

## Investigation of the Possibility to Grant Rights of Use for Radiofrequencies in the 2.6 GHz Band

2.6 GHz

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the Commission of the European Communities reached Decision 2008/477/EC on the harmonization of the 2.6 GHz (2 500-2 690 MHz) band on the European Union level, so that the band may be allocated for the development of terrestrial systems capable of providing Electronic Communication Services in the Community according to the parameters stated in the Annex of the specific Decision.

The designation of the 2.6 GHz band for Electronic Communications systems, represents a significant development in the convergence of mobile, fixed communications and radio and television broadcasting sectors as a result of technological innovation. According to Decision 2008/477/EC, the services to be developed in the 2.6 GHz band should mainly target access to Broadband Services by the end-user.

Although Decision 2008/477/EC specifies a maximum period of six months within which our country must comply with the above Decision regarding the band usage, it leaves to the discretion of the Regulatory Authorities the determination of the appropriate time and method to be used for the allocation of the 2.6 GHz band. Our country has already complied with the EU directive and EETT has initiated a Public Consultation process regarding the investigation to grant rights of use for radio frequencies in the 2.6 GHz band.

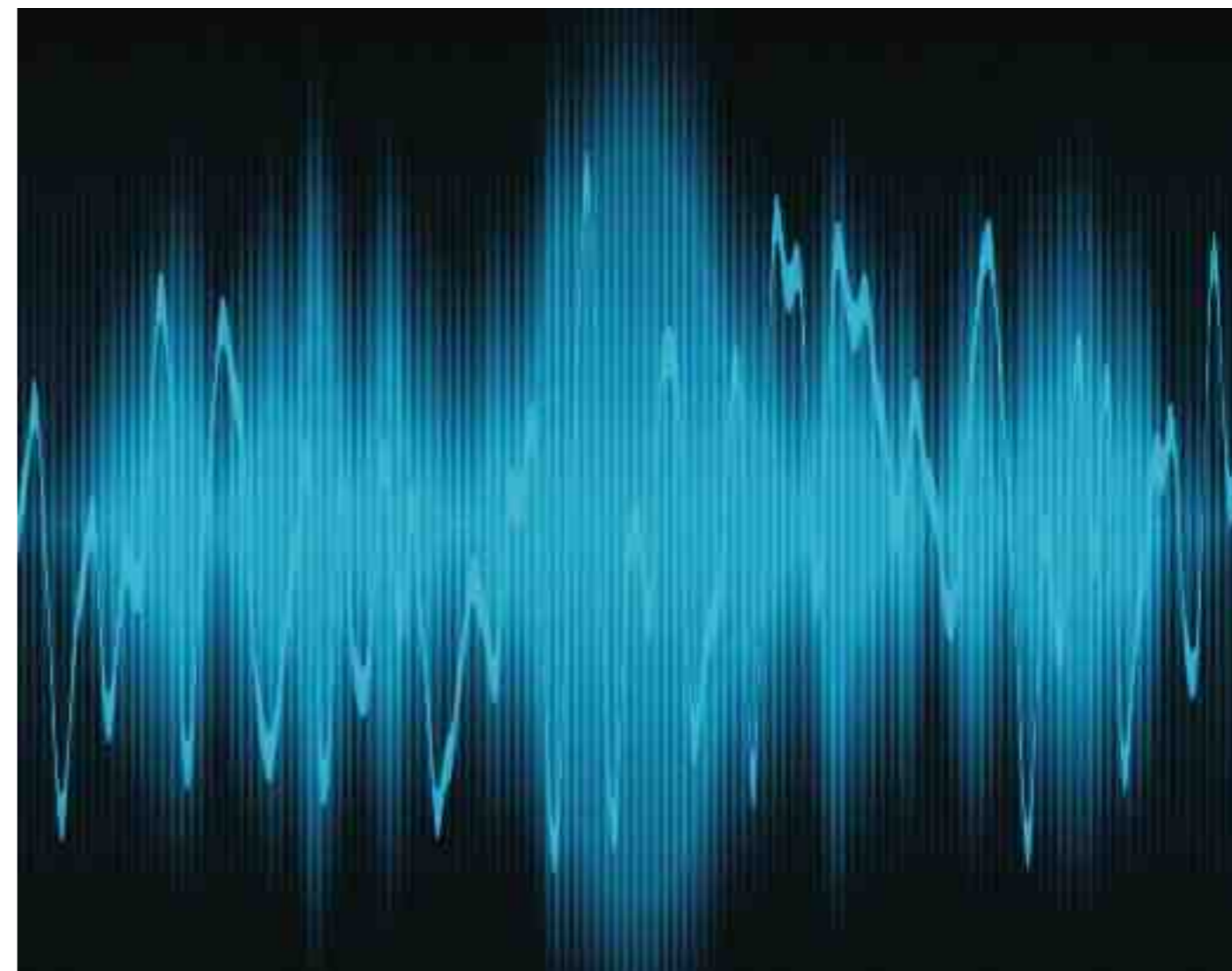
As of 2000, according to the results of the World Radiocommunication Conferences (ITU WRC2000), the 2 500 – 2 690 MHz band has been identified on a global level as a candidate for the development of systems belonging to the family of International Mobile Telecommunications-2000 (IMT-2000) according to Resolution 223 (WRC-2000). At that period, the IMT-2000 family comprised five different system technologies. In October 2007, the ITU Radio Assembly decided to incorporate WiMAX technology into the IMT-2000 family, which will henceforth be called IMT.

