spectru

ANACOM
AUTORIDADE NACIONAL DE COMUNICAÇÕES

4TH QUARTER 2002 STATISTICAL DATA

The number of land mobile service customers at the end of 2002 rose to 8.53 million, the latest statistical data compiled and released by the *Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações* (ANACOM) indicates.

The most recent statistical information, concerning the 4th quarter of 2002, reveal that the mobile networks' penetration rate was 82.5 per 100 inhabitants (it was 77.2 exactly one year beforehand, at the end of 2001).

Compared with the previous year, the number of written messages transmitted between mobile networks increased by 28 percent, for nearly 2 billion messages sent. Regarding portability, a function available in mobile networks since 1 January 2002, 6 026 numbers had been ported by the end of the year.

With regard to cable distribution networks, 25 percent of Portuguese households received the service at the end of the 4th quarter of 2002; the Lisbon and Tagus Valley region had the highest adhesion rate (54 percent). There were at that date 289 000 subscribers to satellite television service using Direct to Home (DTH) technology, equivalent to a rise of 7 percent quarterly and 29 percent annually.

Internet access service in turn increased by 10 percent quarterly and 49 percent annually, with 5.165 million customers at the end of last year. Broadband access counted 260 000 customers.

Audiotext services also increased in the last quarter (114 percent more calls made), while registering a sharp drop compared with the same period in the previous year (57 percent less). Only five of the 20 authorised service providers were operational.

Complete 4th quarter 2002 statistics for various telecommunications services, including fixed telephone service, will be published as a supplement in the next edition of *Spectru*.

SEE http://www.anacom.pt/template15.jsp?categoryId=3476   SEE http://www.anacom.pt/template20.jsp?categoryId=4599&contentId=90461   SEE http://www.anacom.pt/template20.jsp?categoryId=4599&contentId=89384 ◀

SMS IN THE FIXED NETWORK

In a 6 February decision the *Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações* (ANACOM) authorised *PT Comunicações* (PTC) to provide short message service (SMS) in fixed networks.

To do so, PTC must use its own Mobile Network Code (MNC), in this case MNC '02', ensuring total interoperability with the other mobile network operators.

The situation will be reassessed by ANACOM in one year's time, taking into account the emergence of any new standards and protocols in this context, as well as possible modification of the Recommendation E.212 adopted in the Standardisation Sector of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU-T).

SEE http://www.anacom.pt/template12.jsp?categoryId=56770 ◀

INTER-MINISTRY GROUP ON RADIATION EXPOSURE

The last quarter of 2002 witnessed the start of work by the inter-ministry group established as a result of joint order no. 8/2002 of 7 January, which is to study the effects of electromagnetic radiation in frequencies between 0Hz and 300 GHz on human health, and to set limits on the emission of same.

The goals of the group, in which the *Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações* (ANACOM) also participates, are to study Recommendation of the Council no. 1999/519/EC of 12 July, to propose a framework of basic restrictions and appropriate reference levels, and to draw up tangible action proposals regarding this issue.

The work should be finished by the end of the first quarter of the current year. ◀

EVOLUTION OF LEASED LINES PRICES

The average annual value of the price basket of *PT Comunicações* lines dropped by 47 percent between 1998 and 2003, indicates a study on the evolution of leased lines prices undertaken by the *Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações* (ANACOM). During the period in question, the value of monthly digital line (national and international) subscriptions decreased by 49 percent. International digital lines registered a decrease of 45 percent with respect to the average subscription charge.

SEE http://www.anacom.pt/template20.jsp?categoryId=3730&contentId=89174 ◀

CURRENT EVENTS

PTC price table for 2003

The new *PT Comunicações* price table for 2003 took effect on 15 February; the *Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações* (ANACOM) had on 6 February decided not to oppose the entrance into force of same. See http://www.anacom.pt/template15.jsp?categoryId=10251 .

2001 fiscal year postal service audits

ANACOM approved in a 13 February determination the conclusions of the audit, carried out by the Deloitte & Touche company, of the fiscal year 2001 cost accounting system of the *CTT - Correios de Portugal* (Portuguese postal service), as well as the system's statement of conformity and the results obtained. The conclusions, determinations and recommendations resulting from the audit were subsequently passed on to the CTT. See http://www.anacom.pt/template15.jsp?categoryId=1552 . ANACOM also approved, in a 27 February determination, conclusions of the audit of service quality indicators and the CTT claims system for 2001, which was likewise carried out by Deloitte & Touche; the corresponding recommendations and determinations were transmitted to the CTT. At http://www.anacom.pt/template15.jsp?categoryId=4616 .

