

Telecommunications - Taiwan

NCC Completes Broadband Project in Remote Villages Ahead of Time

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At the end of December 2007 the National Communications Commission (NCC) announced its completion of the Broadband Access to Every Village project, which was designed to reduce the digital divide between urban and rural areas, following the NCC's amendment of the Regulations Governing the Telecommunications Universal Service in December 2006 to incorporate broadband internet access within the scope of the universal service.

Chunghwa Telecom and the Taiwan Fixed Network Corporation were the two major carriers appointed by the NCC on May 31 2007 to build up broadband networks in remote areas to offer internet access services with a speed of 2 megabytes per second (Mbps) to 43 villages in eight counties and three villages in the Alishan township in Chaiyi County respectively. Although the Kochapog village in Pingtung County extended its completion date to February 2008 owing to the destruction of a typhoon, construction in the remaining 45 remote villages was completed ahead of time on December 15 2007. Thus, Taiwan has become the first country to introduce broadband access to every village under the mechanism of the universal service fund. The speed of internet service in rural areas has increased 12 times in one year.

In the National Information and Communication Initiative Plan of the Executive Yuan announced on March 28 2007, the Taiwan government unveiled its ubiquitous network society policy, intended to bring about an integrated next-generation network environment with all-pervasive applications to serve the daily need of the public by 2011, with the following goals:

- high-speed (over 30 Mbps) convergence network to reach 80% nationwide;
- 50% of citizens to enjoy innovative information technology e-services (ITeS) with a satisfaction rate of over 80%;
- 55% of citizens to use e-government services with a satisfaction rate of over 60%;
- 30 billion seamless new internet connections; and
- ITeS industry value of NT\$1 trillion (approximately €25 billion).

The status of these goals is illustrated in the following table.

2011 Target	2006 Status
High-speed (over 30 Mbps) convergence network to reach 80%	Broadband (10 Mbps) coverage is 99.1% ⁽¹⁾
	Fibre-to-the building is 28.25% ⁽²⁾
50% citizens to enjoy ITeS services with satisfaction rate over 80%	Satisfaction rate for quality of life is 48.1% ⁽³⁾
55% citizens to use the e-government service with satisfaction rate over 60%	36.79% of citizens use e-government services with 44.37% satisfaction rate ⁽⁴⁾
3 billion Internet connections	600 million radio-frequency identification tags in 2005 ⁽⁵⁾
ITeS industry value reaches NT\$1 trillion	US\$670 billion estimated for global emerging industry by 2009 ⁽⁶⁾

The World Economic Forum Network Readiness Index (2005-2006) ranked Taiwan seventh in the world. The ubiquitous network society policy is to be implemented between 2007 and 2011 and looks forward to high user satisfaction in its annual review.

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Endnotes

- (1) NCC 2006 statistics.
- (2) NCC 2006 statistics.
- (3) Quality of life survey, III (2006/12).
- (4) Research, Development and Evaluation Commission survey (2006/5).
- (5) IDTechEx Survey (2005/12).
- (6) 2015 Vision of Economic Development, Executive *Yuan*.

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