

Digital connectivity good practices

from the 2025
Digital Connectivity
Awards



The European *Digital Connectivity Awards*

The competition

Through the European Digital Connectivity Awards, the European Commission wishes to highlight good practices in European digital connectivity projects that show innovative ways of achieving the Digital Decade objectives. The aim of the Awards competition is to identify, give recognition to, and share replicable good practices in planning, management and implementation of high-capacity digital networks in Europe.

All types of projects are encouraged to apply, irrespective of size, location or technologies. The competition targets public and private entities, from municipalities, regions and Member States' administrations, to communities and private actors, such as network and service operators, utilities and other project promoters that are actively involved in building high-capacity infrastructure. At the time the application is submitted, at least 65% of the project must be completed.

Once the call for applications opens, candidates download the application form from the European Digital Connectivity Awards webpage, submit their applications by email before the deadline, and receive a confirmation email.

A jury of experts in digital connectivity with different professional backgrounds and from different Member States assesses all projects and selects nominees from each of the award categories. The nominees are informed and announced on the European Commission's Digital Strategy website and social media and are invited to the Awards ceremony in Brussels, where the nominated projects are presented and the winners are awarded. The finalists and winners are promoted on the European Commission's website and social media.

The categories

Category 1

Excellence and innovation in deployment of gigabit-ready infrastructure

Projects that deliver high-capacity, future-proof networks, including fibre-to-the-home, advanced 5G fixed wireless access / mobile or satellite networks, particularly if in combination with other infrastructures (cloud, edged computing, internet of things, artificial intelligence, 3C networks, etc). The category fosters technological innovation, readiness for current and future demands of connectivity in combination with other digital infrastructures and technologies, promoting new business models for telecom operators.

Category 2

Champions in addressing the digital divide in rural and remote areas

Projects that successfully connect rural, remote, or geographically challenging areas, generating socio-economic benefits, digital divide heroes with for trailblazing projects that deal with and address digital divide by rolling out networks in most difficult to reach areas and territories. The category recognises efforts to address one of the most challenging aspects of broadband deployment – ensuring no community is left behind.

Category 3

Cross-border and international connectivity

Projects that are rolling out digital connectivity networks in cross-border regions or multi-country contexts both within the EU or interlinking the EU with other non-EU countries or world regions. Global or regional cross-border gateways, terrestrial or submarine backbone connectivity, fixed or wireless connectivity. The category values efforts of engaging in complex transnational projects as well as delivering holistic, secure and resilience cross border connectivity solutions.

The 2025 Jury



Elena Galindo Ayuso

Elena is an engineer with over 20 years' experience in the private industrial sector. Since 2018, she has worked as a civil servant in the telecommunications sector. Currently, she holds the position of Deputy Director General at the Subdirectorate for Telecom Operators and Digital Infrastructures at the Spanish Ministry for the Digital Transformation. Her responsibilities include leading the development of national broadband infrastructure programmes aimed at achieving the EU's connectivity targets for this decade. Elena also represents Spain in various European connectivity forums, including the Broadband Competence Offices (BCO) Network, the CEF Digital Committee and the Submarine Cables Expert group.

Fjodor Gütermann

Fjodor is Head of the Department of Telecommunications Policy and ICT Infrastructure, also known as the Austrian Broadband Competence Office, in the Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport. He studied Economics in Vienna and has worked in Athens and Brussels. In his current role, he acts as a national contact point for the CEF Digital programme and represents Austria in the European Broadband Competence Offices Network.

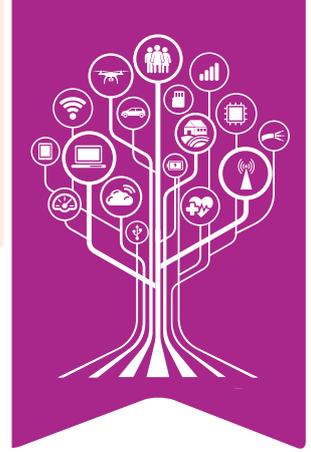


Michael Schmitz

Michael holds the German legal qualification 'assessor iuris'. He pursued his legal studies in Mainz, Germany, and Lausanne, Switzerland, with additional academic visits to Sydney, Washington D.C., and Brussels. Since 2012, he has been serving at the EU office of the German County Association, where he currently holds the position of Deputy Head of Office. His professional expertise primarily encompasses EU Regional and Agricultural Policy, Better Regulation, and Digital Policy. In 2018, Michael was elected Chair of the Cohesion Expert Group of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions. He is an active member of the European Commission's Rural Pact Coordination Group and the Subsidiarity Expert Group of the European Committee of the Regions.

WINNER | CATEGORY 1

Excellence and innovation in the deployment of gigabit-ready infrastructure



Implementation period:
26/03/2024 – 30/06/2025

Finland Hola 5G Oulu

Frontline healthcare workers are under constant pressure from heavy workloads, and administrative tasks and inefficient workflows can leave them with little time for direct patient interaction.

