Basic information

2016/0287(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Procedure completed
Promotion of internet connectivity in local communities Amending Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 2011/0299(COD) Amending Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 2011/0302(COD) **Subject** 3.30.20 Trans-European communications networks 3.30.25 International information networks and society, internet	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	ZORRINHO Carlos (S&D)	16/11/2016
	Shadow rapporteur SANDER Anne (PPE) VAN BOSSUYT Anneleen (ECR) TELIČKA Pavel (ALDE) SYLIKIOTIS Neoklis (GUE/NGL) REIMON Michel (Verts/ALE) BORRELLI David (EFDD) KAPPEL Barbara (ENF)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	NÍ RIADA Liadh (GUE/NGL)	10/10/2016
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
TRAN Transport and Tourism	ȚAPARDEL Claudia (S&D)	08/11/2016

	REGI Regional Development	D'AMATO Rosa (EFDD)	11/10/2016
	CULT Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meetings	Date
	Agriculture and Fisheries	3562	2017-10-09

European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner
	Communications Networks, Content and Technology	OETTINGER Günther

European Economic and Social Committee

European Committee of the Regions

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/09/2016	Legislative proposal published	COM(2016)0589	Summary
06/10/2016	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
01/12/2016	Debate in Council		
25/04/2017	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
25/04/2017	Committee decision to open interinstitutional negotiations with report adopted in committee		
04/05/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A8-0181/2017	Summary
15/05/2017	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations announced in plenary (Rule 72)		
17/05/2017	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations confirmed by plenary (Rule 72)		
21/06/2017	Approval in committee of the text agreed at 1st reading interinstitutional negotiations	GEDA/A/(2017)005766 PE606.136	
12/09/2017	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T8-0326/2017	Summary
12/09/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/09/2017	Debate in Parliament		
09/10/2017	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
25/10/2017	Final act signed		
25/10/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		
01/11/2017	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2016/0287(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Amendments and repeals	Amending Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 2011/0299(COD) Amending Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 2011/0302(COD)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 172
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ITRE/8/07864

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE592.352	31/01/2017	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE592.353	06/03/2017	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE597.451	29/03/2017	
Committee opinion	BUDG	PE597.622	04/04/2017	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE595.741	12/04/2017	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A8-0181/2017	04/05/2017	Summary
Text agreed during interinstitutional negotiations		PE606.136	07/06/2017	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T8-0326/2017	12/09/2017	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Coreper letter confirming interinstitutional agreement	GEDA/A/(2017)005766	07/06/2017	
Draft final act	00028/2017/LEX	25/10/2017	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2016)0589	14/09/2016	Summary
Commission document (COM)	COM(2016)0603	14/09/2016	

Commission working document (SWD)	SWD(2016)0299	14/09/2016	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2017)633	11/09/2017	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	RO_SENATE	COM(2016)0589	11/11/2016	
Reasoned opinion	SE_PARLIAMENT	PE595.574	16/12/2016	
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2016)0589	19/12/2016	
Contribution	DE_BUNDESRAT	COM(2016)0603	21/12/2016	
Contribution	DE_BUNDESRAT	COM(2016)0589	22/12/2016	
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2016)0589	14/02/2017	
Contribution	FR_SENATE	COM(2016)0589	27/02/2017	
Contribution	CZ_CHAMBER	COM(2016)0589	04/04/2017	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES5185/2016	25/01/2017	
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR5113/2016	08/02/2017	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Parliament	Briefing	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Regulation 2017/1953
OJ L 286 01.11.2017, p. 0001 Summary

Promotion of internet connectivity in local communities

2016/0287(COD) - 25/10/2017 - Final act

PURPOSE: to support the provision of high quality wireless connectivity in local communities throughout the Union.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) 2017/1953 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014 as regards the promotion of internet connectivity in local communities.

CONTENT: this Regulation amends Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) and Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 on guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure.

The amendments shall enable the Union to provide assistance to **support access to high-quality free local wireless connectivity without discriminatory conditions** in centres of public life (e.g. public administrations, libraries, hospitals, etc.) and outdoor public spaces).

The promotion of local wireless connectivity that is free of charge and without discriminatory conditions in centres of public life should be identified as a **distinct project of common interest** in the telecommunications sector within the meaning of Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014.

The Regulation aims to contribute to **bridging the digital divide**, particularly in rural and remote areas. It underlines the importance of broadband deployment in the Union and reaffirms the goal of ensuring that, by 2020, **all Europeans have access to internet speeds of above 30 Mbps** and 50 % or more of European households subscribe to internet connections above 100 Mbps.

