

Radio Spectrum Policy Group – Secretariat
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BNE comments on the *(Draft) RSPG Opinion on the ITU-R World Radiocommunication Conference 2019.*

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed the comments on the *(Draft) RSPG Opinion on the ITU-R World Radiocommunication Conference 2019.* from Broadcast Networks Europe (BNE).

Yours sincerely



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BNE – Network operators in 20 countries

BNE is the trade organisation for Terrestrial Broadcast Network Operators for TV and Radio in Europe

 UK	 Spain	 Czech Republic	 Greece	 Poland	
 Serbia	 Italy	 Germany	 Norway, Belgium	 Croatia	 Austria
 Switzerland	 Romania	 Ireland	 France, Estonia, Monaco	 Sweden Denmark	

Broadcast Networks Europe (BNE) welcomes the opportunity to provide comments on the *(Draft) RSPG Opinion on the ITU-R World Radiocommunication Conference 2019 (Draft Opinion)*. We are available to collaborate with RSPG on all related issues.

BNE supports the aim of the RSPG in this Opinion to address the policy approach for WRC-19 Agenda Items which are relevant for the EU policies: assisting the Commission in proposing a Union position to the Council, providing guidance for ECPs (European Common Proposals) and proposing actions for the European Commission. These are key policy levers to provide needed investment certainty for the European digital ecosystem. This approach should seek to drive policy decisions for the benefit of the European digital ecosystem, including the creative, cultural and audiovisual sector.

BNE is fully committed to the common European strategy on the UHF band agreed in 2017; after several years of discussions, European policy makers, regulators and industry have reached a *win-win* agreement for the whole European digital ecosystem captured in the *Decision (EU) 2017/899 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 on the use of the 470-790 MHz frequency band in the Union (UHF Decision)*.

According to the *UHF Decision* taken in May 2017, the European strategy is **to open the 700 MHz band for mobile while confirming the allocation of 470-694 MHz to broadcasting as a primary service until at least 2030, consistent with the long-term strategy defined by RSPG earmarking this band in Europe for audiovisual distribution services even beyond 2030**. The European strategy provides certainty for the European broadcasting industry to invest in its future while making available the 700MHz band by 2020 or 2022.

Decisions at upcoming WRCs on the UHF band, will either make it easier for the EU to implement its UHF strategy (in the case of a no change outcome) or more difficult (in the case of a change to the UHF spectrum allocation). This is the reason why we at BNE want the ITU process as currently outlined to be pursued in full. Therefore:

- **Section 4.1:** According to decisions made in WRC-15, band sub 1GHz are not to be discussed before or during the WRC-19. In this sense, unexpected agenda items should not emerge at the WRC-19. In conclusion, **BNE calls for an unambiguous rejection of any non-agenda UHF proposal on the basis that it would be against EU interest, against the ITU process. Such a proposal can be formally rejected on the ground of the decisions taken at WRC-15 – themselves the result of a carefully compromise between administrations on a contentious issue.**
- **Section 4.12:** According to decisions made in WRC-15, any confirmed agenda item for WRC-23 regarding sub 1GHz band in Region I needs to be in accordance to the Resolution 235 (WRC-15). In addition, when assessing any EU position in this regard, technical but also European creative and cultural perspectives should be taken into account.

As a final comment, ITU processes provide certainty and equality of opportunities for all stakeholders to express and defend their views. Spectrum allocation decisions require studies, discussions, negotiations and a suitable environment to build consensus. Time and care is needed to achieve the right outcomes and improvisation or shortcuts should be avoided. Spectrum management principles are guided by agreed courses of action for regulators, policy makers, associations, private companies and other stakeholders. Circumventing these processes arbitrarily can only serve to undermine the ITU's credibility, putting at risk enormous investment decisions that rely on the certainty provided to adapt to changes brought about by changes to spectrum allocations.