The [Hola 5G Oulu](#) project was created to ease this burden, by introducing advanced technologies that streamline workflows, reduce screen time and allow healthcare professionals to focus more on patient care.

A consortium of public and private sector partners – Boldyn Networks, WICOAR Technologies, Oulu University Hospital, Pohde and the University of Oulu – came together to deliver a geo-redundant, resilient and reliable private 5G standalone (SA) network at Oulu University Hospital.

Developed with careful planning to ensure it caused no disruption to the hospital's existing infrastructure, the network covers targeted areas within Oulu University Hospital, including some patient wards and selected operating rooms. It has a downlink rate of 759.12 Mbps and an uplink rate of 232.67 Mbps.

The network forms the foundation for smart wireless wearable technologies, designed to reduce screen time for doctors and nurses. By enabling hands-free access to critical information, such technology allows medical professionals to concentrate more on their expertise and patient interaction, ultimately enhancing the quality of care.

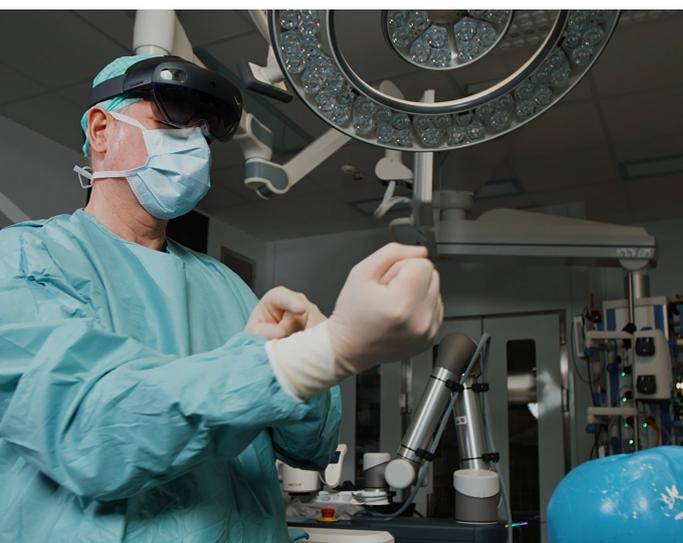
Beyond providing robust network infrastructure and practical use cases for healthcare staff, the project also creates opportunities for collaboration: other technology

companies can partner with the hospital to test and develop additional healthcare innovations using the private 5G SA network.

In the long term, the goal is to expand the network to cover the entire hospital, enhancing both patient care and operational efficiency.

Project costs and EU contribution:

Approximately €2.1 million total investment, of which €1.6 million from the EU's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Digital programme.



Unique characteristics

The project deployed one of the first private 5G SA networks in a functioning hospital in Europe, specifically designed for the highly demanding environment of healthcare.

The network integrates with other technological solutions, such as wireless wearable technologies. For example, during consultations and surgical procedures, smart glasses with augmented reality assist doctors and nurses in viewing patient data, medical imaging, lab results and more. This approach has the potential to significantly enhance and transform healthcare delivery.

Other cutting-edge healthcare technology allows medical staff to communicate with and request assistance from multiple colleagues simultaneously, without needing to locate them physically.

Hola 5G Oulu serves as a replicable model for other hospitals, in Finland, Europe and around the world, with the potential to transform healthcare infrastructure globally.



Results and impact

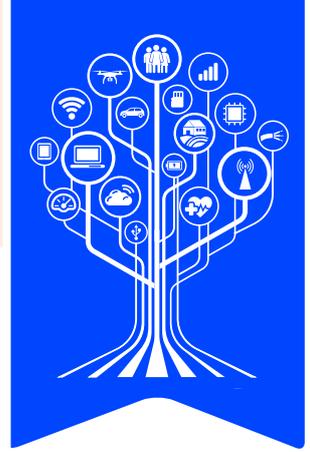
The geo-redundant private 5G SA network at Oulu University Hospital ensures high-quality connectivity for doctors and nurses without delays or interruptions. It is designed to withstand disruptions and maintain consistent performance, even during a blackout or hardware failure.

The project has enabled the use of wireless, mobile healthcare solutions and encouraged the adoption of 5G-enabled technologies from small and medium-sized enterprises, supporting doctors and nurses in their daily work.

Real-time access to data empowers doctors to make faster and more informed decisions without diverting their attention from patients. As a result, it frees up time, reduces workload and has the potential to increase job satisfaction among healthcare professionals.

Improved communication throughout the hospital and less time spent on screens means doctors and nurses have more time and energy for patients. Doctors can be more present, engage more meaningfully in conversations and make quicker treatment decisions. With the ability to treat more patients each day, waiting times are reduced, hospital stays are shortened and overall patient outcomes improve.

