

Digital Single Market

Reports and studies05/09/2013

Video: Public Workshop on Evolution and Impact of Data Traffic Off-loading

On 3 September 2013 in a public workshop in Brussels the study team from WIK and Aegis presented the conclusions of their study on the importance of Wi-Fi & the socioeconomic benefits of using small cell infrastructures. In the afternoon, two panels of distinguished industry experts discussed the results of the study.

A [video recording](#) [1] of the proceedings, the presentations and the [programme](#) [2] are now available.

Presentations: [Summary of the Study](#), [3] [Arqiva](#) [4], [Cisco](#) [5] and [FON](#) [6]

The [full study report](#) [7] can be downloaded from the EU Bookshop.

During the meeting, Mr Andreas Geiss, Deputy Head of Unit for Spectrum in DG CONNECT, announced that the Commission will issue a [Mandate to CEPT](#) [8] to study and identify harmonised compatibility and sharing conditions for Wireless Access Systems including Radio Local Area Networks in the bands 5350-5470 MHz and 5725-5925 MHz ('WAS/RLAN extension bands') for the provision of wireless broadband services.

Background:

A new study by WIK and Aegis, funded by the European Commission, highlights the importance of Wi-Fi for connecting EU citizens to the Internet. In 2012, 71% of all wireless data traffic that was delivered to smartphones and tablets in the EU was delivered via Wi-Fi. It is estimated that this figure will grow to 78% by 2016. It is predicted that in 2016 up to €200 billion in network cost reductions can be expected from data traffic offloading chiefly to Wi-Fi.

Mobile data traffic is estimated to grow at 66% annually for the period 2012-2017, but at the same time almost 80% of all traffic to mobile devices is predicted to come over Wi-Fi. The reason: most smartphone use occurs at home or in the office. The study points out that EU countries like the UK, France or Germany have among the highest household penetration of Wi-Fi in the world; however other countries are not so well covered.

For the study, data traffic off-loading was defined as routing wireless data that could be served by long-range cellular networks over so called "small-areas access points" (LTE or Wi-Fi). Smart phones

and tablets can connect to such alternative access network technologies, which use local coverage and can operate in frequencies that may not be exclusively accessible by one network operator.

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