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SABER Project



SABER - Satellite Broadband for European Regions.

The purpose of the SABER Thematic Network is to create a long term, sustainable environment in which stakeholders interested in tackling the Digital Divide by contributing to the roll out and take-up of broadband for all, at increasing speeds, and in particular through satellite-based services, can proactively collaborate.

The scope of the SABER Thematic Network is to create the conditions for the most efficient and effective contribution of satellite systems to support the achievement of the objectives set in Europe 2020 and subsequently in the Digital Agenda for Europe (DAE). The main objective of the SABER Thematic Network is to address the requirements as set out in Objective 5.3 of the ICT PSP Work Programme 2012.

The SABER Thematic Network is fully aligned with the specific objectives of the ICT PSP Work Programme. The SABER Thematic Network intends to bring together national and regional authorities, and analyse the experience of those which have used satellite solutions for broadband access, in order to develop guidelines for deployment and share best practices and disseminate information to regions across Europe in need using a common, easy to access, information repository which offers access to relevant information including cost benefit analysis of broadband access by satellite, satellite offers and technical capabilities, state aid, business models, funding options including demand aggregation and recommended solutions to non-technological roadblocks.

The SABER Thematic Network intends to explore the possible use of regional funds in relation to demand aggregation schemes and assistance, and to propose plausible adaptations in call specifications to incorporate satellite communication solutions in such calls. The activities of the SABER Thematic Network includes the development of a dissemination plan and working protocols and the launch of a knowledge management platform to facilitate the creation and promotion of an information repository.

Members will participate in extensive intelligence gathering and a series of workshops and expert round table discussions will be undertaken to iteratively review, and validate the network's findings and good practice case studies. These activities will be used to share knowledge and experience. SABER works with regions in 3 streams:

1. an early stream for regions ready to plan deployments in the short term
2. a main stream to support regions in achieving the 2013 DAE objectives
3. a future stream supporting regions to achieve the 2020 DAE objectives.

Tools, methodologies and guidelines will be developed to assist regions in their own satellite broadband deployment planning. SABER seeks to build consensus among stakeholders on solutions to address broadband gaps across European regions. A final conference will be held to ensure that the results and outcomes of the network are disseminated as widely as possible. Finally the activities of the network will be mainstreamed into all other partners' organisations to ensure the on-going sustainability of the activities.

The outcomes foreseen in the SABER Thematic Network will include:

- A critical assessment of actual satellite broadband service deployment and associated case studies
- The identification of regional requirements for planning satellite deployment
- The creation of a White Paper on use of satellite solutions to achieve 100% broadband coverage
- A future roadmap for satellite technology
- A toolkit and set of guidelines for regions to support the deployment of appropriate satellite broadband solutions.

The SABER Thematic Network has assembled an extensive partnership of 26 regional and industry organisations to ensure a wide range of expertise and experience within the network. The partnership comprises a triple helix of stakeholders including:

- a) regional organisations responsible for economic and social development at a regional level
- b) intermediaries that provide support at the regional level
- c) private sector companies, in particular companies that manufacture, deploy and operate satellite broadband infrastructure and services across Europe, and have extensive experience in publicly funded deployments.

Partners can be classified into 3 broad categories:

1. regional partners with experience of deploying satellite broadband solutions
2. regional partners with an interest in exploring satellite broadband solutions
3. satellite industry partners with experience of addressing broadband deficits in regions across Europe and the globe.

For further information on the SABER project, please contact Fiona McCormack, tel: 067-37352 or e-mail: fmccormack@mwra.ie