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Abstract:

In cooperation with other Interreg projects BIRD has learned that there are clear differences between national definitions, standards and approaches of broadband implementation. Overcoming these differences or closing the gaps is an essential part of the European Union process.

The regional level has two main fields of action: harmonizing with the European level – here a common definition of broadband and respective implementation goals must be adopted. Most important is to perceive broadband as a basic commodity and thus provide broadband infrastructure to all citizens / to achieve 100% coverage.

At the same time favorable frame conditions for both effective and efficient local implementations must be set. There is a number of actions and technical possibilities to meet individual situations.

BIRD



Broadband
Access for
Innovation and
Regional
Development

Recommendations for regional 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 regional level

Adjust the national / regional definition of broadband;

National definitions of broadband differ and are often below technically available and also below desirable standards.

BIRD project recommends a two step approach:

1. Until 2010 a connection speed of 2 Mbps up- and downstream has to be available for every end user.
2. Until 2015 a connection speed of at least 100 Mbps up- and downstream has to be available for every inhabitant of the EU.

Everyone must be able to use applications gathered in the so called triple play in a streamlined version. In usual triple play means internet, telephone and IPTV). For a first step it was agreed to reduce the definition of IP TV to video phoning and video conferences.

Provide a basis for 100% broadband coverage - at a reasonable price and a quality high enough for triple play to be delivered

Several technical solutions are available or can be adjusted. Market rule 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 on public or PPP level.

Broadband access and use must be seen as a basic commodity or basic infrastructure.

It should be handled as such e.g.: Providers could be rewarded with a lower VAT for bandwidth.

Convenient broadband infrastructures can be a mayor help against the desertion of rural areas and enrich community life by cheap and transparent communication possibilities (e- community).

Its provision adds significantly to the attractiveness of life in rural and semi-rural areas. Investing in data highways is cheap compared to conventional highways.

Provide a basis for the education of beginners in the use of ICT

Educational courses, cooperations with schools, colleges, etc.

Target groups are elderly people, people with low education background, underprivileged in terms of income.

Provide a basis for trainings/ the education of system administrators.

There is a need for additional knowledge, even specialists for the installation and improvement of services without high costs or efforts.

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 of public benefit. So as to simplify everyday life and give women and men, young and old people, disadvantaged and disabled in every part of the country a better quality of life.

Abbreviations:

IPTV- Internet protocol Television;

ICT- information and communication technologies

