



Recommendation of the Council on Broadband Development



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Date(s)

Adopted on 12/02/2004

Background Information

The Recommendation of the Council on Broadband Development was adopted by the OECD Council on 12 February 2004. Broadband plays a critical role in the workings of the economy and society: it connects consumers, businesses, and governments and facilitates social interaction. Hence, broadband policies are now a vital instrument to ensure the competitiveness of OECD countries and to address pressing societal concerns. The Recommendation calls on Adherents to implement a set of policy principles to assist the expansion of broadband markets, promote efficient and innovative supply arrangements, and encourage effective use of broadband services.

THE COUNCIL,

HAVING REGARD to Article 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

HAVING REGARD to Rule 18 b) of the OECD Rules of Procedure;

HAVING REGARD to the document of the Committee for Information, Computer and Communications Policy entitled "Broadband Driving Growth: Policy Responses" [DSTI/ICCP(2003)13/FINAL];

RECOMMENDS that, in establishing or reviewing their policies to assist the development of broadband markets, promote efficient and innovative supply arrangements and encourage effective use of broadband services, Member countries should implement:

- Effective competition and continued liberalisation in infrastructure, network services and applications in the face of convergence across different technological platforms that supply broadband services and maintain transparent, non-discriminatory market policies;
- Policies that encourage investment in new technological infrastructure, content and applications in order to ensure wide take-up;
- Technologically neutral policy and regulation among competing and developing technologies to encourage interoperability, innovation and expand choice, taking into consideration that convergence of platforms and services requires the reassessment and consistency of regulatory frameworks;
- Recognition of the primary role of the private sector in the expansion of coverage and the use of broadband, with complementary government initiatives that take care not to distort the market;
- A culture of security to enhance trust in the use of ICT by business and consumers, effective enforcement of privacy and consumer protection, and more generally, strengthened cross-border co-operation between all stakeholders to reach these goals;
- Both supply-based approaches to encourage infrastructure, content, and service provision and demand-based approaches, such as demand aggregation in sparsely populated areas, as a virtuous cycle to promote take-up and effective use of broadband services;
- Policies that promote access on fair terms and at competitive prices to all communities, irrespective of location, in order to realise the full benefits of broadband services;
- Assessment of the market-driven availability and diffusion of broadband services in order to determine whether government initiatives are appropriate and how they should be structured;
- Regulatory frameworks that balance the interests of suppliers and users, in areas such as the protection of intellectual property rights, and digital rights management without disadvantaging innovative e-business models;
- Encouragement of research and development in the field of ICT for the development of broadband and enhancement of its economic, social and cultural effectiveness;

INVITES governments to encourage their private sector, in their broadband development activities, to take due account of this Recommendation;

INSTRUCTS the Committee for Information, Computer and Communications Policy to monitor the development of broadband in the context of this Recommendation within three years of its adoption and regularly thereafter;

INVITES the Secretary-General to make this Recommendation available to non-member economies.

Adherents*

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