

Press release

NEW STUDY on misleading advertising for fibre networks The FTTH Council Europe calls on European Policy Makers to take action

- *Study shows consumers are confused about marketing and performance of broadband access technologies*
- *Country reports show misleading fibre advertisement can be tackled successfully*
- *Expertise of Telecom National regulatory Authorities is key in assessment*
- *A 'fibre-ready' label should be introduced for new buildings and major renovations.*

2 December 2020. The FTTH Council Europe says it is time to act on misleading advertising after publishing a [report](#) titled "Identifying European Best Practice in Fibre Advertising".

The report, prepared by WiK, finds that **European consumers are confused about the terms used to market broadband access technologies, and find it difficult to identify which networks provide the best performance. Consumers often think they have fibre access when in fact they do not.**

Telecom regulatory authorities have an objective to promote investment in, and take up of Very High Capacity Networks, which we understand as Fibre to the Home and Fibre to the Building but usually have limited scope to address issues of awareness in advertising. Meanwhile, Advertising Standards Authorities (ASA), which do have competence over advertising may have less expertise to grasp the wider implications of different technological solutions for broadband, and have no mandate to promote the objective of fostering investment in, and take-up of fibre networks.

The study found that the strongest and most effective forward-looking interventions in the market have been driven by the National Regulatory Authority (NRAs) or Digital/Telecom Ministry of the country in question rather than the Advertising Authority. Those interventions have ranged from a labelling regime in Italy introduced by AGCOM to a prohibition on the use of the term 'fibre' in France except where fibre genuinely reaches into the home or premises.

WiK's report includes clear policy recommendations such as guidelines at EU level by the European Commission to foster the involvement of NRAs and/or Ministries across Europe and better align policy approaches to advertising broadband with the objectives established under the Code. The review of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive provides an opportunity to consider mandatory labelling schemes to address the problem.

*"We call on European policy-makers to address the issue of misleading advertising and we believe that when assessing cases, the experience of NRAs would make a huge difference. **The revision of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive is also an opportunity to address this critical issue and the FTTH Council Europe proposes the introduction of a 'fibre-ready' label for new buildings and major renovations.**"* said Vincent Garnier, Director General of the FTTH Council Europe.

*"Italy and France have shown that the problem of misleading advertising for fibre products can be tackled. There are a number of positive examples of controls on fibre advertising and the FTTH Council Europe believes that now is the time to take action at EU level **so that all European consumers and businesses can make an informed choice about the products which are available to them**"* said Eric Festraets, President of the FTTH Council Europe.

This report was presented at the FTTH virtual Conference 2020 in the Workshop 1c: Best Practice in European Advertising for FTTH products, the slides of the presentation can be consulted [here](#).

Contact:

Aurélie Bladocha Coelho
Director Communications & Public Affairs
aurelie.bladocha-coelho@ftthcouncil.eu Tel: +32 478 78 61 00

Sergejs Mikaeljans
Communications and Public Affairs Officer
sergejs.mikaeljans@ftthcouncil.eu Tel: +32 474 81 04 54

About the FTTH Council Europe

The FTTH Council Europe's vision is that fibre connectivity will transform and enhance the way we live, do business and interact, connecting everyone and everything, everywhere.

Fibre is the future-proof, climate-friendly infrastructure which enables an unparalleled fixed and wireless experience as well as new innovative digital technologies and services, empowering a leading Digital Society in Europe. This is a crucial prerequisite for safeguarding Europe's global competitiveness while playing a leading global role in sustainability
The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 160 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu