[EE] Telecommunications Act Adopted

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On 9 February 2000, Riikogu, the Estonian parliament, adopted the Telecommunications Act, which establishes requirements for telecommunications networks and services, as well as the procedures for state supervision of compliance with the established norms.

One of the basic purposes of the Act is to give a legal definition of universal service. Universal service is "a set of telecommunications services, which conforms with the technical and quality requirements established by the government and which ensures, for an area defined in the license of a public telephone operator, that all customers who wish to have access to the public telephone network shall have such access for a uniform and reasonable consideration" (Paragraph 4). Paragraph 5 of the Act provides a list of universal services. According to the text of the Act, these services are: telephone services that are universally available to all subscribers regardless of their geographical location and at a uniform price; Internet services that are universally available to all subscribers regardless of their geographical location and at a uniform price; the services of public phones, for which coins or payment cards are used as payment; the possibility of having free of charge connection to the short codes of the police, emergency medical aid and rescue services.

The Act also determines the principles for licensing telecommunication services. Paragraph 1-2 of the Act stipulates that a "licence grants a given undertaking the right to operate a telecommunications network and determines the duties, conditions and requirements in the operation of such telecommunications network". A person wishing to operate a telecommunications network shall submit an application for a licence to the Estonian National Communications Board.

In addition, the Act contains basic principles of interconnection and tariffs for telecommunications. In particular it stipulates that a public telecommunications network operator or a provider of public telecommunications services shall inform the public about the tariffs charged for the use of the telecommunications network or services provided, and shall ensure the reasonable availability of the services to all persons (Paragraph 43).

Telekommunikatsiooniseadus, Estonia Riikogu Daatu, # 56, 2000.

Telecommunication Act of Estonian Republic, Estonia Riikogu Daatu, # 56, 2000.

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