



# Press Release

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Page 1 of 2

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## **Bundesnetzagentur publishes findings of measurements campaign**

### **Homann: "Improving transparency for consumers"**

The Bundesnetzagentur has today published the findings of the study carried out last year to measure real broadband speeds. The study confirms differences between the "up to" speeds given in customers' contracts and the speeds actually provided, the cause of a large number of customer complaints. Often, none of the technologies, products and providers delivered the maximum promised speed, according to the users who took part.

"An extensive data basis, almost a quarter of a million measurements, underpins the study. This was due to the active participation of so many Internet users, to whom I express my sincere thanks", Jochen Homann, Bundesnetzagentur President, said, emphasising that such comprehensive data would not otherwise have been possible.

Under the new transparency requirements the Bundesnetzagentur had commissioned a study on the service quality of broadband Internet access. Part of the study was a nationwide measurements campaign in which Internet users could measure the speed of their broadband connection on the website [www.initiativenetzqualitaet.de](http://www.initiativenetzqualitaet.de).

Parallel to this, the Bundesnetzagentur took a close look at providers' standard contracts. It found that nearly every provider gave customers unspecific information about the speeds that were available. "Customers have only a vague idea of what to expect. Even after the contract has been signed and the connection provided, there is no great endeavour to give the customer a clear picture of what the connection can really deliver", Homann continued.

"These findings are a good starting point for a constructive dialogue with the providers so as to enhance transparency for the benefit of the consumer", Homann declared. I hope very much that providers will try to make clear what the product they are offering can – and can't – do. We want customers, in the long term, to be able to assess the quality of their Internet access better.



Bonn, 11 April 2013

Page 2 of 2

Besides transparency, efficient switching processes are vital for competition. Customers must be able to respond to offers in the market and to choose the provider and product that suits them best. Unfortunately, despite the new regulations, there are problems at present with switching. Since the amended Telecommunications Act came into force last year, the Bundesnetzagentur has received several thousand complaints which it has sought to resolve individually. It has instituted administrative fine proceedings against several providers on account of breaches of the rules.

"The legislative intent of the new arrangements is to protect customers from disruption when they switch provider. Since last December, the old provider must resume service if the switching process fails. Additionally, the interruption to service may not be more than one calendar day", Homann said. The sheer number of complaints shows that lengthy disruptions to telephone and Internet service may still occur. "Let me urge all providers once more to implement the legal requirements. As the administrative fines proceedings show, we will not tolerate this situation, a situation that is unacceptable for the consumer. An uncomplicated switching process is vital if competition is to work."

An assessment of the terms of the standard contracts and the findings of the study can be viewed on the Bundesnetzagentur's website. The findings are also published on the website at [www.initiative-netzqualitaet.de](http://www.initiative-netzqualitaet.de). Broadband speeds can still be measured there, as can particular aspects of net neutrality.