*Champions in addressing the digital divide
in rural and remote areas*



Implementation period:
01/01/2024 – 30/06/2026

Cyprus

Towards Universal Digital Inclusion: Nationwide Rollout of Very High-Capacity Networks in Rural Areas

Rural and remote areas across Cyprus face a combination of barriers to digital connectivity: geographic, technical and economic. These include outdated infrastructure, challenging deployment conditions and a lack of commercial incentive for private operators to invest in very high capacity networks. Insufficient digital infrastructure has contributed to structural inequalities, population decline and limited access to essential services.

Cyta is leading a nationwide expansion of fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) networks to rural and underserved

areas across the country, including regions where private investment was previously considered economically unviable. This national-scale project targets rural, remote and mountainous areas across Cyprus, including low-density agricultural zones and hard-to-reach communities. The coverage area spans around 4,000 km², including areas from the districts of Nicosia, Limassol, Paphos, Larnaca and Famagusta. The objective is to advance a connected, inclusive society by eliminating territorial inequalities and ensuring that all communities benefit from the opportunities enabled by next-generation broadband infrastructure.

Co-funded by the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility, the initiative is designed to achieve universal FTTH coverage in 2026, so that all communities benefit from high-speed, reliable internet access. The project will also ensure that all buildings classed as socio-economic drivers, such as schools, municipal offices and hospitals, are connected with point-to-point fibre links. In rare cases (estimated at less than 1% of total premises) where homes are situated outside structured areas and cannot viably be reached with fibre, fixed wireless access solutions will be used to ensure universal coverage. The project also includes a wide range of measures to ensure that broadband services are affordable and accessible

to populations at risk of digital exclusion, including low-income households, elderly residents, marginalised groups and those living in geographically isolated communities. The roll-out uses gigabyte and 10 gigabit symmetrical passive optical network technologies. The infrastructure is available for wholesale access to other operators, supporting competition and broader digital inclusion.

Project costs and EU contribution:

€65 million total investment, of which €35 million from the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility. €42 million is allocated to underserved areas based on current project forecast.



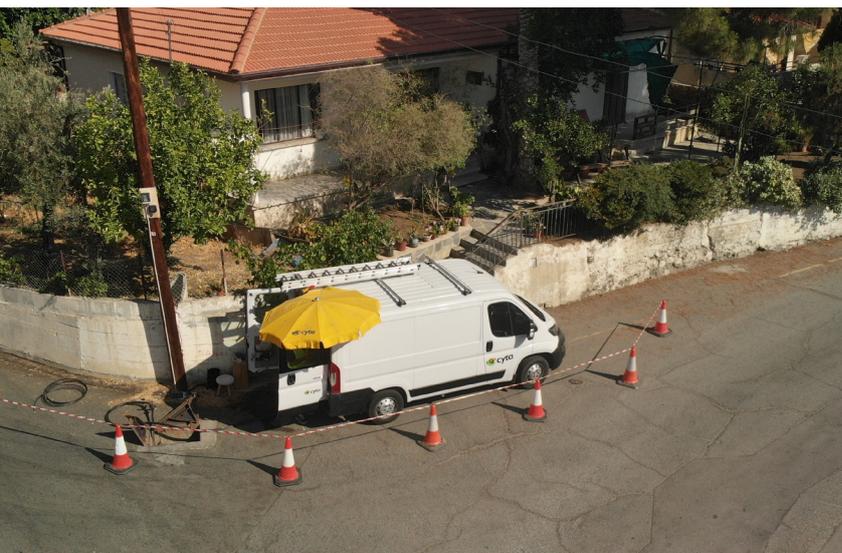
Unique characteristics

Cyta is the only entity deploying a very high capacity network in the targeted rural and remote areas of Cyprus. The company is leveraging its national infrastructure – such as underground ducts, existing fibre assets, central offices and operational systems – to enable faster and more cost-effective deployment. This strategic reuse significantly reduces both roll-out time and capital expenditure.

The FTTH network is designed as wholesale-ready infrastructure, regulated by the national regulatory authority and accessible to all telecom providers. This ensures open access and fosters competitive retail markets, even in remote areas – delivering both efficiency and inclusiveness.

The project builds on Cyta's experience and capabilities established through its completed FTTH roll-out in urban areas. This enables rapid scaling without the need for outsourced capacity, ensuring consistency, quality and speed in project delivery.

As a publicly owned, vertically integrated operator, Cyta is uniquely positioned to align commercial operations with national policy. The project is fully embedded in the Cyprus Recovery and Resilience Plan and directly supports the country's objective to deactivate all copper networks by 2029, achieving 100% fibre coverage and take-up, in line with the EU's Digital Decade goals.



