



**BELGIAN INSTITUTE FOR POSTAL SERVICES AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

PRESS RELEASE

Bilateral agreement between Belgian and Luxembourg telecoms regulators clears the way for calling, sending SMS messages and surfing between both countries without roaming costs.

Brussels, 30 April 2015 - The Belgian and Luxembourg telecoms regulators BIPT and ILR (Institut Luxembourgeois de Régulation) have concluded an agreement that makes it possible to link a Belgian mobile number to a Luxembourg network, while these are in principle nationally segmented. This way, a Luxembourg operator will soon commercialise mobile calling, texting and surfing in Belgium at the same rate on both sides of the border.

An agreement concluded between BIPT and the ILR makes it possible to link a Luxembourg IMSI¹ (unique number linked to any mobile phone and connecting the user to his operator's network) to a Belgian mobile number, while these are in principle nationally segmented. A Luxembourg operator will thus provide services directly to Belgian users based on its existing roaming agreements concluded in Luxembourg. Also, a Ministerial Order is adopted in order to make extraterritorial use of IMSIs possible according to the ITU prescriptions and based on reciprocity. This means that, conversely, Belgian operators also get the same rights in Luxembourg.

In this regard, it is remarkable that, via the operator, subscribers can call, send SMS messages and surf at the same rate on both sides of the border. BIPT and the ILR hope that this initiative of the Luxembourg operator can have positive effects on the Belgian and Luxembourg markets, i.e. a broadening of the market offer and lower prices.

The first operator to make use of the regulatory opportunity is the Luxembourg company JOIN Experience. JOIN Experience is a joint venture between JOIN Wireless and POST Luxembourg Group. The company holds a 4G licence in Luxembourg and in Belgium, JOIN has set up a cooperation to use the BASE network.

Paul Schuh, Director of the ILR states: *"The ILR (Institut Luxembourgeois de Régulation) wishes to emphasise the good cooperation between both regulators within the context of this agreement. Indeed, the agreement offers a certain flexibility to operators of both countries to get a better idea of consumer demand and to make them offers that meet their needs at prices that are certainly more interesting."*

¹ International Mobile Subscriber Identity: ensures the authentication of mobile users in networks other than their telecoms provider's network.

Jack Hamande, Chairman of the BIPT Council: *"Together with the ILR, we have made the commitment to stimulating innovation in the interest of residential and business customers. We are pleased to be able to support initiatives that enable new players to offer attractive and quality services in Belgium and abroad."*

"I hope that more operators and countries will follow soon because roaming costs can disappear in this innovative way, which benefits citizens and companies," says Alexander De Croo, Minister of Digital Agenda and Telecom.

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