The trend towards greater flexibility and more competition in spectrum use is made easier by a market-based approach to individual rights of use.

Spectrum management reform in the EU

The traditional approach to spectrum management is based on deciding who has the right to use a particular block of spectrum and for what exact purpose, attempting to balance a broad range of policy objectives. However, the rapid developments in technology and the convergence of telecommunications, media content and electronic devices – in particular mobile and other wireless devices – are creating a dynamic environment in which the traditional approach to spectrum does not adequately respond to or fulfil the demands placed on it. In particular, flexibility must be flanked by market mechanisms.

As one type of solution, the market-based approach enables new entrants to acquire the right to use spectrum from other users (so-called "secondary trading"). Trading can determine a market value for spectrum and can help reconcile demand and supply. The approach could stimulate innovation and benefit consumers by enabling more and better services. The first steps towards secondary trading of spectrum usage rights have already been taken in Europe, and more and more Member States have the necessary legal provisions in place.

Implementing tradability

A spectrum market without flexibility risks cementing existing market shares, and prevents users from accessing spectrum when they need to. This is why the regulatory aspects of such a market must be responsive and flexible to support access, and there must be a common political agreement on the bands in which tradability applies. Based on the RSPP **[1]**, all Member States should ensure that spectrum trading is allowed throughout the EU in the harmonised bands where flexible use has already been introduced.

Another approach to facilitating access is to gradually increase the amount of radio spectrum where there is no limitation on the number of users that can access that spectrum: the so called "collective use **[2]**" approach, where more than one user at the same time can access the same band without the requirement for an individual exclusive licence.

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