

Frequency bands to be reserved for the coordinated introduction of public pan-European cellular digital land-based mobile communications

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The European Parliament adopted by 578 votes to 15, with 32 abstentions, a legislative resolution amending, under the first reading of the codecision procedure, the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending 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.

The amendments are the result of a compromise agreement between Parliament and Council.

Parliament recalled in the recitals that the 890-915 MHz and 935-960 MHz frequency bands were reserved for a public pan-European cellular digital mobile communications service to be provided in each Member State in accordance with a common specification, known as GSM. Subsequently the so-called extension band (880-890 MHz and 925-935 MHz) became available for GSM operation, and together these frequency bands are known as the 900 MHz band. The future use of the 900 MHz band and in particular the question of how long GSM will remain the reference technology for technical coexistence in this band is a question of strategic importance for the internal market that should be examined together with other issues of the Community's wireless access policy in the future radio spectrum policy programmes, to be adopted in accordance with Directive 2002/21/EC (Framework Directive) as amended. Those programmes will set out the policy orientations and objectives for the strategic planning of the use of radio spectrum, in close cooperation with the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG).

Spectrum made available under this Directive should be allocated in a transparent manner and in such a way as to ensure no distortion of competition in the relevant markets.

Parliament adds that flexibility in spectrum management and access to spectrum should be increased in order to contribute to the objectives of the internal market in electronic communications. The 900 MHz band should therefore be open to other systems for the provision of other pan-European services as soon as it can be demonstrated that they can co-exist with GSM systems.