



STATEMENT ON THE GUIDELINES FOR TRANS EUROPEAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS

GENERAL REMARKS

- The proposed Connecting Europe Facility will have an impact on urban development if, as intended, it succeeds in filling the missing links in Europe's the transport, energy and digital network.
- As cities, we are for a large part responsible for the realisation and maintenance of infrastructure (mobility, energy, ICT), especially with regard to 'the last mile'. We would like to underline the importance of these amenities for the economic and social-cultural performance of our cities, countries and Europe as a whole.
- Broadband has an essential and necessary role to play in stimulating growth and well-being by fostering greater integration of policies and actions as a cross-sectoral tool, and by making a substantial contribution to a more sustainable future. Within our knowledge economy, a capable and future-proof communication infrastructure is already crucial to a city's economic performance and the delivery of efficient urban services. This will only increase in the future.
- We welcome the specific sectoral objectives on the deployment of broadband networks and digital service infrastructure, as laid out in article 4 of the draft Regulation on the Connecting Europe Facility. Market incentives to invest in Fibre to the Premises (FttP) are very limited in many urban areas, for example in deprived neighbourhoods and areas which are home to micro businesses and SMEs.
- Financial support through the Connecting Europe Facility should support investments in these areas to ensure our cities, where the majority of people live, are smart, inclusive and encourage SMEs to be more competitive.
- The Commission should establish forms of structured cooperation with local and regional authorities and provide experts from local and regional authorities with access to thematic expert/advisory groups set up within the framework of the Connecting Europe Facility. The Commission should establish an expert group with representatives from local and regional authorities to provide input when launching new and reviewing running projects of common interest.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON DRAFT REGULATION

- Cities eligible for funding under the Connecting Europe Facility should be consulted on any delegated acts altering the criteria or areas of intervention for projects of common interest, as laid out in Article 5.
- More information is needed on how the different financing instruments (innovative financial instruments and European grants) would be used and how projects would be selected.
- Furthermore, it is unclear currently how funding in the area of ICT would be split between the individual sectors (broadband networks, Digital Service Infrastructures, Cross-border delivery of eGovernment services, access to public sector information, intelligent energy networks and Smart Energy Services)

Broadband networks

- Coordination of activities under the Connecting Europe Facility with national and regional broadband plans is essential – therefore we recommend to include the involvement of actors besides Member States (regional and local authorities, private operators, utilities, equipment manufacturers) in planning, development and operation of digital telecommunications networks in the final regulation.
- In the selection process for CEF support in the area of broadband, four key principles should be taken into account:
 - Open access: Networks should provide equal opportunities for service providers, free choice for users, and room for innovation.
 - Scalable: Networks should use point-to-point (PTP) fibre infrastructure and not point-to-network (PON). This means that each user/location can be linked to another with a physical fibre connection. PTP architecture is the most secure set-up to meet future needs of traffic volume and speed.
 - Symmetric: Networks must have symmetric up- and downstream speed.
 - Affordable: Access to networks must be affordable for every citizen and business.

Digital Service Infrastructures

- We see a strong role for local administrations in a number of the generic services being delivered as described, and would recommend a strong involvement of cities in the development and deployment of these generic services. This holds true in particular for:
 - Electronic procedures for setting up and running a business in another European country
 - Interoperable cross-border electronic procurement services
 - Interoperable cross border eHealth services

Questions to develop this section further

- Do we have any detailed remarks on the other areas addressed by the guidelines: Digital Service Infrastructures (p. 21, <http://bit.ly/oxrNjW>)

Cross-border delivery of eGovernment services (p. 22, <http://bit.ly/oxrNjW>), access to public sector information (p.23, <http://bit.ly/oxrNjW>), intelligent energy networks and Smart Energy Services (p. 27, <http://bit.ly/oxrNjW>) ?

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