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**RADIO SPECTRUM POLICY GROUP**

**19<sup>th</sup> Progress Report of the RSPG Working Group**

**on cross-border coordination**

## 19<sup>th</sup> Progress Report of the RSPG Working Group on cross-border coordination

The Working Group has held one meeting, 6<sup>th</sup> September in Vilnius.

### TV, T-DAB and FM interference around Italy

For the details of the interference situation, please refer to the meeting report in annex:

- For TV interference, there is no more interference except with Croatia. This is also an issue regarding the transition of TV below 694 MHz in Croatia (see below)
- For FM interference, there is an agreement to coordinate on the basis of real data transmitters (rather than GE-84 characteristics), but the discussion with Italy to address priority FM channels identified by Slovenia, Malta and Croatia is not progressing significantly.
- For TDAB interference, the good offices noted that although the current Italian budget law specifies that AGCOM will use in any future planning only GE-06 rights and other resources from cross-border coordination agreements, there is actually no new plan so that Slovenia and Croatia are experiencing interference.

### Review of the progress in cross-border negotiation for the 700 MHz band

The Working Group has considered the responses to the sixth questionnaire *on cross-border coordination issues regarding 700 MHz spectrum clearance and migration of broadcasting service below 694 MHz*, as well as information provided by individual Member states and the Commission.

**All EU Member States have responded to the sixth questionnaire.** Three non EU countries have responded (MK, NO, RS). The results of the questionnaire are summarized in a separate powerpoint document. It has to be noted that some responses were made available after the good offices meeting (ie, the meeting report is not based on all responses).

**Belgium has announced that coordination meetings has been organized in September with the two countries where agreements have not yet been signed (Germany and the United Kingdom), and is expecting that agreements will be achieved at these meetings.**

24 countries have agreed their national roadmap for making available the 700 MHz for mobile services. The national roadmap is not yet agreed for Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Croatia. However, dates for the end of migration are now available for all countries and exceed 2020 for 5 countries (Italy, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta). Planned dates for granting authorizations are also available except for Portugal and Croatia where they are still uncertain. This has enabled the good offices to have further discussions on transition issues:

- One case is intra-EU, with Croatia being at a risk of having to wait until the end of migration in Italy to carry out its own migration. Both countries have been invited to discuss rapidly the matter.
- Other transition issues are involving non-EU countries, due to the uncertainty of migration time in Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina and to possible delays in relation with possible continued use of broadcasting in the 700 MHz band in Russian Federation, which may have domino's effect, as pointed out by Denmark in its response.

The group also analyzed the cases where EU assistance has been requested for coordination with countries outside EU (Albania, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Turkey, Russian Federation) and the most critical issue remains Russian Federation.

The Good Offices Working Group is proposing **not to reissue a questionnaire**. Additional information on cross border coordination and 700 MHz implementation will be directly asked to concerned administrations.

#### **Draft RSPG report on the results of the good offices for the 700 MHz band**

The draft RSPG report on the results of the good offices for the 700 MHz band has been reviewed by the group and is proposed for adoption.

#### **Next meeting**

A meeting is planned on 22<sup>th</sup> January 2019 in Roma.

## REPORT

## RSPG WORKING GROUP

## « GOOD OFFICES »

VILNIUS, 6<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018, 10H00**1. Situation regarding interference around Italy****TV interference issues**