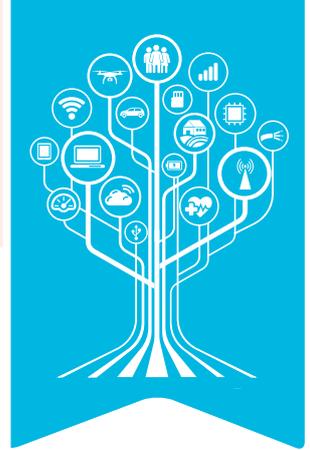
Results and impact

The project has already achieved 65% FTTH coverage (premises passed) in rural and remote areas and a 65% customer take-up rate, as of May 2025. The rural network is on track for universal coverage of all organised communities by mid-2026 and full take-up by 2029.

The project is delivering substantial socio-economic benefits in rural Cyprus, improving quality of life, enabling digital participation, strengthening local economies, and creating new investment and employment opportunities.

Approximately 1,250 out of 1,430 buildings classed as socio-economic drivers, such as schools, hospitals and municipal offices, are already connected to the network via fibre point-to-point links, providing high-speed access to essential services. In addition, around 4,000 out of 10,000 small and medium-sized enterprises are already connected to the network.

Reliable and affordable digital access will support greater inclusion of vulnerable groups – such as the elderly, low-income individuals and geographically isolated populations – and should help reduce rural flight. The network is also enabling farmers to adopt smart technologies that enhance productivity, resource efficiency and sustainability.



Implementation period:
01/03/2024 – 31/08/2025

Czechia, Germany, Poland, Ukraine East West Gate

In central and eastern Europe, the market is dominated by the owners of the main network backbone infrastructure, with connections to the main traffic exchange hubs in Europe based on resources built and used by global corporations. Market prices for access to these hubs are often too expensive for smaller players, including large and small operators from eastern Europe. This inhibits the possibility of faster economic and social development.

The [East West Gate](#) project, lead by NETIA S.A., will allow operators from Poland and Ukraine to become independent of the dominant providers of internet access services. It will, for the first time, provide access to international traffic exchange points in Frankfurt, Berlin and Prague, as well as access to cloud services from the largest global providers, for business-to-business

and business-to-consumer customers from Poland and Ukraine at attractive and affordable prices. The project involves the construction of backbone infrastructure connecting selected nodes in Germany, Czechia, Poland and Ukraine. Its specific routes are: Hrebenne – Lviv, Medyka – Lviv, Slubice – Berlin, Berlin-Frankfurt Main, Frankfurt North - Frankfurt South, Rozvadov (CZ) / Waidhaus (D) - Frankfurt Main, Prague – Waidhaus, Prague – Cieszyn.

This high-capacity fibre optic infrastructure is based on dense wavelength division multiplexing (DWDM) technology. Strategically designed to enhance pan-European connectivity, it will serve as a robust cross-border transport layer and high-performance backhaul for gigabit-enabled services such as fibre-to-the-home and standalone 5G.

The network is constructed with two parallel protected carrier ethernet networks. The dual infrastructure enhances redundancy, reliability and service continuity. This approach was chosen to guarantee ultra-low latency, high security and maximum resilience across critical cross-border routes connecting key European data exchange points.

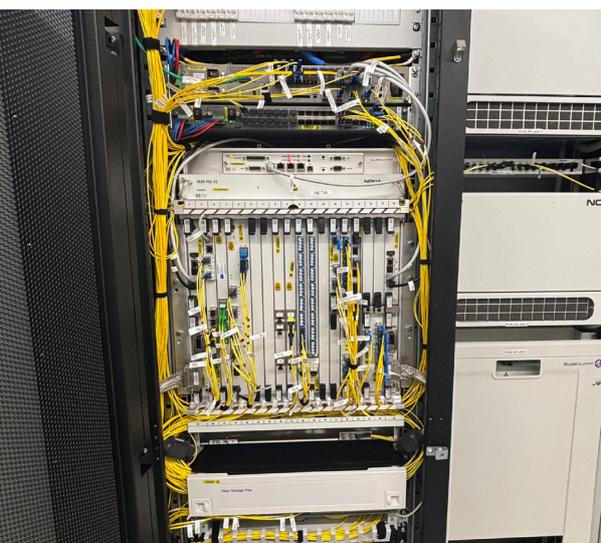
On completion of the project, the coordinator, Netia, will offer equal open wholesale access to the new backbone network infrastructure. This will allow local network

operators to become independent from the current dominant providers.

East West Gate was designed with future scalability and flexibility in mind to meet evolving connectivity demands, including readiness for next-generation technologies such as 6G, symmetrical multi-gigabit speeds and low-latency applications.

