

Press Release

Fibre-optic expansion in the Canton of Fribourg to continue

Since the Swiss Competition Commission (ComCo) published its final report on fibre-optic cooperation in February, the energy companies Groupe E, Gruyère Energie and IB-Murten in the Canton of Fribourg have reached an agreement with Swisscom to revise their cooperation model, thus enabling the implementation of fibre-optics in the Canton of Fribourg. The Canton of Fribourg's State Council has voted to support the state's involvement in this partnership to guarantee the expansion of the fibre-optic network to urban and rural areas, and has passed the matter on to the cantonal parliament, the Grand Council, for approval. The Fribourg partners have formed the joint venture FTTH Fribourg and, together with Swisscom, will push ahead with fibre-optic expansion using a cooperation model that has already been successful elsewhere in Switzerland. This partnership should ensure that the entire Canton of Fribourg is eventually connected to the fibre-optic network.

In February 2012, the Swiss Competition Commission (ComCo) published its final report on fibre-optic (Fibre to the Home, FTTH) cooperation in the Canton of Fribourg. In its report, ComCo criticised several key clauses of the agreement on the planned joint venture between the Fribourg partners and Swisscom. The contractual partners then began immediate discussions on revising the cooperation model to enable the expansion of the fibre-optic network in the Canton of Fribourg to go ahead in conformity with competition law, building in particular on talks with the ComCo Secretariat. Had no joint solution been found, there would have been a risk that this would have put an end to the project. The planned cooperation between Swisscom and the new company created by the Fribourg partners eliminates this danger and allows fibre-optic expansion to continue as planned.

In light of all this, the Fribourg Council of State decided at a meeting on 26 June 2012 to financially support the project by taking a participating interest in the future company FTTH Fribourg with the Fribourg energy distribution partners. The entire canton, including areas with low levels of connectivity, is now guaranteed access to the fibre-optic network. The Council of State has now passed the matter on to the Grand Council.



The partnership between FTTH Fribourg and Swisscom aims to bring comprehensive fibre-optic coverage to the Canton of Fribourg quickly and economically. Both partners will be responsible for the planning and issuing of construction contracts and the maintenance and operation of the new fibre-optic network as far as homes. As part of the FTTH pilot project in the village of Neyruz, Canton of Fribourg, and in the Torry district of the city of Fribourg, around 2,500 homes and 100 businesses have already been connected to the open-access fibre-optic network set up by the Fribourg partners and Swisscom. The FTTH network is designed to allow competition and is open to all service providers without discrimination. An agreement between Swisscom and FTTH Fribourg will allow alternative technologies to be introduced at FTTH, enabling broadband to be rolled out even faster across the entire canton.

Berne/Fribourg, 27 June 2012