

## **FTTH Council Europe calls EU Member States to support CEF budget proposal**

BRUSSELS, 8 OCTOBER 2012 -- The FTTH Council Europe today reaffirmed its strong support for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) in particular with respect to the development of fibre-based high-speed communication networks in Europe.

The challenges facing Europe and identified in the Commission's EU2020 strategy are many but importantly include aging populations and the increased pressure on healthcare systems as well as environmental sustainability and lifting economic productivity. Many of the potential uses of FTTH such as home-working and home-based eHealth applications have significant impacts that can be classified as positive externalities. In the case of home-working this could be relief of traffic congestion allowing other commuters to save time as well as positive environmental impacts. In the case of home-based eHealth applications, decongestion of healthcare facilitates and financial savings to the State can be anticipated in addition to the direct benefits. In these circumstances, the benefits accruing to society often go far beyond the direct economic benefits identified by investors. Studies by the OECD have shown that savings of 0.5-1.5% in just four sectors of the economy (electricity, health, transportation and education) would justify a fully publically financed network.

A series of studies conducted by the FTTH Council Europe estimate the total cost of achieving FTTH in Europe for more rural areas at €73bn. Leveraging the financing proposed in the CEF could therefore have a meaningful impact on those targeted areas. The FTTH Council Europe has also looked at the demand drivers for these networks and found that over time, as consumers become aware of the advantages of FTTH, they are prepared to pay a significant premium. The delay in that added-value being recognised is heavily impacted by misleading advertising, which the European Commission has proposed to address. These and other studies are available on [www.ftthcouncil.eu](http://www.ftthcouncil.eu).

Recognising the difficulties in obtaining ICT funding for infrastructure upgrade, the FTTH Council Europe believes it is essential that any infrastructure built provides a future-proof solution that will not have to be replaced for many years after the targets set for 2020.

The FTTH Council Europe urges Member States to support the Commission's proposal for ICT in the CEF in the current budgetary negotiations.

Karin Ahl, President of the FTTH Council Europe, said "Those Governments that adopt a more holistic view of society and the benefits that spread across the economy will realise the importance of maintaining the CEF for network build. We very much need to build communication networks for the future that look beyond the next quarter's returns and that can put Europe on the front foot for economic growth and innovation."

- ends -

### **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 enhance the quality of life, contribute to a better environment and increase economic competitiveness. The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 150 member companies. [www.ftthcouncil.eu](http://www.ftthcouncil.eu)

**FTTH Conference 2013**, London ExCel, 19-21 February 2013 [www.ftthconference.eu](http://www.ftthconference.eu)

Tired of your Internet connection? Join “**I want Fibre**” page on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/pages/I-want-fibre/174248502650699](https://www.facebook.com/pages/I-want-fibre/174248502650699)

**Media Contact:**

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