

Ultra-rapid Broadband Strategic Plan for Basque Country

Summary of the services

The Basque Government, from the guidelines set out oriented to fulfil the objectives established in the Digital Agenda for Europe from the European Commission under its Europe 2020 strategy, has undertaken the elaboration of the Strategic Plan of ultra-fast broadband in the Basque Country, which has been requested to Idom technological consultancy team.

For the development of the plan, Idom has done a deep analysis referred to the situation of advanced broadband services in the Basque Country (offer of telecommunications services in the Basque country, unattended demand, needs identified from the public administration).

As part of the environmental factors to consider for the design of the strategy, it has been taken into account: trends in services and its technological evolution, the completion of a benchmarking of best practices in boosting ultra-fast broadband networks (NGA) and next-generation mobility services, as well as the situation of the regulatory framework and policies in this area

Furthermore, it has been developed the mapping services in order to identify white, grey and black areas in accordance with the definitions used by the EU Guidelines regarding to high-speed broadband.

From the above information, Idom has developed the Strategic Plan called "Banda Zabala +" (Broadband+ Plan in Basque) that will allow the boost of new generation broadband networks in order to facilitate their availability and use, achieving the ICT multiplier effect in economic and social development of the Basque Country.

The Plan aims to put Basque Country at the height of the reference countries in ultra-fast broadband networks considering the following objectives for 2015:

1. Facilitate broadband fixed services of at least 100Mbps in every town of more than 1,000inhab.
2. Maturity of these services, i.e. have a penetration of 20% of the homes passed by ultra-fast network solutions
3. Availability of mobile services of next-generation enabling speeds of at least 30Mbps for 90% of the population living in towns of less than 5,000 inhabitants, as well as on the main transport routes.

As a second phase of these services, Idom is carrying out the advice for the implementation of the first of actions that aims to develop a public-private initiative through the creation of an investment vehicle participated by the Basque Government and the main operators with network deployments in Basque Country.

This action aims to extend fibre backhaul networks to those towns that will be out of the operators' business-plans for the high-speed broadband services.

The scope of work for the performance of the consultancy service indicated is divided into the following tasks:

- Collaboration for the development and management of a road map for the process of creation of the public-private partnership:
 - Definición de una infraestructura objetivo preliminar
 - Definition of a preliminary targeted infrastructure
 - Validation of both documents with Basque Government
- Review and validation during the analysis process with telecommunication operators of the towns identified as white NGA areas
- Assistance and development of methodology and collaborative procedures for the approach of objectives and approach of the stakeholders involved in the action
 - Monitoring of the roadmap
 - Arrangement of negotiation meetings and preliminary analysis of the position of each of the involved telecommunications operators
 - Arrangement of meetings with other stakeholders of interest (railway infrastructures, roads, utilities, ...)
- Preparation of proceedings and technical reports associated with each of the meetings and drafting of the final document of the technical management model.
- Technical advice on telecommunications during the process

Outcomes

- Study of the State of broadband communications and ultrafast broadband communications in the Basque Country
- Ultrafast Broadband Strategic Plan for the Basque Country.
- Roadmap for the development of an investment vehicle using a PPP model to implement the action 1 of the Ultrafast Broadband Plan
- Information for the EU DG CONNECT in order to let them know about the Basque Government's action.
- Technical information about the scope and the layout of the fibre network to be deployed.

Main Challenges

Among the main challenges that Idom has faced in this work is the approach of a new initiative of public-private partnership in the field of telecommunications.

Furthermore, the management and seeking consensus between four competing companies seeking agreements and sharing of infrastructure that resulted in the improvement of the deployment of ultra-fast networks in the Basque country

Lessons Learned

The main lesson that Idom has learned in this service is the great difficulties that telco operators raise when the model of competence is based on infrastructure, especially when it comes to operators with uneven degree of development of the network. This is very representative on operators with significant market position (SMP)