

Broadband: Action plan

Broadband project plans help you map infrastructure needs, plan financing and deployment, monitor progress, find stakeholders, make the right choices and more.

Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband

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Steps to execute the project and the action plan

After defining your broadband plan and making the 4 key strategic choices (infrastructure and technology, investment model, business model and financing) the next steps include:

Mapping infrastructure needs

In order to fully identify opportunities and challenges, all existing infrastructure in the region should be mapped in detail including the expansion plans of the incumbent telecom operators, alternative wire-line or wireless operators and cable providers as well as public sector organisations and utilities.

The EU study on mapping of broadband and infrastructures reviewed different mapping initiatives and proposed a methodology to conduct the mapping of infrastructure, services, investment and demand. An interactive online mapping application enables the visualisation of quality of service (QoS) for all EU Member States.

Financial planning

Deployment costs should be estimated in the action plan and matched to the possible customer base. This includes a detailed description on how the different financing tools are going to be used and a definition of the actions ensuring the availability of the needed funds.

Through the EU Directive on cost reduction measures, conditions for a more cost efficient network deployment are expected to be established.

Deployment planning

Because municipalities and regions are probably the largest users of broadband in the local market, a plan to connect all public buildings with fibre should be made (public administration, healthcare institutes, hospitals, schools, etc.). This generally constitutes the core of the backbone network. A master plan should be made for the network including all parts of the local private market, houses, multi-dwelling units (MDU), business parks and shopping centres. This should result in a mapping of the area and a high-level network design. It is important to include broadband infrastructure when a new city planning is produced.

Procurement preparation

Procurement needs to be designed to reach the objectives set out in the broadband plan and has to implement the strategic choices. Market awareness is also a very important procurement activity. Due to the high complexity of this step, it is often recommended to rely on consultants and

specialists. The SIMAP portal provides access to the most important information about public procurement in Europe.

Further phases in this context are:

- building phase (deployment);
- network launch;
- project evaluation.

These phases should be clearly defined in an action plan, which concretely outlines how the project shall be carried out according to the strategic choices. In parallel, the following activities need to be carried out:

Monitoring progress

It is crucial to make sure the project is properly monitored and its success is correctly evaluated. Monitoring will allow you to enforce the agreed targets from suppliers and contractors and to ensure competition among multiple service providers over the deployed NGN broadband network. Indicators for the monitoring include:

- physical deployment: Ensure the necessary network elements are indeed being deployed;
- service availability on different parts of the network according to schedule;
- service quality, in terms of actual down- and upload data rates, latency and failure rate;
- ensure that scheduled maintenance and repair takes place;
- number of new end-user connections activated.

Monitoring requirements should be set out in the contracts. In case of state aid, monitoring is mandated. Access (capacity, dark fibre or duct) should be provided to all service providers, without discrimination in terms of time, traffic management or quality of services limitation.

Identify potential customers

The plan should also identify potential customers such as end user, future operators and service providers. New actors will enter the local market when a new operator-neutral infrastructure is in place. If there is leasable infrastructure, several operators will see a business case in delivering services without the need to build it on their own. It is important that discussions with stakeholders take place early on and that many contracts and agreements are signed before deployment is started.

Establishing internal and external coordination and collaboration

A broadband investment project requires the coordination of many different activities, which include:

- assigning a coordinator for the broadband plan;
- establishing coordination between broadband and other infrastructural works to share civil-work costs;
- organising personal interviews and/or workshops with unit managers of your administrative units.

Stakeholder communication and management

Your action plan should include a shareholder communication and management plan. For a project's success it is essential to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted during the course of the project and that you give them proper support. Local residents, business and enterprises are the most important stakeholders and should be integrated as early as possible. The public authority's profile must be highlighted to make sure people can follow and determine the relevance and impacts for the region.

The main approach to government agencies is likely to be defined through Service Level Agreements or contracts relating to the provision of funds and/or the commitment to achieving key outputs. There should be formal reporting and meeting arrangements contained in these documents.

The main approach to managing relationships with suppliers is through the formal channels established in the various collaboration contracts. These channels should include formal reporting and meeting structures and the frequency of meetings at all relevant levels. You should also seek agreement with construction companies and housing organisations as these often represent the key to the end users. And indeed in many cases these take the role of Access Area PIP (Physical Infrastructure Provider).

Broadband champion

The strongest community engagement is always found when it is led and managed from within the community itself. This is best achieved by a Broadband Champion, someone who is:

- already involved in the community (often in another role);
- respected by the community for that role and his/her achievements;
- passionate about maintaining the community alive;
- concerned about the lack of broadband and the effect this is having on the community's social and economic life;
- a good communicator with a good general understanding of broadband.

It is important to remember that while the programme should enable and encourage Champions to learn from each other, they must always stay "rooted" in their community. This is where they add the greatest value and contribute more effectively to the success of the project.

