

ANDRUS ANSIP

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels,
Ares (2015)

11 06. 2015

The Wider Spectrum Group
E-mail: widerspectrumgroup@yahoo.com

Dear Representatives of the Wider Spectrum Group,

Thank you very much for your letter of 29 April 2015 sharing your industry's vision on "A fresh start for Europe" which you sent to President Juncker and me. President Juncker has asked me to reply also on his behalf. I have read your strategy with interest and taken note of its suggestions.

As you may have seen from the announcement on 6 May 2015, spectrum policy is at the heart of our Digital Single Market strategy. Breaking national silos in spectrum management is an important priority for this Commission, as outlined in President Juncker's political guidelines from July 2014. The review of the regulatory framework for electronic communications will amongst other issues address ways to break these silos.

The societal and economic importance of spectrum is increasing every year and I fully agree that spectrum has become too important to be left to technical experts only. The future needs will be very different from the needs of the past and I welcome that more and more stakeholders and politicians are taking an active interest in this debate.

As referred to in the Digital Single Market strategy, the EU strongly relies on creativity to compete globally. Digital content is one of the main drivers of the growth of the digital economy. Content distribution is subject to a changing environment in which consumers increasingly view content on mobile devices and expect to be able to access content from everywhere and wherever they are. Your industry is well placed to tap into these new opportunities as the demand for content continues to grow. Digital terrestrial television is an integral part of the European audio-visual model and it will play an important role in distributing tomorrow's content in a multi-platform digital world.

The Commission's aim in the current discussions on the UHF band is to create a win-win situation where both broadcasters and mobile operators can benefit from future changes. In this context, the 700 MHz band is crucial to connect all Europeans, particularly in rural areas, and the Commission will make specific proposals regarding the coordinated release of the band.

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This release will have to go hand in hand with reassurances to the broadcasting sector on the future usage of the overall UHF band. The Digital Single Market strategy explicitly refers to the need to "accommodate the specific needs of audio-visual media distribution" when releasing the 700 MHz band. The Commission has taken careful note of Mr Lamy's recommendations that broadcasters should be primary users of the lower UHF TV band until 2030, subject to market review by 2025. The Commission is working closely with the Member States in order to define common EU objectives ahead of the World Radio Conference in November 2015.

I much appreciate your active engagement in building a digital single market in Europe and I look forward to meeting you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrus Ansip". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

Andrus Ansip