



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology

Electronic Communications Networks and Services

**Radio Spectrum Policy Group**

**RSPG Secretariat**

Brussels, 08 June 2016

DG CNECT/B4/RSPG Secretariat

**RSPG16-027 FINAL**

**RADIO SPECTRUM POLICY GROUP**

**Report from the joint RSPG-BEREC Workshop  
on “Facilitating access to radio spectrum  
- spectrum assignments in the EU framework”**

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**Background**

Spectrum is an essential input to radio networks and mobile services. Well designed and well executed spectrum awards are necessary to further the competition and the proper functioning of the wireless electronic communications markets and thus support the development of the broadband markets, the availability of electronic communications services and the achievement of the EU goals set out in the 2020 Digital Agenda.

Therefore the RSPG and the BEREC arranged a joint internal workshop in May 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 to promote the sharing of knowledge and best practices between the competent bodies for spectrum assignment in Europe, the aim being to further the know-how of both theory and practice of spectrum assignments in the NRAs and/or the competent spectrum bodies assigning spectrum in the member states.

This was a follow up on the much appreciated event on spectrum awards that BEREC and the RSPG arranged together in 2014, where spectrum experts in the relevant bodies shared experiences and learnt from the awards that so far has been carried out in Europe.

**The 2016 workshop “Facilitating access to radio spectrum - spectrum assignments in the EU framework”**

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, in the IRG office in Brussels, Members of BEREC and the RSPG came together to discuss spectrum assignments processes that supports a well-functioning wireless communication market and implements the EU framework. 50 participants attended, with representation from 21 Member states, both BEREC and RSPG members.

After the welcoming remarks from BEREC and RSPG chairs, the European Commission started the morning session with their talk on “Efficient spectrum awards process from the EU perspective” including thoughts on the importance of spectrum awards and their impact on the mobile markets, investments and the competitive landscape, and on the current EU telecoms framework and the DSM strategy. Then Chris Woolford, the rapporteur of the RSPG report on Efficient awards and use of spectrum, talked about the findings from the group’s work, the main commonalities for spectrum awards in the EU in the objectives, the design and process. Blaise Soury Lavergne from ARCEP presented the 700

MHz spectrum award in France, and Ylva Mälarstig from PTS presented how Sweden have developed their transparency and predictability for stakeholders regarding spectrum use, assignments and awards processes. After that Ilse van der Haar from Tele2 gave An operator's view on efficient award processes, and how different aspects of the awards process will affect an operators ability to participate and make rational biddings in the award.

The afternoon session consisted of group work on topics crucial to efficient awards. The workshop covered Efficient awards processes including the implementation of the criteria in the directives such as transparency and objectivity, The promotion of investments and competition in awards, Public policy objectives in awards and how they are handled, and How EU consistency should be promoted.

The workshop also discussed the Further work and cooperation between BEREC and RSPG, were several topics of common ground where the organisations could support each other was identified.

### **Main takeaways**

While the situations in the Member states differ, there are common challenges that benefits from increased discussions, learning and sharing among Member states. While means that works well in one Member state might not be efficient or possible in another, it is very valuable to hear about and learn from the different approaches that have been applied in other MS, the effects and the difficulties. This can give inspiration and lead to the development of the approaches that each MS take to tackle the challenges.

Spectrum awards is an area where a lot of research and development is going on, both academically and practically. At the same time awards are held occasionally in the Member state, so it is a challenge to keep the knowledge up to date in each Member state. It is thus very valuable to cooperate more closely between MS, helping each other to stay on top of the know-how and to provide a sounding board for spectrum awards experts.

The RSPG and BEREC are well placed to support such an enhanced cooperation and learning on the subject of efficient spectrum awards.

The participants were asked to share their expectancies on the workshop, and in the wrap up session report on how the workshop fulfilled those expectancies. The main benefits of the day according to the participants was

- To get new insights
- To discuss matters regarding spectrum awards and Policy matters

- To understand how different countries do auctions, getting ideas for improvement of their own coming awards
- To discuss how the new regulatory framework affect awards
- To find people to discuss Auction design struggles with

Regarding the Further work and cooperation between BEREC and RSPG several topics of common ground where the organisations could support each other was identified: a continued cooperation on spectrum awards, 5G matters, IoT matters, and coverage matters were raised as potential areas. These proposals will be subject to a continued discussion between the two organisations on how and where cooperation will be helpful.