Marketing and communication plan

In order to ensure consistency across all stakeholders and to maximise take-up, you should prepare a marketing and communication plan that considers:

- raising awareness of the expected economic and social benefits of broadband;
- providing an updated map of the broadband availability throughout the rollout of the project;
- facilitating demand aggregation from businesses, households and other relevant public authorities;
- managing customers' expectations;
- consultations with subsets of the key stakeholders, particularly end-user customers;
- benefit awareness days and broadband education events;
- scheme and area launches throughout the roll-out;
- promotions consistent across all media channels;
- identification and publication of success studies on a regular basis.

Stimulating demand

The public sector has a significant role in stimulating demand as a major purchaser of services for its own use as well as potentially procuring the new network. It also has a responsibility to encourage the development of new services and the establishment of infrastructure. In the long term, using the infrastructure to drive demand in the digital economy is a natural part of regional development and planning and the regional growth.

Local communities can play a very important role in driving demand for new services. There are many examples of successful bottom-up initiatives developed on a co-operative or private sector basis.

Decision making

Different levels of involvement imply different levels of influence on the decision making on a project. Three main variations can be identified:

- if the network infrastructure is fully owned by the public authority, then the authority has full control over any decision-making;
- for a private-public joint venture, a good approach is to consider the needs of the market and to have a board of public body stakeholders to oversee all decision-making;
- governance can be exercised through alternative methods of influence. This approach may be necessary when the public authority is not directly involved. The public authority can still be able to monitor activities of the project and refer any undesirable outcome to another enforcing body.

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Latest

PRESS RELEASE | 15 September 2021

State of the Union: Commission proposes a Path to the Digital Decade to deliver the EU's digital transformation by 2030

The Commission has proposed this week a Path to the Digital Decade, a concrete plan to achieve the digital transformation of our society and economy

by 2030. The proposed Path to the Digital Decade will translate the EU's digital ambitions for 2030 into a concrete delivery mechanism. It will set up a governance framework based on an annual cooperation mechanism with Member States to reach the 2030 Digital Decade targets at Union level in the areas of digital skills, digital infrastructures, digitalisation of businesses and public services. It also aims to identify and implement large-scale

PRESS RELEASE | 12 March 2021

Commission welcomes agreement on the Connecting Europe Facility to fund greener, more sustainable transport and energy networks, and digitalisation

The European Commission welcomes the agreement reached by the European Parliament and the Council on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) proposal, worth €33.7 billion, as part of the next long-term EU budget 2021-2027.

PRESS RELEASE | 09 March 2021

Europe's Digital Decade: Commission sets the course towards a digitally empowered Europe by 2030

The Commission recently presented a vision, targets and avenues for a successful digital transformation of Europe by 2030. This is also critical to achieve the transition towards a climate neutral, circular and resilient economy. The EU's ambition is to be digitally sovereign in an open and interconnected world, and to pursue digital policies that empower people and businesses to seize a human centred, sustainable and more prosperous digital future. This includes addressing vulnerabilities and dependencies as well as accelerating investment.

PRESS RELEASE | 02 December 2020

Commission launches public consultation to gather views on improving fast broadband network rollout

Earlier this week, the Commission opened a public consultation, as part of the review of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive, to collect views, until 2 March 2021, on incentivising the rollout of fast broadband networks, including fibre and 5G. The Directive, introduced in 2014, aims to enable fast electronic communications networks for people across the EU by reducing the related costs.

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Related Content

Big Picture

Broadband project planning

The Broadband planning section helps municipalities and other entities in their planning of successful broadband development projects.

See Also

Broadband: Financing public-private and private-run deployments

Investment efforts to finance public-private and private-run networks are made in cooperation between private actors who own existing infrastructure, and public authorities.

Broadband: Carrier models

Municipalities, municipal companies, joint ventures, and private companies can be involved in one, two or all three stages of broadband development.

Broadband: Actors in the value chain

The basic roles of Physical Infrastructure Provider (PIP), Network Provider (NP) and Service Provider (SP) can be taken by different actors.

Broadband: Access to infrastructure & service-based competition

Access to the broadband infrastructure is possible via different network nodes on the infrastructure and application level.

Broadband: Plan definition

The key to successful regional broadband development lies in defining a plan that includes goals, collaborations, and specific needs and stakeholders.

Broadband: Technology overview

An overview of different wired, wireless and upcoming broadband technologies and a description of their advantages, disadvantages and sustainability.

Broadband: Basic business models

Choosing the right business model depends on the roles of the market actors in the broadband value chain.

Broadband: Investment models

Investment models present interesting involvement opportunities for a public authority that engages in regional broadband development.

Broadband: Main financing tools

The European Commission has a range of financing tools for high-speed broadband development projects across the EU.

Broadband: State aid

State aid for broadband may be necessary in some places where the market does not provide the necessary infrastructure investment.

Broadband: Network and topology

A broadband network consists of geographical parts. The topology of a network describes how the different parts of a network are connected. The most relevant topologies for the backbone and area networks are tree topologies, ring topologies and meshed topologies. For the first...

Broadband: value chain, actors & business models

Different business models are available to public authorities and other market actors in broadband development.

Broadband: Choice of infrastructure

Broadband networks require different infrastructure types based on different logistic, economic or demographic conditions. Use the questions to help choose.

Broadband: Technology comparison

A comparison of broadband technologies presents features of each solution and helps decisions on the best solution for different regions.