

VII. NETWORK INTERCONNECTION

No serious changes in the telecommunications network interconnection had been observed throughout the past 2002.

The effect of the interconnection agreements between BTC and MobilTel, BTC and RTC, BTC and CBM (interim agreement), BTC and GOCIS, RTC and MobilTel, RTC and CBM, MobilTel and CBM continued in 2002, as well as the interconnection agreements between BTC and BulFon and BTC and RTC (Mobika). Twenty-two additional agreements were concluded thereto which led to no significant change of the interconnection prices. The amendments to the agreements stemmed basically from:

- change in the BTC prices for provision of fixed voice service and leased lines;
- provision of the service “communication equipment collocation” to mobile operators by BTC;
- provision of the service “SMS” among subscribers to different mobile networks;
- regulation of the relations among operators with respect to uncollectable subscribers’ amounts and registered doubtful traffic when providing value-added services between two networks;

The limited legal framework allowed CRC to monitor mainly how the non-discrimination principle was followed in the interconnection agreements. The regulatory functions established in the EU countries are still unenforceable.

What is expected with the adoption of the new Telecommunications Act is that CRC will be granted powers to regulate the interconnection prices of the SMP operators.

At the end of 2002 CRC received many requests for granting national numbers for dial-up access to the Internet. As a result, a lot of contracts for access and connection to the fixed network of BTC are expected to be concluded which may lead to some technical problems with servicing the generated IP traffic. The request for resolving the dispute related to the interconnection between BTC and Internet Bulgaria (whose solution will be found in 2003) is an indication of the necessity for administrative measures to guarantee to the users the service “access to the Internet”.