



eir announces partnership with InfraVia to accelerate fibre broadband roll-out

New joint venture will allow roll-out of ultrafast fibre to accelerate by 25% to 250,000 homes per year from next year

- InfraVia Capital Partners will take a 49% stake in a new subsidiary of eir, Fibre Networks Ireland Limited.
- Fibre Networks Ireland will provide passive broadband services exclusively to open eir, with eir continuing to provide maintenance and services for the network.

eir, Ireland's leading telecommunications provider, has agreed a deal with InfraVia Capital Partners to establish a joint venture partnership for its wholesale fibre broadband network that will help to accelerate the roll-out of high-speed internet across Ireland.

Investment provided by this joint venture will allow eir to increase the pace of expansion of its fibre-to-the-home broadband network, and it is estimated that 200,000 homes will be passed in 2022, increasing to 250,000 homes in 2023. This acceleration of the network roll-out will enable access to ultrafast fibre broadband for around 50,000 more than initially anticipated premises per year.

Fibre-to-the-home broadband use in Ireland has grown rapidly in recent years and eir now aims to pass 1.9 million premises by the end of 2026, providing Ireland – in combination with the National Broadband Plan – with over 90% coverage of all premises at the conclusion of both projects.

The deal will see a new subsidiary of eir formed, named Fibre Networks Ireland Limited, which will allow InfraVia to take a 49% share in eir's fibre network. Fibre Networks Ireland will provide passive broadband access exclusively to eir's wholesale arm, open eir, which in turn will continue to supply wholesale broadband, voice, and other services to its customers including eir and other major telecoms companies.

eir's partner in the joint venture, InfraVia, is a leading independent private equity firm specialising in infrastructure and technology investments. The involvement of investment partners in the development of wholesale telecommunications networks has become increasingly common in Europe, and InfraVia boasts extensive sectoral experience, having recently formed a joint venture with Liberty Global to roll-out fibre-to-the-home networks in Germany. The company has also provided investment to French wholesale and open-access telecom operator ADTiM, and has partnered with Iliad in France to establish IFT, a vehicle that provides investment in fibre-to-the-home coverage in medium and low density areas. This expertise will contribute significantly to the enhanced roll-out of eir's high-speed internet network in Ireland.

Through Fibre Networks Ireland, eir, together with InfraVia, will continue to provide fibre roll-out, maintenance, delivery, and other services for the eir network.

Today's announcement is a further example of the company benefiting from specialist telecoms investment, with eir's shareholders owning stakes in a range of European telecommunications firms.

Stephen Tighe, eir CFO, commented:

"The establishment of Fibre Networks Ireland provides a vehicle for further investment in our already extensive network. eir's mission has always been to connect people through great quality services. Through this exciting partnership with InfraVia we can improve our ability to connect customers faster than ever before and ensure that more homes in Ireland can access the high-speed internet that has become an increasingly important part of how we live our lives."

Bruno Candès, Partner at InfraVia Capital Partners, commented:

“We are very pleased to partner with eir and its shareholders in building out a high quality, national FTTH network that will provide next generation connectivity across Ireland. Fibre internet access is a critical service that enables an inclusive digital transformation, and we are proud to support this transition in the Republic of Ireland. This investment builds on our existing track record in Ireland and our deep communications infrastructure experience across Europe. We look forward to working with eir in this partnership in the years ahead.”

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eir is the largest provider of fixed line telecommunications services in Ireland, offering broadband, voice, TV, and data services to residential, small business, enterprise and government segments. eir is the third largest mobile operator in Ireland in terms of revenue and customers. The company operates the eir mobile and GoMo services.

eir’s wholesale division, open eir, is the largest wholesale telecommunications operator in Ireland, providing products and services to national and international wholesale customers across a range of regulated and unregulated markets. The Group generated total revenue of €1.225 billion and adjusted EBITDA of €624 million for the twelve months to 30 June 2021.

About InfraVia

InfraVia is a leading independent private equity firm specialized in infrastructure and technology investments. InfraVia supports entrepreneurs and industrial players in their growth and digital strategy, accelerating their transformation into sizable platforms. Since 2008, InfraVia has raised more than €10 billion of capital and invested in 40+ companies across 13 European countries. www.infraviacapital.com.