Use of the 470-790 MHz frequency band in the Union

2016/0027(COD) - 15/03/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 614 votes to 44, with 28 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the use of the 470-790 MHz frequency band in the Union.

Parliament's position adopted at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Flexible approach: Member States should be able to **delay**, on the basis of duly justified reasons, allowing the use of the 700 MHz frequency band for terrestrial systems capable of providing wireless broadband electronic communications services beyond a common Union deadline of 2020 **for up to two years**.

The reasons for such a delay should be limited to:

- unresolved cross-border coordination issues resulting in harmful interferences;
- the need to ensure, and the complexity of ensuring, the technical migration of a large amount of the population to advanced broadcasting standards;
- the financial costs of transition exceeding the expected revenue generated by award procedures;
- force majeure.

In the event that Member States delay allowing the use of the 700 MHz frequency band, they should **inform the other Member States and the Commission** accordingly and include the duly justified reasons therefor in their national roadmaps. Such Member States and any Member States affected by the delay should **cooperate** with a view to coordinating the process of releasing the 700 MHz frequency band.

As soon as possible and no later than **30 June 2018**, Member States shall adopt and make public their national plan and schedule (national roadmap).

Transfer or leasing of the rights of use of spectrum: upon the granting of the rights of use in the 700 MHz frequency band for terrestrial systems capable of providing wireless broadband electronic communications services, Member States shall allow the transfer or leasing of such rights in accordance with open and transparent procedures pursuant to the applicable Union law.

Use of the 700 MHz frequency band or amendments to existing rights: when Member States authorise the use of or amend existing rights to use the 700 MHz frequency band, they shall take due account of the need to achieve the target speed and quality objectives set out in Decision No 243/2012/EU (minimum target speeds of 30 Mbps), including coverage in predetermined national priority areas where necessary, such as along major terrestrial transport paths.

Frequency band inferior to 700 MHz: Member States shall ensure availability at least **until 2030** of the 470-694 MHz ('sub-700 MHz') frequency band for the terrestrial provision of broadcasting services, while taking into account the principle of technological neutrality.

Pivotal role of the EU: the amended text stressed that the Union needs to take the lead by securing enough spectrum for the successful launch and development of **5G**. It made reference to the resolution of

19 January 2016 in which it called on the European Parliament to highlight that radio spectrum is essential for the future competitiveness of the Union.