On CEPT level, the first pertinent Decision on the 2.6 GHz band was ECC/DEC/(02)06, which specified that, the 2 500 – 2 690 MHz frequency band will have to be allocated to UMTS/IMT-2000 systems as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 having taken into consideration the market needs and the national licensing schemes. The subsequent Decision, ECC/DEC/(05)05, sets a specific channeling scheme, as well

as the allocation of the band between FDD<sup>1</sup> (2x70 MHz) and TDD<sup>2</sup> (50 MHz) systems. Although CEPT Decisions play a significant role in the harmonization of radiofrequency band usage at European level, they are not binding for CEPT member states.

On the level of CEPT member states, two countries (Sweden and Norway) have already granted Rights of Use for Radiofrequencies in the 2.6 GHz band, whereas most of the remaining countries have already completed or are in the process of running a Public Consultations regarding the granting of Rights on the 2.6 GHz band. Procedures relevant to tenders are expected to take place within 2009.

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009, EETT announced the commencement of a one-month-long Public Consultation process which would look into the possibility of granting Rights of Use for Radiofrequencies for wireless terrestrial systems that could provide Electronic Communication services in the 2.6 GHz band.



As part of its effort to acknowledge and encourage the principle of technology and service neutrality, EETT does not intend to prescribe specific technologies and services regarding the use of the 2.6 GHz band. However, as part of the endeavor to achieve the maximum possible harmonization in the use of the 2.6 GHz band, EETT does identify at the moment possible uses, not excluding other potential uses, such as:

1. Advanced mobile telephony services using 3G technologies and the respective developments (UMTS FDD, HSPA, and Long-Term Evolution), offering optimal transfer of both voice and data at high transfer speeds.

2. Broadband wireless services based on WiMAX technologies (2005/revision “e” in particular) or variations of the 3G family (UMTS TDD). These applications could allow the provision of data transfer services at high speeds towards fixed, nomadic, or mobile terminals.

As a starting point, EETT expects that the Public Consultation will enable the investigation of the possibility of granting Rights of Use for Radiofrequencies in the 2.6 GHz band, mainly with respect to the method and time involved in the implementation of the award process. EETT deliberations will take into consideration the views

of the market and all other interested parties. The main issues under scrutiny during the consultation are: the interest of the providers for the specific band, the timing of the award, issues related to competition of the electronic communications market taking into consideration the existing wireless communication networks, issues related to the geographic extent of the Rights in light of the efforts to reduce the digital divide in Greece, issues related to terms that could accompany the Rights, such as roll-out obligations and, lastly, issues related to the technical aspects resulting from the allocation of the band for use by both FDD and TDD technologies.

<sup>1</sup> Frequency Division Duplex  
<sup>2</sup> Time Division Duplex