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E-003157/2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(5.10.2026)

A core objective of the Digital Networks Act¹ (DNA) currently in negotiations is to create a more predictable and investment-friendly regulatory framework that incentivises long-term investment in advanced, high-capacity networks, with positive implications for Europe's technological sovereignty and resilience. As highlighted in the DNA impact assessment², fragmented and investment-unfriendly spectrum regulation, combined with market factors, may slow investment in high-quality and secure mobile connectivity networks, which could constrain productivity and gross domestic product gains across the EU.

This calls for measures to increase predictability in spectrum assignment conditions, including indefinite rights of use by default and quasi automatic renewals proposed in the DNA. Proportionate exceptions are possible to preserve competition, accommodate technological change in line with EU spectrum harmonisation decisions, or align license expiry dates across bands. National authorities must balance investment predictability and EU policy objectives such as competition, consumer benefits and efficient spectrum use, based on forward-looking economic analysis and stakeholder consultations.

Until the entry into force of the DNA, the current framework applies, providing less guarantees for licence holders in terms of duration and renewal. To ensure a consistent exercise of competent authorities' discretion, the DNA proposes a mandatory EU radio spectrum single market procedure for harmonised bands. This would address limitations of the current system and prevent national spectrum decisions from fragmenting the single market or undermining long-term competition, efficient spectrum use and investments.

¹ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-networks-act>.

² <https://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/dae/redirection/document/123763>.