Ported numbers destination network

ANACOM approved on 27 February a decision on the information that must be provided to consumers with respect to the destination network of calls to ported numbers, in the wake of the draft decision adopted last December. See http://www.anacom.pt/template15.jsp?categoryId=618 .

ANACOM joins DVB

The ANACOM joined on 1 January 2003 the DVB (Digital Video Broadcasting) Project, a European working group studying and developing open digital television standards. DVB is at present analysing preparation of the Multimedia Home Platform (MHP), considered vital for the development of interactive services for the launch of digital terrestrial television in Portugal. See http://www.dvb.org .

New sections on the ANACOM website

The section on 99 Review - designation of the new electronic communications regulatory framework to be implemented from 25 July 2003 - and updated information on the Portuguese presidency (1 October 2002 to 30 September 2003) of the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) are online (only Portuguese version at the moment).

Ported numbers

At the end of February 81 532 fixed telephone numbers had been ported (81 378 geographic and 154 non-geographic). In mobile networks some 7 937 telephone numbers had been ported.

ANACOM sponsors Microsoft competition

The 6th Microsoft software competition accepts Windows applications candidate projects until 17 April. Two new areas have been created this year, dedicated to interactive television and teaching, sponsored by *TV Cabo* and HP respectively, besides the traditional categories of management, education, sites and mobility. The ANACOM is sponsoring the Universities award.

9th National Radio Congress

The 9th National Radio Congress was held on 22-23 February in the central Portuguese city of Castelo Branco. The agenda comprised four panels on "Convergence and Regulation", "The Radio Product and Public Service", "Media Challenges for the Radio Sector" and "Radio and the New Digital Platforms". José Faustino was re-elected president of the Portuguese Radio Association (APR).

Exhibition on Communication at the Knowledge Pavilion

Lisbon's Pavilion of Knowledge hosts until 14 September a temporary exhibition on Communication, which deconstructs countless aspects of the world of communication, "from wave motion to satellite networks, from analogue to digital, from binary language to the internet, from animal communication to information society," in the words of the promoters. At http://www.pavconhecimento.mct.pt/home/index.asp?accao=changelang&lang=en .

APDC ELECTIONS

Norberto Fernandes was on 25 February elected chairman of the board of the Portuguese Association for the Development of Communications (APDC). The only list presented for the ballot counted Raúl Junqueiro as candidate for the post of chairman of the General Assembly and Luís Ribeiro to head the Audit Council. The new organs of the APDC, founded in 1984, will oversee the 2003-2006 triennium under the motto "an association for the sector's new times."

COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT

The APDC held on 25 February a conference on the topic of "Portugal Seen from the Outside - foreign investors in communications", the venue was the Belém Cultural Centre in Lisbon.
The opening session outlined the three main conference focal points: the need to debate the current state of communications in Portugal; the problem of the lack of internal investment in our country and the consequent external search for same; and changes that must happen in order to attract foreign investment.

The conference's main conclusions reiterated the Portuguese system's elevated level of bureaucracy, besides highlighting the country's current economic situation, the low qualification of human resources and reduced productivity as aspects that condition foreign investment in Portugal. It was nevertheless also noted that the country has various natural competitive advantages: security, lack of exchange risks, stability, management capacity, modern infrastructures, open and flexible culture, geo-strategic potentials and singular weather conditions from a European standpoint.

MISSION UNIT PRESENTS ACTION PLAN

The manager of the Innovation and Knowledge Mission Unit (UMIC), Diogo Vasconcelos, presented on 19 February at Tagus Park the main measures it aims to launch in the short term, in the context of the information society. The Citizen's Portal, which the UMIC official labelled a "fast lane access to public services", should be operational in December of this year and assure access to more than 50 online services. A functional prototype will already be working in May.

Another main measure aiming to promote the digital economy is the Transaction Portal, likewise to be inaugurated in December 2003. For now, the National Purchasing Plan has been defined and an information portal implemented. In March the National Electronic Purchases Plan will be launched; from April on the project will function in pilot mode in six ministries and in three local governments and public institutes.

The Virtual Campus initiative is also included on the lists of government projects in this area. By the end of this month, all pilot projects should be concluded; plans call for the introduction of wireless broadband networks in all universities and polytechnic institutes by 2004.

Widespread broadband use is at the centre of the Mission Unit's concerns. It aims to complete by the end of this month the respective national strategy, and in April has scheduled a National Broadband Conference.

Also to be set up is a digital scientific library, by means of a soon-to-be-established national consortium. Lastly, the Mission Unit will continue the strategy of granting financial support for national applications to the European Union's 6th Framework Programme for Science, Technology and Innovation.

See http://www.governo.gov.pt/en/ .