Project costs and EU contribution:

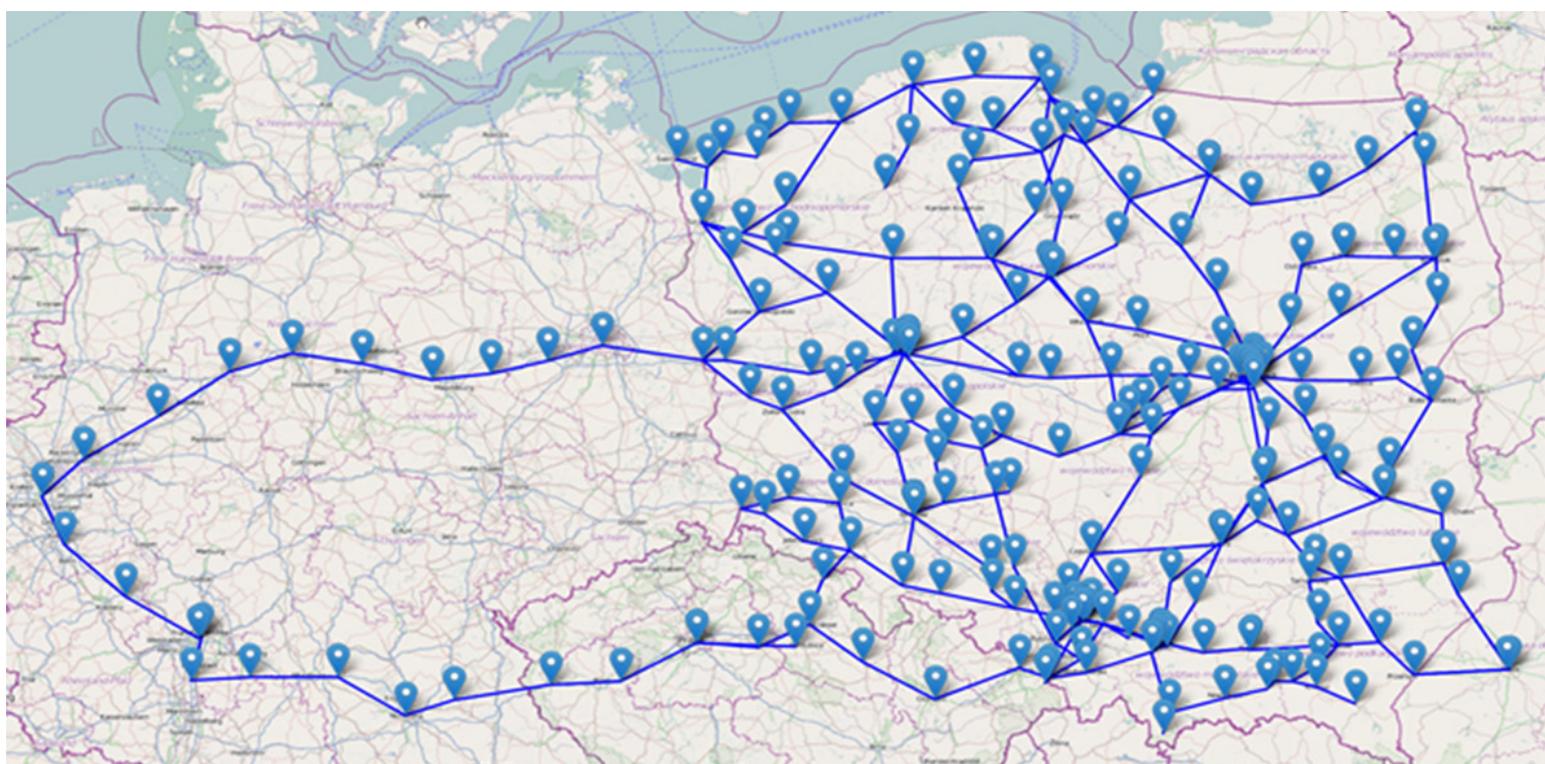
Approximately €9 million total investment, of which €4.5 million from the EU's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Digital programme.



Unique characteristics

East West Gate will establish a modern generalised multiprotocol label switching network in Poland and Lviv (Ukraine), with main distribution nodes in Prague (Czechia), Berlin and Frankfurt am Main (Germany), connecting the three EU countries with Ukraine.

The project will enhance network performance, capacity and resilience, enabling better service delivery and meeting demand at optimal prices. Its DWDM network will offer fast, secure and affordable services for both businesses and private customers.



Results and impact

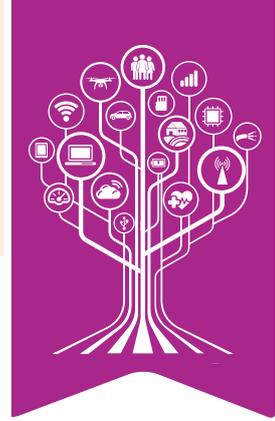
The network will provide fast, reliable and secure connections between key data centres and cities, enhancing access to digital infrastructure. Thanks to the expanded backbone, operators will be able to offer high-performance broadband services, fostering local market growth and improving availability for businesses and individual users.

Stable and high-speed infrastructure will enable effective use of digital government services, supporting digital inclusion.

