

EU helps spread mobile broadband

The 27 European Union member countries made a unanimous decision in late July to amend the 1987 GSM Directive, allowing the 900MHz frequency to be used for 3G and eventually 4G. End users in rural areas across the EU can have access to mobile broadband services as early as next year. Mats Nilsson, head of Ericsson's European Affairs Office in Brussels, Belgium, says the decision comes after much lobbying on the part of the telecom industry. "This final stage of the process began in May this year and the publication of the amended directive is expected at any time," Nilsson says. "The amended directive gives operators new capabilities for mobile broadband, providing customers with almost total urban and rural coverage that is comparable to today's GSM networks. "There is also only limited additional investment needed, since existing GSM900MHz sites and infrastructure can essentially be reused.

Because lower frequencies travel further, the 900MHz frequency lends itself well for rural coverage. The longer distances also mean that fewer base stations are needed. Today, most 3G systems in Europe use higher frequencies, such as the 2100MHz band. "The infrastructure costs of providing mobile broadband coverage to 70 percent of the European population on the 2100MHz frequency is the same as providing coverage to 99 percent of the population on the 900MHz band," Nilsson says. "Member states have been waiting for the amended directive which brings the go ahead to implement 3G and mobile broadband in the 900MHz band," Nilsson says.

EU Telecoms Commissioner Viviane Reding says: "The GSM standard has been a success story for Europe, where it was born. By updating the GSM Directive, the EU has paved the way for a new generation of services and technologies where Europe can be a world leader. This reform will remove constraints on operators so they can deploy new technologies in the GSM bands to develop high-speed mobile broadband services. This should give a welcome boost to Europe's wireless economy and help trigger the take-off of a Digital Europe."

The directive had been delayed a few months because it was part the broader Telecoms Package, but a decision was made to separate the vote for the GSM Directive to prevent further delay. The European Commission expects this will bring capital savings of up to EUR 1.6 billion for the provision of a single Europe-wide network through more efficient management of the radio spectrum. When the directive is ratified, EU member countries will have six months to adjust their legislation and implement the directive.



EU supports telecom services for all

Ericsson has submitted a proposal calling for public-service TV to be distributed via IPTV and internet technology to the European Commission's Directorate General for Competition. This is one of the latest initiatives from Ericsson's European Affairs Office. The office in Brussels, Belgium, helps advance Ericsson's aim of providing telecommunications for all by working closely with industry players. It liaises with EU institutions, governments and other Information and Communications Technologies decisionmaking bodies within the European Union. **Mats Nilsson, Head of the Ericsson European Affairs Office** says: "Decision making is a complex process and it is important to network, participate in public consultations and keep track of when issues are handled. There are also many informal meetings and forums where various stakeholders meet. We work a lot with operators, as well as competitors." Ericsson contributes industry knowledge and global experience to the development of Information and Communications Technologies within Europe, for example through its recent proposal for public-service TV. To read complete article click here: http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2009/q2/090629_esmp.shtml

Universal broadband closes digital gap

Truly universal broadband requires the united efforts of governments and regulators to foster an environment that balances competition with the need for long-term infrastructure investment and its resulting societal benefits. The benefits of broadband – and specifically mobile broadband – are now becoming widely understood. It is a major contributor to economic growth, reducing global carbon-dioxide emissions, facilitating remote learning and telemedicine and ultimately helping to bridge the digital divide between rural and urban areas. **Tom Lindström, Director of Government & Industry Relations at Ericsson**, says governments and regulators play an important role in facilitating the rollout of telecom services. But to ensure that mobile broadband reaches the whole population and all geographical areas, adequate and harmonized radio spectrum needs to be in place. Industry must agree internationally on standards to create interoperability and reach economies of scale. To read complete article, click here. <http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2009/q1/090226-universal-broadband.shtml>

