

BELGIAN INSTITUTE FOR POSTAL SERVICES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

PRESS RELEASE

New mobile operator exercises the option for reserved spectrum

Brussels, 29 March 2022 - One of the two newcomers whose applications had been declared admissible for the spectrum auction has exercised the option to obtain a reserved radio spectrum package in the various radio frequency bands for both 5G and 2G, 3G and 4G applications against payment of €83,340,000. This way this new mobile operator can enter the Belgian mobile market with an adequate spectrum package. The three existing mobile operators have exercised the option to obtain the radio spectrum reserved for them against payment of € 73,000,800 each as well. This allows them to ensure the continuity of their current service on the mobile market.

On 18 March 2022, the BIPT adopted a decision on the eligibility of the candidates for the auction of the future radio spectrum. Five mobile players have been deemed admissible by the BIPT. This auction is due to take place in June 2022. In the meantime, the operators had to indicate whether they wanted to take up the spectrum reserved for them.

The new regulatory framework leaves open the possibility for a new operator to reserve a spectrum package in order for the latter to be able to enter the market as a fully-fledged mobile player. It is necessary for a newcomer to reserve a spectrum package in the spectrum bands for existing and future technologies at the price set (in total 30 MHz duplex for an amount of € 83,340,000) in order to avoid existing operators from hijacking the market by hauling all of the spectrum and thereby preventing a possible newcomer from entering the market.

One of the two newcomers who have been deemed admissible to participate in the auction, has announced the wish to exercise the option to acquiring a defined package of reserved spectrum at the price set. This package includes frequencies in different frequency bands (700 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz and 2100 MHz). Today, the 900 MHz, 1800 MHz and 2100 MHz radio frequency bands are mostly used for 2G, 3G and 4G applications. The 700 MHz radio frequency band is regarded as a "coverage band" for 5G, suitable for a national coverage and for a better indoor coverage. In addition to this reserved package, this player participating in the auction will also have the possibility to acquire spectrum in the 3400-3800 MHz capacity frequency band provided for 5G. The reserved package and possible additional spectrum that can be acquired, allows for sufficient spectrum for the newcomer to enter the mobile market.

The existing mobile operators also enjoy partly reserved spectrum, in order to ensure the continuity of service. They too have asked to use this option (more in particular this regards, for each of the existing operators, one 5 MHz duplex frequency block in the 880-915 MHz and 925-960 MHz frequency bands, three 5 MHz duplex frequency blocks in the 1710-1785 MHz and 1805-1880 MHz frequency bands and two 5 MHz duplex frequency blocks in the 1920-1980 MHz en 2110-2170 MHz frequency bands). The three existing operators each pay €73,000,800 to this effect. This reserved spectrum allows to guarantee the continuity of service on the mobile market.

In addition to the reserved spectrum, all candidates, both the existing operators and the newcomers, will of course have the possibility to bid on the remaining lots of the auction for which they are a candidate (in total 640 MHz for a minimal amount of € 477,000,000). In case of bidding up, this price will of course increase.

For further information:



Jimmy Smedts | Spokesperson

Belgian Institute for Postal Services and Telecommunications

Ellipse Building | Boulevard du Roi Albert II 35 | 1030 Brussels

T +32 2 226 88 22 | **M** +32 478 63 91 82 | **www.bipt.be**

