

ABSTRACT**SERVICE DEPLOYMENT IN DATA NETWORKS**

Described is a method for deploying a service according to a service allocation policy in a data network comprising a plurality of network nodes (eg. 10). The allocation policy governs selection of nodes for deployment of the service. The method comprises defining a service deployment hierarchy having a lowest level comprising the network nodes (10) and one or more progressively higher levels in each of which groups of nodes in the preceding level are represented by respective logical nodes. The method also includes generating a service dissemination command specifying the service to be deployed. The service dissemination command is supplied, along with the allocation policy, from a logical node in an upper level of the hierarchy to nodes in the or each lower level of the hierarchy. The service specified in the service dissemination command is automatically installed in network nodes (10) selected in accordance with the allocation policy. Also described is a network system comprising a plurality of nodes. The system is arranged to perform the aforementioned service deployment method. A network node (10) for such a network system is also described.

Fig. 1