

Question for written answer E-002834/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: WiFi4EU and internet access in small municipalities and villages

The WiFi4EU scheme aims to promote free internet access in public spaces throughout the EU, and has a budget of EUR 120 million for the 2017-2019 period.

On 15 May 2018 the Commission began accepting applications from local authorities for WiFi4EU vouchers worth EUR 15 000 each, awarding them on a 'first come, first served' basis, and promising to distribute them fairly across Member States.

However, the online portal where municipalities can apply for vouchers has been experiencing serious technical problems as a result of high demand.

In addition, many small municipalities and villages appear not to have known anything about the WiFi4EU scheme. This is in spite of the fact that in September 2016 Jean-Claude Juncker said that he wanted 'to equip every European town and village with free wireless internet access around the main centres of public life by 2020'.

How will the Commission ensure that the voucher application portal works properly in the future?

How will it ensure that information about the WiFi4EU scheme is shared in advance of future calls for applications, so that all local authorities can benefit from the same opportunities?