Eligibility and conditions: under the Regulation, municipalities, hospitals and **other public sector bodies** may apply for funding for the installation of new wireless access points if there are no private or similar public internet access available.

The public body will have to commit to **maintaining the new connection for at least three years**.

Actions financed shall:

- **use the latest and best performing equipment** capable of providing a high-speed connection that is easily accessible and properly secured, free of charge and without discriminatory conditions;
- provide access to services at least in the relevant **languages** of the Member State concerned and, to the extent possible, in other official languages of the institutions of the Union.
- respect the principles of **technological neutrality**;
- commit to providing equipment or services to ensure that projects do not unduly distort competition.

In addition, internet connectivity shall:

- **be provided without corresponding remuneration**, whether by direct payment or by other types of consideration, such as commercial advertising or the provision of personal data for commercial purposes;
- ensure the smooth functioning of the network and, in particular, fair allocation of capacity between users at peak times.

Financing: the available budget should be allocated in a geographically balanced manner across Member States to projects and, in principle, on a ‘first come, first served’ basis. EU funding will cover up to **100% of eligible costs**.

To provide appropriate financing for the promotion of internet connectivity in local communities and to ensure its successful implementation, the financial envelope for the implementation of the Connecting Europe Facility in the telecommunications sector should be **increased by EUR 25 million**, and may be increased to **EUR 50 million**.

Actions financed shall be carried out and monitored closely by the Commission for at least three years.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 4.11.2017.

Promotion of internet connectivity in local communities

2016/0287(COD) - 14/09/2016 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to promote internet connectivity in local communities.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with Council.

BACKGROUND: the **new telecommunications package** adopted today by the Commission includes a Communication setting out a European vision of Internet connectivity for citizens and business in the Digital Single Market, as well as a legislative proposal for a European Electronic Communications Code. The Commission proposal set out the reforms needed to ensure **availability and take-up of very high capacity networks** and ensure that no one and no region is left behind.

One of the Commission's strategic aims for the Union to be achieved by 2025 is for sites at which public services are provided, such as public administrations, libraries and hospitals to be equipped with gigabit internet connections.

The proposal complements this effort through **amendments to the legal framework for telecommunications** in the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), contained in Regulation (EU) No 1316/20133 and Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 on guidelines for trans-European networks in the area of telecommunications infrastructure. These amendments encourage entities with a public mission such as public authorities and providers of public services to offer free local wireless connectivity in the centres of local public life (e.g. public administrations, libraries, health centres and outdoor public spaces).

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the impact assessment carried out for the review of the regulatory framework builds on those considerations expressed by stakeholders and proposes to introduce provisions on the deployment of **small cells**. These provisions aim to reduce the costs of deploying very dense networks and to enhance access to local wireless connectivity in order to meet the exponential demand for ubiquitous connectivity.

CONTENT: the proposal aims to amend Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014 in order to **promote internet connectivity in local communities.**

Financial assistance: the proposal provides that entities with a public mission such as public authorities and providers of public services, wishing to offer **free local wireless connectivity through local access points,** will benefit from financial assistance.

Funding to local public authorities for access points in the **centres of local public life**, including outdoor spaces accessible to the general public, will be prioritised in the first phase of the intervention.

Targeted intervention: in order to ensure the targeted nature of the intervention and to realise maximum public benefit, funding will be limited to situations where no freely accessible public or private access points delivering very high-speed broadband exist.

Furthermore, funding will be awarded in a **geographically balanced manner** that contributes to the economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Union by taking particular account of the needs of local communities.

Rate of intervention: to ensure that local communities with limited resources can also experience these benefits of participation in the Digital Single Market, support under this measure should be available for **up to 100 % of the eligible costs,** without prejudice to the principle of co-financing.

Projects of common interest: given its flexible and focussed nature relative to the support for broadband networks under the telecommunications sectoral envelope for the implementation of the CEF, the intervention should be recognised as a separate project of common interest with associated actions under the CEF Regulation and a dedicated budget, the details of which should be provided for under the Guidelines Regulation.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: a total budget of **EUR 120 million is envisaged for the period until 2019.**

Appropriations required by the proposal are to be fully financed within the Multiannual

Financial Framework 2014-2020.

- **EUR 70 million** are to be reallocated within the programmed amounts for the CEF telecommunications sector 2017-2019 and
- **EUR 50 million** will be transferred to the financial envelope for the telecommunications sector through an amendment of Article 5(1) of the CEF Regulation.

For reasons of consistency, this increase is also reflected in the proposal for an amendment of the legal framework for the European Fund for Strategic Investments.

