



BROADBAND, a digital bridge to overcome the isolation of rural areas

Better access to high speed internet, thanks to the spread of broadband, is a prerequisite to overcoming the isolation of rural areas of our country and enabling development and innovation.

In these areas, covering 92% of the territory and affecting half the population, only 17% of the population relies on a connection that is constant and of good quality, against the 89% of urban areas.

A digital bridge, in addition to creating the conditions for social inclusion, may have an important economic impact on the agri-food sector, making it possible for typical products to find new market outlets

To encourage broadband deployment, the European Plan for economic recovery has allotted a financial supplement to its rural areas: Italy was awarded 93 million euros to which a further 55 million in cofinancing has been added for a total of 148 million euros. The areas that are eligible for optical infrastructures number about 2,100 in the digital divide located in rural municipalities classified by the NDP as C (intermediate rural areas) and D (rural areas with complex problems of development), in which broadband services do not exist or are not sufficiently widespread or have a connection capacity of inadequate quality.

For the more marginal areas, where not even the available public funding makes the cost of fibre optic connections feasible, there are provisions to enable the purchase of decoders and satellite dishes by individual users.

"AGRICULTURE BENEFITS EVERYONE"

The National Strategic Plan for rural development, drawn up by the Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies, aims at supporting competitiveness in the sector, enhancing the environment, improving the quality of life in the rural areas and increasing the farms' potential sources of revenue. With 17.6 billion euros until 2013, co-financed by the European Union.



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