



EU regulatory framework for electronic communications: what's in for disabled end-users?

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Revision of EU telecoms package

- Revision of 5 Directives - EU framework for electronic communications
- Adopted November 2009, implementation deadline was 25 May 2011
- Most relevant:

Universal Service Directive 2002/21/EC – universal service and end-user rights

Framework Directive 2002/21/EC– inclusion of issues related to users with disabilities in the general policy aims

Universal service concept

Universal service in electronic communications

- *Safety net of minimum set of services defined at EU level to be available to all, independently of geographical location, at an affordable price.*
- Principles: availability, accessibility, affordability
- Provision universal service by designated undertakings
- Quality of service of designated undertakings
- Financed from public funds/sector specific funding
- Review of the scope of universal service

Universal service *mandatory provisions*

Universal service for disabled end-users:

mandatory provisions

- equivalent access and affordability of publicly available telephone service provided over network connection at a fixed location
- equivalent access and affordability of comprehensive directories and directory enquiry services

Universal service *other provisions*

Other provisions

- measures to allowing disabled end-users to take advantage of the choice of undertakings and service providers
- accessibility of public payphones to disabled end-users
- *NRAs/MS may assess the general need and design specific requirements*

End-user rights *transparency*

- Transparency and publication of information:
 - regular information to disabled subscribers on details of products and services designed for them
 - publication of information on measures taken to ensure equivalent access for disabled end-users
 - information on quality of service parameters so that (disabled) end-users have access to comprehensive, reliable, comparable and user-friendly information

(possible NRA requirements on providers of electronic communications networks/services)

End-user rights *harmonised numbers*

- 112 and emergency services
 - equivalent access for disabled end-users to emergency services, including measures enabling access to emergency services while travelling in other MS (e.g. SMS service, text-relay, video-relay or other real-time functionalities)
- 116xxx numbers for harmonised services of social value
 - access for disabled end-users to services provided under '116' numbering range (to the greatest extent possible), incl. when travelling
 - *Commission may adopt technical implementing measures*
- Must carry obligations
 - possibility to impose transmission of complementary services, particularly accessibility services to enable appropriate access for disabled end-users

End-user rights *equivalent access and choice*

Requirements that may be imposed by relevant national authorities on all undertakings providing electronic communications services:

- Ensuring equivalence in access and choice for disabled end-users
 - access to electronic communications service equivalent to that enjoyed by majority of end-users (i.e. functionally equivalent access allowing same usability of services but by a different means, e.g. accessible information on services, billing, customer services, design for all, terminal equipment)
 - benefit from choice of undertakings and services available to majority of end-users (i.e. consumer protection requirements such as e.g. equivalent terms and conditions of services, incl. prices and tariffs)

End-user rights *terminal equipment*

- MS to encourage availability of terminal equipment offering necessary services and functions (i.e. better end-to-end solutions for disabled and more incentives to invest in new technology and services for manufacturers of goods and service providers)

Disabled end-users

Implementation developments

- BEREC report on equivalence for disabled end-users (2011)
http://berec.europa.eu/doc/berec/bor_10_47Rev1.pdf
- Study Monitoring eAccessibility 2009-2011 (MEAC2)
 - *Report on implementation of eAccessibility articles of European Directives into National Legislation*.<http://www.eaccessibility-monitoring.eu/>
- Study on assessing and promoting e-Accessibility (2013)
<http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/study-assessing-and-promoting-e-accessibility>

Study on assessing and promoting E-Accessibility - 2013

Overview of situation in MS for key telecom indicators

- Directory services
- Payphones
- Relay services
- Special equipment
- Emergency access
- Special tariffs
- Choice

Thank you for your kind attention!