

Press release

Telefónica switches on 5G in the 700MHz band

- The 2022 Mobile World Congress will be the first event with 700MHz commercial coverage provided by Telefónica.
- The 700MHz 5G radio equipment installed by the operator will begin operating following the switch-on authorisation granted to operators this month by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation.
- Telefónica has installed 700MHz 5G base stations to serve 700 towns and cities throughout Spain.
- The aim is to reach 1,400 municipalities by the end of the year and 2,400 by late 2023.

Madrid, 25 February 2022.- Telefónica has switched on 5G in the 700 MHz band after all the operators received authorisation from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation to activate their radio equipment (nodes) in this frequency band.

The Mobile World Congress will be the first major event to feature Telefónica's 700 MHz 5G commercial coverage, complemented by its special 5G deployment in the 3.5 GHz band in the Halls of Fira Barcelona.

With the 700 MHz switch-on Telefónica will continue to complement its 5G coverage, which now reaches more than 80% of the population, all the provincial capitals, large cities and small towns with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants.

In the eight months since June 2021, following the resolution of the 700 MHz auction, Telefónica has deployed the infrastructure required to offer users 5G coverage in the 700 MHz band in accordance with the Ministry's authorisation of the switch-on.

Telefónica has installed 5G base stations to cover 700 towns and cities across Spain once the switch-on is complete. The aim is to end the year with 1,400 municipalities with 700 MHz and reach 2,400 by 2023.

The municipalities already covered with 5G in the 700 MHz band by Telefónica include Almería, Alcudia, Ripoll, Rota, Madrigal de la Vera, Barbate, Azuqueca

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de Henares, Rota, Ocaña, Sada, Motril, Murcia, El Almendro, Andújar and Ezcaray, among many others.

The auction of the 700 MHz band in July 2021 constituted a significant milestone for the deployment of 5G in Spain. Telefónica was awarded one bloc of 2x10 MHz for a total amount of 310.09 million euros, enabling the operator to consolidate its leadership in connectivity by combining the increase in 5G coverage with its extensive fibre network in Spain.

The 700 MHz band, also known as the low band, will allow Telefónica to provide extensive coverage and indoor penetration and universalise some of the features of 5G communication, including low latency. It will thus be the perfect complement for the 3.5 GHz band in which Telefónica also operates, one which is ideal for services that require very high transmission speeds, although its range is shorter, and it is less able to pass through obstacles such as building walls than the signal in the 700 MHz band.

The 5G spectrum is complemented by the 26 GHz millimetre wave bands, which are designed to provide the highest speeds and capabilities, albeit for limited spaces and specific high-performance deployments. It's the newest coverage-related technology and there is no tender date in sight yet.

The switch-on of 700 MHz is gradual, as the Administration allowed 60 installations per week in the initial weeks. Similarly, operators must provide advance notification of the towns and cities where it's going to be switched on so that they can check whether there is any interference with DTT and resolve any specific cases in which this may occur.

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