In parallel, the cross-border nature of the project will strengthen digital integration between eastern and western Europe, reducing disparities in technology access.

The project will contribute to more affordable services by lowering access costs through infrastructure efficiency and competitive conditions. It should also help create favourable conditions for new businesses and job opportunities, and counteract depopulation by increasing regional attractiveness.

As a result, the project will support the long-term economic and social development of the regions connected by the East West Gate network.



Implementation period:
11/06/2024 – 25/09/2024

Croatia

Rijeka Gateway 5G Campus Network

This project has established a cutting-edge digital backbone for the Rijeka Gateway container terminal. Lead by Hrvatski Telekom, [Rijeka Gateway 5G Campus Network](#) set out to provide ultra-reliable, high-speed wireless connectivity for industrial port operations at the terminal, and support future automation and digitalisation of terminal operations. It deployed a fully managed, virtual private 5G campus network based on 5G standalone (SA) and non-standalone (NSA) architecture, complemented by a high-capacity fibre backhaul and carrier-grade public mobile infrastructure.

The architecture is purpose-built to support industrial-grade operations and high-density internet of things deployments. Unlike traditional mobile networks, the 5G SA network is optimised for ultra-reliable low-latency communications, enhanced mobile broadband and massive machine-type communications. Network coverage extends across the entire terminal, including operational and storage areas, with the goal of providing comprehensive digital connectivity and operational efficiency: it covers all business entities operating within the terminal, operational personnel, logistics systems and public entities associated with the terminal infrastructure.

Project costs and EU contribution:

The project is a commercial, privately funded initiative.



Unique characteristics

The project is the first of its kind in Croatia and is among the pioneers in Europe to deploy a fully managed, virtual private 5G campus network on public infrastructure, featuring dedicated network slicing and radio resource partitioning. It sets a new benchmark for digital infrastructure in Europe and serves as an innovative and scalable model for future smart industrial zones.

Another significant innovation lies in the way the service is delivered. It is offered as a fully managed network-as-a-service solution, meaning the port operator does not need to invest in dedicated telecom teams or network infrastructure. Hrvatski Telekom provides end-to-end responsibility for the design, deployment, operation and maintenance of the entire mobile and fibre network, leaving the port operator free to focus on its core business.

Results and impact

The project has driven a comprehensive digital transformation of port operations. With the newly deployed 5G network, high service quality is ensured across all areas of the terminal, including critical zones such as crane operation and cargo storage. This enables faster, safer operations, improved access

to online services, and enhanced territorial cohesion through integration with national and international logistics networks. Over 300 jobs were created, and the project has opened new opportunities for industrial and technological initiatives in the region. The infrastructure supports sustainable operations by reducing emissions, lowering operational costs, and minimising the need for on-site personnel.



Implementation period:
18/10/2021 – 31/12/2025

Germany

Bibnetz - Sustainable technology in Berlin Public Libraries

The State of Berlin's 12 districts each organise and finance their own public libraries, staff and services. Prior to this project, some locations boasted good internet access, modern devices and interesting digital offerings, but in other locations, users were barely able to access the online catalogue, with no internet or Wi-Fi options available or only very limited access.

Lead by Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Bibnetz was conceived to ensure that all users of Berlin's public

libraries have free access to high-quality internet connections (at least 1-10 Gbps), modern technology and workstations (computers, monitors and laptops), giving them access to knowledge and information. This involved connecting individual locations to the fibre optic network and procuring the necessary hardware.

Project costs and EU contribution:

The project received regional and institutional funding.

Unique characteristics

Together with the nationwide telecommunications provider, 1&1 Versatel GmbH Germany, Berlin's public libraries have managed to connect a total of 70 locations to the fibre optic network and equip them with modern technology.

Thanks to Bibnetz, these 70 public libraries, spread across Berlin, now all offer the same level of services and internet user experience, no matter where they are located.



Results and impact

With access to fibre optic connections of at least 1-10 Gbps, users can now engage in study, research, and work at any public library location, and the libraries' digital learning and loan offerings are equally and appropriately developed across all districts.

Each public library has free usable Wi-Fi, with coverage in all areas, and there is better access to all on-line library services, including digital products.





Implementation period:
01/01/2005 – 31/12/2026

Italy

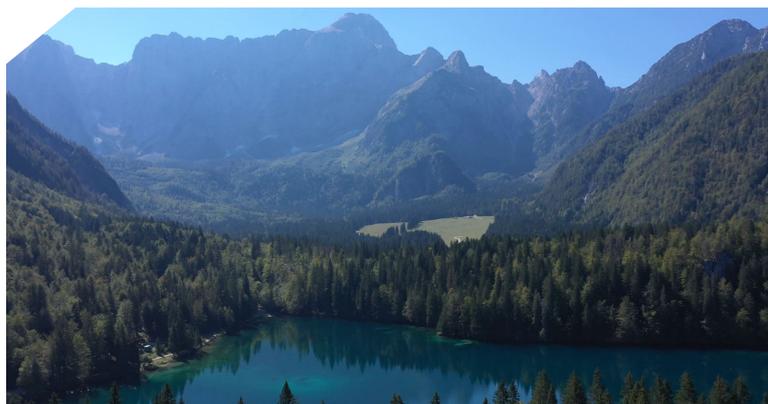
ERMES – an Excellent Region in a Multimedia European Society

The Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region (FVG) is known for its diverse landscape of flat, hilly and mountainous areas. Many municipalities in its most mountainous and inaccessible areas often lack connectivity, with entire valleys not having mobile coverage. The geography and low population density in hilly and mountainous areas are significant contributors to the digital divide.