6TH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME AND VIRTUAL CAMPUS

The European Union's 6th Framework Programme for Science, Technology and Innovation was launched by the Mission Unit on 27 and 28 January in Oporto and Lisbon, respectively. Budgeted at 17.5 billion euros, it will be in effect until 2006, with the goal of promoting the European Research Space. UMIC also launched, on 22 January at the University of Aveiro, the Virtual Campus initiative, by which institutions of higher education will be equipped with broadband and mobile internet access networks.

FCCN/ UMIC SEMINARS

The Foundation for National Scientific Computation (FCCN) organised in February, jointly with UMIC, two seminars: "The IPv6 Protocol - the new internet generation" on the 13th at the National Civil Engineering Laboratory, and "Wireless LANs and Virtual Campuses - broadband access as a priority" on the 14th at Tagus Park.

INFORMATION SOCIETY INDICATORS

The second seminar on Information Society indicators was held in Lisbon on 27-28 February at the Macau Scientific and Cultural Centre and was jointly organised by UMIC and the Iberian-American Network of Science and Technology Indicators (RICYT). Details at http://www.umic.pcm.gov.pt/site/?tema=6&mid=2001&ler=2001 .

@LIS PROGRAMME

The various national entities active in the communications sector were informed, though in draft form, of the priorities to include in Action A1 - Political and regulatory dialogue - of the @LIS Programme, during a 17 January UMIC-co-ordinated meeting in the offices of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. On the same date, UMIC delivered to the @LIS Programme representatives the national response to a previously distributed questionnaire on the matter. With funding of 3.8 million euros over three years, this action aims to encourage information society-related projects in partnership with Latin America.

See http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/international/latin/alis/index_en.htm .

NEWLY ENACTED LEGISLATION

• **Law no. 6/2003** (I Series-A of the *Diário da República* of 6 March) - Authorises the government to legislate on the expropriation regime for the basic telecommunications network.

• **Decree-Law no. 18/2003** (I Series-A of the D.R. of 18 February) - Modifies Decree-Law no. 20-C/86 of 13 February, which establishes the possibility of reducing by 50 percent the telephone subscription rate for the retired, pensioners and those unable to work, with income equal to or less than the national minimum wage.

• **Decree-Law no. 31/2003** (I Series-A of the D.R. of 17 February) - Modifies grounds for the concession of public telecommunications service, published as an annex to Decree-Law no. 40/95 of 15 February.

• **Notice** (III Series of the D.R. of 17 February) - Replaces the notice published in the III Series of the D.R. of 18 September 2001, in compliance and conformity with the provisions of paragraph 2 of article 18, paragraph 2 of article 9 and paragraph 3 of article 12 of Decree-Law no. 151-A/2000 of 20 July.

• **Administrative Rule no. 144-A/2003** (I Series-B of the D.R. of 10 February) - Approves the rates applicable to radiocommunications, revoking administrative rule no. 667-A/2001 of 2 July.

The Council of Ministers (CM) of 28 February approved a Decree-Law that sets up a Public Employment Job Bank, which aims to publicise state hiring opportunities, primarily on the internet. Also approved was another measure that sets out special standards for public-private partnerships. The 20 February CM approved a proposed law that authorises the government to legislate on certain legal aspects of the information society, particularly electronic commerce, in the internal market, transposing into the national legal order Directive no. 2003/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June. The same CM approved a resolution that adopts various measures tending to generalise the electronic acquisition of goods and services in public administration and business enterprises; the Information and Knowledge Mission Unit (UMIC) is given the responsibility of proceeding with its implementation and monitoring, in articulation with other entities. Lastly, the government approved the resolution that appoints the members of the Council of the Competition Authority, which will be chaired by Abel Mateus; the other members are Eduardo Rodrigues and Teresa Moreira. The Competition Authority should become operational on 24 March.

SEE http://www.governo.gov.pt/en/

CEPT MEETINGS

CPG

The Conference Preparatory Group (CPG) of the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), which is responsible for preparing European participation in the next World Radiocommunications Conference (WRC03), met in Göteborg, Sweden from 10 to 14 February.

Participants in the meeting approved the European Common Proposals (ECP) on most of the 39 items on the WRC03 agenda, and identified the administrations that intend to undersign each ECP, which will be followed by the formal signature procedure whose deadline is next 1 April. CEPT's WRC03 document will comprise various parts, each associated with a respective item and the indication of the European countries that support same.

The briefs were also approved, while the document summarising CEPT's preliminary positions was updated, all with reference to each of the agenda points. Final approval of all the briefs will only come at the last CPG meeting.

