

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003956/25
to the Commission
Anna Maria Csisint (PFE)
(8 October 2025)**

Subject: Marginalisation of mountain and rural areas in terms of communication and network connection services

The 2010-2020 digital agenda for Europe, subsequently merged into Regulation (EU) 2021/694, pursued ambitious objectives to improve Internet connectivity and aimed to deploy increasingly cutting-edge technologies, encouraging development in the networks.

Nevertheless, there remain whole sections of EU territory — especially in Alpine and rural areas — where even the most basic sources of communication, along with those linked to the Internet, are unavailable for weeks at a time.

These prolonged blackouts mainly affect areas predominantly populated by older people, with little investment in the network and irregular maintenance. Whole villages have been left for weeks without even telephone and television service.

In light of the above, can the Commission say how it intends to tackle both the digital divide and the communication services gap in remote areas of the EU?

Submitted: 8.10.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(3 December 2025)**

Reliable, fast and secure connectivity for everybody in the EU, including in rural and remote areas, is a Commission priority. The Digital Decade policy programme 2030 ⁽¹⁾ sets up digital targets, including 100% coverage with 5G and very high-capacity networks (VHCN), as well as the framework aiming to ensure that these targets are met. It includes a monitoring process and a cooperation mechanism involving the Member States who, having developed national strategic roadmaps, are fully committed to these targets.

As regards progress achieved ⁽²⁾, in 2024 79.6% of EU households in rural areas were reached by basic 5G coverage, while 61.9% of these households were reached by very high-capacity networks.

At least EUR 17.2 billion of EU funding is dedicated to supporting connectivity in the current Multiannual Financial Framework ⁽³⁾. Besides the structural funds and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Digital also supports connectivity of remote islands and outermost regions, as well as the deployment and take up of 5G by local communities.

The WiFi4EU initiative ⁽⁴⁾ has also helped bridge the digital divide by bringing free connectivity in some 7 200 local municipalities across Europe, the vast majority of which are in rural areas and remote locations.

Furthermore, the upcoming Digital Networks Act will aim to incentivise investments in digital infrastructure and thereby improve access to secure, fast and reliable connectivity across the EU.

⁽¹⁾ Decision (EU) 2022/2481 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 establishing the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030.

⁽²⁾ Digital Decade in 2025: Progress and outlook | Shaping Europe's digital future <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/digital-decade-2025-progress-and-outlook>.

⁽³⁾ Commission Staff Working Document Digital Decade in 2025: progress and outlook Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions State of the Digital Decade 2025: Keep building the EU's sovereignty and digital future <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/498ec314-4aa4-11f0-85ba-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/wifi4eu>.