- Croatia is finishing 2018 measurement campaign of the TV and FM bands and results are in the process of being summarized. In the following month HRV will send interference reports with details of the measurements to Italy with copy to ITU. There are interferences to HRV coordinated TV channels in operation (e.g. 21, 39, 41 and 57), which remains a significant problem for network operators and broadcasters. Italy stated that these issues will be solved when the latest TV cross-border agreement is implemented (in 2022 at the latest), moreover, as reported in the national roadmap (see Italian questionnaire - table 3), already published, the migration below 694 MHz in all the Adriatic area, from Friuli Venezia Giulia to Puglia, will be done in the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021, but the meeting considered that some actions from Italy (e.g. new projects with power reduction or antenna modifications) would be needed before such implementation. In addition there are several channels used by Italy and for which Croatia has rights in GE-06, but not currently in operation. These channels are important for Croatia to allow the use of the 694-790 MHz ('700 MHz') frequency band for mobile. Two licences for TV network operators are expiring in 2019 and HRV will issue new licences with TV channels below 700 MHz. HRV will start transition in 2019 and it is of vital importance that Italy releases these sub-700 MHz channels for which Croatia has rights in GE-06 which are necessary for TV reallocation in Croatia. This issue only relates to the transitional period and is dealt with later.
- Slovenia reported that there is no interference on active channels. However, some Slovenian GE06 channels are still used by Italian stations.
- Concerning interference from Italy to France, a solution has been implemented by the Italian broadcaster.
- Malta reported that there is no remaining interference.

**FM interference issues**

Italy reported about the multilateral meeting held in Rome, in June 2018 where the harmful interference issues caused by Italy to the terrestrial broadcasting services of France, Slovenia, Croatia and Malta were discussed. This meeting was chaired by the ITU and its report was analysed by the RRB in its 78<sup>th</sup> meeting held in July 2018. This meeting agreed on different approaches towards resolving the reported harmful interference cases.

It was agreed with SVN and HRV that real data of the transmitters (rather than GE-84 entries) have to be used to develop solutions:

- On **31-7-2018**, Italy sent to SVN the real data of 3 transmitters that are using priority frequencies of SVN.
- On **1<sup>st</sup> of August 2018**, 10 transmitters have been forwarded to HRV regarding the first 4 HRV priority.
- On **29-8-2018** Italy received an answer from Slovenia with some observations and some data from SVN relating to interference measurement and transmitter characteristics which will be analyzed very soon.

### **FM interference between Italy and Slovenia**

Slovenia reported that there is no improvement in the interference. Slovenia received technical data about some stations, however, Slovenia stated that the Italian stations under consideration are not the main interfering stations and that, until the main interfering signals are eliminated, the reception of Slovenian FM stations will not be improved.

Therefore, Slovenia requests Italian administration to consider solutions regarding all measured interfering signals for the Slovenian stations.

### **FM interference between Italy and Croatia**

Croatia reported that there is no improvement in number of interference cases and levels of interference from Italian transmitters which lasts for years. During multilateral meeting in Roma, October 2017, a priority list of 40 interference cases to be resolved was given to Italy. So far, Croatia has not noticed any progress on the solving interference cases and has not received action plan which had to be proposed by Italy to solve the priority cases. In respect to solving these cases it would be most efficient to treat interferers on the priority lists focusing on the main interferers from the detailed list which HRV provided to Italy.

### **FM interference between Italy and Malta**

The priority interference cases for Malta relate to transmissions on 92.7 MHz, 102.6 MHz and 105.9 MHz. In this regard Italy provided the following update:

- **92.7 MHz:** A measurement campaign has been done by the Italian broadcaster, namely, Radio DeeJay, in Ragusa and Siracusa who claimed that a large part of its coverage area is interfered by signals coming from Malta with the level reaching 63 dB $\mu$ V/m. This station requested to study compatibility among the Italian and the Maltese broadcasters.
- **102.6 MHz:** In Italy, this frequency is used by Radio Maria, and after the joint measurements carried out in Malta in 2017, the Italian local office issued an order to reduce the power by 3 dB. In response, the broadcaster declared that this frequency was currently not being used in Malta and therefore did not consider it necessary to implement

the said power reduction. However, it was prepared to reach compatibility with any future transmission by Malta on this frequency.

- **105.9 MHz:** This frequency is used by the Italian broadcaster M2O (Elemedia). Following joint measurements carried out in Malta in 2017, Elemedia made additional measurements in Sicily and claimed that several areas in Sicily are interfered by the Maltese station and asked to eliminate this interference that affects around 20% of its coverage area.

