



## **2nd World Telecommunication Indicators Meeting**

### **(Geneva, 1999)**

## **Summary of WTIM-99**

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## World Telecommunication Indicators Meeting 1999

### Introduction

The 2<sup>nd</sup> World Telecommunication Indicators Meeting, organized by the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was held at the ITU headquarters in Geneva from 29-31 March 1999. There were 82 participants from 55 countries and four international organizations (see List of Participants, Document 2).

The Chairperson of the meeting was William D. Kishanda, Tanzania while the Vice-Chairpersons were William Alberto Poveda Garzon, Colombia and Xavier Delache, France.

The agenda of the meeting is attached (Document 3). There were a number of presentations in addition to discussions about the indicators used in the telecommunication sector (See List of Documents, Document 1 for background papers issued at the meeting<sup>1</sup>).

### Country presentations of telecom statistics collection and dissemination

- *Telecommunications in Finland - A Statistical Overview*. M. Åkermarck, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland
- *Overview of Norway Telecommunication Statistics*. O. Hoel, Norwegian Posts and Telecom Authority
- *Telecom Statistics in a Competitive Environment*. D. Mozes, Industry Canada and Mr. H. McCarrel, Statistics Canada
- *State of Telecommunications Statistics Collection and Dissemination in BTC*. S. Mokomane, Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC)
- *Socatel - Basic data*. A. Yangana, Socatel, Central African Republic
- *Statistics in Sri Lanka & Future Developments in Telecommunications*. A.S.W Bandusiri Silva, Telecom Regulatory Authority of Sri Lanka
- *Telecommunication statistics in Togo*. Séwa Mensah, Togo Telecom

This session dealt with country experiences in collecting, compiling and disseminating telecommunication statistics. The trend in developed countries is for telecommunication regulatory agencies to collect statistics while in developing countries, the main operators still carry out that function. In the case of Canada, the national statistical agency collects the statistics with input from the ministry responsible for telecommunications. The difficulty of collecting telecommunication statistics in an increasingly liberalized industry was raised. Regarding confidentiality, it was felt that the type of statistics being solicited are general enough so this is not really an issue. Furthermore it is hard to argue that some statistics are confidential in one country when they are readily available in other more competitive markets. The problems faced by many developing countries in terms of non-automated reporting systems, varying definitions and a lack of appreciation by management of the importance of the statistics was identified.

### Regional and international overviews of telecom statistics

- *OECD Work on Communications Indicators*. S. Paltridge, OECD, France.
- *Eurostat's prospects on telecommunications statistics*. M. Lumio, EUROSTAT, Luxembourg
- *Telecommunication Statistics*. M.C. Gasbarro, ITU
- *Of Data Gathering and Data Storage*. O. Beauvais, ITU
- *Challenges to the Network 1999*. B. Petrazzini & L. Männistö, ITU

This session dealt with international organization involvement with telecommunication statistics. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) presented its latest telecommunication statistics and analysis report, *Communication Outlook 1999*. There was emphasis on Internet statistics since this is of growing importance in OECD member countries. Eurostat, the European Community Statistical Office, spoke about its involvement in telecommunication statistics. The difficulty of collecting statistics in the liberalized European telecommunication sector was identified. One problem is that as former monopoly telecommunication operators—which had previously been the main source of statistics—became transformed into enterprises, responsibility for data collection has shifted. On the one hand many regulators have not fully assumed this task while national statistical offices do not have the experience. The ITU presented its routine for collecting and disseminating statistics as well as some pointers for how the telecommunication statistics can be stored, maintained and disseminated in a database system. The latest ITU indicator report dealing with the Internet, *Challenges to the Network 1999*, was presented.

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<sup>1</sup> The documents are available on-line on the ITU's World Wide Web site (<http://www.itu.int/ti/WTIM99/Documents.html>).



## World Telecommunication Indicators Meeting 1999

### Telecom traffic, mobile communication and universal service/access statistics

- *International traffic & tariff indicators*. T. Kelly, ITU
- *Mobile communication indicators*. M. Minges, ITU
- *Measuring access to telecommunications: Universal service and access indicators*. M. Minges, ITU

This session dealt with identifying and defining specific groups of telecommunication statistics. In the area of international telephone traffic statistics it was mentioned that as the Internet grows in importance, new types of international telecommunication traffic statistics would be needed. Regarding mobile communication statistics, it was pointed out that mobile is one of the fastest growing telecommunication market segments and therefore statistics in this area are essential. The *next World Telecommunication Development Report* would have mobile communications as its theme. A set of indicators for measuring universal service and universal access was presented.

### Other

- *Data definition, data collected by different entities, data on the Internet*. M. Minges, ITU.
- *Telecom statistics from a user's perspective*. Mr. Paolo Labombarda, Consiel Management Consulting, Italy

### Other issues

A representative of the TDAG Subgroup dealing with private-sector issues emphasized the importance of statistical information. He noted that he would inform the private-sector group about this meeting and hoped for closer collaboration in the future. It was also noted that the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) might be consulted for comments and advice regarding the telecommunication indicators.

Gender issues have become an important issue at the ITU with recommendations on that subject emanating from the second World Telecommunication Development Conference and the Plenipotentiary Conference. Telecommunication statistics should reflect gender as far as possible.

The representative from Colombia stated that the ITU statistics should be considered official statistics obtained from governmental sources. It was also mentioned that ITU Member States and Sector Members should be the main data suppliers.

### Recommendations

The meeting made a number of recommendations:

- The formation of an Expert Group on Telecommunication Indicator Definitions. The goal of this group is to update the ITU's *Telecommunication Indicator Handbook* to reflect new indicators and definitions used in the telecommunication sector. The Group would be coordinated by Mr. Minges, ITU/BDT and initially be composed of the participants from Australia, Canada, Colombia, Portugal, Senegal, Syria, Eurostat, and OECD. The output of the group would be posted on the web for comments by all and any person wishing to participate in the group would be welcome. The group would work as far as possible by electronic means (e-mail, fax, etc.) although it could be envisaged that a meeting would be held to present the output of the group (providing sufficient resources are available). It is expected that the group would produce a draft version within one year.
- It was recommended that the next World Telecommunication Indicator Meeting be held again in 2001 in order to report to the next World Telecommunication Development Conference (2002). In the interim, holding regional meetings on the subject of telecommunication indicators is encouraged.
- The Meeting also urged the ITU/BDT to provide hyperlinks to telecommunication statistics available on the web from telecommunication ministries, regulators, operators and national statistical offices through the ITU Telecommunication Indicator web page.