

Colombia's Ministry of Communications Issues Policy Discussion Paper on Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP)

On June 25th 2004, Colombia's Ministry of Communications issued a draft policy document to start the discussion process on how services based on Internet protocol (IP) should be implemented in the country, in particular VoIP. The document is intended to be a draft discussion paper and does not establish any ministerial position. The discussion is expected to focus on the impact of VoIP on companies and users, and the legal changes required to recognize the technological opportunities offered by IP within the Colombian regulatory framework.

The document describes briefly what IP is, the implications of convergence, and how it changes the way services are provided. It also provides some related international practice cases and recommendations from ITU. It presents the current regulatory situation in Colombia with regards to the provision of VoIP and questions whether VoIP services can be categorized as a value-added service or as a public basic telephone service. To promote and facilitate the discussion, it sketches a series of considerations for all stakeholders in the sector. Finally, the document proposes a methodology to define the benefits and desirability of implementing VoIP in the country and to establish the best path towards that end.

The Ministry has started to receive proposals from all stakeholders and expects to issue its second draft by August 2004, and the final policy document by October 2004.

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Adapted from: Policy Document for VoIP

<http://www.mincomunicaciones.gov.co/Archivos/Documentos/vozipjun2004.pdf>