



Short situation about Universal Service Obligation

Background:

In accordance to BiH Telecommunications policy, the principal policy objective is to ensure that the whole population of Bosnia and Herzegovina has access to public switched voice telephone services at affordable prices. The means to achieve this objective include:

- investing in infrastructure, modern management systems and services;
- operating on a commercial basis to ensure that users are served efficiently;
- improving customer choice by opening up service provision to the private sector, in both fixed and mobile services (liberalisation); and
- more effective regulation of prices and quality of service.

Present situation:

At the moment Communications regulatory Agency, the CRA, is in the preparation of License for Fixed Public Telecommunications Operators (it will be issued three country-wide license) where, under Universal Service Obligation was stipulated that the "...Licensee shall meet all reasonable requests for connection to the fixed public telephone network at a fixed location and access to fixed public telephone services at affordable prices...". Although the License defines some USO obligations, details will be defined in the new Rule on Universal Service Obligation.

Ongoing and planned activities:

Starting activities on liberalisation of the Telecommunications sector in BiH, where the Agency is one of the key actors, and increasing competition and choices for communications services are going in parallel as to create a harmonised regulatory framework which secures the delivery of universal service.

In accordance to Action plan of the CRA, draft Rule on Universal Service Obligation is planned to be finished until the end of 2002. For this purpose, it will be organized International consultancy service for organization of targeted training courses for responsible key CRA staff as well as consultancy service during the preparation of this document.

Draft Rule on Universal Service Obligation will be prepared in accordance to EU directive on universal service and users rights relating to electronic communications networks and services and apply them in the context of BiH.