



GSME position on the 2010 - 2025 MHz frequency band

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Executive summary

GSM Europe (GSME) welcomes the opportunity to present a position on the 2010 - 2025 MHz frequency band, which is allocated to UMTS TDD according to the ERC/DEC/(99)25, in order to establish a more efficient spectrum usage.

GSME represents the interests of 143 mobile second and third generation operators providing mobile services to around 460 million consumers throughout Europe.

GSME believes that the whole band 2010 - 2025 MHz band could be more efficiently used if in addition to TDD applications it could be also opened for UMTS FDD uplink and therefore supports that the ECC PT1 reviews and updates the ERC/DEC/(99)25 taking into account existing national UMTS TDD licenses in the 2020-2025 MHz band.

This approach would be consistent with ECC/DEC(05)05 which states that "Administrations may assign the frequency band 2570 - 2620 MHz either for TDD or for FDD downlink (external)".

Similarly, the option of UMTS FDD uplink within the band 1900 - 1920 MHz should be discussed within ECC PT1.

Background

The ERC/DEC(99)25 details a harmonised spectrum band plan for UMTS that, among the others, identifies the following:

- the frequency band 2010 - 2025 MHz is unpaired band for TDD operation;
- the frequency band 2010 - 2020 MHz is identified for self provided applications operating in self coordinating mode.

Following the discussion at RSC level, it is evident that there is no actual use of the 2010 - 2025 MHz band in the Member States. A number of European countries (Finland, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands) have awarded licenses for UMTS TDD in the band 2020 - 2025 MHz as part of the national 3G licensing processes.

The information available to administrations today do not suggest that there is a strong interest in "unlicensed" TDD applications. Manufacturers of unlicensed equipment have started to focus on other bands such as the globally harmonised 5 GHz bands. The market for self-provided, self-co-ordinating systems using UMTS TDD technology has demonstrably failed to materialise and no equipment has been developed and made commercially available for the self-co-ordinating, self-provided TDD market.

Page 1

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Therefore, it seems reasonable to adjust the designation of the band 2010 - 2020 MHz, currently envisaged, but not used, for self-provided applications.

The 2010 - 2025 MHz band could be paired with the FDD downlink external within the 2570 - 2620 MHz band as defined in the ECC/DEC(05)05, recently approved at ECC level, and implemented through national licensing schemes taking into account existing national UMTS TDD licenses in the 2020-2025 MHz band.

This approach would be consistent with ECC/DEC(05)05 which states that "Administrations may assign the frequency band 2570 - 2620 MHz either for TDD or for FDD downlink (external)".

Conclusion

After significant infrastructure investment, operators are now beginning to roll out national UMTS networks that are able to offer voice, video and data services simultaneously. As consumer demand for these services increases, as predicted by the current 3GSM operators, additional spectrum will be required.

In order to meet this demand, GSME is of the opinion that the 2010 - 2025 MHz band could be made more flexibly and efficiently used if opened for UMTS FDD uplink in addition to TDD. In particular, the band 2010 - 2025 MHz should be designated for either licensed IMT-2000/UMTS TDD or for IMT-2000/UMTS FDD uplink subject to national decision. IMT-2000/UMTS FDD uplink could then be paired with the FDD downlink external in the 2570 - 2620 MHz band.

Therefore, on the basis of the above mentioned considerations, GSME supports that ECC PT1 reviews and updates ERC/DEC/(99)25 to allow a more viable approach to the use of the 2010 - 2025 MHz band for UMTS FDD uplink in addition to TDD. Similarly, the option of FDD uplink within the band 1900 - 1920 MHz should be discussed within ECC/PT1.

This approach would be consistent with ECC/DEC(05)05 which states that "Administrations may assign the frequency band 2570 - 2620 MHz either for TDD or for FDD downlink (external)".