[HR] Strategy for the Development of Broadband Internet

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The government of the Republic of Croatia has adopted a strategy for the development of broadband Internet in Croatia up to the year 2008. The goal of this strategy is to achieve a better functioning of entities in the educational, health service, economic and public administration sectors on national and local level through broadband infrastructure. The strategic commitment of the Croatian government, to the field of market definitions and analyses, and also to the regulation of the market, shall be in compliance with the *acquis communautaire* at the latest by the end of the year 2008.

At the beginning of 2005, Croatia was lagging behind the average in the European Union in terms of broadband penetration by around nine percentage points. By the end of 2005 the leading Croatian operator, Croatian telecommunications JSC, had a basis of around 100,000 users, within which the penetration of broadband access reached an average level of around two point five per cent. By the end of the year 2008 Croatia must reach a penetration of broadband access of at least 12 per cent. This implies that at the end of the period it must have at least 500,000 broadband ports.

This strategy prescribes that the supply of offers should be stimulated to achieve free competition in the market for broadband services, and that tax incentives and other measures will apply only in cases where the market mechanisms are insufficient to balance the development of services in an appropriate manner. The latter might be the case where no sufficient commercial interest for investments in the broadband Internet access infrastructure is available.

According to the strategy, the Government of the Republic of Croatia will, via a central office for e-Croatia within the Ministry of the Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development and other state bodies, efficiently conduct:

- Programmes and projects for the promotion of Internet use in general and broadband Internet access to the public administration, as well as citizens communication with public administration bodies;

- A strengthening of public trust in the safety of personal data and business transactions used and conducted through Internet;

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- A stimulation of electronic business activities;

- An improvement of applications and standards of services, which the administration is obliged to offer to the public;

- Monitoring of the development of those policies mentioned above in an international context and active participation in that development.

In the case of the content transferred through Internet it is important to consider:

- The question of regulation of content. Considering the global character of the Internet, competent state authorities, the government or other state bodies, will have to follow and to participate in the international development of legislation and policy regarding Internet contents; in particular, forbidden content, such as the propagation of hate, the promotion of violence, pornography, content harmful for children and others, and that which might cause conflicts because of cultural diversity;

- The question of fraud prevention. The public trust in the safety of Internet use must be strengthened and taken as one of the main goals of the strategy.

In addition, the government also accepted the action plan on implementing the strategy of broadband Internet development in the Republic of Croatia for the year 2007. This action plan contains a number of linked activities and individual measures which will be implemented by the Croatian government and other state bodies by the end of the year 2007:

- The ensurance of conditions for the development of the free market competition and infrastructure competition;

- Stimulation of the adoption of new broadband technologies (development);

- Stimulation of the development of electronic business activities;

- Reduction of the digital divide and establishment of conditions for equal participation of the whole population in the information society;

- Contribution to the protection of personal communication and data safety and the strengthening of user trust;

- Balanced approach in stimulating broadband Internet access throughout the Croatian regions;

- Participation in, and active contribution to, international processes important for the development of broadband Internet access,

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- Constant monitoring and evaluation of the fulfilment of the strategy goals as well as the measures of the action plan.

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http://www.vlada.hr/

Strategy of broadband internet development in Republic of Croatia by the end of the year 2008

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http://www.e-hrvatska.hr/

Operating plan on the implementation of the e-Croatia Program 2007

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