

**THE STRATEGY OF THE FINNISH COMMUNICATIONS
REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

2009 - 2015

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1. STRATEGIC KEY AREAS

The FICORA corporate vision and mission

Vision

Providing versatile, effective and secure communications connections and services for everyone in Finland.

Mission

FICORA works towards an effective and secure information society for the good of the people and business.

Strategic key and operating areas 2009-2015

The key areas for FICORA activities in the strategic period 2009-2015 will be consumers and citizens, the competitiveness of business and industry, and effective society. The organisation's most important operating areas will be communications networks, communications markets, communications services, information security, radio frequencies, and securing adequate funding for YLE. FICORA will pay special attention to environmental issues in all its activities and development work.

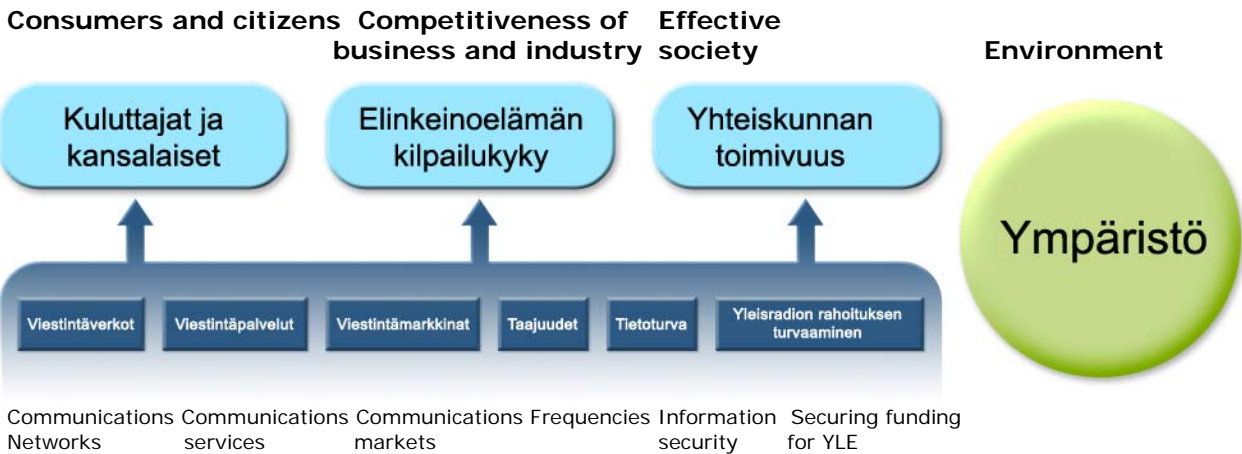


Figure: FICORA key areas and operating areas

An outline of FICORA's operational policy is presented in pages 6-15 of the present document. The corresponding measures to be taken are presented in the FICORA plan of action and economic plan as well as in the scorecard.

Consumers and citizens

Every citizen has access to reliable and secure telecommunications connections and versatile communications services everywhere in Finland.

Every citizen has the knowledge and skills necessary to using electronic communications services effectively. Everyday business is increasingly conducted electronically and confidence in effective information society is increasing.

Competitiveness of business and industry

The competitiveness of business and industry is being enhanced by the creation of more efficient communications markets and by encouraging companies to make investments in Finland. This will enhance both productivity and competitiveness in the communications industry.

Furthermore, such competitiveness is also being enhanced by high-quality and secure communications networks and the efficient use of the available radio frequencies.

Effective society

A reliable and secure electronic communications infrastructure is in place in Finland. Communications networks and the communications services offered therein are mutually compatible.

FICORA is evolving into a national information security authority that provides society with a comprehensive range of communications services. Any problems are addressed immediately and society has a very high ability to protect itself from threats.

The postal services network covers all of Finland and delivery is reliable and uninterrupted.

Funding for YLE is secured to allow it to perform its statutory obligations.

2. OPERATIONAL POLICY

2.1. Consumers and citizens

Every citizen has access to reliable and secure communications connections and versatile communications services everywhere in Finland.

Every citizen has the knowledge and skills necessary to using electronic communications services effectively. Everyday business is increasingly being conducted electronically and confidence in the reliability of the information society is increasing.

Operational policy

High-quality and affordable communications services available to all Finnish citizens

FICORA

- ensures the equal availability and reliability of high-quality and affordable telecommunications and postal services – a so-called universal service – for all citizens at their permanent place of residence.
- promotes competition in the communications markets and regulates the wholesale market efficiently, thus having an indirect impact on retail prices.

