

# **BEREC Summary Report on the status of internet capacity, regulatory and other measures in light of the Covid-19 crisis**

In a joint statement with the European Commission, on 19 March 2020, on how network operators can cope with the increased demand of network capacity, BEREC committed to a special reporting mechanism to ensure regular monitoring of the Internet traffic situation in each Member State, in order to be able to respond swiftly to capacity issues. Furthermore, BEREC is collecting information on other measures implemented by National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) as well as on other initiatives by public and private parties throughout Europe.

This report focuses on, and summarises, the main updates of an ongoing monthly information gathering exercise, and includes the most recent data provided to BEREC by its constituent NRAs as of 29 September 2020. During the entire reporting period (i.e. since BEREC first published a report on how the Covid-19 crisis is impacting internet capacity etc.), 32<sup>1</sup> NRAs have shared their data about the impact of the crisis on electronic communications networks and the actions taken so far in their respective Member States.

Please refer to the previous iterations of this summary report<sup>2</sup> for further details on some of the early measures applied by NRAs during the crisis. The summary report will continue to be updated based on regular input from NRAs with the next iteration expected to be released on 30 October 2020.

## **1. Status of internet capacity**

In general, while traffic on fixed and mobile networks have increased during the Covid-19 crisis, no major congestion issues have occurred.

2 NRAs<sup>3</sup> have provided updates of substance on the status of internet capacity in their Member State since the previous information gathering exercise (25 August 2020), while 18 NRAs<sup>4</sup> have explicitly mentioned that either the situation remains stable or there is nothing

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<sup>1</sup> The following NRAs have contributed so far to the information gathering exercises: AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, ME, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK.

<sup>2</sup> The previous iterations of the summary report can be found at:  
[https://berec.europa.eu/eng/document\\_register/search/?reference\\_number=&title=summary+report&contents=&category\\_id=&date\\_from=&date\\_to=&search=1](https://berec.europa.eu/eng/document_register/search/?reference_number=&title=summary+report&contents=&category_id=&date_from=&date_to=&search=1)

<sup>3</sup> NRAs from the following Member States having provided substantive updates since the previous data gathering exercise: PL, PT.

<sup>4</sup> NRAs from the following Member States having explicitly mentioned that there were no changes since the previous data gathering exercise: AT, BE, BG, CY, DE, DK, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, RO, SE, SI, SK.

new to report. Please refer to previous iterations of the internet capacity summary report for further details on some of the early measures applied by NRAs during the crisis.

#### ***Key updates since previous report***

- *Most operators in PL have reported that their overall traffic flow remains stable compared to last month*
- *An increase in fixed internet traffic and a decrease in mobile data traffic have been observed this month in PT*

### **1.1. Network issues raised by NRAs**

In general, three phases in the evolution of internet traffic have been observed during the crisis: an initial sharp increase, a period of stabilisation and a decrease from the peak.

The following updates on the status of internet traffic have been reported:

In September, most operators in PL have reported stabilisation in their overall traffic flow compared to the previous month. Traffic has not exceeded the 'alert states' (i.e. beyond excessively high levels of capacity) for telecommunications systems and no significant congestions have been reported by operators to the NRA.

In PT, mobile data traffic has decreased in September compared to the previous status report, while fixed data traffic has increased during the same period. As of 20 September, overall data traffic was still 49% above the data traffic registered the week before the pandemic was declared.

Both PL and PT inform BEREC that there continues to be no evidence of any breach to the Regulation (EU) 2015/2120.

### **1.2. Regulatory actions taken**

NRAs are monitoring the situation and are collecting data from ISPs and other market players about the status of their networks, but are doing so with different regularity. No NRA has provided new information to be included in this section of the report.

### **1.3. Actions taken and communication by operators**

No NRA has provided new information to be included in this section of the report.

## 2. Other measures taken by NRAs, public institutions and market players

### *Key updates since previous report*

- *PT reported on the recent actions taken by the NRA and other public bodies*
- *PT reported on the restart of migration process of DTT network*
- *AT, DE, IE, IT, FI and PT provided an update concerning their tracing applications*

### 2.1. Measures implemented by NRAs

PT continues to publish statistics concerning the number of complaints regarding the electronic communications sector. The number of complaints keeps decreasing, although in August it was still 69% higher compared to the same period last year.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.2. Measures to monitor the spread of Covid-19

BEREC has asked NRAs if there are any tracing applications/solutions in place in their Member State in order to monitor the spread of Covid-19. Information provided earlier to BEREC is available in the previous iterations of this summary report.

An update on the issue of tracing applications/solutions, as of 29 September, has been provided to BEREC by AT, DE, IE, IT, FI and PT.

AT reported that the Austrian Stopp Corona App will also participate in the mentioned European gateway. Users will have to update the app and give their consent for the exchange of data with the apps of other Member States. So far, the Austrian app has been downloaded 960.000 times.

DE reported that the German contact tracing app (released by the federal government in June 2020), which uses pseudonymised data, has been downloaded approximately 18.4 million times so far<sup>6</sup>. The app depends on voluntary data provision and is based on a decentralised software architecture using the APIs provided by Apple and Google. Approximately 1.2 million test results have been transmitted via the app and 5,000 users have shared positive test results. As a next step, a European gateway, currently being tested, will enable the German app and the national contact tracing apps of other Member States, also using a decentralised approach, to exchange contact tracing data with each other.

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<sup>5</sup> Detailed information available at: <https://www.anacom-consumidor.pt/-/reclamacoes-no-sector-das-comunicacoes-agosto-de-2020>

<sup>6</sup> Detailed information available at: [https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges\\_Coronavirus/WarnApp/Kennzahlen.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/WarnApp/Kennzahlen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

IE reported that the contact tracing application based on Bluetooth technology, which was released on 6 July, has, as of 29 September 2020, been downloaded by 2 million people.

IT reported that since July, downloads of the “Immuni” tracing application have increased by 1.8 million. Since it was launched, the tracing application has been downloaded 6 million times.

FI reported that a privacy preserving contact tracing application Koronavilkku<sup>7</sup> was released on 31 August. It has, as of 29 September 2020, more than 2 million downloads.

PT reported that the contact tracing application “STAYAWAY COVID”<sup>8</sup> which is endorsed by the Government was officially launched<sup>9</sup> on 1 September. The STAYAWAY COVID app, which is voluntary, does not require access to personal data. By 20 September, the application has already reached approximately 1 million downloads.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://koronavilkku.fi/en/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://stayawaycovid.pt/landing-page/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.sns.gov.pt/noticias/2020/09/01/stayaway-covid-2/>