



5G auction suspended during COVID19 crisis

Due to the COVID19 pandemic, ANACOM suspended Portugal's 5G auction while emergency rules are in force.

In February 2020, ANACOM issued a draft regulation that would allow it the 5G auction to occur as of April.

The regulation, under public consultation, aims at providing Portuguese operators, both incumbents and new entrants access to 5G frequencies. The most interesting feature of the draft regulation is the attempt by ANACOM to level the playing field for new entrants by reserving to them certain lots in the 900MHz and 1800MHz frequency bands, instituting national roaming, limitations on the acquisition of certain frequency bands and discounts.

ANACOM's intention is to ensure the commencement of 5G network roll out by the end of 2020 and achieve full coverage by the end of 2025.

According to the initial schedule, the consultation would be concluded in the end of March and the final allocation to occur in August 2020.

However, due to the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic, for the first time in half a century, in 20th March 2020, the State of Emergency was decreed imposing severe restrictions on population movement and economic activity.

Following a series of requests by operators and considering the terms of the Presidential decree, ANACOM decided to suspend the consultation procedure while the State of Emergency is in force. In the same decision the Regulator also suspended the refarming of spectrum currently used by Terrestrial Digital Television (DVB-T standard), a measure designed to release further 5G frequencies.

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