

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, weekly information gathering exercise, and includes the most recent data provided to BEREC by its constituent NRAs as of 23 June 2020. 32¹ NRAs 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 report² 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. As of July, the report will be released on a monthly basis.

1. Status of internet capacity

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

4 NRAs³ have provided updates of substance on the status of internet capacity in their Member State since the previous information gathering exercise (16 June 2020). 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.

¹ 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.

² 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

³ NRAs from the following Member States having provided updates since the previous data gathering exercise: CY, IT, PL, LT.

Key updates since previous report

- *CY, IT and PL have provided updates on the evolution of internet traffic on fixed and mobile networks*
- *RO and LT have discontinued the periodic collection of data from operators*

1.1. Network issues raised by NRAs

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

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

IT and PL have reported on an overall internet traffic stabilisation.

CY has registered an increase of data traffic in fixed networks during the week of 8-14 June 2020, compared to the week of 1-7 June 2020. Regarding data traffic on mobile networks, there was a slight decrease during the week of 8-14 June 2020, compared to the week of 1-7 June 2020.

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. PL and CY are still collecting data once per week from providers to determine the requirement of taking any further measure, while RO and LT have decided to stop the periodic data gathering from providers. Nevertheless, in RO providers have been told to report any significant changes in traffic or any major incidents and in LT operators are obliged to report to NRA any major incidents as provided for by the national legal acts.

No NRA has applied (or deemed necessary to apply) the exceptional traffic management measures contained in the Regulation (EU) 2015/2120.

1.3. Actions taken and communication by operators

In PL, operators are still applying exceptional measures such as increase of data caps, extended invoice payment for elder people or improved electronic communication between providers and end users.

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

Key updates since previous report

- *PT reported on issuing ordinance on prohibition of operators to suspend electronic communication services for non-payment; consumer request for temporary suspension of the contract; request for cancellation without penalty*
- *IT provided an update concerning the mobile application “Immuni”*

2.1. Measures implemented by public institutions

PT reported that an ordinance was issued on 22 June, which states the prohibition of operators to suspend the provision of electronic communications services for non-payment and the possibility for consumers to request the temporary suspension of the contract or even its cancellation without penalty.

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 24 June, has been provided to BEREC by IT. IT had reported earlier about the launch of the mobile application “Immuni”. After a trial phase at regional level, on 15 June the application has become operational on the entire national territory and so far 3.5 million users have downloaded it.