

# bics

## Cloud communications and regulatory compliance



How can you ensure regulatory compliance is factored into your migration to cloud telephony?

**Migrating telecommunication services to the cloud is a catalyst for growth, improved efficiencies, and reduced costs. It is particularly valuable for companies seeking to create a global footprint.**

The reason is simple: adopting virtualized telecom services eliminates the need for expensive on-site equipment, reduces time to setup telephony services for HQ and satellite offices, ensures centralized billing, maintenance and upgrades, and enhances collaboration and productivity of the workforce.

Enterprises considering cloud migration often spend a great deal of time and effort evaluating the technology, deployment, service team, and functionalities – and rightly so. They must, however, direct their attention to the evaluation of another extremely important aspect of deployment: regulatory compliance.

Governments around the world are directing increased scrutiny towards cloud platforms of all kinds, from social networks to enterprise communications solutions, to assure user protection and safety.





In early 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was passed, with the goal of protecting and safeguarding the privacy and personal data of European Union residents, even if their data is processed elsewhere. The ePrivacy Regulation (ePR), which dovetails with GDPR, regulates how personal data is used in the context of channels such as digital service providers and voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) providers. Those businesses that transfer information for data warehousing, reporting, and marketing purposes must now be ready to delete or anonymize these data sets.

The same concern for consumer safety can be seen throughout the telecoms sector. WhatsApp, for example, in 2019, restricted the number of groups that a message could be forwarded to, to just five, in order to help control compromising consumer safety through the spread of false news and misinformation. At that time, a new GSMA initiative, the Digital Declaration, was also established to ensure businesses act ethically in the digital era. This has since been signed by more than 80 major companies worldwide, including many of the world's top mobile operators.

**As a result, it is important that enterprise communications solutions ensure that adherence to any applicable requirements is seamlessly integrated into the migration process right at the planning stage.**

From a cloud telephony perspective, there are three important regulatory aspects that need to be considered:



**License acquisition**



**Lawful interception**



**Emergency calling**



## Licensing

Every jurisdiction has different needs and permissions that must be obtained in order to provide telephony services.

For example, to enable SIP trunking services in European countries, it is required to procure local telecommunications licenses within the country. This requirement becomes more stringent when there is an absolute mandatory obligation to possess a local entity within a country. The need for local license is very much applicable for all EU countries, for example: France, Germany, and others. The need for a local entity, on the other hand, varies from country to country. In Turkey, for example, it is mandatory.

In all countries, acquiring telecommunications licenses involves applying to the telecoms regulatory authority, providing registration details, business details, address, use cases for service usage, and other information. Application of license is always done in the country's local language.

Enterprise digital service providers – UCaaS, CCaaS, CPaaS, IP-PBX – must ensure they have the statutory rights to provide telecoms services in each geography. These permits, or authorizations, must be acquired in advance from the requisite authorities. For an enterprise trying to expand globally at internet-speed, this process can be time-consuming, onerous and expensive.



## Emergency Services

Many governments require that every number, including virtual numbers, have the ability to make emergency calls to national shortcodes, for example, 911 in the US or 112 in France. Emergency service access is essential for every use case to safeguard employee safety and security, as part of the enterprise's duty of care towards its staff.

Virtual numbers should be configured in the in-country central database for user identification with the correct physical address information. This is to ensure that when an emergency call is initiated from a virtual number, the number is mapped to the correct physical address and the emergency services can reach the location within time.

The need is simple: no matter how complex or feature-rich the platform, every in-country number should allow users to call local emergency services.



## Lawful Interception

Lawful interception (LI) is legally sanctioned access to private communications, such as telephone calls or e-mail messages, for the purposes of police use or national security. In general, LI is a security process in which a network operator or service provider is required by a judicial or administrative order to give a law enforcement agency access to the communications of private individuals or organizations.

Lawful interception is a legal requirement in almost every country around the world. This means that in any market, voice connectivity services must be implemented in a manner that supports authorized electronic surveillance – which includes cloud telephony services.

Traditional lawful interception of telephone calls from fixed or mobile numbers registered to a service provider or the telecom regulator within a country is relatively straightforward, as there are distinct components handling signaling and traffic within the network infrastructure. Laws and procedures for the request and implementation of wiretaps in many countries have also made lawful interception easy for fixed line networks. But for enterprises implementing cloud telephony (VoIP-based calling), providing access to enable LI may have specific issues, including:

- **The complexity of extracting target and non-target data:** All data is tightly intermingled. Therefore, the platform should be able to ensure that non-target data is not erroneously captured, while providing all target data.
- **International data flow:** In many countries, current laws on how to handle Internet interception are not clear, and the platform must be able to manage all of them, along with the infrastructure available to track and comply with emerging regulations.
- **Lack of standards implementation:** Interceptions are sometimes carried out by different organizations within government agencies with different standards, and while efforts are being made to standardize this, the platform must be able to comply with different standards and formats.

Businesses using cloud telephony to connect their workforce, call centers or conference bridges, including where the company has limited physical presence, must make sure that the service provider delivering virtual numbers has the required technical infrastructure and resources to support LI in every offered country.

## Conclusion

Whatever the use case, while implementing global cloud platforms and telephony, it is essential to identify an established enabler who can offer virtual numbers that are already compliant on all fronts. Reputable providers have a global infrastructure, and the scale and resources essential to ensure that all regulations are met, no matter which country the numbers are provided for.

For enterprises and digital communication providers looking to enhance their footprint and accelerate growth while remaining compliant to all regulations, BICS offers a straight path to cloud telephony. With an extensive toll and toll-free number portfolio, international voice and SMS reachability, and SIP trunking solution to enable cloud telephony, BICS is unrivaled in its coverage and support. Building on its position as a leading global telecom provider and digital ecosystem enabler, BICS makes it easy for businesses to improve efficiencies and cut costs, taking advantage of the potential offered by the cloud.

For more information, please visit:  
[www.bics.com](http://www.bics.com)

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