

Pursuant to Article 24, Paragraph (1), Indent 3) and with reference to Article 158, Paragraph (6) of the Law on Electronic Communications (The Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 39/2014), the Director of the Agency for Electronic Communications, on 10.11.2014, adopted the following

RULEBOOK

ON THE INTEROPERABILITY OF DIGITAL INTERACTIVE TELEVISION SERVICES

Article 1

This Rulebook regulates the interoperability of digital interactive television services.

Article 2

(terms used)

(1) The terms used in this Rulebook shall have the following meaning:

1. **Modern digital television equipment** shall mean the adaptation device (set-top box) that is connected to a television set or an integrated digital television equipment so as to enable the reception of digital interactive television services;
2. **Interactive services** shall mean the services of electronic commerce, electronic banking, interactive gaming, news portals, telephone directory, dictionary, quiz shows, and certain types of services by the public administration;
3. **MHP (Multimedia Home Platform)** shall mean the multimedia home platform between the interactive user applications and the device equipped with such user applications;
4. **API (Application Programme Interface)** shall mean the software interface between the broadcasters' or service providers' applications and the modern digital television set for the reception of digital television services;
5. **EPG (Electronic Programme Guide)** shall mean the electronic programming guides;
6. **IPTV (Internet Protocol Television)** shall mean the internet protocol televisions.

(2) Other terms used in this Rulebook shall have the same meaning as defined in the Law on Electronic Communications.

Article 3

(interactive television services)

- (1) Public communication network operators who broadcast digital television services in accordance with their business plans shall decide autonomously on the cooperation models with the interactive television service providers on the market with the purpose to provide the user – the viewer – with additional services as well as to promote interactive services for people with special needs.
- (2) Such services shall be aimed at increasing the number of users and advancing the utilisation rate of the opportunities that digital technology offers.
- (3) The interaction with the TV programmes shall be realised in one of the two methods:
 - permanent communication between a user and the operators' platform (e.g. IPTV); and
 - communication between a user and the software installed in the modern digital television set, set-top box (e.g. digital terrestrial operators).
- (4) Interactive services shall be accessible only to the public owing a digital device, be it satellite, cable or digital terrestrial.

Article 4

(digital radio and television services, interoperability of digital interactive television services)

Public communication network operators who broadcast digital television services shall ensure that television services and programmes are transmitted in a widescreen aspect ratio. When receiving and retransmitting the television services and programmes, the operators shall maintain the same aspect ratio.

Article 5

(interoperability of digital interactive television services)

Providers of digital interactive television services that are transmitted to the public via digital interactive television platforms, regardless of the broadcasting method, shall use an open API in accordance with the minimum requirements or specifications of the relevant standards. The digital television signal, including the information related to interactivity, shall be provided via MHP or via an interactive television device that supports open standards.

Article 6

(access to information)

- (1) The Application Programme Interface (API) operators shall, under fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms, and for an adequate fee, make available all the information necessary for the digital interactive television service providers to ensure, in a fully functional form, all the services supported by API.
- (2) For contents display, the operator shall undertake to provide EPG under fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms. The EPG shall have to support the Cyrillic UTF-8 block of the character set in conformity with the Unicode ISO10646 standard. For the display of Latin characters, the support shall be provided in conformity with the ISO6937 standard for character sets.

Article 7

(final provisions)

- (1) This Rulebook shall enter into force on the following day of the day of its publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia.
- (2) Upon its entry into force, this Rulebook shall be published on the web site of the Agency for Electronic Communications.

AGENCY FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Director

Robert Ordanoski

No. 0201-1374/4

10.11.2014

Skopje