

Fast broadband for all by 2020 pledged by David Cameron

The PM is to introduce a "universal service obligation" for broadband, giving the public a legal right to request an "affordable" connection.

It would put broadband on a similar footing to other basic services such as water and electricity. Labour said it meant "another five years on the broadband back-burner" for those struggling with their service.

In 2010, the coalition government promised the UK would have the best superfast broadband in Europe by 2015. Then, in 2012, a pledge was made by then-Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt that the UK would have "the fastest broadband of any major European country" by 2015.[...]

'Fundamental right'

Mr Cameron's latest announcement is aimed at ensuring consumers have access to a broadband connection with a speed of at least 10Mbps, no matter where in the country they live or work.

"Access to the internet shouldn't be a luxury, it should be a right - absolutely fundamental to life in 21st Century Britain," he said.

Mr Cameron, who is expected to set out further details next week, added: "Just as our forebears effectively brought gas, electricity and water to all, we're going to bring fast broadband to every home and business that wants it. We're getting Britain - all of Britain - online, and on the way to becoming the most prosperous economy in the whole of Europe."

Officials said that more than 83% of homes and businesses in Britain currently have access to a superfast broadband connection - 24Mbps - with that number set to rise to 95% by 2017.[...]

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk> (08/11/2015)

253 Words