DVB EPG

Description

DVB (Digital Video Broadcast) channels have the possibility to receive programme information embedded in the signal stream. This system is called the EPG (Electronic Programme Guide). The information that is received depends on the TV broadcaster. Some channels include very detailed EPG information, some include only a very basic EPG, and some don't include any EPG information at all. Besides receiving the EPG through the DVB datastream, you can also download EPG information from various internet sources by using the WebEPG plugin.

DVB EPG settings

On this panel you can adjust various settings that control the way that MediaPortal TV Server handles the DVB EPG.

General

Always try to fill holes

Sometimes it can happen that one EPG entry ends at time x, and the following entry on the same channel starts at time x+y. This means that there is a gap of y between those two EPG entries. If MediaPortal is playing a TV channel where the EPG has a gap, it won't show any programme information until the new entry starts. With this option checked, MediaPortal will fill these gaps with the information from the neighbouring entries.

Always try to update existing entries (might raise CPU usage)

If this option is checked, MediaPortal will override the existing EPG with the new information from the broadcast datastream when an EPG grab occurs. This is useful for those programmes where the broadcaster initially places a vague or generic programme description in the EPG, but replaces it with a more-specific programme description nearer the time of the broadcast.

If this option is not checked, MediaPortal will store the new information from the broadcast datastream only if the EPG for that time slot is empty. This occurs when the broadcaster adds the EPG information for the day that is 7 or 14 days in the future.

Enable CRC check

Some broadcasters send a CRC checksum along with the EPG content. This allows MediaPortal to check that the EPG was received correctly. If this setting is enabled and the broadcaster is sending CRC checksums, MediaPortal will store the EPG data only if the check is successful.

Grab EPG only for channels on same transponder

Some broadcasters supply on one transponder the EPG for all of their channels, and don't supply the EPG at all on their other transponders (or possibly supply only a limited EPG on their other transponders). This option controls whether the EPG grabber will grab all of the available EPG, or only the EPG for the channels on the transponder being used to receive the EPG.

Note: the term *transponder* is used for satellite channels to refer to the signal broadcast on a single frequency. With digital signals, this single frequency can carry a whole set of separate TV and radio channels.

For digital terrestrial channels, the equivalent concept is the *multiplex*, which is commonly abbreviated to MUX. MediaPortal uses the term transponder for both satellite and terrestrial, even when refering to a terrestrial multiplex.

EPG grabbing while timeshifting/recording

Enabled

If this option is checked, MediaPortal will grab the EPG **when you watch or record TV**, or when you listen to (or record) a radio channel. MediaPortal will not grab the EPG when the tuners are idle.

In addition, only those channels selected on the "TV EPG Grabber" and "Radio EPG Grabber" panels will be used for grabbing the EPG. If you watch or record a channel that is not selected on those panels, MediaPortal will not grab the EPG.

Some care is needed in selecting channels on the "TV EPG Grabber" and "Radio EPG Grabber" panels. You might think that you need to select all of the TV and radio channels listed on those panels, but in some countries this is not an optimal choice due to the way that the broadcaster transmits the EPG. If you select all channels, you may find that MediaPortal grabs the entire EPG every time that you change channel or a recording starts.

If you enable **EPG grabbing while timeshifting/recording**, but watch or record TV or radio only occasionally, the EPG will become progressively more out of date, and may not contain the required programme information when you want to schedule a recording. If this is your situation, you may prefer to use the **EPG grabbing while idle** option instead.

Note: On the "Manual Control" panel you can select the **Refresh DVB EPG** button to initiate an immediate grab of the EPG. However, an EPG grab occurs only if:

- You have enabled **EPG grabbing while idle** and you are not watching or recording a programme, or
- You have enabled **EPG grabbing while timeshifting/recording** and you are currently watching or recording an appropriate channel.

If neither of these conditions is true, the **Refresh DVB EPG** button does nothing.

Timeout

This specifies the number of minutes that MediaPortal will spend grabbing the EPG when you start watching or recording a channel. The time required to receive a full EPG depends on the size of the broadcast EPG, and this varies from country to country. A value in the range of 2 minutes to 15 minutes is suggested.

Note that after the EPG has been grabbed, MediaPortal spends further time updating the database with the programme information. Depending on the size of the EPG and the speed of your hard disk, the database-update phase can take as long or longer than the EPG-grabbing phase. The value for **Time out** does not include the time spent updating the database.

EPG grabbing while idle

Enabled

If this option is checked, MediaPortal will grab the EPG **only when all tuners are idle.** MediaPortal will not grab the EPG when you watch or record TV or radio.

