



Television channels required to provide television access services in 2015

Statement

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About this document

This document explains which TV channels licensed by Ofcom are required to provide access services (subtitles, signing and audio description) on a proportion of their programming in 2015.

Access services are intended to help people with sensory impairments to understand and enjoy TV programmes. The channels required to provide access services include domestic channels broadcast within the UK, and some non-domestic channels broadcast within certain Member States of the European Union.

In 2015, 79 domestic channels will be required to provide access. These channels account for over 90 per cent of the audience share for UK TV.

In addition, 39 non-domestic channels across eight different member states of the European Union will provide access services in 2015.

Section 1

Statement

- 1.1 The Communications Act 2003 required Ofcom to publish a code setting out the obligations of television channels licensed in the UK to provide television access services. Following consultation, Ofcom published the Ofcom Code on Television Access Services (“the Code”) in July 2004, together with an explanatory statement setting out the channels that would be required to provide such services in the following year. A copy of the current version of the Code, incorporating amendments made since the Code was first published, can be found at <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv/ifi/codes/ctas/ctas.pdf>.
- 1.2 The Code also provides for a mid-year review of the audience share and revenues of UK-licensed television channels, based on data for the previous year. The purposes of the review are to establish whether, in the next calendar year, channels should be:
- a) required to provide television access services;
 - b) required to meet a different Level of provision; or
 - c) excluded from the requirement to provide television access services.
- 1.3 The statutory targets for broadcasters are expressed as percentages of the service. They rise from a low level to the ten-year targets prescribed by the Act that is 80% for subtitling, 5% for signing and 10% for audio description. In the case of Channel 3 and Channel 4, the relevant target for subtitling is 90% and for BBC channels (excluding BBC Parliament, which is exempted on audience share grounds) it is 100%.
- 1.4 Ofcom has used the cost of providing access services to calculate three levels of provision we apply to relevant channels:
- d) Level One equates to the full current annual targets for subtitling, signing and audio description, as well as any alternative requirements;
 - e) Level Two equates to 66% of the current annual target for subtitling, as well as 100% of the targets for signing and audio description, and any alternative requirements; and
 - f) Level Three equates to 33% of the current annual target for subtitling, as well as 100% of the targets for signing and audio description and any alternative requirements.
- 1.5 For channels broadcast within the UK (‘domestic channels’), data collected from broadcasters in 2013 has been used to update the assessment of costs which is used to determine whether broadcasters can afford to meet their access service obligations by spending no more than 1% of their relevant turnover.

For channels broadcast in other Member States of the European Union (‘non-domestic channels’), Ofcom has used data collected from broadcasters in 2012. We have deferred until later this year the collection of more up to date information from broadcasters (previously scheduled for early 2014), as it became clear that not all broadcasters had finalised their contractual arrangements by early 2014. The new

data will be used to determining which channels are deemed able to afford to provide access services from 2016.

Domestic TV services

1.8 The list of domestic channels required to provide access services in 2015 is at Annex 1. In brief:

- a) 79 channels will be required to provide television access services in 2015, as compared to 76 during 2014. Channels providing access services continue to account for over 90% of UK audience share.
- b) eight channels that had no obligation to provide access services in 2014 will be required to provide access services in 2015. These are Boomerang and Cartoon Network owned by Turner; BT Sport 1 owned by BT; TLC owned by Discovery; Drama owned by UKTV; MTV Music owned by MTV; Sky Movies Disney and Sky Arts 2 owned by BSkyB;
- c) 67 channels will be required to provide access services at Level One during 2015, as compared with 66 in 2014. 10 channels will be required to provide access services at Level Two during 2015 and two channels will be required to provide access services at Level Three. Subtitling targets are now the highest required under the Code (80%) for the majority of channels in 2015, with audio description at the maximum level of 10% for most;
- d) over 20 timeshifted services (e.g. ITV2 + 1) and simulcast HD services (e.g. ITV1 HD) are also required to provide access services; and
- e) five channels that had an obligation to provide access services this year will no longer be obliged to provide such services in 2015. For Discovery Real Time, Sky Living Loves and Disney Cinemagic this is because these services have ceased to exist whilst for FX and Baby TV this was due to the affordability criteria and/or the audience share threshold.

1.6 The statutory target for audio description is 10% from the tenth anniversary of the relevant date (normally the date on which a channel started broadcasting). Five broadcasters – the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and BSkyB have committed to audio describing at least 20% of their content on most of their channels (excluding sports channels in the case of Sky).

Non-domestic TV services

The list of non-domestic channels required to provide access services in 2015 is at Annex 2. In brief:

- a) 39 non-domestic channels will be required to provide television access services in 2015, as compared to 40 during 2014. The channels required to provide access services in 2015 are broadcast in eight Member States of the European Union.
- b) eight non-domestic channels that had no obligation to provide access services in 2014 will be required to provide access services in 2015. These are 6'eren in Denmark (owned by SBS Broadcasting Networks); TLC in Denmark (by Discovery); Syfy Universal in France (Sci-Fi Channel Europe); Discovery Science in France (Discovery); Nickelodeon and Nickelodeon Junior in France

(Nickelodeon); Discovery Science Channel in Italy (Discovery) and Investigation Discovery in Poland (Discovery). Seven non-domestic channels will drop out on audience share or revenue grounds: Disney Channel (Denmark and Sweden), Discovery Channel (Hungary), AXN Black, AXN White and Cartoon Network (Poland); and AXN Sci-fi in Italy. In addition, Animal Planet in the Netherlands and Cartoon Network in Spain have ceased broadcasting.

