



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS, CONTENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Digital Decade and Connectivity
Radio Spectrum Policy Group
RSPG Secretariat

Brussels, 13 November 2024

RSPG24-034 FINAL

RADIO SPECTRUM POLICY GROUP

Progress Report of the RSPG Sub Group on Assessment of future usage of the frequency band 470-694 MHz within the EU

RSPG Secretariat, office L-51 05/DCS,
Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË
Telephone: direct line (+32-2)29.21.261, switchboard 299.11.11;
E-mail: cnect-rspg@ec.europa.eu
Website CIRCABC: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/f5b44016-a8c5-4ef6-a0bf-bc8d357debc>
Website : https://radio-spectrum-policy-group.ec.europa.eu/index_en

1. The RSPG Working Group on “Assessment of future usage of the frequency band 470-694 MHz within the EU” (hereafter: the **UHF SG**) continued to work on its assigned tasks, holding five more meetings since the last report provided for the RSPG plenary #64:
 - Meeting #3, on 13 June 2024, virtual;
 - Meeting #4, on 10 July 2024, virtual;
 - Meeting #5, on 9 September 2024, virtual;
 - Meeting #6, on 17 September 2024, virtual;
 - Meeting #7, on 15 October 2024, virtual.
2. One more meeting is already scheduled:
 - Meeting #8, on 18 November 2024, virtual.
3. The participants registered in the **UHF SG** represent the following Member States: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden. Representatives from Montenegro, Norway, Türkiye and Ukraine¹, as well as representatives of the European Commission and CEPT/ECO are also registered.
4. The general work plan, that includes a Questionnaire and a workshop as main outputs, was confirmed according to this schedule:
 - the Questionnaire is the target for the remainder of 2024;
 - the Workshop will be the target to be completed in the first part of 2025;
 - the Report will be the final target, with a draft scheduled for June 2025 and the final version for October 2025 (dates as per the RSPG Work Programme).
5. The work of the **UHF SG** focused on the development of the Questionnaire. Thanks to the efforts of the volunteers who agreed to act as coordinators for the different parts, a draft was prepared and discussed in the plenary meetings of the **UHF SG**.
6. In the final version, it was decided to classify the stakeholders to whom the Questionnaire should be addressed into five categories: regulators, network operators, content providers, spectrum end-users, and other interested parties. Each category has a specific set of questions.
7. The original intention was to publish the Questionnaire in July, but more time was needed. The Questionnaire was published on the RSPG website on 30 September. The deadline for responses was set to 5 November 2024. Representatives from each participating country were responsible for distributing the Questionnaire to the various stakeholders in their country.

¹ The impossibility of reaching Ukraine's representatives by e-mail, already reported in the previous report to RSPG Plenary #64, persists: messages sent by the chairman Umberto Mascia (email: umberto.mascia@mise.gov.it) are rejected with the error message *Sender address rejected: Domain not found*.

8. In response to some requests received for an extension of the deadline for responding to the questionnaire, the **UHF SG** decided to allow an extension of the deadline to 8 November only upon explicit request. It was decided that no further extension was possible in view of the time needed for the collection and analysis of data.
9. The Questionnaire consists of two documents: an introductory text explaining the purpose and structure of the Questionnaire, and an Excel file in which the responses are collected. The use of the Excel file is intended to facilitate the extraction and aggregation of data for subsequent analysis. Further, the introduction specifies that each respondent is free to answer other questions of interest to him or her, in addition to the questions in his or her section.
10. The **UHF SG** is seeking to set up five teams internally, each dedicated to analysing the responses from one of the stakeholder categories, as a large number of responses are expected. The work plan is for each team to provide a draft of the results and analysis collected to the co-chairs by mid-December. The co-chairs will prepare a draft summary to be discussed at the following **UHF SG** meetings. The aim is to present the results of the Questionnaire at the RSPG Plenary #66 scheduled for February 2025.
11. Meeting #7 of the **UHF SG**, held after the publication of the Questionnaire, was devoted to an initial discussion on the Workshop. It was agreed that it should be open to representatives of RSPG member countries as well as stakeholders; that it should be held in a hybrid format, probably in Brussels (if any administration is willing to host it, it would be welcome). A date between the end of March and mid-April is being considered.
12. The content of the Workshop will be based on the responses to the Questionnaire. The point of view of the PMSE community will certainly be taken into account, as explicitly stated in the Work Item.
13. Special attention will be given to the ITU workshop “Future of TV for Europe”, to be held on 7 November 2024, both to derive further guidance and to avoid duplication of content.
14. No material is submitted to the Plenary for approval at this stage.

RSPG work item: update to Plenary	
Work item	Assessment of future usage of the frequency band 470-694 MHz within the EU
Rapporteur/s	Andreas Agius, Hellenic Telecommunications and Post Commission, Greece Umberto Mascia, Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy, Italy
Rationale	<p>The RSPG in its “Opinion on the strategy on the future use of the frequency band 470-694 MHz beyond 2030” contributed with a strategic vision for sub-700 MHz spectrum use, exploring the potential of the flexibility defined in Article 4 of Decision (EU) 2017/899 and at the same time the current implementation constraints, and identifying some possible scenarios beyond 2030. It is considered as the background for the report on the usage of sub-700 MHz required by 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.</p> <p>The RSPG noted that the evolution of UHF band broadcasting reception during the current decade, including factors such as the number of programs, the content format and technological advancements (T2, HEVC, 5G Broadcast) plays an important role in shaping any timeline post 2030. The RSPG considers that any later EU choice or decision on the European legal framework in this band will take due account of the needs of the Member States, respecting the flexibility offered by the ITU Radio Regulations in the use of spectrum.</p> <p>A notable finding of the Opinion is the recognition of the possibility that in the next decade, 2030-2040, a single scenario may not be applicable to all Member States. In order to continue the work undertaken with the above-mentioned Opinion, the RSPG considers that there is added value in exploring how different scenarios can coexist in EU.</p> <p>Further, the RSPG recognises the role of the PMSE and the need to preserve sufficient spectrum for PMSE needs, particularly audio-PMSE which make extensive use of the sub-700 MHz band, including for the long-term development.</p>
Scope	<p>The RSPG should continue to monitor EU Member States initiatives on the future usage in their frequency band 470-694 MHz.</p> <p>In consequence, based on its recent Opinion on UHF:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The RSPG should carry out an assessment of the prospects for the use of the sub-700 MHz band in the decade 2030-2040 by the different Member States, seeking information from relevant institutional stakeholders. 2. RSPG should also collect lessons from early initiatives from Member States introducing other usages than broadcasting to address audio PMSE long term developments in order to preserve sufficient spectrum for audio PMSE needs, taking also into account the transition of audio PMSE towards new spectrum efficient technologies. <p>The RSPG also should gather information from industry stakeholders on expected technological developments in both mobile and broadcasting platforms.</p>

Planned deliverables and timing	RSPG Report on the future usage of sub – 700 MHz band in the EU. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Report for public consultation: June 2025• Final Report: October 2025 RSPG Questionnaire/workshops as appropriate.
Project plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Step 1: Questionnaire. To be completed by the end of 2024.• Step 2: Workshop. To be held by April 2025.• Step 3: production of the Report.
Dependencies	No dependencies identified at present.