

Press release of 20 April 2006

**European DMB project MI FRIENDS kicks off
400 DMB mobile phones for Munich**

The European DMB project MI FRIENDS, initiated by the Bayerische Landeszentrale für neue Medien (BLM), will be piloted in Munich from the end of May. At the third meeting of the steering group on Wednesday 19 April 2006, project participants finalised plans for the work streams and other procedures. MI FRIENDS stands for 'Mobiles Interaktives Fernsehen, Radio, Information, Entertainment und Neue Digitale Services'. New mobile radio and media services using Digital Media Broadcasting (DMB) technology will be developed and tested in four regions – Munich, Regensburg, Bodensee and South Tyrol.

Test broadcasts of audio and video programmes began in Regensburg several weeks ago. In Munich, where preparatory work is near completion, multimedia offerings will be trialled during the FIFA World Cup.

On the basis of the April 2005 Memorandum of Understanding between the BLM and the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) of the Republic of Korea on co-operation in the promotion of DMB technology, Korean partners LG and SK Telecom will make available 400 mobile phones equipped to receive these services.

In November 2005, the MI FRIENDS project was adopted as part of the CELTIC programme, in recognition of its contribution to the promotion of the aims of the EUREKA programme. In the meantime, over 50 project participants from nine countries have signed Confirmation Letters confirming their active co-operation with the CELTIC project. This important step was welcomed both by the CELTIC office and by the BLM as project initiator. Speaking at the last full meeting [*of what?*], BLM President Dr. Wolf-Dieter Ring underlined the importance of this DMB project: 'MI FRIENDS is [aimed] at two markets with strong growth potential for the future – the market for 'information and communication' and the market for 'mobility'.

Since December 2005, an introduction to the project has been available at www.mi-friends.org. The website also provides further information about the test regions and the project streams as well as the CELTIC organisation and its partners.

Background

The coordination of the European CELTIC projects is carried out by the BLM in cooperation with the project partners, as well as the MIC of the Republic of Korea.

MI FRIENDS was initiated by the BLM as a pilot project in accordance with Article 30 of the Bavarian Media Law (Bayerischen Mediengesetzes). Participants in the four phase project include DMB-Regensburg, DMB-WM München 2006, as well as DMB-Bodensee and DMB- Südtirol/Transalp. The project will be implemented over 24 months as part of the CELTIC-initiative of the EUREKA programme.

Contact:

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