

The Connectivity Toolbox

Advanced networks are one of the most fundamental blocks of the EU's digital transformation and an essential pillar of the recovery. The timely deployment of fibre and 5G networks will offer significant economic opportunities for the years to come, as a crucial asset for European competitiveness, sustainability and a major enabler for future digital services.



The Connectivity Toolbox

The Connectivity Toolbox is a set of best practices for timely rolling out 5G and fast broadband. On the one hand, the measures help network operators reduce the cost of deploying networks. On the other, Member States can use these measures to give operators access to the spectrum they need to rollout 5G and to encourage operators to further invest in 5G coverage. The Connectivity Toolbox is the result of exchanges between Member States, in cooperation with the Commission, following the Commission's Recommendation.

The Connectivity Toolbox Recommendation

In September 2020, the Commission adopted a Recommendation calling Member States to boost investment in very high-capacity broadband connectivity infrastructure, including fibre and 5G. The aim of the Recommendation is for Member States to develop a Toolbox of best practices for reducing the cost of deploying electronic communications networks and for efficient access to 5G radio spectrum. The Member States will share their experiences with each other in order to focus their actions on measures that work best in rolling out advanced networks.

Connectivity Special Group

The Connectivity Special Group, composed of Member States' representatives responsible in the area of electronic communications and the Commission as established in its terms of reference, aims to assist Member States in identifying and agreeing on the best practices, and, upon request, in the implementation and reporting of the Toolbox.

The Connectivity Special Group was established in October 2020 as a cooperation platform. It is supported by two subgroups:

- a subgroup on the reduction of the cost of deploying electronic communications networks
- a subgroup focused on access to 5G radio spectrum

The Connectivity Special Group is co-chaired by a representative of the current Presidency of the Council and a representative of the incoming Presidency of the Council, as well as by a representative of the Commission, which is also acting as the secretariat of the Group.

The Connectivity Special Group is engaging, where appropriate, with the Radio Spectrum Policy Group (RSPG), the Body of European Regulators or Electronic Communications (BEREC), national regulatory authorities (NRAs), the Broadband Competence Offices network (BCO network) and competent authorities in charge of the functions of the single information point. The list of the Connectivity Special Group members (.pdf) is available.

Calendar and main deliverables

The Connectivity Toolbox Recommendation establishes clear milestones to be accomplished by the Member States in close cooperation with the Commission:

1. By 20 December 2020: Member States identify and share between themselves and with the Commission best practices in reducing the cost and increasing the speed of deploying very high capacity networks, as well as ensuring timely and investment-friendly access to 5G radio spectrum. On 18 December 2020, the Connectivity Special Group adopted a report compiling all the information on best practices provided by Member States.
2. By 30 March 2021: Member States agree on a Union Toolbox of best practices on Connectivity.
3. By 30 April 2021: Member States provide the Commission with roadmaps for the implementation of the Toolbox.
4. By 30 April 2022: each Member State should report on the implementation of the Toolbox.

Related Content

Big Picture

Connectivity

The EU's goal is for Europe to be the most connected continent by 2030.

See Also

Open Internet

EU rules enshrine the principle of open Internet access: internet traffic shall be treated without discrimination, blocking, throttling or prioritisation.

Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications

The Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) improves consistency of EU telecoms rules.

ICT and standardisation

ICT specifications ensure that products can connect and interoperate with each other, boosting innovation, and keeping ICT markets open and competitive.

Electronic communications laws

The EU's electronic communications policy improves competition, drives innovation, and boosts consumer rights within the European single market.

EU radio spectrum policy for wireless connections across borders

Enabling seamless wireless connections across borders so we can share media, stay informed and enjoy the latest innovative technologies wherever we are takes coordination and cooperation on radio spectrum. This dynamic and rapidly evolving sector needs a flexible, market...

5G

5G is the critical new generation network technology that will enable innovation and support the digital transformation.

112: EU Emergency number

Need help? 112 is your life-saving number! 112 is the European emergency phone number, available everywhere in the EU, free of charge.

Roaming: connected anywhere in the EU at no extra charge

Europeans can call, message and use mobile data anywhere in the EU without extra costs thanks to the 'Roam like at home' policy.

Intra-EU calls: lower and limited charges for calling other EU countries

Europeans pay lower and limited charges for, Intra-EU calls, or calling other EU countries.

Connected and automated mobility

Connected and Automated Mobility provides a unique opportunity to make our transport systems safer, cleaner, more efficient and more user-friendly.

Satellite broadband

Satellite broadband is available to provide fast internet connectivity throughout every EU country.

Support for Broadband rollout

Increasing broadband network coverage is key for reaching the EU's Gigabit Society objectives. EU businesses, project managers, as well as local and regional authorities can find information on broadband best practices, financing tools, technological and business solutions, as...

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