

Broadband Investment Guide

The broadband investment guide, available in 22 languages, will help local, regional and national authorities to develop long-term development plans to bring fast internet to their communities. The handbook gives practical tips to support public authorities in the preparation of broadband investment projects, including those co-financed from the European Structural and Investment Funds and the Connecting Europe Facility.



Guide to High-Speed Broadband Investment

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The handbook

- lists the investment alternatives when developing broadband;
- advises public authorities how to take a long-term investment perspective when they develop a broadband plan;
- provides a list of choices when choosing a type of infrastructure, an investment model, a financial model and the financing tools available;
- suggests how to involve citizens, collaborate with other broadband developers, neighbouring municipalities and regions, and how to monitor and evaluate broadband investment.

European Commission Vice-President @NeelieKroesEU, in charge of the Digital Agenda said: "This guide will help public authorities make the right choices and plan the right investments for their villages, towns and regions to go digital. State-of-the art broadband infrastructure will bring growth, jobs and new opportunities for all parts of Europe, in particular rural areas and other regions where there is not enough interest of private investors.

European Commissioner @JHahnEU, in charge of the Regional policy said: "Between 2007 and 2012 over 5 million people got access to broadband thanks to Structural Funds. Standard broadband availability is now more or less 100% in nearly all regions, but more needs to be done, as access to the next generation of links to the internet is largely limited to urban areas. In 2012, 9.1 million homes in the EU still did not have fixed broadband coverage and over 90% of these were in rural areas. Only 12% of rural households in the EU had access to high-speed internet."

European Commissioner Almunia, in charge of Competition policy, said: "Broadband infrastructure requires the right mix between public and private funding. EU state aid rules ensure that taxpayers' money makes a real difference and that no available technology is excluded."

European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural development, Dacian Cioloş said: "I hope that the guide will help national and regional authorities make use of EU funds for further developing an innovative, knowledge-based businesses and human capital in rural areas, for example in helping help to close the rural-urban gap in access to high - speed internet facilities."

Background

This is an update of the guide to broadband investment published in 2011, and developed by experts in the field with the contribution of the regions involved in the Engage Project (High Speed Broadband for Rural Europe).

In addition to the guide, the European Commission can offer support and guidance from the following sources:

- European Investment Bank: The Commission has provided seed money for the EIB, as part of its Connecting Europe Facility, to deliver tailored financing for broadband projects, backed by the banks AAA credit rating.
- JASPERS: the technical assistance scheme set up to support major projects under the European Regional Development Fund.
- European Structural and Investment Funds (European Regional Development Fund and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) can contribute to the financing of broadband infrastructure, in particular in rural areas. Access to, and quality and use of ICT (including broadband investment) is one of the top priorities for the European Regional

Development Fund and is a key focus area for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

- State aid: The Commission has defined special rules (the 2013 Broadband Guidelines – see IP/12/1424) to make sure that State aid granted by Member States for broadband infrastructure is well-targeted, technologically neutral and does not harm competition through crowding out private investment. The rules ensure that public aid measures are targeted at market failures and provide open access to State funded infrastructure. A new EU block exemption regulation has also been introduced in July to exempt from notification certain categories of aid supporting the deployment of broadband infrastructure.
- A fully developed set of content about Broadband on the Digital Agenda web site.

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Thèmes associés

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