

Fact sheet on ISDN today and in the future with 2018 universal service

April 2017

ISDN facts

- From 1 January 2018, the new provisions for universal service will apply as follows: according to the Ordinance on Telecommunications Services (OTS) dated 2 December 2016, the universal service licensee (Swisscom) must, pursuant to Art. 108a, provide, at the customer's request, analogue and ISDN interfaces at the network termination point (NT) at no additional charge to the customer by 31 December 2021.
- Swisscom will offer a universal service product that includes landline-based telephony (IP) and, if desired, Internet with a minimum bandwidth of 3/0.3 Mbit/s. If the customer requires several telephone numbers, they can also select the MultiLINE option with 2 or 3 numbers.

Implications for private customers

- ISDN telephony use has been declining among private customers for years. Private customers generally use the ISDN connection with a combination of ISDN and analogue telephone devices (e.g. an analogue DECT telephone). It is also possible to continue using these devices with IP. It is not possible to continue using traditional ISDN telephones with the current private customer landline-based telephony (IP) offers.
- There are IP products with multiple voice channels and phone numbers (MultiLINE option) available
- Swisscom advises all customers not to use ISDN telephones with the new landline-based IP telephony, and recommends that they switch instead directly to IP landline-based telephony in order to benefit from the advantages of IP telephony such as spam filters for unwanted calls, HD voice technology, name display, a personal list of blocked numbers, etc.
- The current offers for private customers with the new landline-based telephony (IP) come with a router that does not have an ISDN interface. This means that customers cannot continue to use their conventional ISDN phones with the new IP offers. Swisscom is helping all customers with the switch from ISDN to IP by offering free home installation (worth CHF 249) so that they can benefit from the advantages of landline-based IP telephony.

What about private customers who wish to continue using their ISDN devices?

A router with an ISDN interface will be available from 1 January 2018 for the new basic service provision offer with the MultiLINE option (not available for packages such as Vivo or inOne). Customers cannot switch to a combined ISDN/IP solution themselves, but rather require a technician to carry out the installation adjustments. Should the customer wish to switch entirely to IP at a later date, they will require a technician for a second time to convert the installation entirely to IP.

What do private customers who, in spite of our recommendations, wish to continue to use ISDN devices need to do today?

As part of the planned ongoing switch to All IP, outdated private customer offers will gradually be withdrawn from the market. ISDN customers affected by this transition who would like to keep their phones can, from 2018, switch to the new universal service offer with the MultiLINE option. As part of their order, they will receive a router with an ISDN interface free of charge.

Implications for business customers

- There is a need for the continued operation of ISDN communication systems.
- Modern communication solutions are now built on the basis of IP technology. ISDN is outdated and will therefore not be further developed.
- Swisscom recommends switching to an IP solution and thereby benefiting from the many advantages.
- The customer has the option of continuing to use ISDN communication systems with an ISDN interface (e.g. Centro Business Router).
- Swisscom cannot guarantee that all existing ISDN functionalities will continue to work.

Why are business customers already able to use their ISDN devices with IP whereas private customers cannot?

Because business customers' need to use ISDN telephones continues to be much greater than that of private customers. Therefore, instead of supporting the use of ISDN telephones, we are encouraging private customers to switch to IP by offering each of them installation performed by a technician – a service worth CHF 249.

More information on ISDN on the Internet:

<https://www.swisscom.ch/en/residential/internet-television-fixednetwork/fixednetwork/angebote/basic-service-provision.html>

<https://www.swisscom.ch/en/residential/internet-television-fixednetwork/home-networking/replacing-isdn.html>