



## **Orange Belgium increased its 4G coverage in the Walloon region to over 99% thanks to more than €13million of network investment**

Since reaching an agreement with the Walloon government in December 2016 over the region's pylon tax, Orange Belgium has invested more than €13million to improve mobile broadband access in the Walloon region and brought 4G mobile coverage to the population in 39 municipalities with inadequate fix and mobile service. Today Orange Belgium's 4G network reaches 98% of the population in these 'white zones' and indoor coverage has risen to up to 94%. An illustration of this positive trend: Orange Belgium installed an innovative technical solution in Vresse-sur-Semois to offer 4G to 96% of the inhabitants.

### **Mobile connectivity promise serving the Walloon citizens**

In 2016, the Walloon government and the three mobile telecommunication operators reached a three-year agreement to improve coverage in the territory, paving the way for an ambitious collaboration on the digital Wallonia of tomorrow. The Walloon Region engaged itself to discourage taxes levied by municipalities and provinces and it has implemented a legislative, regulatory and administrative framework designed to facilitate the deployment of this infrastructure. In return, mobile operators agreed to invest a total of €60 million over three years on top of the investment already planned for the region.

In line with the agreement, Orange Belgium has already invested €13million in the Walloon Region to boost mobile coverage in residential areas where it was inadequate, as well as in areas with a particular advantage or specific needs (areas of economic, industrial, commercial or touristic activity).

One of the priorities identified was the coverage increase in 39 municipalities<sup>1</sup> in the Walloon Region. Since then, Orange Belgium has brought 4G coverage to 98% of the population in those areas. Indoor coverage in particular has increased, reaching up to 94% in certain municipalities. In 2016 there were still 50.000 people without any 4G coverage in these municipalities, today they can enjoy 4G quality and speed of Orange. In total the 213.000 citizens of these 39 municipalities can stay connected anytime. Orange Belgium also significantly invested in its network in other municipalities over the past years.

Michaël Trabbia, CEO of Orange Belgium, explains: "At Orange Belgium we focus on what is essential for our customers and it all starts with an excellent voice and data connectivity everywhere that matters to them, at home, at the office, on the go... Therefore we are determined to give the region every chance of achieving its digital strategy while also allowing an open collaboration with the government in the interest of citizens, businesses

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<sup>1</sup> According to BIPT, the national telecommunications regulator, 39 municipalities were considered to be in the "white zone", all in the Walloon Region. According to BIPT, a municipality is called a "white zone" if the fixed coverage at 30 Mbps does not exceed 60% of its territory and that 100% of its territory does not have a 4G outdoor coverage. The 39 municipalities are: Amel, Aywaille, Bertrix, Bièvre, Braives, Büllingen, Burg-Reuland, Cerfontaine, Daverdisse, Doische, Erezee, Fauvilles, Frasnes-lez-Anvaing, Gedinne, Gesves, Gouvy, Hastière, Honnelles, Houffalize, Houyet, Jalhay, La Roche-en-Ardenne, Léglise, Manhay, Ohey, Onhaye, Philippeville, Rendeux, Rochefort, Sainte-Ode, Sankt-Vith, Somme-Leuze, Stoumont, Tenneville, Vaux-sur-Sure, Vielsalm, Vresse-sur-Semois, Waimes, Yvoir.

and competitiveness. Thanks to our recent additional investments, