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With increasing demands on radio spectrum from a wealth of new applications, this scarce and valuable commodity must be managed and used as efficiently as possible, to ensure the most benefit to society. In particular, if frequencies become available for new uses, it is important that any reorganisation of the radio spectrum is coordinated on a pan-European basis.

A key resource for the Digital Agenda for Europe

Radio spectrum is a resource which makes a significant contribution to the current and future economic strength and competitiveness of Europe. However, it is a scarce resource which must cater to demands from a growing number of applications.

Wireless technologies are becoming ubiquitous, and promoting the widespread availability of electronic communications services is a key component of the Europe 2020 initiative and the Digital Agenda for Europe. Ensuring the most efficient use of radio spectrum in Europe, and globally, is a critical goal of EU policy.

In particular, when frequencies become available, due to changes in service provision or the withdrawal of an obsolescent technology, it is important that any subsequent reorganisation or reallocation of frequencies is coordinated to obtain the maximum benefit for all stakeholders; and is approached on a pan-European basis. These processes are sometimes also referred to as "refarming".

Reallocating resources to better uses

Three examples of current reorganisation are: the reallocation of the **169 MHz frequency** [1] band from the pan-European land-based public radio paging service (known as ERMES) to a number of other services including radio paging; the sharing of **GSM mobile frequencies at 900 and 1800 MHz** [2] with more advanced mobile electronic communications services; and, most importantly, the reallocation of the high quality frequencies in the UHF band that will become available when the switchover to digital television broadcasting is completed in 2012 - the so-called **digital dividend** [3].

All are helping to expand the range of electronic communications services available.

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Links
[1] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecomm/radio_spectrum/sectorial/shared_use/169mhz/index_en.htm
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/getting-more-your-mobile
[3] https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/delivering-digital-dividend