

From: jno
Sent: 17 December 2003 05:28
To: BBC Charter Review
Subject: Response: Better deal for expats!

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to contribute to this consultation. Currently the BBC broadcasts most of its digital services via the 2D satellite - receivable with any FTA digital receiver most parts of France, Holland, Germany and parts of Spain with a reasonable dish size (around 60-80cm).

My first point is that UK people have to pay a license fee for BBC services while Europeans can effectively pick this up for free without any guarantee that their local license fee (a) contributes to the quality of BBC programming and (b) is paid at all - most European countries do not have such a strict TV licensing "van" like in the UK - why is a German watching BBC1 for free when a pensioner in the UK is paying a licence fee for this?

My second point is, that why should a British ex-pat who lives outside these regions, for example, in Italy, Hungary, Greece, Austria, Portugal, southern Spain be forced to buy a huge dish and watch these illegally with a Sky digibox taken out of his native UK? Most expats would gladly pay for this legally if the BBC would offer such a service.

I would like to see BBC move some of its services to a satellite with a wider European beam than Astra 2D and allow us expats a facility to either watch, or at least subscribe legally to watch, BBC programming throughout the whole of Europe, rather than just in UK 2D "overspill areas". Isn't there a EU directive on "television without frontiers"? Do the BBC follow this convention?

In my opinion BBC Prime does not offer a wide enough selection of programmes for the paying subscriber - when the price paid for this subscription is 102 GBP for one whole year for one channel!

The BBC has forgotten its expats and those people who would gladly pay it money (via a UK Licence fee - internet exists, with credit card so effectively anyone could pay for this, that is the wonder of technology) to watch BBC1, 2, 3 and 4 abroad.

I feel this should be brought to your attention and hopefully somebody somewhere will listen, read and act upon this.

Regards

Jonathan Gibbs