Foreword

Broadband Policies for Latin America and the Caribbean: A Digital Economy Toolkit is the result of a partnership between the OECD and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Its aim is to encourage the expansion of broadband networks and services in the region by assisting policy makers and regulators with the implementation of policies based on a coherent and whole-of-government approach. In order to do so, the publication puts forward good practices and case studies. It builds on the combined expertise of the OECD and IDB.

The OECD has extensive experience in policy analysis associated with broadband access and usage, as well as in developing recommendations aimed at fostering deployment, investment and competition. Many of the policy and regulatory issues faced in the LAC region are common to those in OECD countries, and sharing good practices can be a valuable resource. The wide variety of issues covered by expert groups within the OECD, whether on education, health, government or taxation, make it possible to compile an extensive set of good practices on both supply and demand-side issues with a proven record of success.

The IDB has been a major supporter of LAC countries as they design and implement digital and broadband strategies and has assisted its member countries in the challenge of developing this critical technological infrastructure. This ranges from supporting the design of national broadband plans to nurturing public-private partnerships, where necessary, to expand broadband coverage.

This Toolkit draws on a wealth of information collected by the OECD and IDB using an extensive questionnaire on policy and regulatory issues that was distributed to all 26 LAC countries in 2014 and 2015. It has benefited from an up-to-date and comprehensive perspective of the region, thanks to this stocktaking exercise, which has also helped to identify a variety of good practices drawn from LAC countries.

The OECD/IDB Broadband Policy Toolkit for LAC will complement existing toolkits and regulatory references by drawing on extensive accumulated experience on policy making and regulation across different countries with a range of contexts and challenges. This Toolkit covers supply and demand-side broadband policy issues and hopes to offer a holistic overview of the subject that can help policy makers and regulators prepare for the future. Good practices included in this Toolkit rely on the IDB’s experience in the LAC region and the OECD’s recommendations and evidence-based analysis of broadband policy issues, which are referenced throughout each chapter.
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