

Francesco Chirichigno, President, Italian Executive Committee for Broadband, Italy

Mr Francesco Chirichigno is the President of the Italian Committee for Broadband which is an initiative of the Italian Ministry for Innovation and Technologies. Mr Chirichigno represented Hon. Maurizio Gasparri, Minister of Innovation and Technologies.

The theme of my speech is Broadband infrastructure development in Italy.

This morning we spoke of the ICT world with some concerns.

Essential and unavoidable thematics have to be developed.

First of all, the world of ICT without research is not sustainable.

The investments in ICT have positive effects not only on the countries growths but also on the companies' productivity.

The concepts of our Committee are clear.

Our goal is not only to develop innovation but more important to develop a real research.

In fact, in Italy, concerning research, a great number of SMEs are not able to make enough investments. We have not found yet the magical recipe, however we are trying to gather small and medium enterprises and we aim at being a driving belt towards scientific research in order to facilitate the use of this research by companies.

Another essential point is quality

The government (by the way Minister Maurizio Gasparri who regrets not being able to join us this morning sends you his greeting and welcomes you to the forum) is currently creating quality standards in order to fund not only a pricing-driven competition but also a quality-driven competition.

The government is now presenting a project concerning quality.

This project has to indicate the guidelines which will enable enterprises and suppliers to initiate a real quality-based research.

Concerning the digital divide

What is done in Italy in order to try and diminish the digital divide which is both technological and cultural?

In order to cope with the existing digital divide, Italy is about to create 2 companies : one which could help setting up infrastructures and the other to enhance innovation towards services.

We do not intend either to go back to a public investment policy or to move towards an interventionist state.

Therefore it is necessary to provide backbone infrastructures to cities and companies suffering from the digital divide. This will be done in furtherance of already existing infrastructures.

This is not about making duplications of already existin,g infrastructures, this is about diminishing the digital divide as well as creating new opportunities. This project aims at creating a virtual wealth spiral, i.e. make investments where ther is none.

Thnak you very much for your attetion, if you wish to have more information you can visit our website :

http://www.innovazione.gov.it/eng/intervento/banda_larga/index_eng.shtml