

Press Release

European Commission's Powerline Project started

Brussels, February 2004 - The EU-sponsored Powerline project „OPERA – Open PLC European Research Alliance“, which is part of the larger broadband project „Broadband for All“, started work on January 1, 2004. With OPERA the European Commission is emphasising the importance of Powerline for the European broadband market. OPERA is being sponsored within the framework of the initiative „eEurope“ and its appendant project „Information Society Technologies (IST)“. The project stretches over two project phases, each lasting two years. Total budget for the project's first phase is 20 million euros. An international consortium of utilities, technology companies, research institutions and consultants will develop a uniform European Powerline standard. The European Commission's long-term goal is to further develop the broadband market in Europe and to establish Powerline as an additional pillar beside DSL and cable access.

The European Commission has set itself the goal of promoting more intensely broadband Internet access in Europe. Powerline technology is recognised as an important platform here. To ensure that the expansion and implementation of Powerline networks continues to be pursued rigorously in Europe, the „OPERA“ Project commenced work on January 1, 2004. This project is expected to last four years. The project's first phase has already been planned in detail, and has been allocated a total budget of 20 million euros. The European Commission will contribute 9 million to the total budget. Within the scope of the overall project, 36 companies and research institutions are working together in an international consortium.

One of the goals of the EU-project is to intensify competition in the access network field. It is especially important that, through Powerline, structurally weak and rural areas will also enjoy broadband Internet access coverage. Particularly these areas have, in the past, been deliberately neglected during coverage with conventional technologies. As, apart from the Internet application, Powerline offers a range of other possibilities, such as telephony or applications in core business, new applications based on Powerline should increase the quality of life for European citizens in the future. The European Commission's long-term goal is to further develop the broadband market in Europe and to encourage the development of complementary and competitive infrastructures, like Powerline, as additional pillars beside DSL and cable access.

The members in the OPERA Project are:

- Advanced Digital Design S. A., Spain
- Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- Ascom Systec AG, Switzerland
- Auna Telecomunicaciones S.A., Spain
- Dieneso de Sistemas en Silicios S. A. (DS2), Spain
- Dimat S. A., Spain
- Eichhoff GmbH, Germany
- Electricité de France, France
- Elsys Design SA, France
- Endesa Ingeniería de Telecomunicaciones, S. L., Spain
- Endesa Net Factory, Spain
- Enel.It S.P.A, Italy
- Eutelis Consult Italia & Associates SRL, Italy
- Fundación Robotiker, Spain
- Iberdrola Ingeniería y Consultoría, Spain
- Iberdrola, S. A., Spain
- INESC Inovacao-Instituto de Novas Tecnologias, Portugal
- Itran Communications Ltd., Israel
- Linz Strom GmbH, Austria
- Main.net Communications Ltd., Israel
- Mitsubishi Electric Information Technology Centre Europe B. V., France
- MVV Energie AG, Germany
- ONItelecom, SA, Portugal
- PLCforum Association, Belgium
- Power PLUS Communications AG, Germany
- S Electric Powerline Communications AB, Sweden
- Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL), Switzerland
- Technische Universität Dresden, Germany
- Telvent Energía y Medio Ambiente, Spain
- The Open University, Great Britain
- Unión Fenosa, S. A., Spain
- University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- University of Karlsruhe, Germany
- University of Politécnica de Madrid, Spain
- University of Pontificia Comillas, Spain