



- Press release -

New Ruhr-CIX Internet Exchange launched

German Ruhr Region cities Dortmund, Bochum and Gelsenkirchen jointly establish new ecosystem for the digital economy

Dortmund, Bochum and Gelsenkirchen, 8 September 2020 The new Internet Exchange Ruhr-CIX (Ruhr-Commercial Internet Exchange) powered by DE-CIX has been launched. The three Ruhr Region cities of Dortmund, Bochum and Gelsenkirchen are jointly establishing a new ecosystem for the digital economy across city boundaries. Ruhr-CIX is located in the data centers of DOKOM21, TMR and GELSEN-NET, which are connected via a high-speed fiber-optic ring. The technical operation of the Internet Exchange platform is ensured by DE-CIX, the operator of the world's leading Internet Exchange in the German metropolis Frankfurt am Main.

Ruhr-CIX is the first Internet Exchange in Germany to be realized through the merger of three regional network operators and one global Internet Exchange operator. The Ruhr-CIX project represents an innovation boost for the development of the digital economy. For other German regions, it serves as a blueprint.

First regional Internet Exchange in the Ruhr region

The regional telecommunication service providers DOKOM21 Gesellschaft für Telekommunikation mbH, GELSEN-NET Kommunikationsgesellschaft mbH and TMR - Telekommunikation Mittleres Ruhrgebiet GmbH seek to increase the importance of the Ruhr Region for the Internet in Germany, and establish the first regional Internet Exchange in the Ruhr Region together with the operator DE-CIX. The aims of the partners are to strengthen digital value creation, expand the infrastructure, and attract new Internet companies to the metropolitan Ruhr Region. "With Ruhr-CIX, a new ecosystem is to be created for the digital economy," says Ruhr-CIX founder Jörg Figura, Managing Director of DOKOM21 and spokesperson for Ruhr-CIX.

Expanding digital value creation and Internet infrastructures

“With this interconnection of fiber-optic networks and data centers across the entire Ruhr Region, and through the largest operators of fiber-optic networks and data centers within the region, we are promoting the technology itself, as well as the range and accessibility of the services of international technology and media groups in Germany’s largest conurbation. This will increase the digitalization and interconnection of the entire metropolitan Ruhr Region for companies and private individuals,” Figura emphasizes.

“Municipal supply services is a field of activity that is developing with tremendous dynamism. Not just since Corona, the digitalization of almost all areas of our society, the broadband rollout, and the question of how and how quickly we can succeed in providing households with fiber-optic connections throughout the country has been in the focus of attention,” says Guntram Pehlke, CEO of DSW21. “As a municipal company, these challenges will also affect us more in the future than the classic supply services in which we have great experience and routine. Ruhr-CIX is also a strong statement for the good cooperation and cohesion in our region, which is often wrongly assumed to be based on parochialism amongst the local authorities.”

Three Ruhr Region cities interconnecting their strong digital competencies

Every day, the Internet grows by a million new Internet users worldwide. In 2019, the proportion of users online in Germany was 89 percent. Among 30 to 59 year-olds, the proportion of Internet users was even higher, reaching 95 to 99 percent. The Ruhr Region is the largest metropolitan region in Germany, with 53 cities and more than five million inhabitants, as well as being the home base for 37 of the top 500 companies in Germany.

“The three Ruhr Region cities Dortmund, Bochum and Gelsenkirchen each have strong digital competencies and want to further develop the necessary digital infrastructure together with Ruhr-CIX,” explains Maik Luhmann, Head of the staff unit “Connected City” in Gelsenkirchen.

The City of Dortmund has been acclaimed as a digital hub in the field of logistics and, along with Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg and Munich, acts as a motor for digitalization in Germany. Since 2018, Gelsenkirchen has been a Digital Model Municipality within the framework of the project of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) "Digital Model Regions NRW", as the city has done considerable exploratory work in the field of digitalization. With its "Gigabit City" initiative, the City of Bochum is again creating the digital infrastructure of tomorrow, something that is indispensable for the large university location which includes, among other things, the Bochum Health Campus and innovative commercial locations such as MARK 51°7.

