Published on *Digital Agenda for Europe* (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda)



The Radio Spectrum Policy Programme sets the roadmap for encouraging efficient management and use of spectrum to meet the increasing needs for spectrum in the internal market.
Share this

The overall goals of EU's Radio Spectrum Policy are to coordinate the use of the radio spectrum across the Union, increase the availability and efficient use of the spectrum, and provide relevant information on spectrum usage to help those endeavours.

# Three main goals

At the European level radio spectrum policy has three overall goals:

- **Harmonising** the use of radio spectrum
- Working towards **more efficient use of spectrum**
- **Improving the availability of information** about the current use, future plans for use and availability of spectrum.

The Radio Spectrum Decision aims to ensure sufficient harmonisation to support the single internal market and promote innovation and competitiveness, while making use of spectrum more flexible.

The policy also ensures that EU interests in international negotiations relating to radio spectrum are effectively coordinated in issues ranging from transport to broadcasting. In 2012 the **Radio Spectrum Policy Programme (RSPP)** [1] [2]defined a roadmap for how Europe could translate these policy goals into **concrete policy actions that need to be addressed up until 2015** [1] [3]to complete the internal market.

# A forward-looking approach to spectrum management

A primary aim of EU policy in this area is to ease access to spectrum usage - by reducing bureaucracy and delegating decision-making to users where possible. To achieve its aims, the Commission has outlined a forward-looking strategy for radio spectrum policy in Europe. The strategy advocates a common EU-wide approach, using a mix of models to manage frequency allocation, according to the type of wireless application envisaged.

This includes increasing the supply of spectrum by ensuring, through a **market-based approach** [4], that assignment of spectrum to individual use is efficient. This approach is often optimal in commercial sectors where Quality of Service (QoS) is important, such as mobile telephony.

At the same time, in some bands, flexibility is increased by making their use unlicensed, i.e. allowing the assignment of shared spectrum access for applications in parts of the spectrum where exclusive

usage rights are not justified and shared usage represents the best use of resources. The easier access to spectrum in such bands fosters innovation in rapidly evolving mass-markets such as **short-range devices** [5] (e.g. Wi-Fi) where a degree of interference is acceptable or compensated by innovative technologies.

Traditional management processes, where the use of the spectrum is tightly regulated by governments, will also continue to be applied selectively in areas where security and safety-of-life considerations are paramount (defence, public security, aviation…).

Two general principles are applied in EU spectrum policy: **technology neutrality and service neutrality** [6]. [7] In essence, all innovations, products and processes are deemed to be equal. These principles are especially important when refarming of spectrum is being considered. Refarming is the reallocation of a frequency range from one application or licensed service to another.

## Why radio spectrum matters

The overall objective of EU's Radio Spectrum Policy is to contribute to the completion of the EU's single market. Harmonisation to provide integrated markets for equipment and services cuts costs for consumers, and boosts business competitiveness.

This internal market also helps provide integrated and responsive public services; spectrum management can and should support this trend. Numerous EU sectoral policy objectives rely on the availability of radio resources in areas as diverse as the information society, space, transport, research and environment.

The generic policy goals for competitiveness, innovation and economic growth in Europe are in many ways led by information and communication technology (ICT) - as set out in the **Digital Agenda for Europe** [8]. ICT innovation is increasingly dependent on mobile, wireless access to networks which is in turn critically reliant on access to spectrum.

### Tags:

Radio Spectrum Policy [9]
- wireless [10]
- coordination [11]
- harmonisation [12]

---

**Source URL:** https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/radio-spectrum-coordination-harmonisation-and-information

**Links**
[1] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/radio-spectrum-policy-program-roadmap-wireless-europe
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/content/rspp-roadmap-wireless-europe
[3] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/content/rspp-roadmap-wireless-europe#actions
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/improving-access-radio-spectrum-through-market-mechanisms
[5] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/short-range-mass-market
[6] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/easier-access-radio-spectrum-eus-electronic-communications-framework
[7] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/content/easier-access-radio-spectrum-eus-electronic-communications-framework#objectives
[8] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda
[9] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/radio-spectrum-policy-0
[10] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/wireless
[11] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/coordination

[12] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/tags/harmonisation