Promotion of internet connectivity in local communities

2016/0287(COD) - 04/05/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Carlos ZORRINHO (S&D, PT) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014 as regards the promotion of Internet connectivity in local communities.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Universal and free access: actions contributing to projects of common interest shall promote the provision of high quality local wireless connectivity that is free of charge and free from restrictions in local communities.

For the purposes of accessibility, those actions shall, to the extent possible, avoid potential language barriers.

Access points: in order to promote internet connectivity in local communities, the proposal encouraged the deployment of wireless local access points as part of simplified planning procedures with reduced regulatory barriers.

Members stressed that these access points should be able to **form part of a network with a single authentication system** that is valid across the whole Union, and other free local wireless connectivity networks should be able to join the system.

Simplified procedures: given the limited volume of financial appropriations measured against the possibly high number of applications, Members called for steps to be taken to ensure that administrative procedures are simplified so that decisions can be taken in a timely manner.

In this regard, they called for Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 to be amended to ensure that **certification of expenditure and annual reporting** to the Commission are not obligatory for grants awarded under this Regulation.

Eligibility of actions: eligible institutions may use financial assistance to establish free local wireless connectivity in locations that are most suitable and accessible for community usage.

To be eligible, projects shall:

- be implemented by a **public sector body** capable of ensuring the financing of operating costs for minimum of three years;
- build on very high-speed broadband connectivity enabling delivery of high quality Internet experience to users is that free, easy to access, and uses state-of-the-art equipment, taking advantage of **optimal technological solutions**;
- respect the principle of **technological neutrality**, use public funding efficiently and are able to adapt projects to the best technological offers.

Financing: Member States may allocate their **own resources or resources from the European Structural and Investment Funds** to develop complementary services and offers that boost the sustainability of projects. Projects financed under this section shall be in operation and closely monitored by the Commission for at least three years.

The intervention shall be implemented by the most appropriate forms of financial assistance, notably **grants**, for instance through **vouchers**, available under the Financial Regulation. The principle of sound financial management should apply.

The available budget shall be allocated in a **geographically balanced manner** so that projects can be covered in all the Member States. The allocation shall also take into account the need to address the digital divide.

Priority shall be given to **local SMEs** in the context of the procurement and installation of equipment.

Promotion of internet connectivity in local communities

2016/0287(COD) - 12/09/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 582 votes to 98, with 9 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulations (EU) No 1316/2013 and (EU) No 283/2014 as regards the promotion of Internet connectivity in local communities.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

Aim: the aim of the Regulation is to support the provision of **high-quality wireless connectivity in local communities across the Union** in order to reduce the digital divide in rural and isolated areas.

The amended text stressed the importance of broadband deployment in the EU. It reaffirmed the goal of ensuring that, **by 2020, all Europeans have access to internet speeds of above 30 Mbps** and 50 % or more of European households subscribe to internet connections above 100 Mbps.

Eligibility and conditions: in order to be eligible for funding, actions shall:

- be implemented by a **public sector body which is capable of planning and supervising the installation, as well as ensuring for a minimum of three years the financing of operating costs**, of indoor or outdoor local wireless access points in public spaces;
- use the **latest and best-performing equipment** capable of providing their users with a broadband connection that is easy to access and properly secured, free of charge and without discriminatory conditions;
- provide access to services at least in the relevant **languages** of the Member State concerned and, to the extent possible, in other official languages of the institutions of the Union;
- respect the principles of technological neutrality;
- commit to providing equipment or services to ensure that projects do not unduly distort competition.

In addition, internet connectivity shall:

- be provided **without corresponding remuneration**, whether by direct payment or by other types of consideration, such as commercial advertising or the provision of personal data for commercial purpose;
- ensure a **smooth functioning of the network** and, in particular, the need to ensure a fair allocation of capacity between users at peak times.

Actions **duplicating** existing free private or public offers with similar characteristics in the same public space shall not be eligible to receive funding.

Budget: the available budget shall be allocated in a **geographically balanced manner across Member States** and, in principle, on a 'first come, first served' basis. Administrative procedures shall be **simplified** so that decisions can be taken in a timely manner.

To provide appropriate financing for the promotion of internet connectivity in local communities and to ensure its successful implementation, the financial envelope for the implementation of the Connecting Europe Facility in the telecommunications sector should be increased by EUR 25 million, and may be increased to **EUR 50 million**.

Actions financed shall be in operation and closely monitored by the Commission for at least three years. The Commission shall inform end-users about the availability of services and draw attention to the fact that funding has been provided by the Union.