The Italian local office issued an order to reduce the power by 3 dB and to present a draft project to eliminate the interference by 30 days.

Elemedia brought an extraordinary appeal to the President of Republic and another appeal to the Administrative Court of Lazio asking to stop the harmful interference coming from Malta and moreover asking for reimbursement for the loss in service due to the claimed Maltese Interference.

At the end of the 2017 the Administrative Court rejected the appeal. The broadcaster presented an appeal to the State Council against the decision of the Administrative Court. The appeal made to the President of the Republic is still pending.

- **92.7 MHz:** Italy asked Malta to exchange data on the actual use of this frequency.

Malta reported that during August 2018, campaigns were carried out to measure the interference level present on its GE84 frequencies. With respect to the above-mentioned frequencies, i.e. 92.7 MHz, 102.6 MHz and 105.9 MHz, Malta reported that in accordance with measurements taken on the 29<sup>th</sup> August, the level of interference is 53.6 dB $\mu$ V/m, 62.3 dB $\mu$ V/m and 69.9 dB $\mu$ V/m respectively. Malta will be carrying out additional measurements, the results of which will be submitted to Italy. As to the claims made by Italian broadcasters, Malta noted that under the GE84, it had the right to make use of these frequencies.

### **FM interference between Italy and France**

Regarding the last pending case, a joint measurement will be done on 19th September 2018, the broadcasters will be present to the measurements.

### **TDAB interference issues**

Italy reported that the current budget law specifies that AGCOM will use, in any future planning, only GE06 Italian rights and other resources from cross border agreements with neighbouring countries. However, AGCOM needed time to develop a new plan which will be based on the principle set up by the budget law.

The meeting considered to be extremely important for Italy and its neighbours to conclude all necessary frequency coordination agreements for the VHF band III and, for Italy, to only make use of those T-DAB channels which are in conformity with its rights.

### **TDAB interference between Italy and Slovenia**

Strong signals on channel 12C were detected (75 dB $\mu$ V/m). Reports were sent to the Italian administration. Slovenia considers that it will experience severe interference when it will start using this channel in the near future.

### **TDAB interference between Italy and Croatia**

Croatia reported several interference cases in the VHF band III. There is a large number of Italian transmitters already operating on channels 12A (network EuroDAB Italia), 12B (network DAB+RAI), 12 C (network \*DAB ITALIA\*) and 12D (network DAB+RAI). After the multi-lateral meeting held in Rome in June 2018, Croatia provided additional measurement reports concerning these interferences to Italy. No response was received from Italy on these reports indicating if or when these uncoordinated transmitters will be switched off.

Italy provided the following information:

- **12A:** Italy has ten days ago, tasked the national broadcaster and the local Office to investigate this issues and to provide a project to be analyzed by the Ministry.
- **12B:** Italy has already tasked twice the public broadcaster and the local Office in Emilia Romagna to investigate this issue and if no answer is received, a project will be developed by the Ministry.
- **12C:** HRV had sent measurement results to Italy, but Italy, on the 31<sup>st</sup> August commented that measurements were undertaken outside the Croatian allotment area for this channel. However, HRV responded that the Italian transmission is not in conformity with the international rights for Italy.

## **2. Review of the cases where intra-EU cross-border agreements are not signed**

Belgium reported about the ongoing negotiation with the two countries with which agreement is not signed. A meeting with UK has been planned on 6 and 7 September to discuss the remaining issues concerning the 700 MHz coordination process. A further meeting is planned between BEL/Germany on 24-25/9/2018. Belgium expects that agreements will be achieved at these meetings.

UK and Germany confirmed this information.

The meeting asked for being kept updated of the results of these meetings in order to inform the RSPG meeting.