It was more difficult to obtain an ECP agreement on some subjects. Such is namely the case of the radionavigation satellite service (RNSS) in which the European Galileo project is inserted (the CPG approved a proposal that guarantees the same regulatory framework for existing systems and for the Galileo system, thus seeking to consolidate the project's viability conditions with regard to the allocation of frequencies) and of IMT-2000 and future systems, for which a proposal was approved indicating that 2010 is the most consistent date to assess the future spectrum needs, which should be dictated by the market and by experience gained in the meanwhile.

Similar difficulties in reaching consensus occurred with regard to other issues: aeronautical mobile satellite (AMSS) service in the 14-14.5 GHz band, for which there is a proposal to allocate this band to the service, with secondary status; earth stations on vessels (ESV), for which agreement was reached on the regulatory framework option that CEPT will propose at WRC03, based on coastal separation distances for the protection of fixed service and on minimum diameters for antennas installed on vessels vis-à-vis the frequency bands in question (6/4 GHz and 14/11 GHz); and the identification of bands to be globally and regionally harmonised for public protection and disaster relief (PPDR) systems, for which CEPT will propose a resolution that identifies the bands currently harmonised in Europe (380-385 MHz and 390-395 MHz) for narrowband digital systems.

Lastly, and regarding the item on the RLAN (Radio Local Area Networks) regulatory framework in the 5 GHz band, the CPG approved an ECP that proposes allocation of the 5150-5350 MHz and 5470-5725 MHz bands to primary status mobile service, though subject to conditions that guarantee due protection of existing services (fixed by satellite, aeronautical radionavigation, radio localisation and space science services).

ECC PT5

The project team on satellites (PT5) of the Electronic Communications Committee (ECC) met in Copenhagen on 19-20 February to update implementation of One Stop Shopping (OSS) for satellites and the Combined Application Form (CAF).

Work to develop the computer requirements needed for the COM Recommendation continued at the meeting, with the drawing up of the application flow chart. Also discussed were new working topics for PT5, namely those deriving from the entrance into force of the European Union's new regulatory framework.

ECC PT4-APRII

At this meeting, held in Madrid on 13-14 February, the chairman of project team 4 on Accounting Principles and Regulation of International Interconnection (APRII) reported that, due to the ECC's reorganisation, APRII and ECC PT2 (Technical Regulation and Development of Interconnection Standards - TRIS) will join to become the working group on Access and Interconnection Regulation (WG AIR); topics related to this new structure were extensively discussed. Outstanding among the remaining issues debated are the new community regulatory framework for the electronic communications sector, accounting rates, interconnection in the context of fixed-mobile traffic and the third mobile generation (UMTS).

ECC WG RR

The meeting of the Working Group on Radio Regulation (WG RR) was held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 3 to 7 February, attended by representatives of 26 CEPT administrations.

Noteworthy among the subjects considered are the approval for public consultation of a draft ECC decision on the individual licence exemption for VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) ground stations functioning in the 14.25-14.50 GHz (land-space) and 10.70-11.70 GHz (space-land) frequency bands, the approval of an ECC recommendation to prohibit the market placement of GSM jammer service (non-selective systems) and the update of information on the website of the European Radiocommunications Office (ERO) concerning licensing regimes applicable to CB stations (PR27 equipment) and the implementation of ERC decisions on PMR446 equipment in the different CEPT member states.

Also submitted to the WG RR was the first version of a draft ECC report on audio and television broadcasting stations operating in frequency modulation, not licensed in Europe.

Various presentations were given on the new regulatory frameworks applicable to radiocommunications services in force in some CEPT countries, such as Denmark, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Ireland and Hungary.

ECC WG SE

The Spectrum Engineering (WG SE) group met in Molde, Norway, from 2 to 8 February and approved a number of documents, among them a report on the effects of cable transmission systems (namely cable television, xDSL and power line technologies) on radiocommunications services.

The WG SE also approved a new report on the compatibility of short-range anti-collision radars for vehicles, with the preliminary conclusions indicating that same are not compatible with passive meteorological sensors (EESS), ▶

radio-astronomy and fixed service.

The new masking for 'outband' emissions from AM radio broadcasters being considered in the context of the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has been subject to the nay vote of some administrations, who hold that it is less restrictive than the previous one.

WG FM

The meeting of the Frequency Management group was held in Dublin from 27 to 31 January, with the aim of preparing for the Regional Radiocommunications Conference (RRC04/05), and to adopt various recommendations, namely on harmonised spectrum use for the 1.28 Mcps option for UTRA TDD (Universal Terrestrial Radio Access - Time Division Duplex) and to review recommendations on frequency bands for the temporary use of SAP/SAB (radio broadcasting ancillaries) video and audio connections, including ENG/ OB (Electronic News Gathering - Outside Broadcasting) and on co-ordination of UMTS/ IMT2000 systems along borders.

