



Bringing Broadband to the Regions

State Investment in Regional
Broadband Infrastructure in Ireland



Ireland: An Overview



- ◆ Population: 4 million
- ◆ GDP per capita: €25,100
- ◆ Total Area: 70,280 sq km

Ireland's Communications Market

- ◆ The Irish telecommunications market is a fully liberalised market regulated by an independent regulator; the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg)
- ◆ The dominant market player is the incumbent, Eircom, which was privatised in 1999, and has 63% of the broadband market
- ◆ DSL is the major broadband technology used totalling 72% of the market
- ◆ The broadband penetration rate (% of population) is 1%, the second last in the EU 15

Source: EU Commission

Government Objective

“That Ireland be in the top 10% of OECD countries for broadband connectivity within 5 years.”

New Connections 2002

Government Policy

- ◆ The provision of broadband is a matter for private sector companies in a liberalised market
- ◆ The Irish Government has recognised that the market failed to respond to the demand
- ◆ The state have undertaken a number of initiatives to stimulate competition in the market

Government Policy

- ◆ The state is providing targeted infrastructure investment
 - Framework international connectivity deal with Global Crossing
 - Grant aiding the development of additional high-speed backbone infrastructure
 - Provision of state owned infrastructure operating on an open access, carrier neutral basis
 - Development of community based infrastructure

