Breaking news from the FTTH Conference 2016:
Croatia, Germany and Poland join the FTTH Ranking

FTTH Conference, Luxembourg, 17 February 2016 – The number of fibre to the home (FTTH) and fibre to the building (FTTB) subscribers in Europe increased by 19% over the first nine months of 2015, reaching more than 35.9 million FTTH/B subscribers. Homes passed increased by 17%, with nearly 127 million FTTH/B homes passed in EU39[1] at end-September 2015, according to the latest update to the FTTH panorama announced today at a press conference held at the FTTH Conference 2016 in Luxembourg.

What is the outlook of the FTTH ranking and panorama?

At end-September 2015, there were more than 17.9 million FTTH/B subscribers on the European continent, excluding CIS countries (namely Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine), according to the latest update of the FTTH market panorama prepared by IDATE for the FTTH Council Europe. After Russia, which counts more than 15 million subscribers, the other largest markets in absolute figures are Spain (reaching 2.6 million subscribers with 65% growth rate over nine months), France (2.4 million subscribers with 31% growth) and Romania (2.3 million subscribers).

Three new economies have now entered the FTTH Ranking[2]: Croatia, Germany and Poland. The deployment of FTTH in these countries was led by initiatives by both private operators and policy makers. For example, in Germany fibre projects led by municipalities coupled with the dynamism of private players had a great impact on fibre rollout in the country. The rollout and adoption of FTTH/B in those countries is expected to continue to grow at a steady pace in the coming years.

In terms of penetration, while Lithuania is still number one in the ranking with a penetration rate of 36.8%, Latvia (36.2%) and Sweden (35.2%) have made impressive progress. Both countries are now nearing lead position after greatly increasing their penetration rate since end-December 2014. They are not the only countries racing forward. Luxembourg's penetration rate gained almost three points from 11.2% at end-December 2014 to 14.1% at end-September 2015. The high-level engagement and support of politicians, along with the involvement of incumbent operator POST and other stakeholders, explain the significant penetration of fibre in the country.

"The year 2015 has seen continued structural growth in fibre rollout throughout Europe, confirming the trend already observed in 2014." said Edgar Aker, President of the FTTH Council Europe. "We are glad to witness such progress, including three new countries entering our FTTH ranking. We feel that the European Commission now tends to favour the development of a more "fibre friendly" environment. It is also important to stress the endorsement of fibre broadband by local policy makers, as well as the increase in public-private partnerships. Europe is now well positioned to stimulate FTTH rollout, the only future-proof broadband solution."

There are however a number of European countries that are still holding back on their fibre deployments. Countries such as Austria, Ireland and Belgium connected less than 4,000 new FTTH/B customers during the first nine months of 2015. Even though the United Kingdom connected 26,000 more FTTH/B subscribers, the country is still lagging behind and has yet to reach the qualifying 1% threshold for the FTTH ranking.

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[1] The EU 39 includes Andorra, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

[2] The European FTTH ranking includes all countries of more than 200,000 households where the ratio of FTTH/B subscribers is at least 1% of the total number of households.

Who are the Champions of the FTTH Award 2016?

The FTTH Council Europe also announced today that POST and INEA received this year's FTTH Operator Award, while Professor Hartwig Tauber received the Individual Award, for their outstanding efforts to accelerate the adoption of FTTH in Europe.

