

Internet connectivity for growth, competitiveness and cohesion: European gigabit society and 5G

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PURPOSE: to present an action plan for the rapid and coordinated deployment of 5G networks in Europe.

BACKGROUND: the [Digital Agenda for Europe](#) and the [Commission communication](#) "Connectivity for a Competitive Digital Single Market - Towards a European Gigabit Society" stress the importance of having very high capacity networks such as 5G to enable Europe to compete in the global market.

According to the Commission, revenues generated by 5G worldwide are expected to be equivalent to EUR 225 billion by 2025. Another source indicates that the benefits of introducing 5G in four major industrial sectors could reach EUR 114 billion per year.

A lack of coordination between the different national approaches to the deployment of 5G networks would create a significant risk of fragmentation in terms of frequency availability, continuity of services across borders (for connected vehicles, for example) and the implementation of standards.

For this reason, the Commission proposes an action plan as a means of promoting appropriate coordination.

CONTENT: in addition to the new regulatory framework envisaged by the Commission and the proposed measures in the European electronic communications code, this communication presents an action plan for the rapid and coordinated deployment of 5G networks in Europe, by means of a partnership between the Commission, the Member States and the sector.

The proposed plan aims to create momentum for investment in 5G networks and to create new innovative ecosystems, thereby enhancing European competitiveness and delivering tangible benefits to society.

The Commission intends to base the plan around the following essential elements:

- setting in place a common timetable for the launch of the first 5G networks by the end of 2018, followed by the launch of fully commercial 5G services in Europe by the end of 2020: Member States will be encouraged to set in place by the end of 2017, national roadmaps on the deployment of 5G in the context of national broadband programmes;
- designate, by the end of 2016, a provisional list of frequency bands for the launch of 5G services;
- agree, by the end of 2017, on all the frequency bands (below and above 6 GHz) to be harmonised for the initial deployment of commercial 5G networks in Europe;
- promote early deployment in large urban areas and along major transport routes;
- continue the deployment, starting in 2018, of a selection of 5G tests with a clear European dimension;
- encourage Member States to consider using the future 5G infrastructure to improve the performance of communications services used for public safety and security;
- facilitate, in cooperation with the sector and the EIB group, the establishment of a venture capital financing mechanism for 5G;
- support innovative European start-ups aimed at developing 5G technologies and related new applications in different industrial sectors;
- ensure the availability of the initial global 5G standards by the end of 2019 and bring together key players to work towards the promotion of global standards.

The European Parliament and the Council are invited to approve the action plan for 5G.