Metropolitan Ruhr Region attains essential digital significance

“With the Ruhr-CIX Internet Exchange, we are helping the densely populated metropolitan Ruhr Region to gain even more sovereignty and essential digital

significance in the digital age," says Sebastian Kopietz, City Director of the City of Bochum.

Thomas Westphal, Managing Director of the Dortmund Economic Development Agency, adds: "After the commissioning of the high-speed fiber-optic ring, the Ruhr backbone, Ruhr-CIX is another important component of the digitalization and network expansion in the region. Ruhr-CIX is, so to speak, the "Hellweg" – the German silk road – of the Internet and connects Dortmund directly with international hubs. With the Ruhr-CIX Internet Exchange, Dortmund is now part of the international data highways. This means that our data does not have to travel via the crowded country roads of the Internet to a distant hub to then be sent out into the world. You can now get into the fast lane directly in Dortmund. We hope that this will have a positive pull effect on the economy, similar to the way DE-CIX has developed in Frankfurt am Main."

For Wulf-Christian Ehrich, Deputy Managing Director of the Dortmund Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the newly-created Internet Exchange is a strong location factor for the digital future: "With Ruhr-CIX, we show once again how we are shaping digital transformation in our region. As a result, promising new opportunities for digital processes and business models are constantly opening up for all companies."

Ruhr-CIX improves Internet quality in the region

By distributing the data locally, the new Internet Exchange will further improve Internet quality in the region and contribute to economic growth. It will also promote the use of digital services for businesses and administrations, as well as digital work and leisure activities.

"Ruhr-CIX will increase the stability and flexibility of the regional infrastructure. Connected companies will enjoy a noticeable improvement in the Internet structure through the local distribution of data alone. Ruhr-CIX will thus contribute to their economic success. Through the direct connection to DE-CIX, they also become a part of a global digital ecosystem including important international players," Harald A. Summa, CEO of DE-CIX, explains. DE-CIX, the operator of the world's leading Internet Exchange in Frankfurt am Main, is the ideal partner for the professional set-up and operation of Ruhr-CIX.

Ruhr-CIX reduces the packet run-time between the connected Internet companies and leads to a more stable network for applications like cloud computing, VoIP connections, video, gaming and music streaming. Beyond this, Ruhr-CIX also has the objective of building an improved connection to the important Internet companies like Google, Akamai, Microsoft, Amazon, Netflix, and Facebook.

Partner DE-CIX – operating Internet Exchanges worldwide for 25 years

For 25 years, DE-CIX has been operating successful Internet Exchanges in metro regions such as New York, Madrid, Frankfurt, Istanbul, Dubai and Mumbai. DE-CIX is well-known for a very stable and reliable global network infrastructure. Ruhr-CIX will be realized with the same high availability and security requirements as every other of the more than 20 DE-CIX locations around the world. "Through a

cooperation with DE-CIX, our partners achieve optimal interconnection and improved marketing towards national and international content providers, cloud providers and Internet service providers, as well as towards companies that are active both nationally and internationally, and systems integrators that are based outside of the Ruhr region,” Summa reports.

Total capacity of 10 Tbit/s in the first expansion stage

The DWDM backbone infrastructure implemented by Kapsch BusinessCom GmbH, based on the XTM platform from Infinera, is based on a highly flexible ROADM technology. With this technology, highly available bandwidths ranging from 1 Gbit/s to 100 Gbit/s are transmitted via redundant routing. In the first stage of expansion, the Ruhr Region backbone will have a total capacity of almost 10 Tbit/s and is thus future-proof for the bandwidth growth in the region and at Ruhr-CIX. “We at Kapsch are proud to support our long-standing partners DOKOM21, TMR and GELSENNET in this strategic project in planning, implementation and operation,” says Ralf Arweiler, Managing Director of Kapsch BusinessCom.

