on the PSB a specific obligation in order to adopt measures to protect disabled viewers:

*Art. 17, para 2, lit. q) of law no. 112/2004*

*Il servizio pubblico generale radiotelevisivo, ai sensi dell'articolo 6, comma 4, comunque garantisce:*

*(...) q) l'adozione di idonee misure di tutela delle persone portatrici di handicap sensoriali in attuazione dell'articolo 4, comma 2-*

More specific provisions are foreseen by the contract of service (the last one was signed in 2003, available at

[http://www.comunicazioni.it/it/DocSupp/627/contratto%20rai%202003\\_bis.pdf](http://www.comunicazioni.it/it/DocSupp/627/contratto%20rai%202003_bis.pdf)). In particular, RAI is obliged both to deal with a programming devoted to disabled people, as to ensure access to the programmes, with audio description on OM channels and transmission with telesoftware (for blind people) and subtitling on teletext and sign language (for deaf viewers). The aim for the period 2003-2005 is to increase the offer of such programming with 10% compared with 2002, improve the technological quality of audiodescriptions and the number of subtitled current affairs.

*Art. 7 – Contract of service (...)*

*La RAI, nel ribadire il proprio impegno di produzione e di programmazione nell'ambito e nel rigoroso rispetto delle normative antidiscriminatorie del Trattato di Amsterdam e delle risoluzioni del Forum Europeo delle persone disabili di Madrid, dedica particolare attenzione alla promozione culturale per l'integrazione delle persone disabili e il superamento dell'handicap anche attraverso campagne sociali mirate e programmi speciali, in collaborazione con le istituzioni competenti nazionali e locali. La RAI si impegna inoltre a garantire l'accesso alla propria offerta multimediale alle persone con*

*disabilità sensoriali, tramite le specifiche programmazioni audiodescritte sui canali in OM e le trasmissioni in modalità teleshopping per le persone non vedenti e sottotitolate con speciali pagine del Televideo e con traduttori in video per le persone sorde, attuando, a tal fine, le seguenti iniziative:*

*incremento del volume delle offerte specifiche di cui sopra del 10 per cento annuo rispetto al 2002 sia in termini quantitativi che di tipologie di generi di programmazione, anche con riferimento alle trasmissioni culturali e a quelle di approfondimento ed informazione a tema;*

*mantenimento dell'attuale servizio di sottotitolazione dei notiziari e sua estensione ad almeno una ulteriore edizione del telegiornale nelle fasce orarie di buon ascolto;*

*miglioramento qualitativo del segnale per l'audiodescrizione nel quadro delle risorse trasmissive dedicate allo specifico servizio;*

*promozione della ricerca tecnologica al fine di favorire l'accessibilità dell'offerta multimediale alle persone disabili e con ridotte capacità sensoriali;*

*comunicazione al pubblico delle iniziative intraprese.*

**1.3. Are there obligations on commercial broadcasters concerning subtitling?**

If so, what are these? (types of programmes, percentage of programming, etc.)

No obligations, but spontaneous initiatives.

**1.4. Are there other arrangements concerning the use of subtitling?**

If so, what are these?

No

**1.5. Do broadcasters, who are not under any obligation to provide subtitling, provide subtitling on a voluntary basis?**

Yes, Mediaset and La7 do that sometimes on page 776 of the teletext services, but not on a general basis.

**1.6. Are speech recognition systems used or being developed?**

No, as far as AGCOM knows.

**1.7. Are provisions on subtitling envisaged in particular in the context of the digital switchover?**

Apart from the mentioned provisions, no specific rules have been approved for the switchover period.

**2. Audio Description**

**2.1. Are there legal provisions on the use of audio description?**

There are no legal provisions on audio description, but see the answer to question 1.

**2.2. Are there obligations on Public Service Broadcasters concerning audio description?**

If so, what are these? (types of programmes, percentage of programming, etc.)  
Yes, see answer to question 2.

**2.3. Are there obligations on commercial broadcasters concerning audio description?**

If so, what are these? (types of programmes, percentage of programming, etc.)  
No

**2.4. Are there other arrangements concerning the use of audio description? If so, what are these?**

No

**2.5. Do broadcasters, who are not under any obligation to provide audio description, provide audio description on a voluntary basis?**

No

**2.6. Are provisions on audio description envisaged in particular in the context of the digital switchover?**

Apart from the mentioned provisions, no specific rules have been approved for the switchover period.

**3. Sign Language**

**3.1. Are there legal provisions on translation into sign language?**

There are no legal provisions on audio description, but see the answer to question 1.

**3.2. Are there obligations on Public Service Broadcasters concerning translation into sign language?**

If so, what are these? (types of programmes, percentage of programming, etc.)  
Yes, see answer to question 2.

**3.3. Are there obligations on commercial broadcasters concerning translation into sign language?**

If so, what are these? (types of programmes, percentage of programming, etc.)  
No

**3.4. Are there other arrangements concerning translation into sign language? If so, what are these?**

No

**3.5. Do broadcasters, who are not under any obligation to provide sign language, provide translation into sign language on a voluntary basis?**

Yes, Mediaset and La7 do that sometimes, but not on a general basis.

**3.6. Are provisions on sign language envisaged in particular in the context of the digital switchover?**

Apart from the mentioned provisions, no specific rules have been approved for the switchover period.