

DEAR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,
DEAR COLLEAGUES,

I have the honor and pleasure to be among you for a consecutive year on the occasion of the opening the 14th ITU Regional conference for Europe on "Regulation of Electronic Communications Market". I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers for keeping the tradition alive and gathering representatives of regulatory authorities of the ITU Member States, industry and academia, unified around the idea to ensure for all citizens of the world the possibility to be connected and to communicate irrespective of time and place. I believe that the missions of the regulatory authorities of EU and ITU Member States are close despite the significant difference in their geographic scope. The goals enshrined in the ITU Strategic Plan for the period 2016-2019 and in the Strategy for a Single Digital Market in Europe are identical. Both of them recognize the provision of reliable and affordable information and communications services to all citizens of Europe and of the world as a key enabler to achieve sustainable social, economic and ecological development.

In this context the priorities of the Communications Regulation Commission (CRC) as a European Regulatory Authority and Related Administration in ITU are aimed at creating conditions for investment and roll-out of broadband fiber networks as well as 4G and 5G mobile networks, development of a competitive market environment, guaranteeing and protecting end users' rights and provision of high-quality services. Bulgaria is continuously improving the different indicators, measuring the broadband access level with the major contribution of CRC. According to latest data the speed of Internet connection in our country is among the highest in the European Union and 53,5% of the broadband Internet access consumers are using download speeds of 30 to 99 Mbps. At the end of 2015 the penetration per households of fixed broadband Internet access reached 48,6% compared to 44,3% at the end of the previous year. Bulgaria ranks among the first places in Europe as far as provision of NGA broadband access is concerned, as 72% of all broadband access subscriptions are provided through Next Generation Networks. In the course of the last year a significant growth in the number of subscribers to mobile Internet access has been observed, whereas they reached 4,5 million. This in turn influenced the indicator for mobile internet access penetration according to population in Bulgaria, which by the end of 2015 reached 80,8% of the population of the country.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This year's Conference topics enable us once again to provide up-to-date information on the development of the electronic communications market in our respective countries, to exchange expertise and regulatory practices as well as to continue our discussions from previous year. I believe that all of us present here today will benefit from the current forum for dialogue focused on the topics which shall mark the development of the sector in the next years.

In conclusion I wish to all of us successful common work and fruitful discussions during the Conference.