

PRESS RELEASE
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FTTH Council Europe Welcomes Commission Proposals towards a Gigabit Society

BRUSSELS, 14 September 2016 – The FTTH Council Europe welcomes the [legislative proposals of the European Commission](#)¹ revising Europe's telecoms rulebook. The proposal sends an important signal that the policy and regulatory landscape is shifting towards prioritising fibre investments. Focusing on infrastructure based competition and regulatory tools that enable it, such as duct access is the right policy choice to drive fibre investment. The FTTH Council Europe pledges to review the proposed text and to work with legislators to provide information, support and advice as deliberations on the legislation begins.

The FTTH Council Europe believes that building a Gigabit Society is the right ambition in the fast moving, globalised digital age. Very High Capacity connectivity - implying fibre-based networks - is the backbone of the digital era and indispensable for every citizen and business in order to participate and compete in an all-connected world. Fibre is the only future-proof infrastructure capable of supplying guaranteed bandwidths of 1Gigabit for both downstream and upstream and will be essential for enabling the 5G evolution.

"The progressive thinking of the European Commission pointing towards ubiquitous fibre coverage for the whole of Europe is the right way forward in the global digital race. We need the approach proposed in this legislation if we are to get the investments needed to achieve best in class networks in Europe," said Ronan Kelly, President of the FTTH Council Europe. "We need to make sure that the right incentives are in place to encourage FTTH and that we get a market driven competitive process driving those investments where it is possible. This proposed legislation looks like a big step in the right direction".

"We welcome the streamlined focus on competitive, private fibre investment where commercially possible and the solutions proposed for building a single fibre network also in rural areas." said Erzsebet Fitori, Director General of the FTTH Council Europe. "Fibre is the new electricity and there should be nobody left behind. Stressing the geographical dimension and trying to prevent a new 'Gigabit divide' is a crucial change. The prioritisation of access to civil engineering assets - which, if newly built might represent up to 80% of the rollout costs - should allow Member States to build on recent measures to reduce costs and extend the reach of future proof fibre networks to many more

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/connectivity-european-gigabit-society?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_content=Digital%20Single%20Market&utm_campaign=connectivity

of their citizens. FTTH networks can greatly enhance public service delivery as well as boost local businesses' productivity".

The FTTH Council Europe pointed out that several countries, including France, Spain, and Portugal have already taken big strides in terms of setting out a model of how FTTH networks can deploy quickly by putting appropriate policy and regulatory measures in place, including measures to reduce deployment costs. Learning from these examples appears to be at the heart of the Commission's approach.

Regulation is a priority theme for the Council this year, and will be discussed at the FTTH Conference in Marseille, France, from 14 to 16 February 2017 www.ftthconference.eu.

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

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