

GSR13 Consultation

Contribution from ANACOM - Portugal

The evolving role of the regulator: the regulator as a partner for development and social inclusion

The ultimate goal of all regulatory activity developed by ANACOM is to promote competition and competitiveness and protect the interests of consumers in the sector - which is also to ensure compliance with the universal service obligations (and therefore geographical accessibility and price and social inclusion) - especially with regard to citizens with special needs.

Universal service providers shall make available specific provisions in order to ensure that end users with disabilities have the same level of access as all other end users regarding publicly available telephone services, including access to emergency services, directory enquiry services and directories. The specific provisions may, in particular, consist of:

- a) The provision of handset amplifier for hearing impaired people;
- b) The provision of call indicator light, which consists of a device that activates a visual signal when the terminal equipment receives a call;
- c) The provision of simple *braille* bills;
- d) The provision of fixed destination line;
- e) The possibility of making a pre-defined number of free calls to directory enquiry services.

In another perspective, it should also be recognized the active role of ANACOM in the preparation of active public policies concerning the development and social inclusion, specifically in the role of ANACOM of advising the government.

One example is the multiband auction, which took place in the end of 2011, established coverage obligations applicable to those operators who acquired rights of use in the 800 MHz band. The results have determined that the three mobile network operators in Portugal have each an obligation to cover 160 parishes which currently do not have mobile broadband coverage, or have levels of coverage which are clearly insufficient to ensure that end users have adequate access to mobile broadband services. The obligations are to be fulfilled by 50% and 100%, respectively, within 6 months and one year after ANACOM notifies of the end of the existing operational restrictions in the 800 MHz band. Operators are now in the process of choosing the parishes, following a decreasing order of their winning bids.

Another example is the promotion of broadband in rural areas, which can contribute to ensure a level playing field for all citizens, promote info-inclusion and the development of human capital and contributing to the creation of externalities in rural development policy at the level of employment, growth, competitiveness and sustainability of the industries located in these areas, the Portuguese government launched five Public Tenders for the deployment of "High-Speed Networks in Rural Areas", involving 139 municipalities, an investment of 156 millions of euros, covering more than 1 million of people.

ANACOM played an active role in setting up these public tenders and is currently monitoring the execution of contracts between the state and the contractors, particularly with regard to the implementation of wholesale offers and verification of compliance with these offers wholesale access obligations.

Finally, it should also be mentioned the approval of the Agenda Portugal Digital, which was approved by the Council of Ministers Resolution 112/2012, of 31 December, and determines a set of measures to promote the achievement of the objectives of the Digital Agenda. We highlight the following objectives:

- To promote the development of broadband infrastructures in order to allow that all citizens have access to broadband speeds equal to or greater than 30 Mbps, by 2020;
- To promote the development of broadband infrastructures in order to allow that 50% of households have access to broadband Internet speeds equal to or greater than 100 Mbps, by 2020.

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