

FTTH Council Europe confirms support for Digital Agenda Targets to Vice President Kroes

Brussels 25 September 2012 - On 13 September the President of the FTTH Council Europe, Karin Ahl and the Director General, Hartwig Tauber met with Vice President Neelie Kroes to discuss the latest developments on the Next Generation Access broadband market.

Karin Ahl reemphasized the support of FTTH Council Europe for Vice President Kroes efforts to drive forward the Digital Agenda. The FTTH Council Europe has the clear position that the 100 Mbps broadband targets in the Digital Agenda should not be weakened. On the contrary, it is necessary to include in the definition upload targets and Quality of Service Parameters. There was agreement that Europe needs to increase its efforts to reach the Digital Agenda targets to stay competitive in a global market.

Transparency and clear communication towards the end user was another topic that was discussed during the meeting. Today, many broadband products only deliver a fraction of the speed that was used to market them to the end user. "If a consumer buys a litre of milk at the supermarket and realises then that it just contains 0.2 litres, he will complain. But on the broadband market, this happens every day", stated Hartwig Tauber to illustrate the issue.

FTTH Council Europe also confirmed their continued support to ensure that the 9.2 billion euro budget proposal for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) is defended against the strong demands from other sectors. While many stakeholders still believe that this budget is already decided, the contrary is the case. There is a significant risk that the sum could be drastically reduced during the budget discussions in November. The FTTH Council Europe will increase its efforts in the next weeks to do a "wake up" call in Europe to secure the 9.2 billion euro budget for CEF.

The meeting was also used to update Vice President Kroes about the latest studies and activities of the FTTH Council Europe. This included the latest results of the cost project, which show that the costs to roll out fibre are lower than estimated. Another recent study of the FTTH Council Europe proves that consumers are ready to subscribe to fibre networks. Take-up rates are just a matter of time, suggesting that once consumers understand what is available, they readily subscribe. This is, again, underlining the need for accurate marketing of speed and QoS to consumers.

Finally Karin Ahl presented to Vice President Kroes the new "I want fibre..." campaign of FTTH Council Europe on Facebook. Vice President Kroes appreciated this activity and even sent out a twitter message the same day pointing to this campaign.

"It was a very positive meeting and the Council were pleased to hear that Vice President Kroes and her team remain committed to drive forward the Digital Agenda. We, the FTTH Council Europe, still have concerns that policy changes will detract from putting in place today the networks that will drive the future beyond 2020 but are ready to support the commitment to meeting the targets and obtaining a budget for the CEF", concluded Karin Ahl after the meeting in Brussels.

**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

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