



# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

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# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

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# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Universal services

- Adequate broadband Internet access and voice communication service at a fixed location, of the prescribed quality;
- Universal service may also include the provision of a universal directory service and a universal telephone directory enquiry service;
- Universal service is provided on a technology-neutral basis;
- The right to universal service also applies to entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and non-profit organizations.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## New regulatory framework for universal services in Montenegro

Old regulatory framework	New regulatory framework
Rulebook on the method of assessing the affordability of service prices and special universal service packages for socially vulnerable persons and persons with disabilities	Rulebook on the manner of providing universal services
Regulation on the minimum set of services covered by the universal service	
Rulebook on the quality of universal service	
Rulebook on determining the data transmission speed for functional internet access through the universal service	
Rulebook on the criteria for assessing the justification of users' requests for access to the public electronic communications network through the universal service	

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## New regulatory framework for universal services in Montenegro

Old regulatory framework	New regulatory framework
Rulebook on conducting a public tender and the conditions for designating the operator of the universal service	Rulebook on conducting public tenders and the conditions for designating the operator of universal services
Rulebook on the methodology for calculating the net cost of providing universal service	Rulebook on the methodology for calculating the net costs of providing universal services
Rulebook on the types of benefits and special measures for access to public electronic communications services for persons with disabilities	Rulebook on types of benefits and measures for persons with disabilities and persons in a state of social need

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## New Rulebook on the manner of providing universal services

Reasonable request - 6 conditions:

One connection



No equivalent service



Distance limit 300 m



Coverage area



Threshold 3,600



Network expansion



# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## **New Rulebook on the manner of providing universal services**

Additional changes in the Rulebook:

- If the connection costs exceed €3,600 (excl. VAT), the user may cover the excess cost, with written consent; operator may offer instalments;
- The supply time: Service must be provided within 65 days of request submission;
- Operator responds within 15 days on request validity; user confirms within 5 days;
- User signs a minimum 24-month contract for universal service.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## **New Rulebook on the methodology for calculating the net costs of providing universal services**

The general principles and criteria for assessing unfair burden (net costs) include:

- The avoided cost principle;
- Taking into account the benefits of providing the universal service (both material and non-material benefits);
- The reference model of an efficient operator;
- The obligation to keep separate accounting records;
- Identification of unprofitable versus profitable areas and users;
- The significance of the financial impact.





# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## **New Rulebook on the methodology for calculating the net costs of providing universal services**

### Universal operator – reporting obligations

- Submit, with the annual report, a separate study proving the unfair burden, based on criteria in the Rulebook;
- Deadline: by 30 June each year, send the report and net cost calculation for the previous calendar year to the Agency.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## **New Rulebook on conducting public tenders and the conditions for designating the operator of universal services**

Main changes:

- The universal operators are designated for a period of three years;
- The universal operators can be designated either at the national level or at the level of municipalities.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## **New Rulebook on types of benefits and measures for persons with disabilities and persons in a state of social need**

Key rules:

- This Rulebook is currently in the process of being adopted by the Ministry of Economic Development;
- The Agency has submitted the expert basis for the Rulebook;
- The Agency proposed that the universal operators must provide free terminal equipment to persons with disabilities and persons in a state of social need, and ensure priority in the implementation of connections.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Analysis of the quality of providing universal services



**Main conclusion:** The need for universal operators is justified – 15% of households have no network access or have Internet speeds of  $\leq 2$  Mbps



**Main goal:** To ensure a minimum level of availability of universal services in areas without commercial interest.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Analysis of the quality of providing universal services

- The Agency conducts the analysis every three years to determine whether universal service is necessary;
- The Agency defined adequate broadband of at least 10 Mbps (download) and 1 Mbps (upload) speed, with a minimum data usage of 100 GB per month;
- Based on the Review of service availability at the municipal level, the Agency identified a total of 23 municipalities as appropriate geographical units;
- 23 municipalities (19 + 4):
  - In 19 municipalities the rule for designating the universal operator: coverage >50% of households and >2% of market revenue.;
  - In 4 municipalities (coverage <50%): Šavnik, Andrijevica, Plužine, Petnjica – all operators may provide the service.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Analysis of the quality of providing universal services

- Operators that may be designated as universal service operators:
  - Crnogorski Telekom: 23 municipalities;
  - Mtel: 16 municipalities;
  - Telemach: 6 municipalities.

# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Analysis of the quality of providing universal services

- At a distance of 300 m from the telecommunications termination and cable, the number of uncovered buildings is 20,622 (12,597 business premises + 5,918 households);
- Number of persons in a state of social need and persons with disabilities: around 11,000 (+/-);
- 8,742 users are using speeds below 10 Mbps.



# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Analysis of the quality of providing universal services

Universal service	Maximum price (incl. VAT)	
Broadband Internet service	18,51 €	An affordable price
Voice communication service	4,05 €	
Broadband Internet service + Voice communication service	22,56 €	
Broadband Internet service	5,61 €	Prices for persons with disabilities and persons in a state of social need
Voice communication service	1,23 €	
Broadband Internet service + Voice communication service	6,84 €	



# Universal service in Montenegro – new challenges and opportunities

## Future activities:

**18.09.2025.**

The Agency has adopted a Decision to launch and conduct a public tender for the designation of a universal service operators



**October 2025.**

The public call for the designation of universal service operators should be published



**No later than 26 January 2026**

Universal service operators will be designated no later than 26 January 2026

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*Thank you very much for your attention !*



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