Two draft ECC decisions were approved for public consultation, one on use of the 1479.5-1492 MHz frequency band by S-DAB systems and the other to cancel ERC Decision (97)08 on the Schiever Plan for the TFTS.

Likewise approved for consultation by the administrations were the following documents: a draft ECC recommendation on satellite monitoring in CEPT; a draft ECC recommendation on measures to safeguard the future use of the UMTS/ IMT2000 system in the 2.5 GHz band vis-à-vis satellite audio broadcasting systems; a draft revision of recommendation ERC/REC 70-03 on SRD (short-range devices); and a draft ECC report on the strategic plan for PMR/PAMR (professional - private - mobile radio/ public access mobile radio).

In wake of the consultation of the administrations, the WG FM decided to submit to the ECC, for final adoption, the draft ECC decision on frequency availability for broadband PMR/PAMR and the proposal to eliminate the following recommendations: recommendation T/R 01-02 on monitoring emissions from space service stations; recommendation T/R 01-03 on monitoring satellite emissions; and recommendation T/R 42-01 on the designation of frequency bands for the pan-European TFTS system.

ECC - FM EFIS

The safeguarding of information from EFIS (ERO Frequency Information Systems), the maintenance group that includes the WG FM, with the addition of new information and sharing of experience in the area, were in focus at the EFIS/MG meeting held on 13 February at ERO headquarters in Copenhagen.

Future work will centre on revision of the decisions ERC/DEC (97)01 and ECC/DEC (01)03, and on the appropriate manner to include information on radio interfaces, in accordance with article 4.1 of the R&TTE Directive.

ECC - SE PT 37

The third meeting of the project team that includes Spectrum Engineering group PT 37 (use of CDMA - Code Division Multiplex Access - in PMR systems) took place in London on 13-14 January, with participants reviewing the state of ongoing work.

CERP - WG EA

On 25 February Berlin hosted the meeting of the Economic Affairs working group of the European Committee for Postal Regulation (CERP), which reviewed the situation of the work accomplished. Also noteworthy was the presentation of various systems for controlling prices, cost and financing of universal service and VAT, and a summary of developments in the context of Universal Postal Union (UPU) terminal charges.

SEE http://www.cept.org   SEE http://www.eto.dk   SEE http://www.ero.dk ◄

INDEPENDENT REGULATORS GROUP

WG SMP

The *Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações* (ANACOM) took part in the meeting of the Significant Market Power (SMP) working group held on 21 February in London, where participants debated issues in the context of the recommendation on relevant markets, namely concerning the concept of SMP, practical questions related to the study of markets and the problems of effective competition observed in the various markets. ◄

QUALITY OF UNIVERSAL POSTAL SERVICE DEBATED

A seminar on a WIK-Consult study in the context of universal postal service quality was held on 27 February in Brussels, promoted by the European Commission.

Also presented was another study to be carried out by the same company, related to the postal network of countries belonging to the European Union. ◄

EUROPEAN UNION

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON RELEVANT MARKETS

On 11 February, the European Commission approved a recommendation on relevant markets for products and services in the electronic communications sector that may be subject to *ex ante* regulation, in line with the provisions of Directive 2002/21/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services. Considered the 'final piece' of the 99 Review package, the recommendation identifies 18 markets (11 wholesale and 7 retail) where there may be a need for sector specific regulation, depending on prior evaluation by the national regulators. At http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/221|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

In a communication dated 11 February and titled "Electronic Communications: the road to the knowledge economy", the Commission provides an overview of the sector situation, anticipating measures to adopt by the end of 2005. At http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/news_library/documents/acte_sector_en.pdf .

eEUROPE 2002 EVALUATION REPORT

The Commission has addressed a communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, in which it adopts the final report on implementation of the eEurope 2002 Action Plan.
Launched at the Santa Maria da Feira European Council in June 2002, eEurope 2002 has been a "major success" vis-à-vis the task of putting households, schools and businesses online, states the report released on 12 February. At http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope/news_library/documents/acte_eEurope_2002_en.doc;
http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/220|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

COMMISSION STUDIES CREATION OF NETWORK SECURITY AGENCY

Given that cyber-security is a vital element in the digital economy, the Commission proposed on 10 February a regulation that institutes the future European Network and Information Security Agency. Details at http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/208|0|RAPID&lg=EN;
http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/03/28|0|RAPID&lg=EN;
http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=SPEECH/03/65|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE TEN-TELECOM PROGRAMME

A Commission-organised public consultation in the context of the document on "Orientations and Priorities for the eTEN Programme 2003-2004" ends on 28 March. At http://www.ten-telecom.org/public_consultation.asp .

