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## BELGIAN INSTITUTE FOR POSTAL SERVICES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

*PRESS RELEASE*

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### Belgium generally maintains an average price level compared to its neighbours

Brussels, 13 December 2016 - Today BIPT published a [benchmarking study of the residential prices of telecom products in Belgium and in our neighbouring countries](#) (the Netherlands, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom). Belgium generally maintains an average price level compared to its neighbours

BIPT publishes its annual benchmarking study of residential prices of telecom products in Belgium and in our neighbouring countries. In total 715 tariff plans from six countries have been analysed in August 2016 (Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom). The following evolutions and observations became apparent during this study.

After the price decreases in Belgium between 2012 and 2014 the prices of Belgian tariff plans for **mobile telephony (postpaid)** remained stable since 2015. Nevertheless Belgium slides back in the ranking as the price level in the neighbouring countries, apart from France, did decrease further. Belgium has an average score for all profiles. The difference compared to the neighbouring countries is often very small. For a profile including 300 minutes, unlimited texting and 1 GB of data, Belgium comes in second place. An average consumer pays € 21 for this. BIPT observes that the price differences between the different countries are becoming less and less distinct: the prices in the cheapest country (usually France) increased while the mobile prices in the most expensive country (Germany) dropped.

Belgium also holds its good position for **prepaid customers** (who still make up nearly 40% of the mobile callers in Belgium). Prepaid bundles including data have become cheaper compared to last year. Bundles without data but with a lot of call minutes on the other hand increased more strongly. As was the case during the previous years, the United Kingdom is often the cheapest country while France is usually the most expensive.

The price level for **mobile Internet (standalone)** decreased significantly during 2014 in all study countries. In the meantime the prices have stabilised again since 2015: the results for all user profiles remained almost unchanged compared to last year. We look at Belgium's position compared to its neighbouring countries and see that Belgium is still relatively expensive: for a tariff plan including at least 5 GB the customer in Belgium pays € 31 on average. As is the case for mobile telephony BIPT observes that the prices of the neighbouring countries are converging.

Belgium has good results for **broadband (standalone)** although there are only two countries to compare this with. For in Germany and the United Kingdom this service is only provided as a part of bundles.

The average price level for **triple play** (including fixed telephony, Internet and television) in Belgium has increased compared to last year, both for fast and ultrafast Internet. Generally speaking, triple play in Belgium remains rather expensive to expensive compared to the neighbouring countries. For a product with a speed between 30 and 100 Mbps for instance, the consumer in Belgium pays an average of € 65 (including the consumption charges for 25 'fixed telephony' calls) while France presents itself as the cheapest country once more.

Last year Belgium presented itself as a rather cheap country (speed of 30-100 Mbps) to an average country (speed of more than 100 Mbps) as regards **quadruple play** offers (including fixed telephony, Internet, television and mobile telephony). Even though the price level in Belgium is stable, it drops one place in the ranking compared to its neighbours for the 30-100 Mbps speed category. This can be put down to the presence of France in the benchmarking exercise for this product category however. For superfast Internet Belgium maintains an average price. However, the absolute price difference with the country preceding Belgium in the ranking is very small.

As regards **fixed telephony** as a standalone product, the country ranking remains relatively stable compared to last year. Belgium has become less competitive compared to last year for the "lightest" profile, for which our country comes in as second most expensive. Belgium is rather expensive for the profiles with a medium consumption and cheap for the profiles characterised by a more intense use. The price difference between the different countries is relatively small, especially as regards the heaviest profiles.

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