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## Digital Switchover: Six Local Stations now available in Digital

**Four new digital TV channels have recently joined TVM and Education 22 on the PBS-managed free-to-air platform, after satisfying criteria for the transmission of programme content meeting general interest objectives.**

All new four digital TV channels – Favourite Channel, Net TV, ONE and Smash TV – were found by the Broadcasting Authority to have fulfilled the necessary requirements to be able to start broadcasting on the free-to-air digital TV broadcasting platform operated and managed by PBS Ltd. This platform has nationwide coverage and is set to completely replace the old analogue broadcast technology.

This latest development in the digital switchover process means that Maltese viewers can now benefit from a wider variety of Maltese TV channels, a better picture quality, as well as an electronic programme guide (EPG).

According to the latest survey carried out by the Digital Switchover Committee, some 4,760 households rely on free-to-air transmissions received via rooftop aerials. The survey estimates that around 21% of these households have made the switch to digital, leaving 3,780 households still relying solely on analogue transmissions.

The latter 3,780 households would need to purchase a digital decoder or a digital TV in order to be able to receive the six free-to-air TV channels in digital. These may be purchased from a number of retail outlets nationwide. Apart from benefiting from the additional TV content now provided over digital, they would also be prepared for the eventual switching off of analogue transmissions.

The existing four analogue TV stations – TVM, Net TV, ONE and Smash TV – will be transmitting in both analogue and digital technology simultaneously for a number of weeks. This ‘simulcast’ period allows those households who rely solely on analogue transmissions enough time to carry out the necessary adaptations in order to be able to receive digital transmissions. They are encouraged to do so as soon as possible. Details as to when analogue transmissions will cease entirely will be announced in due course.

Further information and assistance on the digital switchover can be found on [www.dso.org.mt](http://www.dso.org.mt) or by calling free-phone helpline 153.