Mobile and wireless communications system: frequency bands to be reserved for the coordinated introduction of public pan-European cellular digital land-based mobile communications

2007/0126(COD) - 25/07/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to repeal Council Directive 87/372/EEC on the frequency bands to be reserved for the coordinated introduction of public pan-European cellular digital land-based mobile communications in the Community.

PROPOSED ACT: Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: the GSM Directive presently requires Member States to reserve the whole 890-915 MHz and 935-960 MHz bands for GSM. This constraint prevents the bands from being used by pan-European systems other than GSM, capable of providing advanced interoperable voice, data and multimedia services with a high delivery bandwidth.

To contribute to the objectives of the i2010 initiative "A European Information Society for growth and employment" and the internal market and to maximise competition, the use of the 900 MHz band should be opened as much as possible to additional types of technologies provided that it remains coordinated to introduce compatible pan-European services while allowing users as much freedom in the choice of services and technologies as possible.

Market developments have led to a general support from industry to remove the reservation of the 900 MHz band for GSM, so that new digital technologies capable of providing innovative pan-European services and coexisting with GSM can be deployed in the 890-915 and 935-960 MHz frequency bands.

In order to overcoming the present limitation of spectrum usage to GSM, it is proposed to repeal Council Directive 87/372/EEC on the frequency bands to be reserved for the coordinated introduction of public pan-European cellular digital land-based mobile communications in the Community in order to allow the use of such bands by systems capable of providing electronic communication services not limited to GSM.

The objective is to allow a larger choice of services and technologies and thereby to maximise competition in the use of the bands so far covered by the GSM Directive, while ensuring that services remain coordinated and protecting the continued operation of GSM. To do so, the use of this spectrum would be allowed, besides for GSM, also for pan-European electronic communication services other than GSM. As a first step, this would include UMTS. This requires new harmonised technical conditions for the spectrum band in question which would be defined pursuant to a Commission Decision to be adopted based on Decision 676/2002/EC on a regulatory framework for radio spectrum policy in the European Community (Radio Spectrum Decision).