- c) 37 non-domestic channels will be required to provide access services at Level One during 2014. Two channels will be required to provide access services at Level Two during 2014. No channels will be required to provide access services at Level Three. Subtitling targets for all channels stand at 10%, but all have chosen to provide 5% additional subtitling in lieu of signing (a concession that will expire at the end of 2015). Audio description obligations will increase to 4% in 2015, though channels in those territories where TV platforms do not support the provision of audio description are exempt from this requirement.

1.7 A copy of this document in a format suitable for use by screen readers has been posted on Ofcom's website. Ofcom can also provide documents to individuals in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, audiotape or large print) on request. We may also provide translations of documents into languages other than English. To request non-standard versions of documents, please contact the Ofcom Contact Centre at <mailto:contact@ofcom.org.uk>, by phone on 0300 123 3000, or by textphone at 0845 456 3043. Please note that the time needed to produce an alternative format document will depend on the length of the document.

Annex 1

Domestic channels required to provide television access services in 2015

Level One (full requirements) (67 channels as compared with 66 in 2014)		
BBC1	Sky One	Dave
BBC2	Sky Two	Eden
BBC3	Pick TV	Watch
BBC4	Sky Sports 1	Yesterday
BBC News	Sky Sports 2	Alibi
CBBC	Sky Sports 3	Good Food
CBeebies	Sky Sports 4	Home
ITV1	Sky Sports News	G.O.L.D
ITV2	Sky Sports F1	Really
ITV3	Sky Movies Premiere	Drama
ITV4	Sky Movies Comedy	Disney Channel
CITV	Sky Movies Action	Disney Junior
Channel 4	Sky Movies Family	Disney XD
4Seven	Sky Movies Sci-Fi/ Horror	BT Sport 1
E4	Sky Movies Greats	ESPN
More 4	Sky Movies Drama Romance	Universal
Film 4	Sky Movies Showcase	4Music
Channel 5	Sky Movies Thriller	Discovery
5*	Sky Movies Disney	Quest
5 USA	Sky Living	Animal Planet
Challenge	Sky Livingit	TLC
Sky Atlantic	Sky Arts 1	
Sky News	Sky Arts 2	

Level Two (full requirements for signing and audio description; 66% of subtitling) (10 channels as compared with 5 in 2014)		
Nick JR 2	MTV	Comedy Central Extra
Nickelodeon	MTV Music	S4C
Nicktoons	Viva	
Nick JR	Comedy Central	

Level Three (full requirements for signing and audio description; 33% of subtitling) (2 channels as compared with 5 in 2014)		
Boomerang	Cartoon Network	

Note: Timeshifted and simulcast HD versions of the channels listed above are also required to provide access services.

Annex 2

Non-domestic channels required to provide television access services in 2015

Level One (full requirements) (37 channels, compared to 40 in 2014, covering 7 EU Member States)	
EU Member State	Channel
Denmark	Kanal 4 ¹
	Kanal 5
	6'eren
	TV3 ²
	TV3 Plus
France	The Discovery Channel
	Discovery Science
	Cartoon Network ³
	Syfy Universal
	Disney Cinemagic
	Nickelodeon
	Nickelodeon Junior
Netherlands	The Discovery Channel
Republic of Ireland*	BBC 1
	BBC 2
	Sky Living
	Sky One
	Channel 4
	UTV
Italy	AXN ⁴
	The Discovery Channel
	Discovery Science

¹ The licensee for the Kanal channels and 6'eren is SBS Broadcasting Networks

² The licensee for TV3 and TV3 Plus is Viasat Broadcasting UK

³ The licensee for the Cartoon Network channels is Turner Broadcasting

⁴ The licensee for the AXN channels is AXN Europe, a subsidiary of Sony Pictures Entertainment

Level One continued (full requirements)	
EU Member State	Channel
Poland*	Animal Planet
	AXN
	The Discovery Channel
	Discovery Science
	Discovery World
	Investigation Discovery
	TLC
	Travel Channel TV
Spain*	Disney Cinemagic
Sweden	The Discovery Channel
	Kanal 5
	Kanal 9
	TV3
	TV6
	TV8

Level Two (full requirements for signing and audio description; 66% of subtitling) (Two channels, compared with zero in 2014)	
EU Member State	Channel
Denmark	The Discovery Channel
Denmark	TLC

Level Three (full requirements for signing and audio description; 33% of subtitling) (Zero channels, compared with zero in 2014)	
EU Member State	Channel
N/A	N/A

* Indicates countries where TV platforms do not support the provision of audio description and channels are exempt from the relevant requirements.