

# Draft Czech Republic contribution to the Radio Spectrum Policy Group consultation on UHF >2030

This proposal responds to the RSPG consultation:

[https://radio-spectrum-policy-group.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/RSPG23-021final-draft\\_RSPG\\_Opinion\\_on\\_UHF\\_beyond\\_2030.pdf](https://radio-spectrum-policy-group.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/RSPG23-021final-draft_RSPG_Opinion_on_UHF_beyond_2030.pdf)

## Introduction:

In the framework of the Radio Spectrum Policy Group's (RSPG) consultation on the draft document "RSPG Opinion on the Strategy for the Future Use of the 470-694 MHz Frequency Band after 2030 in the EU", the Czech Republic submits to the RSPG for its consideration some information and aspects of the national situation in the UHF band and adds for consideration proposals based on the national discussion on the 470-694 MHz band so far, which was attended by the Ministry of Industry and Trade and other ministries, the Czech Telecommunication Office, associations and societies representing radio spectrum users, the public service broadcaster, the operator of the nation-wide DTT network, private operators of nation-wide DTT networks, telecommunications infrastructure operators, Internet access service providers, representatives of the political representation, universities (academia), expert advisors and other participants.

## PART A - GENERAL COMMENTS AND NATIONAL POSITION

1. The Czech Republic agrees with the draft Opinion and considers the UHF band (470-694 MHz) to be promising in the long term regarding current and future society-wide benefits of its use. The band will be important in the long term for disseminating television broadcasting via DTT in the Czech Republic.
2. The Czech Republic supports the conditions set out in the draft RSPG Opinion in the UHF band, where, instead of a uniform and binding procedure, a flexible approach is developed, allowing Member States to decide on the conditions of use of the band at the national level, taking into account the possibilities in terms of cross-border coordination.
3. The Czech Republic operates 4 nation-wide DTT multiplexes covering at least 97 % of the population.  
<sup>1</sup> DTT programmes are freely available (FTA). 56 % of households use DTT. <sup>2</sup> 45 % of households use DTT as their primary TV reception. <sup>1</sup> Given the national importance of DTT broadcasting and its long-term perspective, the Czech Republic supports maintaining the long-term outlook for Broadcasting, at least in part of the UHF band, in the long term and beyond 2030.
4. Paid alternative platforms allowing access to linear broadcasting are also available in the Czech Republic, e.g. satellite reception (primarily used by 20 % of households), as well as platforms that are gradually expanding, such as CATV (13 % of households), IPTV (22 % of households) <sup>1</sup> and high-speed >100 Mbps downlink connection (in 2021, for 89 % of households it was available (coverage), 27 % were connected (penetration)), <sup>3</sup> which is steadily growing. However, none of these platforms are freely available (FTA), as is the case for DTT. Some ISPs offer linear broadcasting services as part of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ato.cz/en/2021/world-television-day-record-breaking-year-for-tv/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ato.cz/2023/cesky-divak-sleduje-temer-4-hodiny-tv-denne-projekt-mereni-sledovanosti-zmeril-v-poslednim-roce-769-tisic-poradu-na-90-stanicich-svym-rozsahem-cr-predci-i-zeme-s-delsi-tradici-tv-mereni/>

<sup>3</sup> 2021 data from DESI, Study Broadband Coverage in Europe 2021, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi-connectivity>

the Internet access service, usually as part of a paid service package. Thus, DTT is not only the leading platform for receiving linear television broadcasts in the country but also represents indispensable access to information for the general public in critical and severe crisis situations.

5. The Czech Republic has been, and will continue to be, leading the national debate on UHF issues in a long time perspective. At the same time, the Czech Republic has been, and will continue to monitor, national indicators in the area of audio-visual content consumption and viewing patterns (including non-linear content and VOD services), penetration across platforms of TV content reception, penetration of high-speed Internet access services and other indicators, including economic, competitive, social, cultural and other aspects. In the context of this national debate, the views of market players in the Czech Republic on the use of the UHF band in the Czech Republic in the long term after 2030 differ.
6. The Czech Republic is monitoring developments in the UHF band in other countries and will continue to participate in discussions over the future of the UHF band and the search for appropriate conditions for existing and future services so that existing services in individual markets are least adversely affected by any changes, while at the same time leaving room for innovation, in particular through the substantially more extensive build-out of very high capacity networks (VHCN).
7. The Czech Republic is aware that an essential objective of future negotiations is to achieve mutual technical compatibility of different national solutions in different countries while minimising situations where geographic protection zones of tens or hundreds of kilometres should be applied.

## **PART B - SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR THE RSPG OPINION AND OTHER RSPG ACTIVITIES**

1. With regard to points 3 and 4 of Part A of our comments, we would like to request the addition of the name of the Czech Republic to the list of countries with DTT importance listed in section 4.1 of the draft RSPG Opinion: *„Representative cases are, for example, those of Spain, France, Poland, ~~and~~ Croatia **and the Czech Republic** where, despite the extensive fibre optic ~~or~~ fixed broadband network, DTT continues to be one of the most used platforms.“*
2. The Czech Republic recommends that the RSPG, either in this Opinion or in further recommendations in the context of the revision of the UHF Decision<sup>4</sup>, consider including instruments that will in any way improve the prospects for Member States to successfully reach mutual cross-border agreements on the use of UHF within the meaning of Article 4 of the UHF Decision.
3. The Czech Republic further recommends that the RSPG, considering the initiatives described in part 3.3.3 – Opinions and the expected developments in the development of new technologies, services and societal needs, consider recommending the development of draft technical conditions for these new technologies (e.g. channel layout, compatibility conditions with Broadcasting, etc.) that could use the band (e.g. IMT), however taking into account the long term priority of the UHF part for DTT in the long term and beyond 2030.

CZ agrees to the publication of this contribution.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32017D0899>