

RESOLUTION 64 (Rev. Kigali, 2022)

Protecting and supporting users/consumers of telecommunication/ information and communication technology services

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Kigali, 2022),

considering

- a)* Resolution 196 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on protecting telecommunication service users/consumers;
- b)* Resolution 84 (Rev. Geneva, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, on studies concerning the protection of users of telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) services;
- c)* United Nations guidelines on consumer protection, reviewed and approved by the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 70/186 of 22 December 2015, which establish the main characteristics that consumer protection laws must have, the institutions in charge of enforcing them, and compensation systems so they can be effective;
- d)* Resolution 188 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on combating counterfeit telecommunication/ICT devices;
- e)* Resolution 189 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on assisting Member States to combat and deter mobile device theft;
- f)* § 13 e) of the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which states that governments should continue to update their domestic consumer-protection laws to respond to the new requirements of the information society;
- g)* §§ 4.4 and 4.5 of Article 4 of the International Telecommunication Regulations;
- h)* Goals 2 and 3 of the ITU Connect 2030 Agenda, on bridging the digital divide and providing broadband for all, and managing challenges resulting from telecommunication/ICT development, respectively;

i) the work of ITU-D Study Group 1 of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector being carried out under Question 6/1, on consumer information, protection and rights,

taking into account

a) ITU's mandate to serve as coordinator and facilitator for Action Lines C5 and C6 of the Geneva Plan of Action;

b) that the basic principles of consumer and user relations include education and outreach on the appropriate consumption and use of products and services, in order to guarantee freedom of choice and fairness in contracting, together with clear and appropriate information of these products and services, with the correct information such as specification of quantities, characteristics, composition, quality and price, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

c) that information is the main input of the digital economy, for which reason it is recognized that the cross-border flow of personal consumer and user data demands the observance of national laws and regulations;

d) that it is necessary to continue work in updating and redefining the protection needs of users and consumers in an increasingly connected world, considering new and emerging telecommunication/ICT technologies and services;

e) that there is a need to promote digital skills among users/consumers of telecommunication/ICT services;

f) that similar measures to protect and support, as well as to enhance the level of digital skills, should be taken with respect to users/consumers of telecommunication/ICT services with disabilities or specific needs, as well as other vulnerable groups¹;

g) that the establishment of effective protection for users and consumers must also take into account issues like their economic interests, information about security and protection of their personal data, the coordinated fight against device theft, and advances in financial services, among others;

¹ Vulnerable groups are intended to include women and girls, persons with disabilities and specific needs, older persons, youth, marginalized communities and indigenous people.

- h) that policies on information transparency make it possible to increase the level and quality of the information provided by operators to users and consumers;
- i) that the same policies should ensure access to telecommunications/ICTs for vulnerable groups, in conditions of use comparable to all other consumers and users;
- j) that telecommunication/ICT services provided to users and consumers should be based on quality standards;
- k) that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has accelerated the adoption of telecommunications/ICTs and at the same time has given rise to an increase of risks in the use of ICT services amongst consumers and users,

resolves

to continue work aimed at the development of the guidelines and best practices on the support and protection of telecommunication/ICT users/consumers regarding issues such as information on basic telecommunication/ICT services being provided, their rates and prices, their quality and security, and the protection of personal data, among other aspects,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau, in collaboration with the Directors of the Radiocommunication Bureau and the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

- 1 to continue to support work aimed at raising awareness among decision-makers regarding telecommunications/ICTs as well as among regulatory agencies regarding the importance of keeping users and consumers informed and empowered about the basic characteristics, quality, security and rates and prices of the different services offered by operators, and at creating other protection mechanisms to facilitate and support the expeditious exercise of consumers' and users' rights;
- 2 to continue coordination with the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) and the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) on such topics as service quality, perceived quality and security and ITU-R on such topics as quality of service and quality of experience of telecommunication/ICT services;
- 3 to issue regular information about relations and joint efforts with other international organizations and entities involved in telecommunication/ICT consumer and user protection;

4 to invite Member States to create their end-user and consumer associations that can address issues relevant to this resolution;

5 to organize training programmes, such as workshops and seminars, in order to analyse best practices, to encourage training in telecommunication/ICT services, user and consumer education, education for sustainable consumption and data protection, and to formulate possible recommendations about tools and measures that provide support and protection for users and consumers of ICT services,

encourages Member States

1 to empower users/consumers through the formulation and promotion of policies that foster the provision of information and good practices in regard to consumer education, consumer rights, and the characteristics, quality, security, rates and prices of the telecommunication services offered by different providers, considering especially those that facilitate the provision of free-of-charge, transparent, comparable, up-to-date and accurate information;

2 to consider the creation of an enabling and collaborative regulatory environment in which telecommunication operators can provide telecommunication/ICT services for their users/consumers, with the appropriate quality, and stimulating competitive, fair and affordable rates and prices;

3 to foster measures to ensure that, in international roaming, visiting users are provided with telecommunication/ICT services of satisfactory quality, and that consumers and end users are informed in a timely manner about international telecommunication services, including international roaming rates, and relevant applicable conditions;

4 to encourage telecommunication/ICT operators/providers to develop clear, simple offers at affordable prices, with easy to understand, transparent and accessible terms of service, as well as better consumer-education practices;

5 to build the trust of telecommunication/ICT users and consumers in the utilization and leverage of telecommunications/ICTs, including through the development of policies to guarantee and encourage the provision of quality services, and transparency of comparable, updated and accurate information, in order that user and consumer decisions about services are based on ease of perception, understanding and accessibility;

6 to include users/consumers with disabilities, persons with specific needs, older persons and other vulnerable groups, so they have access to telecommunication/ICT services under equal conditions;

7 to consider improving digital skills among users/consumers of telecommunication/ICT services, particularly for users/consumers with disabilities, persons with specific needs, older persons and other vulnerable groups,

invites Member States and Sector Members of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector

to contribute inputs that will allow the dissemination of best practices and policies they have implemented in regard to this resolution, taking into consideration ITU Recommendations, reports and guidelines.