### **3. Review of the responses to the questionnaire on the 700 MHz band**

It was noted that AT, EL, BG, IE, CY did not respond to the questionnaire. Hungary confirmed that its response to the fifth questionnaire remains valid.

The meeting noted that the UHF national roadmap has been adopted and published only in 21 EU countries (not for BE, NL, CZ, AT, HR, EL, CY). It was indicated that EL has probably published it, but did not respond to the questionnaire.

Austria pointed out that their UHF national roadmap is pending publication of the roadmap by Czech Republic since it would endorse the changes of 2 Czech channels which were discussed after the cross border agreement has been signed. In this respect, Czech response to the questionnaire indicates that *“Technical Plan is prepared completely and has been put on agenda of the Czech government meeting on 29 August 2018”*.

The meeting discussed the remaining transition issues:

- As mentioned above in the discussion on TV interference from Italy, the delay of the migration in Italy would prevent Croatia from making its own migration since some channels needed for the migration are not free from interference. The solution for the transition period between Italy and Croatia is to be rapidly discussed between these two countries and reported to the good offices.
- For the case of Spain/France, the new migration date confirmed by Spain will probably ease the transition.
- Denmark mentioned possible difficulties with Poland, if it has to delay the end of migration because of Russian Federation. On the other hand the difficulty with Norway has been solved. The potential “domino” effect of no agreement with the Russian Federation and of continued use of the 700 MHz band by broadcasting is generally of concerns to many countries.
- In the SEDDIF area, there is great uncertainty on the migration of broadcasting below 694 MHz by Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina. Croatia noted that they already have interference in the 800 MHz band.

### **4. EU assistance for coordination with countries outside EU**

The meeting noted that there is no significant progress:

- EC is preparing internally some discussions with Russia
- The draft agreement between Italy and Libya has been developed and finalized, but Italy is still waiting for receiving the signed agreement
- Malta is working on new proposals to be submitted to Tunisia towards end September.



## **5. Need for further questionnaire**

The meeting agreed that instead of reissuing a questionnaire, each Member state would be asked to confirm:

- Whether the information gathered in the map/slides are correct
- Whether they have any transition issue (and what is the updated information regarding this transition issue)
- Whether they have any cross-border coordination issue with non-EU country (and what is the updated information regarding this transition issue)

This message should be sent one month before the next RSPG good offices meeting.

In addition, the WG Good Offices chairmen will contact directly the concerned administrations to complete the information regarding the roadmap and regarding the reported coordination issues with Belgium.

## **6. Draft RSPG report on the results of the good offices for the 700 MHz band**

The meeting reviewed the report and included updated information, including information about the publication of national UHF roadmaps. It was decided that the statistics should refer to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 for the signature of agreements and to the 31<sup>st</sup> August for the UHF national roadmap. For the latter, the date is slightly delayed compared to the deadline set out in the EU decision but reflects the date when the information was gathered.

The report was agreed and will be presented for adoption at the next RPSG meeting.

It may be necessary to slightly correct some elements during the RSPG meeting if additional elements are available (i.e. signature of agreements or availability of the UHF roadmap).

## **7. EECC article 28**

The results of the discussion in the RSPG WG on EECC relating to the article 28 was considered. The good offices WG agreed with this report and highlighted several elements:

- The current activity of good offices is not likely to be impacted. The current work of the good offices relating to FM broadcasting, although not covered by article 28 (not related to the availability of harmonized spectrum), will continue.

- Article 28 opens the possibility of an RSPG opinion being drafted in relation to cases where there is unresolved intra-EU cross border coordination problem or dispute.
- In relation to the band covered by article 53A, it was noted that the 3.4-3.8 GHz band has been harmonized for ECS for a long time. Therefore only difficulties regarding coordination with countries outside EU could be likely to occur. For the 26 GHz band, it was noted that interfering distances, which are quite low, could limit cross-border coordination issues.

### **8. Date of next meeting**

The next RSPG “good offices” meeting is planned the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019 September in Roma.