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Fiber (FTTH) Broadband Services Expand (Global Rankings)

The number of countries where Fiber To The Home (FTTH) broadband connections show significant gains continues to expand, according to an updated global ranking issued by the FTTH Councils of Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America.

The ranking, which is based on statistics gathered at the end of last year, lists 14 economies where more than 1% of households are connected directly into high speed fiber optic networks. This is up from 11 economies during last July.

Globally, 2007 was the best year yet in terms of subscriber growth, thanks primarily to strong uptake in Japan, China and the USA, where a total of nearly 6 million new FTTH households were added for the three countries. The ranking itself, which we've rewritten into order, is as follows:

1. South Korea - 31.4%
2. Hong Kong - 23.4%
3. Japan - 21.3%
4. Sweden - 7.1%
5. Taiwan - 6.8%
6. Norway - 6%
7. Denmark - 2.5%
8. The United States - 2.3%
9. Slovenia - 1.8%
10. Iceland - 1.5%
11. The People's Republic of China - 1.5%
12. Netherlands, Italy, Singapore - 1.1% to 1.4% (each)

It will come as little surprise to regular readers and industry observers alike that the UK is not included. To date the government and regulatory bodies are still trying to determine the best way forward and even then it may not include proper FTTH. Meanwhile a growing number of European states continue to develop their FTTH networks:

"What this indicates is the unrelenting vigor of the FTTH industry here in Europe – where we surpassed one million connections – and worldwide," said Joeri Van Bogaert, President of the FTTH Council Europe. "This phenomenon is driven by something that never slows down, and that is the consumer appetite for ever-higher bandwidth."

It's worth pointing out that the rankings only include FTTH and FTTB (Fiber To The Building) figures, while copper-based broadband access technologies (DSL, FTT-Curb, FTT-Node) are not included. FTTC is known to be more attractive to BT than FTTH because of the lower cost factor, though adoption of FTTC would obviously limit our presence in any future rankings.

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