

PRESS RELEASE

PRYSMIAN PRESENTS ITS LATEST STUDY ON TELECOM NETWORKS AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

ENABLING THE DIGITAL SOCIETY: PRYSMIAN CALL FOR THE END OF TECHNOLOGY NEUTRALITY

ONLY OPTICAL FIBRE TECHNOLOGIES HAVE THE CAPACITY TO MEET GIGABIT SOCIETY'S DEMANDS

Milan, July 12th, 2016 - Prysmian Group, world leader in the energy and telecom cable systems industry and owner of the only European technology for the production of optical fibre, today launched a new study on broadband deployment. The company, offering products providing innovative qualities through continuous investment in research and development at several locations in Europe, called on the European Commission to be consistent with its ambitions for the Gigabit society by supporting the roll-out of optical fibre technologies, a position that implies moving on from the doctrine of technology neutrality in the long run. The call was made in the European Parliament, during a meeting of Members of the European Parliament with an interest in digital affairs, European Commission officials, industry representatives and technology journalists. With the Commission's on-going efforts to revise the telecommunications framework providing the backdrop to the discussions and highlighting their relevance, the exchanges centred on the need to ensure the rapidly expanding demand for connectivity is met by appropriate investment in next generation telecom infrastructure.

MEPs Emilian Pavel and Massimiliano Salini hosted the debate, with MEP Salini commenting "we need future-proof solutions that will match the rapidly expanding demand for data in Europe, and put us on an equal footing with our international competitors". Meanwhile, MEP Pavel noted that "it is crucial that the Commission places the appropriate emphasis on modernising the telecoms framework and creating favourable conditions for investment in next generation telecoms networks".

An industry perspective was provided meanwhile by Jean-Pierre Bonicel, Senior Business Development Director at Prysmian Group, who presented the Group's latest white paper on telecoms networks. He emphasised that the sustainable digitalisation of society relied on the careful choice of high quality network components such as fibre, cable and connectivity. Intelligent choices in this domain are essential to ensuring that disruptions to the network are minimised and the end service is optimized. Furthermore he held that only optical fibre technologies had the capacity in the long run to meet the Gigabit society's demands: "While a period of transition to this new technology is of course understandable, the Commission and Member States should provide public support to optical fibre and genuinely future proof solutions".

The event also provided the opportunity to present the findings of a new study by Wolter Lemstra, senior research fellow and telecoms specialist at TU Delft. The study found that a long-term increase in connection speeds could only be delivered through fibre optic networks. It cautioned that despite the liberalization of telecom markets, governments still have an important role to play in cases of market failure. Although leading European countries are performing well, attention must be paid to the digital laggards within the EU, with the aim of closing the gap between the top performers and the rest. Special attention is also needed for rural areas, where progress will require a bottom-up process, involving collaboration between government and users.

The lively ensuing discussion also encompassed contributions from Anna Krzyżanowska, Head of the Commission's Broadband Unit, and a number of other Members of the European Parliament. Interest in the subject of telecoms infrastructure and the surrounding European legislation is evidently heating up with the September deadline for the Commission's proposals drawing closer. Philippe Vanhille, Senior Vice President Telecom Business at Prysmian Group commented "Prysmian Group is happy to help facilitate this important legislative discussion. We will continue to lend our expertise and market insights to help European legislators deliver a telecoms framework that can support the vision of a gigabit society".

Prysmian Group

Prysmian Group is world leader in the energy and telecom cable systems industry. With almost 140 years of experience, sales of about €7.5 billion in 2015, over 19,000 employees across 50 countries and 88 plants, the Group is strongly positioned in high-tech markets and offers the widest possible range of products, services, technologies and know-how. It operates in the businesses of underground and submarine cables and systems for power transmission and distribution, of special cables for applications in many different industries and of medium and low voltage cables for the construction and infrastructure sectors. For the telecommunications industry, the Group manufactures cables and accessories for voice, video and data transmission, offering a comprehensive range of optical fibres, optical and copper cables and connectivity systems. Prysmian is a public company, listed on the Italian Stock Exchange in the FTSE MIB index.

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