



The public telephone company and its affiliates, who are the major players, are active in almost all types of communication and have an expansive investment strategy. However, the forthcoming full liberalization of the market and the tidal wave of new technologies will seriously challenge their supremacy.

Although reports may disagree on precise figures, for 1998, the market was evaluated at around GRD1.5 to 2 trillion (approximately \$7.5 to \$10 billion), and first estimates indicate that the market is "running" at a rate of 25% to 30%.

Voice telephony is still the leader, but network and data communication services are showing a fast upward trend. Additionally, there is rapid development in the Internet sector and in cellular telephony (three operators, estimated penetration of 32% to over 33% for 1999). E-commerce is slowly becoming a household term, and Greece is considering the launch of a telecommunications satellite.

Although the issue of alternative networks is of concern to potential local players, no evident progress has been made so far. However, the Public Power Corporation and OSE, the Greek railway organization, seem to be more active in this field. For telecommunications, there is movement in e-commerce, network and data communication, Internet applications such as banking, and satellite communication applications.

For more information, contact:

George E. Dimitriou,
Commercial Officer
Canadian Embassy
4, Ioannou Ghennadiou Street
Athens, GR 115-21, Greece

Tel.: (011-30-1) 727-3355
Fax: (011-30-1) 727-3460
E-mail: george.dimitriou@dfait-maeci.gc.ca
Web Site: <http://www.infoexport.gc.ca/gr>

MARKET CONSIDERATIONS

MARKET CONSIDERATIONS: The market is not easily accessible, and competition is fierce. Frequent trips are necessary, since developing personal contacts is a pre-requisite to conducting business locally. The services of a local agent is key to business success in Greece.

For **IT**, penetration is still low, and the market is perhaps the smallest in Europe in terms of per capita IT expenditure. However, technological advances have prompted Greek firms to use IT products, and the estimated growth rate is around 18% to 20%. This is the fastest-growing IT market in Europe, given the European Union average of around 9%.

For **telecommunications**, Greece's participation in the emerging Information Society is a major priority for the government. Greece will have to focus on research and development, content, and the dissemination of information and communication technologies. This exercise should take into account practical parameters such as education infrastructure, and incentives such as pricing and tariffs.

or visit

The Hellenic Telecommunications Organization:
<http://www.ote.gr>
Strategy of Greek government for ICT sector:
http://www.primeminister.gr/infosoc/index_en.htm
The European Telecommunications Office:
<http://www.eto.dk/contacts/greece.htm>
National Telecommunications and Post Commission:
<http://www.eett.gr>
Federation of Hellenic IT Enterprises: <http://www.sepe.gr>