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FTTH Council Europe Welcomes New FTTH Project For Paris

Roll-out of universal Fibre-to-the-Home in French capital marks progressive step toward the realisation of Europe's next generation knowledge economy

According to the FTTH Council Europe, the recently unveiled FTTH project set to roll out universal high-speed broadband access in Paris indicates a highly positive step in the development of fibre infrastructure deployments in France. Crucially, in addition to providing 2.1 million Parisian residences with 50Mbps connections within the first two years, Free - the group behind the new project - also promises to open up the new network to all other operators; a move applauded by the Council.

Hartwig Tauber President of the FTTH Council Europe comments, "The partnership with City authorities demonstrates how FTTH projects are becoming increasingly recognised for their potential economical and social benefits, and validates the widely accepted belief that competitive FTTH is possible where civil infrastructure barriers are addressed.

"This new project is fully in-line with the "Paris-Digital City" initiative and although Free will be heavily investing in the fibre themselves, spending €1bn over the six year period, we note that in this case, the co-operation between Free and the Municipality of Paris is a fundamental cornerstone of the deal, helping make Next Generation Broadband a reality."

As well as attracting new demand, the project will see Free migrate all its existing ADSL2+ based subscribers to FTTH at no charge, providing high-speed broadband services including unlimited voice and HDTV to over 4 million people across various areas of France by 2012.

Tauber continues, "This progress confirms the increasing dedication France has given to FTTH development. With the "Paris-Digital City" initiative and promising fibre-

based pilots being driven energetically by France Telecom, France stands as an exemplar to other countries in Europe.”

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About the Fibre to the Home (FTTH) Council Europe

The FTTH Council Europe www.europeftthcouncil.com is a market development organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre-based, broadband access networks to consumers and businesses. With few exceptions, Europe lags well behind the US and Asian tiger economies in the availability of high speed broadband services (10 Mbps and upwards). The Council believes that the development of fibre-based access networks is fundamental to the deployment of such services, and hence to reaping their benefits for European citizens and businesses.

The Council's charter is to work with European governments, policy-makers and opinion leaders qualify and quantify the benefits to be gained from fibre-based broadband access networks, and to identify and help to erode the barriers to their development. Council members are drawn from the telecoms (vendors), broadband content and academic sectors.

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