Fast and reliable communications connections and services to all citizens

FICORA

- promotes the supply of fast and reliable broadband connections. By the end of 2010, every Finnish household will have access to a 1 Mbit/s broadband Internet connection at a minimum.
- promotes the mutual compatibility of communications services.
- ensures that the wireless connections in use are interference-free.
- actively encourages private persons to acquire a .fi domain name.
- maintains a user-friendly telecommunications network numbering system.
- ensures the flexible and prompt transfer of phone numbers from one operator to another for consumers.

Securing citizens' rights as users of communications services

FICORA

- secures consumers' rights by ensuring that the terms of agreement for communications services provided by telecommunications companies are reasonable from consumers' point of view.
- boosts citizens' confidence in communications services by supervising the correctness of invoicing and the observation of other communications statutes concerning consumers.
- ensures the availability of clear and current information on the prices, quality, and other features of communications services by performing systematic surveillance and supervision.
- provides communications companies with additional information and instructions, in order to establish a common set of rules for all sectoral players.

Interference-free radio and telecommunications terminal equipment that comply with the requirements available to all citizens

FICORA

- ensures that all radio and telecommunications terminal equipment in use comply with the requirements and addresses any problems promptly.
- provides consumers, manufacturers, and importers with information on conformity assessment of radio and telecommunications terminal equipment.

Securing versatile media for all citizens

FICORA

- secures the necessary prerequisites for content and network operators, to allow them to provide citizens with a wide range of high-quality media services at affordable prices, regardless of the device or distribution method.
- monitors the broadcast of television programmes that are deemed harmful to children by ensuring that these are aired at the appropriate times and preceded by the appropriate warnings.
- gathers information on consumers' media literacy and perceptions of media-related, potentially harmful issues. This research data is utilised in supporting self-regulation in the media and providing information for children, parents, and teachers.
- participates actively in co-operation aimed at improving citizens' media literacy skills.
- secures the necessary funding for YLE in accordance with the proposals of the parliamentary working group.

Increasing citizens' information security and privacy protection awareness and ensuring the confidentiality of communications

FICORA

- boosts citizens' confidence in the communications networks and services provided by the information society by offering anticipatory solution and alert services for countering information security and privacy protection threats.
- offers Web users group-specific information aimed at various citizen groups, information security services, and models and recommendations for using electronic services on the Web safely.
- promotes the use of electronic signatures and authentication.
- provides companies and private citizens with status reports on information security.
- coordinates the national Safer Internet Day project.

Developing FICORA services

FICORA

- provides high-quality, customised expert services and electronic services.
- develops its service processes to ensure the availability and quality of FICORA services.

2.2. Competitiveness of business and industry

The competitiveness of business and industry is being enhanced by the creation of more efficient communications markets and by encouraging companies to make investments in Finland. This will improve both productivity and competitiveness in the communications industry.

The competitiveness of business and industry can be further enhanced by high-quality and secure communications networks and the efficient use of available radio frequencies.

Operational policy

Ensuring the functionality of the communications markets

FICORA

- regularly analyses the competition situation in the communications markets. On the basis of this analysis, FICORA designates operators with significant market power and imposes the necessary obligations on them in order to promote healthy competition.
- monitors the price and cost development of regulated products and, when necessary, issues instructions and recommendations on reasonable pricing.
- promotes free competition in the postal services market by ensuring free access to the market for new operators through the efficient implementation of new postal services legislation and close monitoring of its observation.
- ensures that, for regulated postal products, Itella PLC prices and terms for companies are non-discriminatory and reasonable.
- by engaging in active international co-operation, ensures level competitive conditions throughout Europe for Finnish companies.

Fast and reliable communications connections for companies and corporations

FICORA

- promotes the supply of fast and reliable broadband connections. By the end of 2010, all companies and government offices in Finland will have access to a 1 Mbit/s broadband connection at a minimum. By the end of 2015, almost every citizen will have access to a fast, 100 Mbit broadband connection.
- is responsible for implementing the national broadband strategy in promoting backbone optical fibre connections in sparsely-populated areas, by overseeing government enterprise subvention for instance.

Efficient distribution of radio frequencies

FICORA

- through its radio frequency policy, helps to ensure that business and industry have suitable and interference-free radio frequencies at their disposal.
- ensures that the frequency needs of Finnish business and industry form part of European and worldwide decision-making processes concerning radio frequencies.
- through its frequency solutions, promotes the development and introduction of equipment and services based on new technology.
- endeavours to anticipate demand more effectively in frequency planning.
- makes frequency decisions with a view to the functionality of the communications markets.

