One Albania becomes first in the Western Balkans cleared to test SpaceX Direct-to-Device technology

A new chapter in telecommunication history is opening in Albania. One Albania received the authorization from the Electronic and Postal Communications Authority (AKEP) to test Direct-to-Device (D2D) technology in collaboration with SpaceX, becoming the first operator in the Western Balkans for this new generation of satellite-to-mobile connectivity.

The permission covers a period of 120 days and marks an important step in bringing mobile and satellite technologies close together. As part of the trial, SpaceX satellites will use radio spectrum resources authorized to One Albania to establish direct communication with compatible mobile devices. This represents a key contribution from One Albania to the project and enables the integration of satellite connectivity with its mobile network.

Direct-to-Device technology enables compatible mobile phones to connect directly to satellites, without the need for specialized satellite equipment. This creates a new alternative for mobile communication, particularly in remote rural areas, mountainous regions and tourist destinations where terrestrial coverage may be limited or unavailable. Satellite connectivity is not intended to replace the existing mobile network; rather, it complements it by extending the reach of communications beyond areas covered by terrestrial base stations and adding an additional layer of resilience to the network.

"*Being the first operator in the Western Balkans to receive authorization for this technology gives us the opportunity to explore how the next generation of connectivity can serve our customers in the future. An important part of this project is One Albania's contribution of radio spectrum resources, which enables the direct connection between compatible mobile devices and SpaceX satellites. D2D can extend communication beyond the limits of traditional coverage, particularly in areas that are more difficult to reach, while adding another layer of resilience to our network*," said Barna Kutvölgyi, CEO of One Albania.

The authorization in Albania follows a major milestone at European level. In September, 4iG Group, the parent company of One Albania, and SpaceX signed Europe's first agreement to launch Starlink Mobile and Sovereign Solutions. The partnership brings together terrestrial mobile networks and satellite technology, creating new opportunities at the intersection of the telecommunications and space industries. For One Albania, the authorization represents another concrete step toward the future of mobile communications in Albania, one in which terrestrial and satellite networks can work together to make connectivity more resilient and extend its reach beyond the limits of traditional infrastructure.

Background information

One Albania is one of Albania's leading telecommunications providers, offering mobile and fixed-line services, high-speed internet, digital television, and business solutions. Building on decades of experience in the Albanian telecommunications sector, the company serves

individual customers, businesses, and institutions, providing digital solutions tailored to their evolving needs.

As part of the 4iG Group, One Albania continues to invest in advanced technologies, including 5G and fiber-optic infrastructure, to enhance connectivity and strengthen its telecommunications network across the country. Through its operations and strategic investments, the company contributes to the advancement of Albania's digital infrastructure, supporting connectivity, technological development, and the digital transformation of businesses, institutions, and communities.