

The Malta Communications Authority (MCA)

The Malta Communications Authority (MCA) is the National Regulatory Authority of the Electronic Communications Networks and Services, mandated with the regulation and oversight of all practices, operations and activities related to the sector.

One of the MCA's main objectives is to ensure the provision of products and services, based on the latest innovative technologies, at the right price and of the highest quality to **consumers**. On the **business** side, the Authority aims to ensure and promote an environment that is conducive to sustainable competition and investment, through a forward looking regulatory framework that adequately caters for the growing demands of the future.

The Authority supports home-grown entrepreneurship but also internationally promotes Malta and its technology readiness in order to attract more businesses that actively contribute to the development of the local communications industry in some way or another.

The MCA enables **competition** in the communications sector by facilitating market entry through a light-touch authorisation framework for the provision of networks and services, and by regulating access to networks so as to develop effective choice for end-users - both residential and business.

As the body responsible for the **regulation** of the electronic communications networks and services, the MCA works closely with all relevant stakeholders at national and EU levels. This way, MCA ensures that the regulation is proportionate, reflects the challenges being faced by the sector, meets the needs of consumers and benefits the Maltese communications sector and the economy.

ICT-20-2019-2020: 5G Long Term Evolution

In order to ensure that Malta reaps the full socio-economic benefits of a timely introduction of 5G, the MCA has launched a number of initiatives to facilitate the roll-out of new network technologies including 5G. A set of initiatives are focusing on showcasing how 5G will enhance not solely how we communicate but also how we do business and augment our well-being - 5G will impact all aspects of society.

Besides Malta being a small but densely populated island, valuable commercial spectrum which is scarce in other jurisdictions, is available to be used under a trial framework, making Malta an ideal location for pilot studies of 5G and its verticals. The MCA, as the Authority responsible of spectrum management on behalf of the Government, has published a light weight test and trial licensing framework¹ which grants both local and foreign companies the licence to carry out tests and trials of innovative wireless systems such as 5G on a non-commercial basis. Both the 3.6 GHz and the mmWave frequency bands are currently available for such trials. The MCA believes that the available spectrum in both the 3.6 GHz

¹ <https://www.mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/pageattachments/MCA%20Decision%20-%20Test%20and%20Trial%20licensing%20framework.pdf>

band and the mmWave can be beneficial to interested parties including for the upcoming ICT-20-2019-2020 5G Long Term Evolution². Strand 3 of the call, is expected to result in:

“Improvement of radio spectrum usage, novel strategies for coverage/service extension, support of novel use cases and mobile edge cloud applications, usability of today unexplored spectrum.”

The MCA as a partner in a consortium for this H2020 call, will ensure that the consortium can trial new products both in the 3.6 GHz, mmWave and new spectrum. Moreover, as a National Regulator Authority, the MCA can facilitate tests and trials in one or more cities in Malta.

² <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/topics/ict-20-2019-2020.html>