

PRESS RELEASE

Build Fibre, Save energy!

Brussels, 28 January 2021. Breko, Europacable and the FTTH Council Europe call on policy-makers at European, national and local level, to consider the impact of the different broadband technologies on the sustainability of the environment and the European economy when selecting amongst them.

In December 2019, the European Commission presented the European Green Deal with the ambition to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people's health and quality of life, caring for nature, and leaving no one behind.

Digitalisation will be at the core of this ambitious program and fibre is key to **align the digital and sustainability agendas. As the most sustainable telecommunication infrastructure technology, full fibre¹ is a prerequisite to achieve the European Green Deal and make the European Union's economy more sustainable.**

Several studies² that compared the sustainability aspect (energy consumption and CO₂ emissions) of traditional copper or coaxial cable-based technologies with full fibre networks at different speeds and capacity rates have been published.

The studies show evidence that the choice of broadband network technology can have a significant impact on the electricity required to operate the network and on CO₂ emissions and conclude that the **choice of full fibre networks can drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.** Based on the electricity consumption per bitrate, the BREKO report shows that copper-based networks (VDSL2 vectoring, super vectoring) consume up to seventeen times more electricity than fibre networks.

It is also important to note that the number of active network elements are key factors influencing the power consumption and energy efficiency of the different access technologies. **However, they are currently not taken into account in the political and economic considerations and we believe they should become a key factor guiding the decision-making process.**

Full fibre networks are the only ones that can cope with future data rate requirements without a need to adapt or upgrade their primary passive infrastructure. High quality fibre networks also increase energy efficiency of data transfers and storage and reduce energy consumption.

Moreover, full fibre networks are far more reliable than copper-based alternatives, with less service disruption, less failure and lower maintenance-costs. Consequently they require fewer field support staff and less travel to network locations to carry out maintenance/repairs, also resulting in reduced energy-emissions.

¹ Full fibre network is to be understood as FTTH (Fibre to the Home), FTTB (Fibre to the Building), FTTO (Fibre to the Office), FTTA (Fibre to the Antenna)

² Study conducted by Prof. Dr. -Ing. Kristof Obermann from the University of Applied Sciences (Technische Hochschule) Mittelhessen from BREKO in May 2020 <https://brekoverband.de/gutachten-nachhaltigkeitsvergleich-von-ftth-und-fttc>
Study conducted by Prof. Dr. Ing Stephan Breide, Sebastian Helleberg M. Eng i.Hs FH for Prysmian in December 2017 <https://www.prysmiangroup.com/staticres/energy-consumption-whitepaper/8/index.html>

In conclusion, Europe's ability to combine the climate and digital transition depends on the quality and sustainability of its telecommunication infrastructure. Not only is full fibre the most future-proof technology which quality parameters are unmatched, but it is also the most energy-efficient technology.

To reap the benefits of digitalisation and to enable a more sustainable future, a strong and swift political commitment to full fibre technology is needed and BREKO, Europacable and the FTTH Council Europe call on policy-makers to make the right choice. This is indispensable to fully grasp the long-term energy-efficient opportunities offered by full fibre networks.

To learn more about the contribution of fibre to the sustainability challenge and get an overview of the above-mentioned studies, watch the replay of the workshop [Towards & Greener Europe with Full Fibre](#) which took place at the FTTH virtual Conference 2020.

About BREKO

BREKO, the leading German Broadband Association, is the shared voice of more than 370 members advocating for competition on the German telecommunications market. Together, they pave the way for future-proof fibre infrastructure and currently account for around 75 percent of the competitive FTTB/H deployment in Germany. Over 215 BREKO members are network operators which provide future-proof fibre access in urban and rural areas. In 2019, their telecommunications investments amounted to € 2.5 billion with a revenue of € 7.8 billion. For more information, visit www.brekoverband.de.

About Europacable

Founded in 1991, Europacable is the voice of all leading European wire and cable producers. Europacable members include the largest cable makers in the world providing global technology leadership, as well as highly specialized small- and medium sized businesses from across Europe.

Globally our members employ over 80.000 people of which more than 50% in Europe, generating a turnover over € 70 billion in 2019. The product scope of our members covers the full range of energy, communication, industrial and special application cables.

Europacable is listed in the European Commission's transparency register under 453103789-92. We are a partner of CENELEC. www.europacable.eu

About the FTTH Council Europe

The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate ubiquitous full fibre-based connectivity empowering a leading Digital Society throughout Europe.

Fibre is a future-proof infrastructure which enables an unparalleled fixed and wireless experience as well as new innovative digital technologies and services, the prerequisites for Europe's global competitiveness and sustainability.

The FTTH Council Europe's vision is that fibre connectivity will transform and enhance the way we live, do business and interact, connecting everyone and everything, everywhere.

The FTTH Council Europe consists of more than 150 member companies. www.ftthcouncil.eu