

Europe gives regulatory push to fibre investments & end-user benefits

Brussels, 6 June 2018 – The co-legislators gathered today in presence of the European Commission reached an agreement on the European Electronic Communications Code, the piece of legislation aimed at revising the existing legislative framework for telecommunications.

The FTTH Council Europe congratulates the policy-makers for this landmark agreement and welcomes the new Code, which promotes competitive investments in future-proof digital infrastructures like full fibre and 5G.

Since the publication of the European Commission's proposal in September 2016, the FTTH Council Europe has been advocating for the final text to find the right balance between rewarding investment risk and ensuring fair competition.

"Today, the co-legislators paved the way towards a long-term competitive market structure by creating a favourable environment for all investors -both traditional and new- to play an active role in building our digital highways" highlighted Ronan Kelly, President of the FTTH Council Europe.

For the first time, investment in very-high capacity (VHC) networks is becoming a legally binding objective of the regulatory framework alongside competition, the creation of the single market and consumer benefits. This new Code marks a shift compared to the previous regulatory framework as it addresses the urgent need for step-change infrastructure investments in Europe and supports the evolution of the telecom market towards a long term competitive structure. **Even more importantly the parameters defining the VHC networks will be built on the characteristics of fibre.**

"There is clearly a momentum for fibre investment" says Erzsébet Fitori, Director General of the FTTH Council Europe. *"We see a lot of the emerging wholesale-only vehicles backed by new types of investors and now there is also more room for step change investments made in a safeguarded competitive structure to be governed by a commercially driven scheme. **There is opportunity in the new Code for full fibre investors and a win-win for end-users, who will benefit from fibre based connectivity and long-term competition.**"*

While the level of complexity of the framework remains high, the FTTH Council welcomes these new rules, which will stimulate investments and deliver benefits to European citizens and businesses. The National Regulatory Authorities and BEREC will therefore have a crucial role in applying the new Code to boost fibre across the European Union.

Fibre is the foundation of fixed and wireless gigabit networks as well as the key enabler of all new innovative digital technologies and services. It is also the prerequisite for Europe's global digital competitiveness and sustainability and this new Code will be key to pave the full fibre future of Europe.

About the FTTH Council Europe

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate ubiquitous fibre-based connectivity empowering a leading Digital Society throughout Europe. The FTTH Council Europe's vision is that fibre connectivity will transform and enhance the way we live, do business and interact, connecting everyone and everything, everywhere.

Fibre-based infrastructure is the only future-proof foundation enabling fixed and wireless gigabit networks as well as all new innovative digital technologies and services and the prerequisite for Europe's global digital competitiveness and sustainability.

The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 150 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu

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