Some care is needed in selecting channels on the "TV EPG Grabber" and "Radio EPG Grabber" panels, depending on the information transmitted by your broadcaster, and whether you receive satellite or terrestrial signals.

For satellite broadcasts:

- If you receive signals from a single provider on a single satellite, there should be one channel that carries the EPG information. This channel may be a TV channel or a radio channel. You need to select **only this channel** in order to receive a full EPG.
- If you receive signals from multiple providers on a single satellite, each provider may transmit a channel that carries the EPG for the group of channels from that provider. In this case you need to select **all of the EPG channels** in order to receive a full EPG.
- If you receive signals from multiple satellites, each satellite probably has one or more channels that carry the EPGs. In this case you need to select **all of these EPG channels** in order to receive a full EPG.

For terrestrial broadcasts:

- Some broadcasters transmit the entire EPG in every MUX (that is, each MUX carries the EPG for itself, plus the EPG for all of the other MUXes). In this case you need to select **only one channel** on the "TV EPG Grabber" panel, and **no channels** on the "Radio EPG Grabber"

panel. Choose a channel that has good signal strength, good signal quality, and which broadcasts 24 hours per day; don't choose a part-time channel. You also need to use the following settings:

- ○ Deselect **Grab EPG only for channels on the same transponder** on the "DVB EPG" panel.
- ○ Deselect **Store data only for selected channels** on the "TV EPG Grabber" panel.
- ○ Deselect **Store data only for selected channels** on the "Radio EPG Grabber" panel.
- Some broadcasters transmit in each MUX only the EPG for the channels in that MUX. In this case you need to select **one channel from each MUX** on the "TV EPG Grabber" panel, and **no channels** on the "Radio EPG Grabber" panel. You also need to use the additional settings listed in the previous bullet.
- Don't make the mistake of selecting every channel that you want to watch. Depending on how your broadcaster transmits the EPG, selecting every channel may cause MediaPortal to grab the entire EPG from the first channel, then grab the entire EPG from the second channel, and then again from the third channel, and so on. MediaPortal needs to grab the EPG only once during each refresh cycle (see below).

Note: On the "Manual Control" panel you can select the **Refresh DVB EPG** button to initiate an immediate grab of the EPG. However, an EPG grab occurs only if:

- You have enabled **EPG grabbing while idle** and you are not watching or recording a programme, or
- You have enabled **EPG grabbing while timeshifting/recording** and you are currently watching or recording an appropriate channel.

If neither of these conditions is true, the **Refresh DVB EPG** button does nothing.

Timeout

This specifies the number of minutes that MediaPortal will spend grabbing the EPG when the tuners are idle. The time required to receive a full EPG depends on the size of the broadcast EPG. A value in the range 2 minutes to 15 minutes is suggested. The **Timeout** value does not include the time that MediaPortal spends updating the database.

Refresh every

This specifies how often MediaPortal will refresh the EPG. The time is the shortest interval between successive EPG grabs, but the interval will be longer if the HTPC is busy recording or you are watching TV or listening to the radio. Recording, watching TV, and listening to the radio always take precedence over grabbing the EPG.

If you use the TV or radio a lot, you may notice that the HTPC seems to continue running after you try to put it to sleep. This happens because the EPG is overdue for a grab, and so the EPG grab occurs when you put the HTPC to sleep (assuming that it is not recording). When the EPG grab is complete, the HTPC will sleep.

Display options

Here you can define how MediaPortal will display the information gathered from the DVB EPG. On the right side you will see all of the values that *might* be included in the EPG datastream. The availability of these values depends on the broadcaster that provides the EPG. Possible values are:

%TITLE%

Title of the programme.

%DESCRIPTION%

Description of the programme.

%GENRE%

Genre of the porgramme.

%STARRATING%

Numerical rating of the programme (example: 3). The rating is one of ten possible values.

%STARRATING_STR%

Textual representation of the rating (example: *** for a 3-star programme). This rating is one of five possible values.

%CLASSIFICATION%

Classification of the programme.

%PARENTALRATING%

Parental rating of the programme. The system used depends on the country and the TV broadcaster.

%NEWLINE%

Inserts a newline (this variable always has the same value).

These variables are used to populate the **Title** and **Description** of the programme information that is shown in MediaPortal. To test how the result will look, select **Test** and you will see an example in the text areas below the button. Example: the string:

%TITLE% %STARRATING_STR% (%GENRE%)

would produce:

Over the Hedge *** (movie/drama)

TV and Radio EPG Grabber

In these sections you can select the TV and radio channels for which EPG information should be grabbed, and in which languages the information should be grabbed. See the following pages for further details:

- TV EPG Grabber
- Radio EPG Grabber