For the first time two companies received the FTTH Operator Award in recognition of rolling out advanced fibre networks. Luxembourg's incumbent operator POST is honoured with this Award for its high investment in state-of-the-art fibre optic networks: at end-September 2015 it counted 27,730 FTTH/B subscribers, with a coverage of more than 50%, which is one of the highest in Europe for an incumbent. Joint winner of this award, INEA is a Polish alternative telecommunications operator engaged in deploying FTTH infrastructures since 2010. INEA has made an important difference in the Polish FTTH market by significantly growing its fibre networks, particularly in the Wielkopolska suburban and rural areas, where FTTH can greatly contribute to bridging the digital divide.
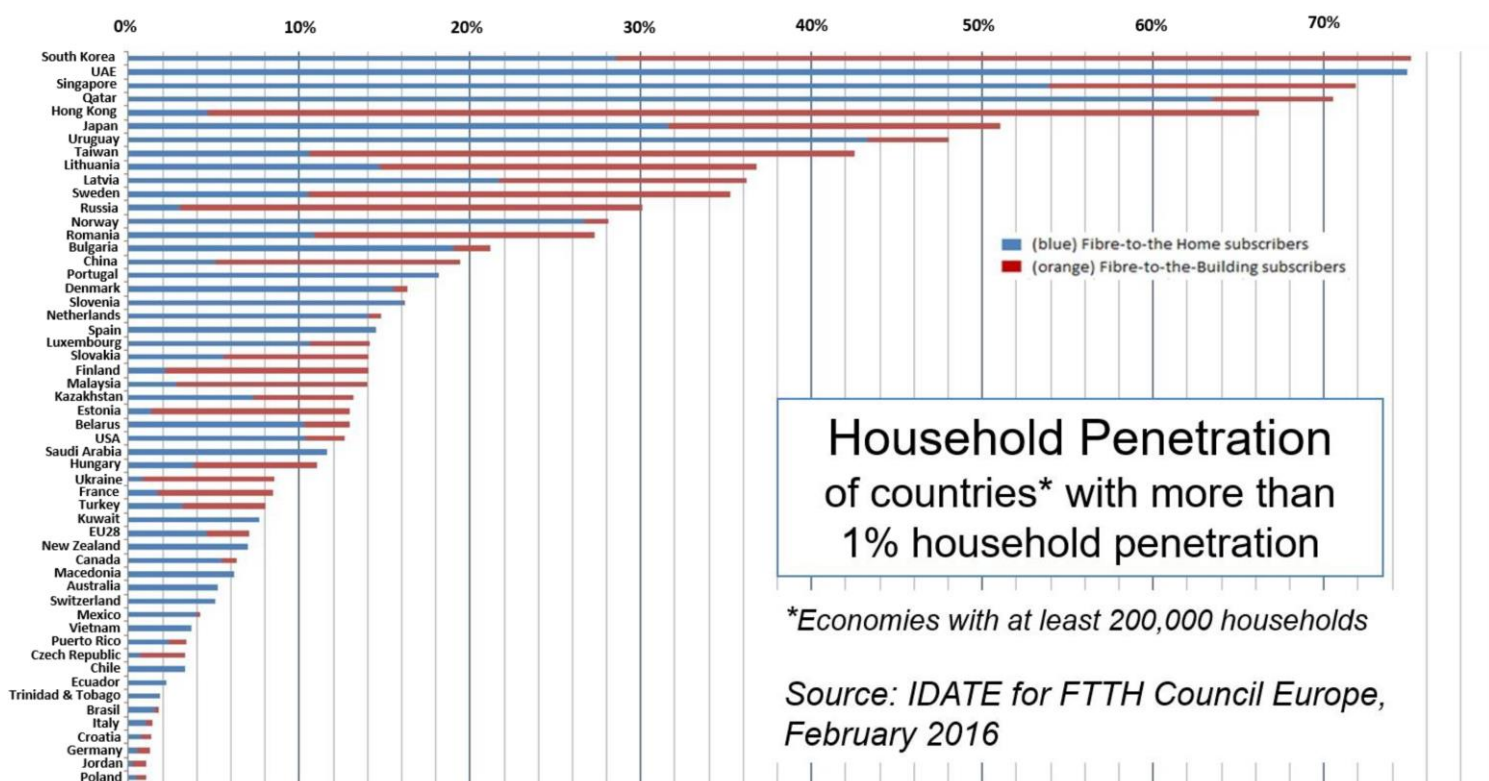
Professor Hartwig Tauber, winner of the FTTH Individual Award, has been one of Europe's most active defenders of FTTH for more than a decade now. Hartwig is one of the founding leaders of the FTTH Council Europe, elected President of the organisation from 2004 to 2007 and acting as Director General from 2007 to November 2015. His involvement in the FTTH Council Europe helped the organisation to develop a strong and respected voice in Europe. Hartwig is now the Managing Director of NöGIG, the largest rural FTTH network in Austria.
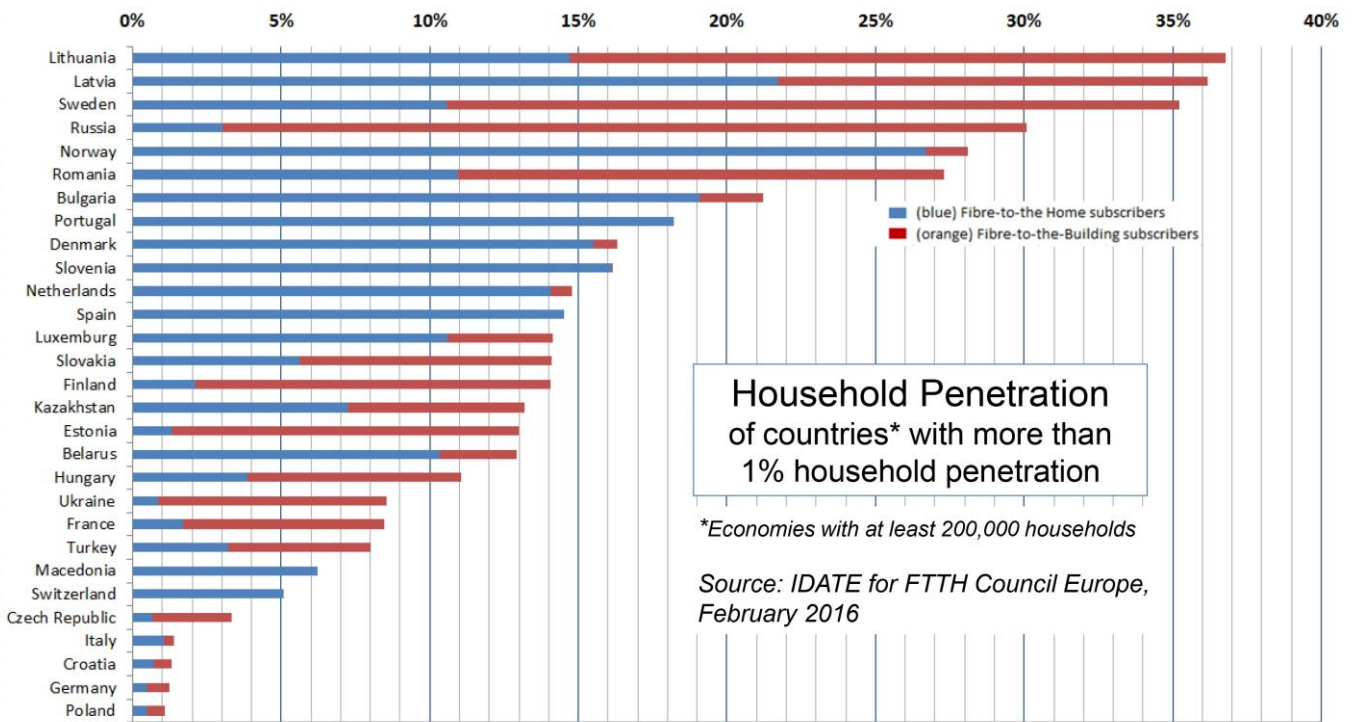
What are the highlights of the FTTH Conference 2016?