TV frequencies open up for mobile communications

The digitalization of terrestrial TV networks offers a historic opportunity to use the freed-up UHF (ultra-high frequency) band for more efficient TV transmissions; this, in turn, will lead to new beneficial and more profitable uses in this band. The now available spectrum for mobile usage varies between countries and regions, but amounts to approximately 100MHz. Historically, the ITU, a United Nations body, makes the major international spectrum decisions. For example, in 1992, the 2.1GHz “core bands” that are now stimulating mobile industry growth were identified for IMT-2000 applications, says Lasse Wieweg, Director, Government & Industry Relations at Ericsson. Wieweg says the identified spectrum is critical for service providers to meet the projected demand for mobile broadband services. Service providers will be able to reduce costs further and use more efficient technologies to bring innovation and make equipment simpler, he says. Click here to read the complete article. http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2008/q1/080305_tv.shtml

HSPA hits milestone, sets record

Never mind that HSPA has been a 3GPP standard since 2000, that it has been launched on more than 300 networks around the world or that it boasts current speeds of up to 21Mbps. The real proof of its success is how its users have embraced the mobile broadband technology. **Hans Ovesen, VP Industry Relations & Marketing at Ericsson**, says: “Mobile broadband is growing at a pace that far exceeds that of GSM and WCDMA. It is a technology and service delivering on a promise to change the lives of millions of people. Having access to communication anywhere, anytime substantially influences work and commuting behaviors – contributing to a sustainable society, while increasing the quality of life.” Click here to read the complete article. http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2009/q3/090814_hspa.shtml

Broadband access for all in the US

Ericsson will lead as a wireless and wireline infrastructure provider by providing broadband across the US and actively engaging with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the creation of a national broadband plan. The US Congress has given the FCC the task of coming up with a rollout plan for broadband by next February and encourage its wide-scale uptake across the country. Ericsson says it wants to see even-handed network oversight, meaning that carriers should be able to manage their networks in the way they see fit, rather than being forced to comply with mandated rules set forth by regulators. **Barbara Baffer, head of Public Affairs & Regulations at Ericsson in the US** says: “In addition, what I see becoming a crucial factor is the evolution of spectrum policy and the way it includes future technologies such as LTE. There is a definite need for more spectrum and broader swathes of spectrum to enable both high-speed and seamless broadband.” Click here to read complete article. http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2009/q3/090713_national_bb.shtml

New horizons for HSPA in Europe

Mobile broadband will reach more people in rural areas as Europe opens up for 3G services on the 900MHz spectrum. The European Parliament has agreed to allow the deployment of 3G services on the 900MHz spectrum, which until now has been reserved for GSM services under the European Union's GSM Directive. Today, most 3G systems in Europe use higher frequencies such as the 2100MHz band. **Mats Nilsson, Head of the Ericsson European Affairs Office in Brussels, Belgium**, says the decision removes the final obstacle for EU member states to open up the 900MHz bands for UMTS/HSPA, thereby providing the opportunity for a new wave of HSPA deployments on the 900MHz band. “This groundbreaking spectrum agreement enables more Europeans to benefit from mobile broadband services,” he says. To read complete article click here. http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2009/q2/090617_hspa_europe.shtml

Fiber helps build sustainability in Europe

The deployment of optical fibers is picking up pace in Europe, and contributing to a sustainable future by having a positive impact on the environment, the economy and quality of life. The environmental effect of broadband growth was one of the topics on the agenda at the Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Council Europe's annual conference in mid February in Copenhagen. Delegates heard how the industry has made substantial efforts to minimize any negative environmental impact from their products and services. Hardware has been completely redesigned and recycling services have been implemented. Don McCullough, head of Product Marketing at Product Area Broadband Networks, Business Unit Networks, was the Ericsson speaker at the conference. He says that in the operation phase, power consumption is the main contributor to carbon dioxide emissions, and therefore focus on energy efficient solutions is key. To read the complete article, click here. <http://www.ericsson.com/solutions/news/2009/q1/090326-ftth.shtml>