Promotion of network investments in Finland

FICORA

- in the technical steering of telecommunications companies, takes international aspects into account and encourages companies to make network investments in Finland.
- in co-operation with communications companies and other stakeholder groups, produces and maintains impartial research and monitoring data on the development of the communications industry, investment capability and investments, and market indicators.

Improving information security in companies

FICORA

- in co-operation with the most important authorities producing security services, produces reports and threat analyses concerning business and industry security. Companies can utilise this information in anticipating and assessing security risks.
- to ensure a safe network and service supply, produces advanced solution and alert services for the anticipation of information security threats and threats to privacy protection.

Promotion of the internationalisation of the information security market

- As the national information security authority, FICORA sets the information security standards for communications systems and products. Having Finnish information security products and services officially approved enhances their competitiveness in the international market.

Developing electronic FICORA services

- By developing electronic services, FICORA promotes the availability of the "raw materials" necessary for electronic communications, such as network numbers and domain names.

2.3. Effective society

A reliable and secure electronic communications infrastructure is in place in Finland. Communications networks and the communications services offered therein are mutually compatible.

FICORA is evolving into a national information security authority that provides society with a comprehensive range of information security services. Any problems are addressed immediately and the ability of society to protect itself from threats is extremely high.

The postal services network covers all of Finland and delivery is reliable and uninterrupted.

Operational policy

Improving the technical quality and reliability of communications networks and services

FICORA

- ensures the technical quality and reliability of networks by providing the appropriate guidelines, which includes promotion of best practices and the efficient management and repair of faults and disturbances.
- develops situation reports on the structure and reliability of networks. FICORA also supports measures that ensure the national implementation and management of networks.
- promotes the compatibility of communications services, which in turn makes them more user-friendly and reliable and encourages users to introduce new communications services into their activities.
- maintains and develops the national ENUM service, which supports the compatibility of services based on IP networks and circuit switched networks.
- monitors the technological development of domain name and name server services and prepares for the implementation of the necessary changes therein.
- ensures the operation of the .fi root name server in all circumstances.
- will abolish the local numbering areas of the fixed network by the end of the planning period.
- is developing the numbering system, taking account of the users' needs, equal distribution of numbers, and developments in network technologies.
- in co-operation with communications operators, is promoting the gradual introduction of the IPv6 protocol in Finland.

Ensuring interference-free radio networks

FICORA

- through bilateral co-operation, ensures interference-free and sufficient radio frequencies in border areas with neighbouring countries.
- monitors and removes radio network interferences, paying special attention to the need for interference-free radio networks in functions vital to society.

Security of communications networks and information society services

FICORA

- monitors information security in communications networks and services as well as the reliability of telecommunications networks both in Finland and abroad. In co-operation with other sectoral players, defines the minimum levels for information security.
- monitors the development of technical standardisation in the sector and, in co-operation with other sectoral players, actively utilises this information in the development of security.
- in co-operation with the Data Protection Ombudsman, actively co-operates with electronic service providers in order to improve information security within services.
- produces and coordinates software and hardware vulnerability management services.
- in accordance with the requirements of the market and society, develops licensing procedures and the right of use of radio frequencies.

Development of the necessary prerequisites for players critical to security of supply and securing objects in need of special protection

FICORA

- promotes co-operation between telecommunications companies and other players critical to security of supply, in order to support the development of the reliability and functionality of communications networks.
- recognises the dependency of functions vital to society on public communications networks and services, and promotes players' voluntary co-operation in ensuring the reliability and functionality of the service chain.
- as the national security authority, sets the standards for communications networks with respect to objects in need of special protection as well as the standards governing the security of the most important systems and services connected with these networks.
- is enhancing preparedness co-operation between FICORA and the National Emergency Supply Agency, and extending its information security services to cover IT service providers, automation systems providers, and Social Welfare and Health Services.

Ensuring reliable postal services

- Through efficient monitoring of the obligations of postal services companies and the appropriate guidelines, FICORA is ensuring a national postal network and interference-free deliveries.

Securing funding for YLE

FICORA

- secures the necessary funding for YLE in accordance with the proposals of the parliamentary working group.

2.4. Environment

Electronic communications services will replace many functions that place a burden on the environment. Reliable and secure communications networks will promote the use of electronic communications services.

Energy-efficient equipment and network solutions will be utilised in electronic communications services.

Operational policy

As regards environmental issues, FICORA's operational policy will be announced after the publication of the National Report on Climate Change commissioned by the Ministry of Transport and Communications.