



(Press Release)

International Conference

APPROACHES TO THE DIGITISATION OF AUDIO BROADCASTING IN V4 COUNTRIES

After successful transition from analogue to digital terrestrial TV broadcasting in the whole Central Europe, the similar process in audio broadcasting is expected in near future. With the aim to harmonise this process in Visegrad Four (V4) countries as much as possible, four research and scientific institutes and societies, namely Research Institute of Posts and Telecommunication ([VÚS](#)) from Slovakia, Czech Metrology Institute ([ČMI](#)), Scientific Society for Infocommunications ([HTE](#)) from Hungary and National Institute of Telecommunications ([IKT](#)) from Poland decided to organise an international conference "Approaches to the Digitisation of Audio Broadcasting in V4 Countries". The conference was supported by the International Visegrad Fund.

The event was held in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia on 18th – 19th February 2015 and was attended by 110 participants from nine European countries, representing broadcasters, network operators, public administrations, regulators, research bodies, universities, etc. Except of speakers from V4 countries, also speakers of high reputation from the international organisations outside the V4 countries, more specifically WorldDMB, DRM Consortium, EBU and GatesAir, presented their contributions.

The conference was accompanied by the exhibition about pioneers of radiocommunications, with special focus on Jozef Murgaš who realised the first broadcasting of the human voice in the world and who was born in the village Tajov near Banská Bystrica.

At the beginning of the conference there was noted that V4 countries represent the market with 64.3 mil. inhabitants.

The programme of the conference was divided into four sessions:

- Why is it important to go to digital?
- Legislation, regulation
- Economical aspects of digitisation
- Role of public broadcasters in the implementation process

The moderation of individual sections was evenly distributed between the representatives of all the V4 countries.

During the first session the President of WorldDBM informed about the rollout of DAB/DAB+ across Europe and the advantages of this system. DRM Marketing Director presented the DRM standard, possibilities and features of transmission and the prospects of its implementation. He also mentioned the availability of receivers. The representative of EBU explained key factors for the deployment of digital radio and recommended approaches as summarised in the Digital Radio Toolkit published by EBU in Dec. 2014. Also possibilities of other additional services in DAB/DAB+ broadcasting were shown in this session.

During the second session the representatives of regulatory bodies presented the state of legislation in individual V4 countries in more details, e.g. Digital Law, Law on Broadcasting, licence regimes, etc. Though the status of legislation concerning digital broadcasting differs, it was noted that in all countries substantial improvements are still needed.

Economical aspects of digitisation belong to the most important ones if the digitisation should be completed successfully. These aspects were shown by network operators. Very detailed analysis and comparison between investment and operating costs for analogue FM and digital DAB+ operation were presented by the representative of the company GatesAir. Of course, except of transmission the digitisation affects also the receiving side, incl. car industry.

In the session four the high positioned representatives of public broadcasters presented the current status of digital audio broadcasting in individual V4 countries. It was stated that the T-DAB+ broadcasting achieved the highest coverage of population in Poland and there is no T-DAB/DAB+ transmission in Slovakia. However, Slovakia is the only one V4 country with DRM+ transmission.

The programme of the conference, the level of presentations, the content richness of information and the logistic support were already highly rated by participants during the course of the conference. Their other observations, comments and suggestions may be placed on the Forum's website www.vus.sk/v4/responses, which was set up after the conference.

Due to the seriousness of the conclusions of the conference the organisers decided to handle the Resolution that will be submitted to, inter alia, the highest governmental institutions and parliaments of individual V4 countries.

Organising Committee:

Juraj Oravec, VÚS, Slovakia
Čeněk Pavelka, ČMI, Czech Republic
Péter Nagy, HTE, Hungary
Dariusz Więcek, IŁ, Poland