SATELLITE NAVIGATION DEBATED

The first Euro-Mediterranean seminar on global satellite navigation systems took place in Cairo on 16-17 February, where the future Galileo and its counterpart EGNOS (European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Device) were in focus. Details at http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=MEMO/03/42|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

NON-COMPLIANCE OF PUBLIC CONTRACTS

The Commission decided to go head with infringement proceedings against seven member states, for non-compliance with community rules in the context of public contracts. Portugal is among them, due to alleged incorrect transposition of Directive 89/665/EEC on remedies for tenderers. See http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/266|0|RAPID&lg=EN&display= .

STI ACQUISITION APPROVED

The acquisition of 41 percent of the capital of Siemens Tele Industry (STI) by the Greek maker Intracom SA has been approved. At http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/211|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

ELEARNING 2004-06

The European Union's eLearning programme for 2004-2006, as well as links to counterpart national initiatives, may be consulted via the Commission's electronic teaching website, at http://www.elearningeuropa.info/ , which was launched on 4 February. See http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/168|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

REPORT ON NOTIFICATION OF ONLINE SERVICE RULES

The first Commission report on the application of prior notification of national online service rules demonstrates the measure's success. See http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/227|0|RAPID&lg=EN . The report is available at http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/ecommerce/com69en.pdf .

TREATY OF NICE TAKES EFFECT

The Treaty of Nice, which aims to respond to the inherent demands of adding 10 new member states to the European Union, took formal effect on 1 February. One of its main novelties is the modification changing the decision rule in many instances from unanimity to qualified majority.
See http://europa.eu.int/comm/nice_treaty/index_en.htm;
http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action.gettxt=gt&doc=IP/03/160|0|RAPID&lg=EN .

OJEU

- **Council Resolution (2003/C48/01) -** Concerning a European approach towards a culture of information and network security. Published on 28 February.
- **Council Resolution (2003/C48/02) -** On implementation of the eEurope 2005 action plan. Published on 28 February.
- **Commission Notice (2003/C42A/01) -** Recruitment of the director of the Galileo joint undertaking - new closing date for the submission of applications. Published on 21 February.
- **Directive 2002/95/EC (2003/L37/19) -** Of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 January 2003, concerning restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment. Published on 13 February.
- **Directive 2002/96/EC (2003/L37/24) -** Of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 January 2003, on waste electrical and electronic equipment. Published on 13 February.
- **Call (2003/C34A/01) -** For applications for the position of responsible for protecting Eurojust data. Published on 13 February.
- **Commission Recommendation of 11 February -** Regarding relevant markets for products and services in the electronic communications sector that may be subject to *ex ante* regulation, in conformity with the provisions of Directive 2002/21/EC.

SEE http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/index.html

SPAIN - *Comisión del Mercado de las Telecomunicaciones* **(CMT) -** The CMT approved on 13 February a recommendation on good practices for telecommiccations service contracts in public administration. At http://www.cmt.es/cmt/document/c_prensa/2003/c20030213_02.pdf .

SPAIN - *Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnologia* **(MCT) -** "Adopting Today to the New Television" is the title of an information brochure on digital terrestrial television (DTT) recently published by the MCT. See http://www.sgc.mfom.es/ .

FRANCE - *Autorité de Régulation des Télécommunications* **(ART) -** The ART welcomes the fact that the number of unbundled lines in access to the local loop has reached the historic total of 10 000, when only three months ago it stood at only a few hundred. Details at http://www.art-telecom.fr/observatoire/blr/index-tbtous.htm . For the sixth year in a row, the regulator carried out a study to gauge the quality of mobile networks in France. See http://www.art-telecom.fr/communiques/communiques/2003/index-c250203.htm .

ITALY - *Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni* **(AGC) -** The AGC approved on 27 February, with substantial reductions, Telecom Italia's 2002 interconnection reference proposal. See http://www.agcom.it/comunicati/cs_270203.htm . The new maximum fixed-mobile prices, which take effect on 1 June, may be consulted at http://www.agcom.it/comunicati/cs_050203.htm .

IRELAND - Commission for Communications Regulations (ComReg) - On 10 February ComReg launched a consultation on fixed interconnection charging mechanisms, which will run until 21 March. At http://www.odtr.ie/whats_new/default.asp?ctype=5&nid=100818 . On the 17th , the Irish regulator unveiled its reworked internet website, at http://www.odtr.ie/_fileupload/publications/pres170203.pdf . On 30 January, the regulator set the so-called 'no-contact period' associated with local loop unbundling at three months. At http://www.comreg.ie/_fileupload/publications/ComReg0311.pdf .

