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Information and Communication Technologies for Attaining SDGs

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CONTRIBUTION BY [Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications / Republic of Serbia]

TITLE: Implementation of the Digital Radio Broadcasting

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Europe Regional Initiative: ☒ EUR1: Broadband infrastructure, broadcasting and spectrum management

Year(s) of implementation: ☒ 2018 ☐ 2019 ☒ 2020 ☐ 2021

Background

Due to differences in European countries, there is a need to take steps and assist administrations in every aspect of the practical implementation and development of digital broadcasting, including digital radio.

Across Europe each country has developed its own regulatory framework within which the radio broadcasting services operate. These regulations cover two basic aspects. The first is programme content and the second is the allocation of spectrum. Besides that, it is important to ensure radio simulcast as well as to enable the usage of the VHF existing infrastructure. Other important things developing the digital radio is Industry collaboration. For both, regulatory and industry fragment, besides content and allocation of spectrum coverage, consumer devices, vehicles and consumers should be emphasized.

Radio is the most accessible media worldwide. Radio is free, accessible almost everywhere, robust and reliable in emergency cases. Digitization of radio is one of the major strategic goals of the telecommunications policy in the Republic of Serbia. This strategic document should in particular regulate: way and timetable of crossing; requirements and dynamics related to the establishment of a digital broadcasting network; requirements for the formation of a multiplex; scope of use of frequencies to the extent that it is necessary for the successful conduct of switching to digital broadcasting.

From digitization of radio, users can expect: better reception of radio signals, better sound quality, a greater choice of content, use of interactive visual radio, greater mobility etc. Benefits that the state will make are relate to: more efficient use of radio frequency spectrum in dedicated channels (multiple

programs) but also use of adjacent channels without causing disturbance; a significant reduction in power output for the same coverage area with better sound quality.

Proposal

The Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications in the next period is preparing to write a strategic document that regulates the transition to digital broadcasting that will include the principles on which the switch to digital broadcasting of the radio program will be based.

Looking beyond developing digital radio broadcasting, countries have engaged at varying speed and success in deploying digital radio broadcasting systems and delivery of new services. In this context a new regional initiative on digital radio broadcasting is proposed to provide a platform for cooperation, exchange of best practices, capacity building and technical assistance to be provided to the countries in need.

Requirements:

Focus should be given to:

- Regional review of released spectrum to new services and applications
- Monitoring of the evolution of the digital radio broadcasting (DAB, DAB+, OMRI DRM, RadioDNS, MPEG-1 Audio Layer2 to MPEG-4 High Efficiency AACv2profile(HE-AAC v2), etc.
- Review of the implementaiton of digital radio broadcasting, including identification of challenges
- Capacity building through relevant awareness and technical trainings on digital broadcasting, including especially digital radio, taking into account outcomes of the ITU conferences and regional agreements
- Provision of equipment for countries in need for assistance

Objective:

- To assist the countries in need, in their efforts of deploying digital radio broadcasting systems and provision of new services, while investigating emerging trends.

Expected Results:

- Assisting in the capacity building through relevant awareness, technical trainings, monitoring of the evolution of the digital radio broadcasting, regional review of radio frequency spectrum, a significant reduction in power output for the same coverage area etc.