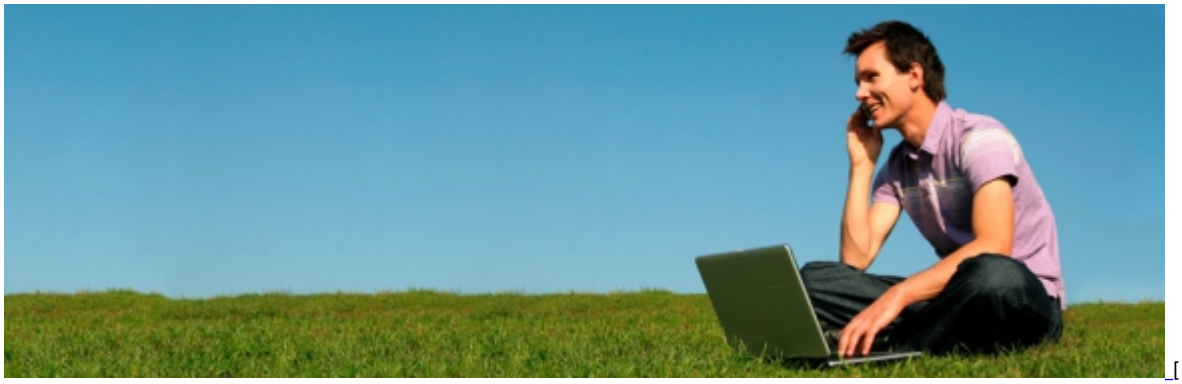
Published on *Digital Single Market* (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market)

Digital Single Market

Wireless Europe

☐Menu

Demand for wireless services is soaring. The European Commission's radio spectrum policy helps to make the most of our airwaves.


[1]

On the EU level, radio spectrum policy has three main goals, which are to harmonise spectrum access conditions to enable interoperability and economies of scale for wireless equipment, to work towards a more efficient use of spectrum, and to improve the availability of information about the current use, future plans for use and availability of spectrum. In short, spectrum policy is one instrument which works towards the creation of the Digital Single Market [2].

On 14 September 2016 in the context of the EU Electronic Communications Code [3], the Commission proposed updated rules for radio spectrum management which aim at creating a stable regulatory environment, improving coordination of spectrum and reducing divergences between regulatory practices across the EU to boost the single market.
The Code proposes:

- long licence durations, coupled with more stringent requirements to use spectrum effectively and efficiently
- greater powers for national competent authorities
- to coordinate basic parameters such as the timing of assignments to ensure timely release of spectrum to the EU market, and more converged spectrum policies and assignment conditions across the EU.

The new measures also seek to support a more flexible access and use of spectrum by promoting greater use of general authorisations and spectrum shared use with a view to enable the

development of new innovative applications and services.

What's Radio Spectrum Policy?

Radio spectrum relates to radio frequencies used for wireless communication over the airwaves and thus is a key raw material for wireless communications. It is not only the basis for communication services such as wireless broadband, which we use on our smartphones and tablets on a daily basis and hence serves often as a prominent example. It also enables current and future services in a diverse range of application areas like:

- terrestrial broadcasting including news gathering and theatrical production (e.g. wireless microphones and cameras);
- intelligent transport systems leading eventually to connected and autonomous vehicles,
- communication networks for law enforcement and emergency services;
- the Internet of Things [4] including Machine-to-Machine communications (e.g. smart grids, smart farming, smart cities, industry 4.0 [5]);
- short range devices ranging from simple garage door openers via alarm systems, or hearing aids to active medical implants for smart health systems and even further application areas.

Since radio spectrum is a finite resource, governments regulate and manage its use, which is referred to as spectrum policy. This task became more and more complex due to the proliferation of wireless technologies and their corresponding requirements especially over the recent years as indicated by the examples above.

As more and more people want to use it, we need better coordination and smarter technologies. For example, new technologies [6] benefit from the internal market for wireless services based on harmonised EU rules; while more [7]flexible usage conditions [7] help markets to develop and support innovation. Since 2002, the EU's Radio Spectrum Policy [8] has ensured the availability and efficient use of spectrum.

Get involved and contribute

The European Commission and national spectrum regulators work closely together to develop common rules. But radio spectrum policy also has an impact on many stakeholders. Find out how you can contribute and learn more about the current activities in the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG) [9] and the Radio Spectrum Committee (RSC) [10] .

Spectrum Library

The Radio Spectrum Policy archive [11]contains documents such as relevant EU legislation, Commission Decisions, studies, etc; as well as access to committee working documents.

Published:
6 September 2013
Last update:
20 March 2018
Team responsible
Radio Spectrum Policy (Unit B.4) [12]
Share this page

Source URL: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/wireless-europe

Links
[1] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/sites/digital-agenda/files/Image-carousel-4_wireless.jpg
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-single-market
[3] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/news-redirect/34112
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/internet-things
[5] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/fourth-industrial-revolution
[6] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/315
[7] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/264
[8] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/118
[9] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/122
[10] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/121
[11] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/143
[12] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/content/radio-spectrum-policy-unit-b4