The FTTH Conference 2016 was opened by Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister and Minister for Communications and Media of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Ruud Hendriks, entrepreneurial icon in the Netherlands, shared his experience and vision in an inspirational keynote speech. The FTTH Conference remains the world's largest FTTH-focused event, attracting more than 3,000 participants from 85 Countries. This year, 95 exhibitors hosted the event, which included over 100 high-level presentations and cases studies from distinguished speakers.

The 14th edition of the FTTH Conference will be held from 14 to 16 February 2017 in Marseille.

GLOBAL RANKING – end September 2015

EUROPEAN RANKING – end September 2015

Household Penetration
of countries* with more than
1% household penetration

*Economies with at least 200,000 households

Source: IDATE for FTTH Council Europe,
February 2016

Legend:
- (blue) Fibre-to-the Home subscribers
- (orange) Fibre-to-the-Building subscribers

Countries (top to bottom): Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden, Russia, Norway, Romania, Bulgaria, Portugal, Denmark, Slovenia, Netherlands, Spain, Luxemburg, Slovakia, Finland, Kazakhstan, Estonia, Belarus, Hungary, Ukraine, France, Turkey, Macedonia, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Italy, Croatia, Germany, Poland

Notes for editors:

The FTTH definitions can be downloaded from: www.ftthcouncil.eu/about-us/about-ftth/ftth-definitions

Available downloads (FTTH Global and European Ranking graphs, photos of the event and of the FTTH Award winners, the presentation from the FTTH Council Europe Press Conference): www.ftthconference.eu/news-media/news

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About the FTTH Council Europe:
The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre-based, ultra-high-speed access networks to consumers and businesses. The Council promotes this technology because it will deliver a flow of new services that enhance the quality of life, contribute to a better environment and increase economic competitiveness. The FTTH Council Europe consists of 150 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu

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