UNITED KINGDOM - Office of Telecommunications (OFTEL) - A consultation is under way until 11 March which aims to gauge the most appropriate way for industry to finance the regulator's activities, under the sector's new regulatory regime. At http://www.oftel.gov.uk/press/releases/2003/pr05_03.htm . In the context of the Communications White Paper, OFTEL has published a set of guidelines for drawing up codes of practice to benefit consumers. Interested parties may comment on this matter until 31 May. See http://www.oftel.gov.uk/publications/ind_guidelines/2003/copi0203.htm .

UNITED KINGDOM - Postal Services Commission (Postcomm) - The British postal regulator has decided to extend until 21 March a consultation on the proposed new prices to practice by the incumbent Royal Mail. The new prices are expected to take effect on 1 April. At http://www.psc.gov.uk/documents/Media/022103Postcommextendspricecontrolconsultation.pdf .

NORWAY - Norwegian Post and Telecommunications Authority (PT) - The PT has launched a consultation on fixed wireless access (FWA) in the 3-40 GHz frequency bands. The aim is to ascertain the most appropriate way to allocate the respective licences. The deadline for submission of comments is 10 April. See http://www.npt.no/eng/frequencies/news/data/2001/frekvensaksess_eng2.pdf .

FINLAND - Ministry of Transport and Communications (MINTC) - A report that studies and compares recent regulatory modifications in European telecommunications, linked to the activity of the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (FICORA), has recently been published. Details at http://www.mintc.fi/www/sivut/dokumentit/julkaisu/julkaisusarja/2003/comparativelessons.pdf .

BRAZIL - *Agência Nacional de Telecomunicações* **(ANATEL) -** The 22 percent increases registered in the price tables for mobile networks affect only 5 percent of mobile accesses in Brazil (corresponding to the basic service plans), ANATEL clarified in a statement released on 6 February. The remaining plans, among which are pre-paid access (72 percent of the total) have not been affected by the price adjustment. See http://www.anatel.gov.br/Tools/frame.asp?link=/biblioteca/releases/2003/release_06_02_2003(4).pdf and http://www.anatel.gov.br/Tools/frame.asp?link=/biblioteca/releases/2003/release_06_02_2003(2).pdf . The consultation on the proposed regulation on the use of telecommunications network services to access internet services, which anticipates two new access models, ended on 15 February. Some 903 contributions were received. See http://www.anatel.gov.br/biblioteca/Releases/2003/release_17_02_2003(2).pdf .

USA - Federal Communications Commission (FCC) - The American regulator's 2003-2008 Strategic Plan is available at http://www.fcc.gov/omd/strategicplan/strategicplan2003-2008.pdf and sets six priority goals. On 30 January the FCC decided to reallocate spectrum to ensure its reuse in new wireless telecommunications services, namely the third mobile generation (IMT 2000). At http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-230754A1.pdf .

International Telecommunications Union

PrepCom and Information Society

The prospect of low civil society and business participation in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) generated controversy at the second meeting of the International Telecommunication Union's Preparatory Committee (PrepCom2) and led to an urgent 26 February encounter between the Committee chairperson and the delegation leaders.

Participants in the meeting held in Geneva from 17 to 28 February highlighted the need to reopen participation in the entire preparatory process to United Nations agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), business enterprises and citizens, in an attempt to stimulate their interest in the WSIS.

RAG

The Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) of the ITU's Radiocommunications Sector (ITU-R) met in Geneva from 27 to 31 January, with the proceedings chaired by Canada.

In his opening speech, the ITU secretary general underscored the Union's current financial difficulties, stressing the need to reduce commitments with respect to human resources and the Union's activities, and also to effect cuts, namely in the number and length of meetings and in the quantity of paper documents to distribute.

Given the imminence of the upcoming World Radiocommunications Conference (WRC03) in July 2003 and its inherent preparatory work, the meeting's main goal was to prepare for the next Radiocommunications Assembly (RA03), and to study the decisions adopted during the Plenipotentiary Conference (PP02) held in Marrakech, namely those introducing modifications to the Constitution and the Convention, with incidence in ITU-R, and the financial measures affecting ITU activities.

SEE http://www.itu.int/newsroom/press_releases/2003/10.html   SEE http://www.itu.int/

EUROPEAN UNION - COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE (COCOM)

Meeting in Brussels for the fourth time, on 12 February, the Communications Committee (COCOM) discussed two proposed recommendations submitted by the European Commission, one on R-LANs (local area networks) and the other on caller localisation. While the first proposal was approved (with Portugal voting against), the second raised a number of questions, namely concerning the conformity of some provisions with the Data Protection Directive; approval is thus pending, with the Commission awaiting comments to be submitted by 12 March.

