

Statement by Ryan Heath on the proposal to reduce the cost of deploying broadband

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On 26 March 2013, Ryan Heath, Spokesperson of Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the EC in charge of the Digital Agenda, made a statement on the new regulation proposed by the European Commission to cut by 30% the cost of rolling out high-speed Internet. Civil engineering, such as the digging up of roads to lay down fibre, accounts for up to 80% of the cost of deploying high-speed networks. The proposal may save companies 40 to 60 billion euro.



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00:00:05	SOUNDBITE by Ryan Heath, Spokesperson of Neelie Kroes, Vice-President of the EC in charge of the Digital Agenda, (in ENGLISH) saying that the new regulation is about cutting the costs of installing broadband across Europe; it is significant for several reasons; the overall problem that is tackled is that it's very expensive to install broadband but Europe needs more broadband; that's something everyone agrees on; the cost is not so much in making the actual cables or making sure that people can pay to access those cables but it is about very boring and annoying stuff like: how do you dig in the	00:00:45

how do you dig up the roads?, how do you get all the different parties together to get the planning approval, to actually dig up the streets and put it in there?; so the regulation is on cutting the costs of getting those cables into the ground.

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SOUNDBITE by Ryan Heath (in ENGLISH) saying that the regulation covers several areas; the first really important one is that, in order to get every European digital, it's essential that every new home is also digital; so if you are building a new home, apartment or office in the future, this regulation says that you have to have it broadband ready, you have to have the ducks that allow the cables to go into each and every apartment; the second really significant thing is that they're trying to find a pro competitive way for different companies to collaborate; telecoms companies, water companies, electricity companies, all have some reason to put a pipe or a cable into the ground in front of a house or along a highway but they don't work together; the EC doesn't want people to be scared that there would be a competition problem or a competition case; they found a way that those companies can work together to

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can work together to reduce their costs; it is really good news because more people can put those cables in your street now and give you a better or a cheaper service as a result of approving this regulation; another thing is that, often, companies face lots of different delays or problems in getting permits approved like for example 4G mobile; it is very hard to get approval to put that network in some cities; the EC is saying now that the city has to decide within 6 months and if they don't decide within 6 months then the default answer is yes; so that is going to give companies more certainty and make it quicker to get these new technologies to the consumer.

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SOUNDBITE by Ryan Heath (in ENGLISH) saying that this regulation is politically important for two reasons; the first is that people often think that the EU is about creating red tape or making things complicated; this is actually about slashing and burning that red tape, it is making it simpler in every town and every city to make sure people can get broadband; the second reason is that the Member States proposed to cut a lot of the money that would go to broadband when they

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proceeding when they had their discussions about the EU budget; that means that between 50 and 70 billion euro that would go into broadband are not going there and that regulation is the EC's way to make up the difference; they think that they can save 60 billion euro by implementing this regulation so what they lost in those budget discussions they win it back by implementing this regulation.