



## BELGIAN INSTITUTE FOR POSTAL SERVICES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**B I P T**

*PRESS RELEASE*

### Update of the mobile coverage maps on the BIPT website

Brussels, 5 November 2015 - BIPT has collected new coverage data from the mobile telecom operators and has incorporated them into the "Atlas" on its website. These show that only 0.61% of the Belgian population does not have 4G coverage yet, from any operator. As for 3G almost all of the Belgian population is covered. The Atlas now also contains new functionalities helping the consumer to verify the coverage in a given municipality.

In July 2015 BIPT published an "Atlas" showing the coverage of the mobile telecom operators in Belgium on its website for the first time. The initiative meets **a strategic concern to create a qualitative digital environment and transparency for the consumer**. The Atlas provides support to the operators who wish to gain a comprehensive insight in the development of the networks in the telecom sector. It is also a means for other authorities and partners who wish to define the areas that are or are not covered ("white spots") in the context of the Digital Agenda. Furthermore the Atlas enabled the consumer to be informed about an important quality of the mobile service, namely the outdoor coverage of the 3 mobile network operators (BASE company, Mobistar and Proximus) separately or as a whole, for 2G, 3G or 4G.

BIPT points out that, in addition to the survey of the coverage by operators, it is also working on a measuring campaign mapping the operators' **user experience** (such as the possibility to successfully upload or download a file of a given size). For there is more to the quality of the mobile networks than just coverage.

As stated in July, the coverage maps shall be updated every three months. To that effect BIPT has collected **new data from the telecom operators** on 10 September and has, following verifications or "scanning" in the field, validated and assembled those data in a public and free "Atlas" that can be found on its website. The data validation methodology was developed by BIPT and the operators. The individual results' reliability for each of the mobile operators was found to differ in July 2015, which did not benefit the comparison of the maps. BIPT has now minimised the differences in reliability for the 3 mobile operators and has imposed a minimum reliability of 97% (instead of 95% in July). Belgium's map has been subdivided in pixels of 200 m by 200 m in the Atlas. A map is approved by BIPT when, following verification it is found that 97% of the pixels indicated by the operator as covered, are indeed covered.

From the new maps it can be deduced that the **telecoms operators continue to make major investment efforts to roll-out their mobile networks**. The new maps show indeed that only 0.61% of the Belgian population does not have 4G coverage yet, from any operator. As for 3G almost all of the Belgian population is covered. Only 0.004% is not.

To further optimise Atlas' user-friendliness a number of **new functionalities** have been added. For instance the coverage for a given specific municipality can be looked up and shown. Pop-ups can be activated to show the coverage percentage per municipality. The menu is extended with a functionality allowing to visualise the (non) coverage at pixel level for each operator,

regardless of how much the map was zoomed in on. At municipality level, the higher the coverage, the greener the colour representing the coverage.

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