The Commission also requested preliminary comments from delegations on its outline of the proposed recommendation on leased lines, mentioning that it will soon present a consolidated text - comments are to be received during a three week period.

Regarding transposition of the new regulatory framework known as 99 Review, the Commission reported that it was at member states' disposition for eventual clarifications related to same, including the holding of bilateral meetings; it is also preparing a 'table of conformity' for the Data Protection Directive, an auxiliary instrument to assess the respective state of transposition.

Documents related to bitstream access and the broadband availability table were distributed, with member states asked to submit comments by 26 February.

The constitution of a new working group on Access for Users with Special Needs was discussed; the Commission presented two documents in this context, a summary of legislation and current problems, and a proposal of the group's working reference terms.

COCOM also commented on a document drawn up by the Commission, concerning the various methodologies for local loop access charges in effect in the fifteen member states.

Also subject to discussion were the provisions of Directive 2002/58/EC of 31 July, regarding unsolicited electronic mail, and the likely holding of two seminars, on the European Telephone Numbering Space (ETNS) and on the methodology for drawing up the report on leased lines.

Lastly, the Commission presented a recently-adopted recommendation on relevant markets and distributed a compilation of community case law relevant to the sector.

SEE http://europa.eu.int/information_society/topics/telecoms/implementation/onp/index_en.htm ◀

INTERNET ACCESS VIA SATELLITE

Although still not very common, internet access via satellite may be a viable solution in the regional absence of a DSL connection or cable-modem, when a service with better performance than dial-up access is desired. This solution requires neither telephone line nor cable network. All that is needed is a satellite reflector for two-way communications (the upload speed is approximately a tenth of the 500 Kbps speed achieved when downloading). The necessary equipment basically consists of a reflector, two modems (for uplink and downlink) and coaxial cables for reflector-modem links, besides unobstructed sight lines to geostationary satellites.

Internet access via satellite communications systems uses IP multicasting technology, which allows one single satellite to simultaneously serve several thousand communication channels, sending compressed point-multipoint data and ensuring bandwidth greater than in dial-up terrestrial systems.

The far majority of telecommunications operators nevertheless view satellites as just one more link (namely in ocean coverage and support to terrestrial connections) in the chain of transmission inherent to telecommunications service, and generally used only as routers, broadcasters, repeaters or as a source of radiated energy. Yet their use is tending to become an alternative for the distribution of content to communities located far from major urban centres, especially when spread over large geographical areas. For example, one geostationary satellite can cover almost all of Europe.

The advantages of using satellites include immediate access, broad coverage and absence of geographic barriers. In a multicasting context, satellite even has some advantages over fibre optics, a reason why the transmission of television channels by satellite has been so successful. ◀

IN MARCH 2003

European Union
- Spectrum Committee (5)
- EMC WP (10-11)
- TCAM Committee (12-13)
- COCOM (13)
- Seminar on eTEN Programme (14)
- Council of Telecommunications Ministers (27-28)

IRG
- Contact Network (13-14)
- IRG/ ERG Plenary Session (27-28)

CEPT
- *Ad hoc* group for ITU management reform (5)
- Assembly (6-7)
- CPG (10-14)
- CPG PT1 (10-12)
- *Ad hoc* presidency group on elections (18)
- CPG PT2 and PT3 (31/3 a 4/4)
ECC
- Plenary session (10-14)
- SE 7 and SE37 (11-13)

- FM EFIS (13)
- FM PT24 (17-19)
- SE19 (18-19)
- WGFM PT22 (24-28)
CERP
- WG UPU Affairs (28)

UIT
- WP6E (17-21)
- TDAG (19-21)
- WP8F (26/3 a 3/4)

NATO
- NATO FMSC (26-28)

CENELEC
- Standardisation and interoperability of interactive digital television services (12)

UPAEP
- Executive and Advisory Council (17-19)

EVENTS

- *The New EU Regulatory Package for Electronic Communications - Best Practice Solutions for Effective Competition -* 10-11, London
- *CeBIT 2003 -* 12-19, Hannover
- *Cities and Digital Regions - 2003 National Meeting -* 13-14, Mirandela, Portugal
- *New Technologies and the Handicapped* 14, UTAD, Vila Real, Portugal
- *SAP Strategic Solutions - Efficiency and Quality of Services* 19, Congress Centre, Estoril, Portugal
- *ISSS/ LORIS 2003 Local and Regional Information Society -* 23-25, Prague
- *ETSI M-Commerce Project* 27, Sophia Antipolis
- *Innovation and Knowledge. People at the Centre of Transformations?* 27-28, Calouste Gulbenkain Foundation
- *Accessibility for All -* 27-28, Nice
- *ECTA Annual Telecoms Industry Conference 2003* 31/3-2/4