

GSR13 Consultation

Contribution from the Georgian National Communications Commission, Georgia

The developed electronic communications sector is the most important prerequisite for country economic growth, its international integration and development of the information society.

The electronic communications sector is currently undergoing rapid changes with advancement of new technologies, development of online services and introduction of broadband internet. Currently we have the new, digital era generation requiring completely new and different approaches.

Georgia, like the whole world, pays special attention to the development of information-communication technologies. The Georgian National Communications Commission – the regulatory authority for electronic communications and broadcasting in Georgia - within the framework of its competence and by means of its mission, values, priorities and effective regulations supports the development of information-communication technologies in our country.

The mission of the Georgian National Communications Commission is to:

- promote availability of wide range and nation-wide electronic communications quality products and services to consumers at affordable and reasonable prices;
- ensure development of competitive electronic communications market in Georgia; and
- encourage investments, innovations and development of new technologies by creating predictable regulatory environment;

The values of the Commission are:

- transparency;
- impartiality;
- neutrality; and
- effectiveness.

The priorities of the Commission are to

- promote availability and development of wired and wireless broadband infrastructure and services;
- develop policies for efficient and effective use of spectrum in order to promote development of innovative technologies;
- foster sustainable competition across the entire electronic communications sector by implementing effective, proportionate and justified remedies following analysis in relevant markets; and
- ensure that consumers derive maximum benefit in terms of choice, price and quality of service.

Special attention is paid to the effective regulation of spectrum. To learn the best European practice, within the framework of bilateral projects between UKE and GNCC since 2011 the Commission studies the UKE experience concerning all spectrum related issues.

Introduction of high speed internet service has increased the gap between agreed and real speed of the internet. This, in turn gives rise to violation of consumers' rights. To improve the quality of broadband internet service the Commission in 2012 started preparation works for monitoring of broadband internet service quality. This study is aimed at internet service providers to determine the minimum level of quality of services offered and make this

information accessible to consumers, which in turn will support the reduction of the gap between the offered and the real services.

For several years, the digital dividend (800 MHz band) has been a hot issue extensively discussed by telecom administrations and telecom policy makers in developed and developing countries. Nowadays, based on the European experience social and economic benefits generated by the use of digital dividend for mobile communications are quite obvious.

In order to respond to the mobile broadband traffic growth in Georgia, the mobile industry needs to gain access to additional frequency spectrum and we are considering the possibility to make 800 MHz band available for IMT services as soon as possible. We are actively work on procedural and technical measures to be put in place in order to start negotiations with our neighboring administrations and to reach agreements with them on the usage of 790-862 MHz band for mobile/aeronautical radio navigation and broadcasting services.

Below we are providing the data reflecting the latest trends of electronic communications market of Georgia:

By the end of 2012 the number of fixed broadband service subscribers equaled to 483,300 subscribers. After the end of 2011 the number of subscribers increased by 27.4% (103,900 Subscribers). The density of fixed broadband subscribers equals to 37.8%.

By the end of 2012 the number of fiber-optic subscribers equaled to 180,600. This is 44.4% (55,500) more than the corresponding 2011 indicator.

Mobile internet traffic also increased in 2012 and amounted 717 TB. This is 93.9% more than the corresponding indicator of the last year.

As we can see, the presented information demonstrates the successful development of the electronic communications market in Georgia, which is result of the proper policy of the Government and effective regulation of the Georgian National Communications Commission.