The [ERMES](#) project was launched by the region to address this divide and the market failure in broadband deployment across FVG's territory, with the goal of leveraging advanced telecommunications infrastructure for regional development and social cohesion.

Project costs and EU contribution:

Approximately €135 million total investment, of which approximately €5.4 million from the EU's European Regional Development Fund and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.



Unique characteristics

Primarily through its in-house company, INSIEL S.p.A., the region built and manages a publicly owned regional fibre optic network with 1,675 km of backbone fibre.

Designed with excess capacity, this network provides high-speed fibre infrastructure – a 100 Gbps backbone – and wholesale access to telecommunication operators,

stimulating competition and enabling service delivery in underserved areas.

The ERMES project has facilitated the digitalisation of local authorities by establishing the infrastructure needed for a regional data centre, enabling the delivery of innovative and reliable digital services at scale, even to the smallest municipalities.

Results and impact

ERMES successfully extended high-speed connectivity to all municipalities, schools, hospitals and public offices across the region (more than 1,300 sites in total), including in difficult-to-reach areas such as low-density mountain zones, where network operators typically have no incentive to invest. This has enabled these areas to access services that would otherwise remain

unavailable and is helping to mitigate and even reverse depopulation in affected areas.

Thanks to the project and its optical fibre backbone, FVG has enacted a law to further reduce the digital divide, allowing the implementation of passive network infrastructure in market failure areas, making them accessible to mobile operators.



Implementation period:
01/01/2022 – 31/12/2025

Spain

FTTH gigabit access network deployment in ultra-rural areas in Castilla y León

Castilla y León is one of the most depopulated and territorially fragmented areas in Spain, where the absence of broadband infrastructure has left many municipalities digitally isolated. The region contains 1,860 municipalities, almost half of which have fewer than 500 inhabitants. These are some of the most demographically vulnerable and digitally excluded areas in Spain. ASTEO Red Neutra's mission is to bring high-speed, reliable internet connectivity to locations that have traditionally been excluded from digital development. With this project, it is deploying fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) infrastructure, using gigabyte and 10 gigabit symmetrical passive optical network (GPON and XGS-PON) technologies, across seven provinces - Ávila, Burgos, León, Salamanca, Segovia, Valladolid, and Zamora - targeting only ultra-rural areas. The goal is to connect 680 small municipalities with very low population densities, enabling residential and business users to access high-performance broadband services. ASTEO is seeking to offer telecom operators access to a

neutral FTTH network at a competitive wholesale price in areas where deploying their own infrastructure would not be economically feasible.

Project costs and EU contribution:

Approximately €37 million total investment, including support from Next Generation EU under the UNICO-Broadband programme in Spain and regional funding programmes.



Unique characteristics

ASTEO is committed to deploying state-of-the-art FTTH technology across a large number of very small municipalities, many with fewer than 300 homes. Most fibre network roll-outs focus on urban or semi-urban areas with higher population densities. ASTEO is looking to deliver broadband services in ultra-rural villages at

a standard equivalent to that enjoyed by citizens in Europe's major capital cities. This vision requires cutting-edge infrastructure, such as XGS-PON technology and optimised network design, and a tailored operational model capable of maintaining economic and technical efficiency at scale, despite the complexity of servicing numerous geographically dispersed, low-density settlements.

Results and impact

More than 192,000 households will be covered with FTTH connectivity, giving them access to high-speed internet in areas previously underserved or with no connections.

By bringing gigabit-level connectivity to places long neglected by traditional operators, ASTEO is empowering

rural communities with access to the digital economy, remote education, telehealth, cloud services and smart village solutions, helping to eliminate the gap between urban and rural digital life.

With this project, ASTEO not only demonstrates the viability of ultra-rural FTTH deployment, but also lays down a replicable model for future broadband expansion in Spain and across Europe.



