

## Contact:

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## Abstract:

Convenient broadband access has great potential for boosting communal life and individual quality of life.

The local level – towns, districts, counties - plays an important role when it comes to reaching the goal of 100 % broadband coverage for business and households. Broadband slows or even reverses migration from rural areas. At the same time rural areas are often marginalized and of low or no interest to commercial providers. This market failure needs actions by the public sector or public/private partnerships.

Recommended actions range from the provision of the infrastructure itself, to educating groups of non users, to the development and implementation of e-services.

A number of best practices, case studies –amongst others from Interreg projects- are available to support effective and low cost roll out.

# BIRD



## Broadband Access for Innovation and Regional Development

### Recommendations at the local level:

- How to implement broadband infrastructure and access
- How to increase broadband use

## How to implement broadband infrastructure and access; how to increase broadband use – on local level

*Recommendations by the BIRD project's working group Think Tank:*

1. Aim for 100% coverage. It might not be possible or cost efficient to do this with traditional wire technologies. Wireless solutions provide an alternative.

*The market has been creating a broadband provision gap between metropolitan and rural areas, especially in sparsely populated areas. Due to this market failure there is need for actions by the public sector or public/ private partnerships.*

2. BIRD project recommends a two step approach (on all levels):
  - Until 2010 a connection speed of 2 Mbps up- and downstream has to be available for every end user.
  - Until 2015 a connection speed of at least 100 Mbps up- and downstream has to be available for every inhabitant of the EU.

*Save your own resources and gather existing information about (1) governmental priorities, projects and strategic priorities for the next years*

*and (2) technical possibilities, developments and test results.*

3. Low barrier access is the minimum; barrier-free broadband access and use of e-services and applications is the standard.

*10-20% of the population can be regarded as excluded. Barrier-free access unlocks important potential, especially in societies facing demographic changes.*

4. Develop (new) citizen centric infrastructures for broadband services.

*One of the main problems of today's broadband users is information and service overload. Public services and regional information should be provided at one portal, adjusted to the needs of customers/ citizens.*

5. e- collaboration: all municipalities in a county should cooperate on IT services

*E.g. cooperation on joint purchases, system administration and resource centres for various shared systems.*

6. e-Government: work towards transparency of processes and services to citizens or businesses in your county and make use of the gains that this kind of cooperation yields.

7. Educate beginners in the use of ICT. Offer educational courses and cooperate with schools, colleges, etc.
8. Train or educate system administrators.

*Target groups are elderly people, people with low education background, and low income. There is also a need for additional knowledge or even specialists for the installation and improvement of services without high costs.*

9. The main objective for IT-development: "Towards a sustainable information society for all."

*This implies an accessible information society with a modern infrastructure and IT services for public benefit giving women and men, young and old people, disadvantaged and disabled in every part of the country a better quality of life. It recognises that new technologies and faster infrastructure do not replace personal involvement.*

10. Make use of the Internet and its applications efficiently.

*Server parks and broadband use in general tend to be very energy consuming which effects both global climate and local financial issues. However there are more energy efficient technologies and broadband can facilitate remote and mobile working and reduce journeys.*

