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[Home](#) > 8 EU Member States ahead of the US in broadband deployment says Commission's Telecoms Report

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8 EU Member States ahead of the US in broadband deployment says Commission's Telecoms Report

Menu

Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden are world leaders in broadband deployment with penetration rates over 30% at the end of 2007, says the European Commission's 13th Progress Report on the Single Telecoms Market issued on 19 March. These EU countries, together with the United Kingdom, Belgium, Luxembourg and France, all had broadband penetration rates higher than the US (22.1%) in July 2007. 19 million broadband lines were added in the EU in 2007, the equivalent of more than 50,000 households every day. The broadband sector generated estimated revenues of € 62 billion and Europe's overall penetration reached 20%. However, there is considerable scope for further consumer benefits from a reinforced single market, strengthened competition and reduced regulatory burden for market players.

"The European regulatory model is designed to increase competition in the telecoms market and this certainly is starting to pay off," said Viviane Reding, the EU's Telecoms Commissioner. "However, the job is not yet done. Competition is limited for access to the fixed network which is still provided to 86.5% of customers over the incumbent's infrastructure. In addition, though telecoms technologies know no borders, only 30% of major operators' EU business is outside their home market. This shows that we still lack an attractive single market for businesses and services of European dimensions, so we must intensify our efforts to reduce the regulatory borders in Europe. Only by opening up the single market for business will Europe become competitive and will consumers benefit from a wide choice of rich and affordable services."

[Full press release](#) [1]

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) [2]

[Full report](#) [3]

Factsheet : [Focus on consumers](#) [4] (.pdf)

[Glossary](#) [5] (.pdf)

Country Factsheets (.pdf)

1. [Austria](#) [6]
2. [Belgium](#) [7]
3. [Bulgaria](#) [8]
4. [Cyprus](#) [9]
5. [Czech Republic](#) [10]
6. [Denmark](#) [11]
7. [Estonia](#) [12]
8. [Finland](#) [13]
9. [France](#) [14]
10. [Germany](#) [15]
11. [Greece](#) [16]
12. [Hungary](#) [17]
13. [Ireland](#) [18]
14. [Italy](#) [19]
15. [Latvia](#) [20]
16. [Lithuania](#) [21]
17. [Luxembourg](#) [22]
18. [Malta](#) [23]
19. [The Netherlands](#) [24]
20. [Poland](#) [25]
21. [Portugal](#) [26]
22. [Romania](#) [27]
23. [Slovakia](#) [28]
24. [Slovenia](#) [29]
25. [Spain](#) [30]
26. [Sweden](#) [31]
27. [United Kingdom](#) [32]

Contact

[33]

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<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/8-eu-member-states-ahead-us-broadband-deployment-says-commission%E2%80%99s-telecoms-report>

Links

- [1] <http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/460&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- [2] <http://www.europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/08/167&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>
- [3] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecommlibrary/communications_reports/annualreports/13th/index_en.htm
- [4] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-28-consumer.pdf
- [5] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-29-glossary.pdf
- [6] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-1-at.pdf
- [7] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-2-be.pdf
- [8] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-3-bg.pdf
- [9] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-4-cy.pdf
- [10] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-5-cz.pdf
- [11] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-6-dk.pdf
- [12] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-7-ee.pdf

- [13] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-8-fi.pdf
- [14] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-9-fr.pdf
- [15] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-10-de.pdf
- [16] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-11-el.pdf
- [17] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-12-hu.pdf
- [18] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-13-ie.pdf
- [19] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-14-it.pdf
- [20] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-15-lv.pdf
- [21] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-16-lt.pdf
- [22] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-17-lu.pdf
- [23] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-18-ma.pdf
- [24] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-19-nl.pdf
- [25] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-20-pl.pdf
- [26] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-21-pt.pdf
- [27] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-22-ro.pdf
- [28] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-23-sk.pdf
- [29] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-24-sl.pdf
- [30] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-25-es.pdf
- [31] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-26-se.pdf
- [32] http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/doc/factsheets/13thimplementation/9-27-uk.pdf
- [33] <mailto:>