BREKO: Trend-setting for Internet security in Germany

Dr. Stephan Albers, Managing Director of the leading German fiber-optic association BREKO sees the Ruhr-CIX project as a trend-setting development for Internet security in Germany: “In the future, we must no longer rely solely on handling data traffic via non-European clouds. Especially for the economy, we in Germany need secure and stable solutions. This is exactly what we ensure with Ruhr-CIX. On the one hand, the regional Internet Exchange will enable connections to international clouds worldwide. At the same time, it meets the highest security requirements via regional network structures and local data centers. The new trend in Internet connectivity is called glocalization: Globally networked, but locally secured. Of course, all this only works on the basis of high-performance fiber-optic networks. I am therefore particularly pleased that we have successfully implemented the first blueprint of a regional Internet Exchange in the Ruhr Region. We are now tackling further regional projects.”

www.ruhr-cix.net

About DE-CIX

DE-CIX is one of the world’s leading operators of Internet Exchanges, and this year is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Taken into operation in 1995, DE-CIX in Frankfurt, Germany, with a data throughput of more than 9 Terabits per second (Tbps) and over 1000 connected networks, is one of the largest Internet Exchanges in the world. In total, in its more than 20 locations in Europe, the Near East, Asia and North America, DE-CIX provides over 2000 network operators, Internet service providers (ISPs) and content providers from more than 100 countries with peering and interconnection services. The connected customer capacity of all DE-CIX locations worldwide exceeds 60 Terabits. More information is available at www.de-cix.net

www.de-cix.net

About DOKOM21:

DOKOM21 is a regional telecommunications service provider based in Dortmund. In addition to Dortmund, the DOKOM21 connection area includes the cities of Hagen, Herdecke, Holzwickede, Essen, Unna and Werl, as well as Halver, Iserlohn, Kierspe, Lüdenscheid, Meinerzhagen, Menden and Schalksmühle in the Märkischer Kreis. The services range from telephone connections, Internet access, Voice-over-IP solutions and fixed connections for location networking, through to cable TV and mobile communications. In addition, the offering includes online data backup and data center services, as well as multimedia services for the housing industry.

www.dokom21.de

About GELSEN-NET:

With the latest technologies, gigabit-strong optical fiber technology, and individual services, GELSEN-NET continues to expand its position as IT systems integrator and regional carrier. For more than 35 years, GELSEN-NET has been developing constantly and innovatively. This dynamism is coupled with profound knowledge of the industry and active responsibility for the region as a business location. High-speed Internet, telephony, location networking, smart city solutions and cloud services – GELSEN-NET provides complete solutions from a single source for all IT topics, tailor-made for the individual requirements of companies and private customers in Bottrop, Castrop-Rauxel, Gelsenkirchen, Gladbeck, Herten, Marl and Recklinghausen.

www.gelsen-net.de

About TMR:

TMR – Telekommunikation Mittleres Ruhrgebiet GmbH (TMR) is the reliable telecommunications service provider for business customers, carriers, institutions, cities and municipalities, with more than 24 years of practical experience. In addition to its own fiber-optic network and the digital development of industrial estates, TMR operates data centers in Bochum and Herne.

www.tmr.net

About Kapsch BusinessCom

Kapsch BusinessCom is a company within the Kapsch Group and, as a digitalization partner, supports companies in increasing business performance and developing new business models. Kapsch acts as a consultant, system supplier and service provider. The extensive portfolio in the German-speaking DACH region includes technology solutions for intelligent and secure ICT infrastructure, smart buildings, media, and security technology, and outsourcing services. Kapsch

BusinessCom has around 1,500 employees and serves over 17,000 customers locally and globally.

www.kapsch.net

About BREKO:

As the leading fiber-optic association, the Bundesverband Breitbandkommunikation e.V. (BREKO) represents the majority of German fixed-line network competitors. Its members are clearly committed to future-proof fiber-optics and are currently responsible for almost 70 percent of competitive expansion with direct fiber-optic connections (FTTB / FTTH). Since its foundation in 1999, BREKO has successfully advocated for competition in the German telecommunications market. The more than 350 BREKO companies, including over 200 network operators, supply both conurbations and rural areas with high-performance fiber-optic connections. To this end, they invested around 2.5 billion Euro in 2019, generating sales of 7.8 billion Euro.

www.brekoverband.de

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