



Mobile Television

The EU switches on

Mobile television is a prime example of digital convergence, which can generate new business opportunities and benefit consumers. By bringing audiovisual content to personal mobile terminals, mobile TV is indeed at the cutting edge of high-value, innovative services. It unites personal mobile communications, one of the most dynamic European markets, and audiovisual content.

It allows consumers not only to watch TV while on the move but also to access personalised, time-shifted and on-demand audiovisual content. Mobile TV could potentially be a significant source of growth, investment and jobs for Europe, thus contributing to the success of the Lisbon Strategy. The recent results of the large number of trials conducted in Europe and worldwide, including the large scale Mobile TV trial in Germany during the 2006 Football World Cup as well as the first commercial services in a number of Member States, suggest a high interest among consumers for these exciting new services.

The EU approach towards mobile TV

Only a common European strategy for mobile TV, actively promoted by all Member States and stakeholders, will enable consumers and industry to reap the full

benefits of **economies of scale**. It will also lead to a

genuine internal market for audiovisual content and multimedia services, unhindered by potentially 27 different sets of national rules, the uncoordinated use of spectrum and a lack of interoperability.

Therefore, the Commission, together with industry and national authorities is acting in several key areas, such as technology and standards, spectrum and regulation, which are essential for creating a pan-European mobile TV market.

The Commission encouraged the creation of an industry umbrella group, composed of actors from all interested sectors, **the European Mobile Broadcasting Council**. It issued a roadmap for the successful launch of mobile TV in February 2007. Interoperability, a light regulatory touch and a coordinated European approach to spectrum policy are the key ingredients.

Moreover, to accompany the introduction of mobile TV on the European market, the Commission is working on a Communication on Mobile TV that will be adopted during 2007.

Technology & standards for mobile TV

Putting standards and interoperability at the service of the European market is crucial for success. Two standards are recognised by the **European Telecommunications Standards Institute** : DVB-H (Handheld digital

video broadband) and **T-DMB** (Terrestrial digital multimedia broadcasting). Italy has pioneered the commercial introduction, whilst several other Member States are rapidly taking steps towards availability of mobile TV commercial services.

Achieving interoperability among different standards and consumer devices is essential. Industry clearly has a pivotal role to play here ensuring that technology unlocks the potential of the EU's internal market for mobile TV.

Regulating mobile TV

Mobile TV can be broadcast over different types of networks and the **regulatory models vary considerably across the EU**.

It is important to identify **regulatory obstacles** that might hamper the successful introduction of new multimedia services.

Clarifying the impact of different regulatory approaches and measures, and identifying **best practices** will help the Commission and national authorities put in place a **light touch regulatory approach** favourable to investment, innovation and competition in this emerging market.

The Commission cooperates closely with Member States through the "**Radio Spectrum Policy Group**" (RSPG) and will define an EU approach to introducing mobile TV. It recently adopted two opinions on multimedia services and the use of the Digital dividend.

In addition, the Commission, with help of the Member States has successfully clarified the applicable regulatory regime, enabling pan-European mobile TV satellite systems to be deployed within harmonised frequency bands.

Spectrum availability and harmonisation of mobile TV

Freeing spectrum for mobile TV is a key issue. The Commission is working to ensure a minimum of harmonised EU frequencies, so these services can be introduced across Europe.

The switchover from analogue to digital TV by 2012 will free up radio spectrum which can be used for promising new digital technology applications such as mobile TV. The Commission has launched a debate on the use of this "digital dividend", which will also feed into the communication foreseen to be adapted in 2007.

Content provision – vital for mobile TV success

The success of mobile TV will clearly depend on the availability of high quality content.

The new audiovisual media services directive, once adopted, will create the conditions for a level playing field and thus a **true internal market for audiovisual content**.

Mobile TV and EU-funded research

The European Commission has been supporting the development of mobile TV technology to promote international co-operation in research, development and standardisation of digital television. It has committed some €40 million to mobile TV research under the EU's previous research programme (2002-2006). EU-funded research has notably been instrumental in developing and validating digital video broadcasting (DVB) standards, which has led to the mobile broadcasting standard DVB-H.

The EU research programme has notably pioneered key audiovisual digital technologies such as image compression, robust transmission, interactivity, mobility and content protection, yielding major contributions to international standardisation fora such as the **Moving Pictures Experts Group** (MPEG). European industry has fully benefited from these efforts through developments of products and associated key intellectual property rights portfolios in this field.

Networked audiovisual technologies will continue to be supported under the new ICT programme of the 7th EU Framework Programme (2007-2013).

Further Information:

Mobile TV web page:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/industry/broadcasting/mobile/index_en.htm

Europe's Information Society:

http://europa.eu/information_society

Information Society and Media Directorate-General:

Av. de Beaulieu 25, 1160 Brussels

info-media@ec.europa.eu

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/information_society

All fact sheets can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/fact_sheets