

RADIO BULGARIA has now left short wave Historical overview of short wave broadcasts in Bulgaria

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Short wave broadcasting was brought to the public attention for the first time in Bulgaria after February 27, 1927, when a tender was carried out for purchasing radio equipment. It was won by the company Marconi and two transmitters were bought. In 1935, only one of the transmitters was operational, and it was rarely used. A group of technicians adapted it in order to broadcast speech and music.

On November 12, 1935, the first trial transmission was broadcast on a frequency of 7460 kHz and it became the first shortwave broadcast in the history of Bulgarian radio. On January 19, 1936, the emissions were broadcast every Sunday, and from May 24th the same year they turned into daily broad-casts. Shortwave broadcasts were discontinued on April 15, 1938, and resumed in 1939, but the frequency was changed to 8465 kHz. The content of the broadcast was actually a relay of the medium wave broadcast in Bulgarian. On May 24, 1936, a newscast in Esperanto was added to the program, and on May 1, 1937, news bulletins in English, French, German, and from 1938 in Italian and Turkish. This was the beginning of the foreign service of R. Sofia, later renamed to R. Bulgaria.

During World War II, the Bulgarian authorities purchased two more short-wave transmitters and used them to broadcast two other radio stations. One was Radio United Bulgaria that started operation on February 18, 1942, on a frequency of 7490 kHz, and the other was Transmitter Bulgarian News – operational since July 1, 1944 on 8465 KHz.

After the Soviet troops entered Bulgaria and the Bulgarian army was sent against that of Germany, a new radio station entitled Front And Homeland started transmission on both frequencies. In 1947, there was only one working short-wave transmitter at a power of 5 kilowatts, which began broadcasting news in 12 languages on 9350 kHz, but soon the equipment was damaged. The transmitter was renovated and on December 18, 1948, it resumed transmissions, initially at a power of 3 and then 15 kilowatts on the frequency 7670 kHz. In the following years, new radio transmitters were purchased from the Soviet Union with a power of 50, later 120 kilowatts, and in the 1970s transmitters of 500 kilowatts were introduced.

In the following years, the name of Radio Sofia was changed to Radio Bulgaria. Radio Bulgaria turned into one of the leading shortwave radio stations in the world. We should mention that from the 1960s to the 1980s, Bulgarian shortwave transmitters were used to broadcast programs of Radio Moscow and three stations of the communist parties of Chile, Spain and Iran, respectively radio

Magalianes, radio Espana Independiente and radio Courier of Iran.

As of February 1, 2012, the shortwave transmitters of Radio Bulgaria was stopped and stored in anticipation of better times for the many listeners of Radio Bulgaria on short wave across the world.

The History of the DX Program of Radio Sofia/Bulgaria

On 17 November 1957 was aired the 1st edition of the weekly program called "Calling DXers and radio Amateurs" in English on Radio Sofia Foreign Service on short waves. The author was mr. Dimiter Petrov LZ1AF. Until May 1972 the program has been consisted from amateur (HAM) news. Then after a letter to the English Section of R. Sofia Rumen Pankov visited the Radio, and broadcast tips were added on weekly bases from him. It was till 27 November 1974 when Pankov was arrested after a visit in the USSR (and his meetings with Soviet Dxers in Kiev and Moscow) from Bulgarian communist secret services and was kept as a political prisoner till May 1979. In this period, and later till 1999, the DX program in English was presented by Petrov and Pavel Iordanov and there were also similar DX programs aired in German and French. In June after the death of Iordanov, Pankov was again invited to take part in the DX program. Earlier Ivo Ivanov began to present a DX program in Russian. At the end of 1999 the DX programs were:

In English with HAM news from D. Petrov and BC tips from Pankov;

In French, German and Spanish with BC items and tips by Pankov;

In Russian and in Bulgarian by Ivo Ivanov (First named "Observer" and later renamed DX Mix – a name already used by ERF in German broadcasts). Starting 2011 Petrov was retired and the programmes in English, French, German and Spanish consisted already of 2 parts: DX Themes and Tips from Pankov and DX Mix by Ivanov. Since February 1st, 2012 all DX programs were stopped. By the way, the DX Mix items are from the correspondence between technical services of the BC stations taking part in the HFCC.



From left to right (sitting): Vyara Popova, Rossitsa Petcova, Daniela Konstantinova. Standing: Zhivko Stanchev, Delian Zahariev, Alexander Markov, Radostin Zhelev.