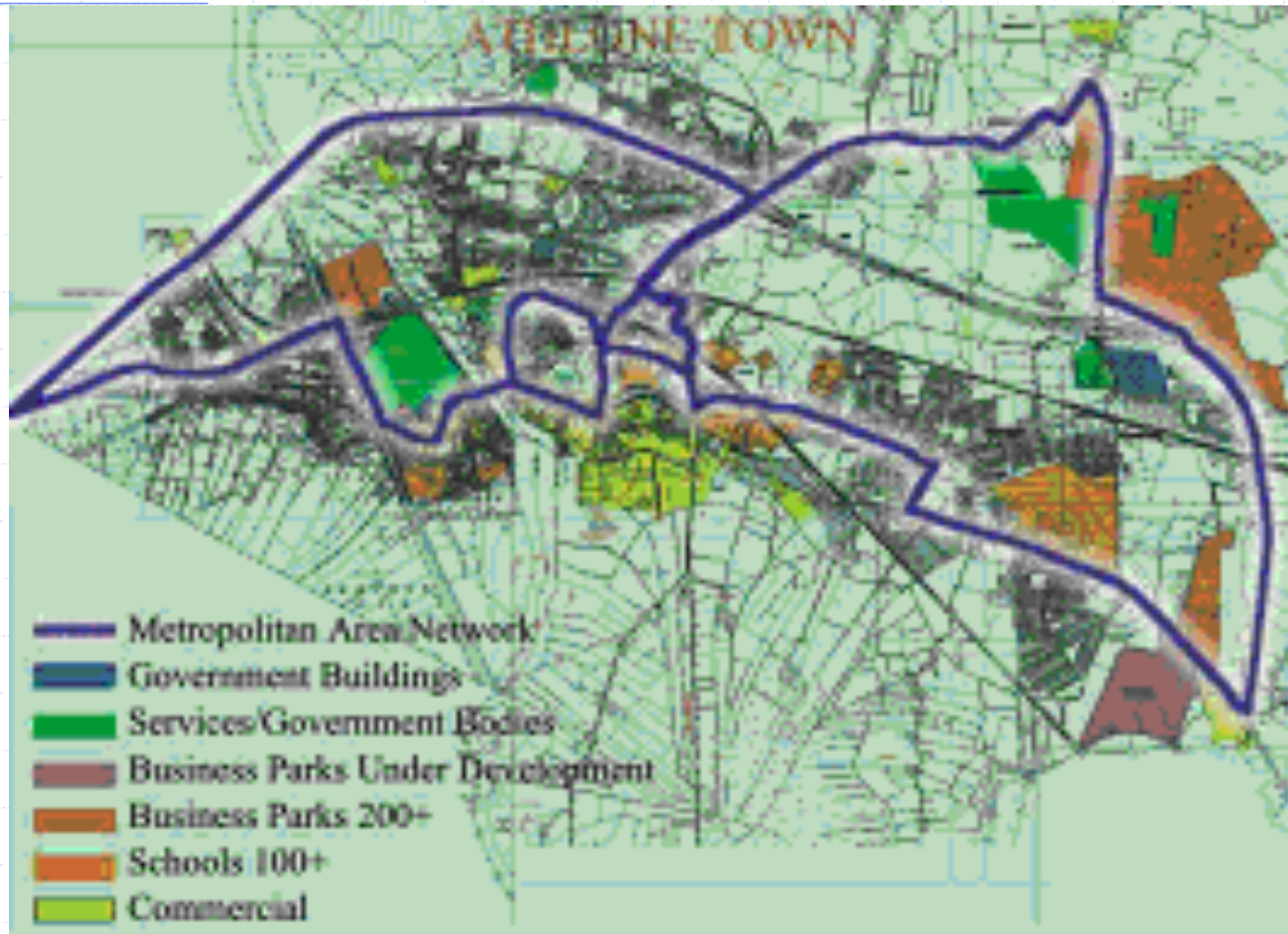
Regional Broadband Programme

- ◆ Targeted government investment to make Broadband available throughout Ireland.
- ◆ Approx. €200m funding under the National Development Plan (NDP) and part funded by the EU through the ERDF
- ◆ €23m invested in private sector projects
- ◆ €65m investment in 19 Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN)
- ◆ Further €105m for the Broadband Action Plan and Group Broadband Scheme over next 4 years

Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN)

- ◆ Fibre optic ring(s) encircling town
- ◆ Connects business and public sector
 - Hospitals, Schools, State building etc.
- ◆ Provides high-speed internet connectivity to customer premises
- ◆ Linked to national/international backbone

MAN - Athlone



MAN - Fibre



- ◆ Four duct layout (110mm) with 4 sub-ducts per duct
 - Spare capacity for future take-up
- ◆ 48 pair optic fibre in one sub-duct initially
 - Very high capacity
- ◆ High Durability

Why build MANs?

- ◆ Lack of private sector investment
- ◆ State can afford to take 20 year view
 - Reduce barriers to entry
- ◆ Promote competition and reduce prices

Metropolitan Area Networks

- ◆ Fibre optic rings linking businesses, schools and public offices to the national backbone, enabling high speed connectivity 19 towns throughout the state
 - €65m funding from state and ERDF
- ◆ 19 projects to be completed by end June 2004 with the remaining six to commence by end 2004
 - All projects are expected to be completed on time and under budget
- ◆ The networks will be managed by a neutral management services entity which is currently being procured from the private sector

Metropolitan Area Networks

- ◆ The Metropolitan Area Network programme will shortly be extended to cover all towns in Ireland with a population over 1,500 that are not adequately served by broadband infrastructure.
 - Currently there are approx. 90 such towns in the state
- ◆ The programme will consist of 3 annual phases with a third of the towns to be built in each phase and has an €80 million fund for the 3 years.

Group Broadband Scheme

- ◆ Infrastructure built by a partnership between teleco's and local community groups
- ◆ Technology neutral, i.e wireless, DSL etc.
- ◆ 20% -55% grant-aid depending on area and company status (EU state aid rules)
- ◆ € 25 million fund for 3 year programme with monthly rolling call
- ◆ Programme will target communities with population \leq 1,500

Schools Broadband Programme

- ◆ Joint Industry / Government initiative to provide high speed broadband to all primary and post-primary schools in the state.
 - ◆ 512kb minimum speed rising to cater for the needs of larger schools.
 - ◆ €18 million fund available
 - ◆ €15 million from telco industry
 - ◆ €3 million from Government

Broadband Website

- ◆ Government run website to show availability of all broadband platforms throughout the state
- ◆ Provides information by area and price comparisons
- ◆ Utility available for customers to register their demand for broadband
 - Telcos provided with aggregate numbers by region



Thank You

Any questions?