



RTÉ Response to the draft Radio Spectrum Policy Group opinion – Strategy on the future use of the frequency band 470-694MHz beyond 2030 in the EU.

RTÉ is the national public service broadcaster in Ireland. We provide trusted public service media through a range of platforms to maximise reach and accessibility.

RTÉ is pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to this draft RSPG opinion on the future use of the essential spectrum for the future availability of public service media in Europe beyond 2030. RTÉ also supports the EBU response to this draft RSPG opinion.

In Ireland, RTÉ's digital terrestrial TV platform Saorview is a vital source of free to air public service media. Relying on this spectrum (470-694MHz) it is available to over 98% of households in Ireland (and approximately 75% of households in Northern Ireland), delivering reliable and secure access to Irish public service media, including important cultural and Irish language services. Up to 38% of households nationally [source: TAM Ireland/Nielsen, July 2023] currently rely on Saorview for access to Irish free to air public service television. In some regions - predominantly rural - this figure includes up to 52% of households. The Saorview platform is continuing to grow with the addition of new services (the number of TV services on the platform has increased from 11 in 2020 to 14 with a further 2 expected during 2023). RTÉ expects digital terrestrial TV to remain an important platform for a significant proportion of Irish citizens well beyond 2030.

In addition to RTÉ, outside broadcast companies, content creators and events producers in Ireland also rely heavily on the remaining UHF spectrum for programme making and special events (PMSE). Wireless microphones and talk-back/monitors operating in the UHF band are integral to modern production and there are still no practical near-term alternatives for elements of this key enabling technology.

Comments on the Draft RSPG Opinion

As a public service media organisation RTÉ would like to see greater emphasis on the essential role that this spectrum is likely to continue to fulfil beyond 2030 in delivering important social, economic and cultural objectives (i.e. Article 7 of the UHF Decision) within this draft opinion.

RTÉ agrees that it is likely that Member States will vary in their reliance on DTT post 2030 with its high level of importance in some Member States being maintained in the longer term. We expect that DTT broadcasting in the UHF band will remain a primary form of access to Public Service Media in Ireland well beyond 2030. Similarly we believe that requirements for additional, and sub 700MHz, spectrum for mobile services will vary between Member States. Given the practical difficulties in

sharing between broadcasting and mobile services noted in the draft opinion, we support the continued emphasis on ‘the pursuit of compatible uses’ in any future regulatory action.

We agree with the recommendation that spectrum for audio-PMSE should be preserved in all cases and are pleased to see this stated in the recommendations.