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Milan to host the prestigious FTTH Conference 2011

The FTTH Council Europe hopes the presence of the world's leading Fibre to the Home event will encourage further FTTH deployment in Italy

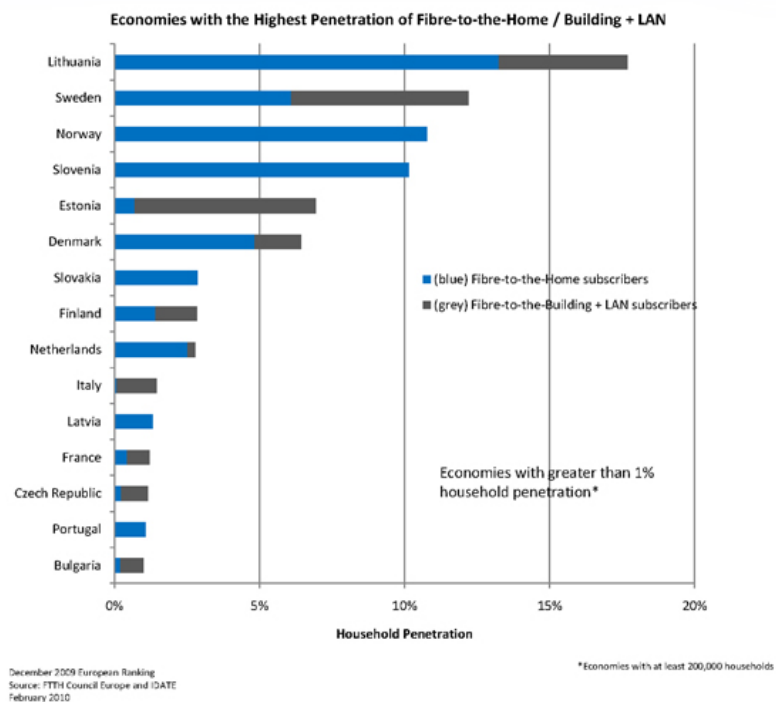
BRUSSELS, 18 May 2010 – The Fibre to the Home Council Europe is pleased to announce that Milan, Italy has been selected to host the world's largest Fibre to the Home (FTTH) event next year. The FTTH Conference 2011 will take place at the Milano Convention Centre in Fiera Milano on 9-10 February 2011.

The city of Milan has a firm place in fibre history, being one of the first cities where FTTH was deployed. In 2000 alternative operator Fastweb started to roll out a fibre network across the city that now passes some 2 million homes and has nearly 300,000 subscribers. This early success propelled Italy into the FTTH Ranking – a league table of nations where more than 1 percent of households are fibre subscribers. In fact, Italy was the first major European economy to break into the FTTH Ranking.

But despite such a promising start, FTTH deployment in Italy appears to have stalled. In December 2008, the country was in eighth position in the European rankings, but by December 2009 it had slipped to tenth place, with an unchanged 1.3 percent.

“Early fibre deployments in Italy took place at a time when copper connections only offered speeds slower than 1 Mbps and could not support TV services. With fibre access the Milanese had access to advanced services such as video communications in the early 2000's, but since then no real progress has been made”, explained Chris Holden, the new President of the FTTH Council Europe. “We welcome the recently-announced plans to roll-out fibre across the country. While consumer demand for new applications and services is on the rise, FTTH is the only solution that can meet both short- and long-term bandwidth demands.”

“Italy was a pioneer in fibre deployment” said Hartwig Tauber, Director General of the FTTH Council Europe. “We hope that the presence of the FTTH Conference in Milan will inspire the Italians and encourage them to renew their efforts to roll out fibre, such as the Italian operators' recent plans to connect the largest Italian cities. The conference provides an unparalleled opportunity to find out, first hand, how fibre can benefit all sectors of society, including service providers, the local community and the national economy.”



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About The FTTH Council Europe:

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre-based, ultra-high-speed access networks to consumers and businesses. The Council promotes this technology because it will deliver a flow of new services that enhances the quality of life, contributes to a better environment and increased economic competitiveness. The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 130 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu

Media Contact:

Nadia Babaali
Communications Director
FTTH Council Europe
+33 (0) 6 20 88 72 38
nadia.babaali@ftthcouncil.eu