

Buenos Aires Action Plan

STUDY GROUP 1

QUESTION 4/1

Economic policies and methods of determining the costs of services related to national telecommunication/information and communication technology networks, including next-generation networks

1 Statement of the situation or problem

As recognized in the Final Report on study Question 4/1 of the previous study period, the deployment of next-generation networks (NGN) calls for changes to new accounting tools in order to strengthen and increase the benefits that the use of such networks offers end users.

Similarly, the last study period focused on various topics such as new charging methods for services provided over NGN networks, infrastructure-sharing models, consumer price evolution and impact on ICT service usage, methods of determining the cost of licences for the operation of networks and/or the provision of telecommunication services and regulatory accounting in an NGN environment.

Considering the previous study period, Question 4/1 should continue to consider that operators and service providers require access to telecommunication/information and communication technology (ICT) networks and services, including broadband infrastructure, in a converged manner.

Thus, the work programme set out below to guide the activities related to Question 4/1 should cover:

- identification of active collaborators;
- expected outputs of the Question;
- working methods; and
- work programme.

2 Question or issue for study

The Question will cover the following main topics from national perspectives:

- 1) New charging methods (or models, if applicable) for services provided over NGN networks:
 - 1.1) Methods for determining the costs of wholesale services.
- 2) Different models for infrastructure sharing, including through commercially negotiated terms:
 - 2.1) For what type of infrastructure (or facilities) the provider party is free to negotiate reasonable commercial terms and conditions with a requesting party.

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- 2.2) The impact of infrastructure sharing on investment cost, local loop unbundling, provision of telecommunication/ICT services, competition and prices to consumers: case studies with quantitative analysis.
- 3) Consumer price evolution and impact on ICT service usage, innovation, investment and operator revenues:
 - 3.1) New and innovative business models for services deployed in an NGN environment, including methods encouraging the adoption and use of ICT services.
 - 3.2) Trends in prices of telecommunication/ICT services, including international mobile roaming.
- 4) Trends in the development of virtual mobile operators and their regulatory framework.

3 Expected output

Development of best practices for each of the following areas:

- a) Promoting appropriate infrastructure sharing
- b) Encouraging price/tariff reduction to consumers through competition
- c) Stimulating access to and use of these services.

4 Timing

An interim report will be presented to Study Group 1 in 2020. It is proposed that this study should be completed in 2022, when a final report will be submitted.

5 Proposers/sponsors

ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) Study Group 1 proposed the continuation of this Question as modified herein.

6 Sources of input

The major source of input will be the experiences of Member States and Sector Members on costing and pricing issues. Contributions from Member States and Sector Members will be essential to the successful study of the issue.

Interviews, existing reports and surveys should also be used to gather data and information for the finalization of a comprehensive set of best-practice guidelines.

Material from regional telecommunication organizations, telecommunication research centres, manufacturers and working groups should also be used, in order to avoid duplication of work.

Contributions are expected from Member States, Sector Members and Associates, and from relevant ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) and ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) study groups, in particular ITU-T Study Group 2, and ITU-D study groups, and other stakeholders.

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7 Target audience

All the target audiences mentioned below, with particular attention to the needs of developing countries¹.

Target audience	Developed countries	Developing countries
Telecom policy-makers	Yes	Yes
Telecom regulators	Yes	Yes
Service providers/operators	Yes	Yes
Manufacturers	Yes	Yes
ITU-D programme	Yes	Yes

a) Target audience – Who specifically will use the output

All national telecom policy-makers, regulators, service providers and operators, especially those in developing countries, as well as regional and international organizations.

b) Proposed methods for implementation of the results

The results of the Question are to be distributed through ITU-D interim and final reports. This will provide a means for the audience to have periodic updates of the work carried out and to provide input and/or seek clarification/more information from ITU-D Study Group 1 should they need it.

8 Proposed methods of handling the Question or issue

Electronic distribution of the report and guidelines to all Member States, Sector Members and their respective national regulatory agencies (NRAs), and ITU regional offices.

Distribution of the report and guidelines at the Global Symposium for Regulators (GSR) and relevant Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) and Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) seminars.

How?

- 1) Within a study group:
 - Question (over a multi-year study period)
- 2) Within regular BDT activity:
 - Objective 3
 - Projects: regional initiatives
 - Expert consultants

¹ These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

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9 Coordination and collaboration

The ITU-D study group dealing with this Question will need to coordinate with:

- Relevant ITU-D study group Questions, particularly Question 1/1 and Question 3/1
- Relevant ITU-T study groups, particularly Study Group 3
- Relevant focal points in BDT and ITU regional offices
- Experts and experienced organizations in this field.

10 BDT programme link

ITU-D Objective 3.

11 Other relevant information

Question 4/1 will liaise closely with ITU-T Study Group 3 and its regional groups for Africa (SG3RG-AFR), Asia and Oceania (SG3RG-AO), Arab States (SG3RG-ARB) and Latin America and the Caribbean (SG3RG-LAC), ITU-D Study Groups 1 and 2 and other international and regional organizations concerned with issues relating to costs and tariffs for telecommunication services, and the ITU-D enabling environment programme.

As may become apparent within the lifetime of this Question.