Implementation period:
01/01/2019 – 31/12/2023

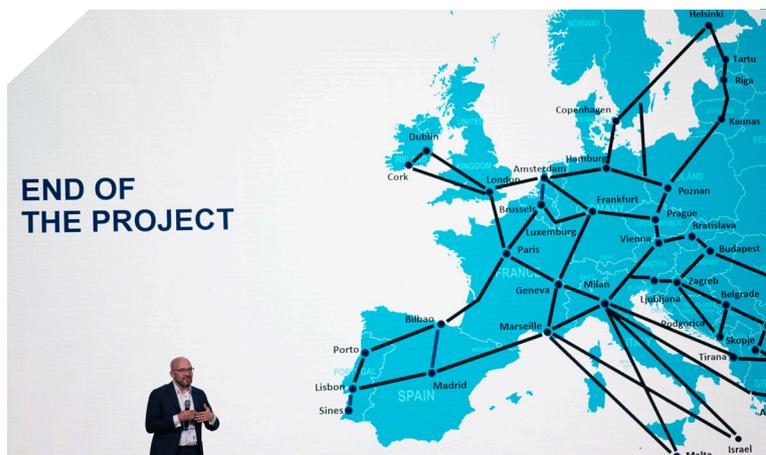
Netherlands

GN4 Phase 3 Network Project - restructuring of the GÉANT backbone network

Europe's national research and education networks (NRENs) are interconnected through the GÉANT network, which links researchers, academics and students to each other across the European continent, covering the entire European Research Area. At the start of the [GN4 Phase 3 Network Project](#) (GN4-3N), the GÉANT fibre network connected 14 countries. Countries typically leased lines to connect to the network, bearing high costs. The network consisted of 23 short-term leases and a single spectrum link, and most connectivity was in western/central Europe. Through GN4-3N, the GÉANT Association - the project coordinator - sought to restructure the backbone network by exploring and procuring long-term indefeasible rights of use, leased lines and associated equipment. The initial target was to expand the network from 14 to 24 countries and to increase digital inclusion by providing links of at least 100 Gbps to more NRENs.

Project costs and EU contribution:

Approximately €63 million total investment, of which €50.5 million from the EU's Horizon 2020 programme.



Unique characteristics

GN4-3N delivered the most significant restructuring of Europe's backbone network for research and education to date, aimed at offering uniform network access across the continent and stimulating the market in cross-border communications.

The project integrated 18 additional countries into the GÉANT infrastructure, surpassing the initial target, and secured long-term contracts for connectivity. It established a truly pan-European network that ensures secure and resilient cross-border connectivity for research and education for the next two decades.

Results and impact

When the first NREN networks were developed, speeds of 64-256 Kbps were considered adequate to support the limited number of researchers and students needing access to remote services or networks. Now, thanks to the GN4-3N project, European NRENs and their users benefit from service speeds of at least 100 Gbps. Many links have a capacity of up to 400 Gbps, with infrastructure and equipment in place to scale to terabit speeds in the future.

The GÉANT network is the largest and most advanced research and education network in the world, connecting roughly 50 million users at 10,000 institutions across Europe and across all scientific disciplines.

The coverage of 32 countries in one consolidated network made GÉANT the biggest operator of telecommunications infrastructure in Europe at the project's completion.



Implementation period:
01/01/2023 – 15/02/2026

France and Tunisia

ViaTunisia – Submarine cable between Marseille and Bizerte

Internet network traffic between France and Tunisia is increasing exponentially, but existing routes cannot handle this growth. ViaTunisia aims to provide a new submarine route between the two countries, and more broadly between Europe and Africa. This will come via a new 1,050 km high-capacity submarine cable connecting Marseille in France and Bizerte in Tunisia. Lead by Orange, the project involves three fibre pairs (out of a total of 24 pairs in the submarine cable), each designed to carry 24 Tbps. This will give a total available capacity of 72 Tbps, far more than existing systems can carry. The goal is to provide open access for Tunisian telecom operators, enabling them to benefit from the latest transmission technologies at competitive prices, thereby enhancing connectivity between Europe and Africa and contributing to the EU's digital sovereignty. Medusa Submarine Cable System, a co-investor in the project, will take ownership of the submarine system

once it is ready for commercial use. It will also handle commercial offers to Tunisian operators and others, in the form of indefeasible rights of use over dark fibre pairs.

Project costs and EU contribution:

Approximately €32 million total investment, of which approximately €9.6 million from the EU's Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Digital programme.



Unique characteristics

From the project's early stages, the design of the submarine system and the business model were centred on the customers themselves, Tunisian operators. The goal is to ensure that capacity is increased significantly, efficiently, fairly and affordably, in line with their specific requirements in terms of, for example, the landing site, type of capacity, system protection, investment capability and long-term vision.



Results and impact

The project will provide more capacity between Europe and Tunisia than previously laid. It will offer greater diversity and improved latency compared to existing systems, and the latest dry technologies will be available.

Once ready for commercial service, the submarine system will give Tunisian telecom operators equal and fair access to new wholesale offers, based on dark fibre pairs. The dedicated submarine cable is designed as an open system, meaning fibre pairs can be lit at different times with different vendors, which will enhance competition both technologically and commercially.

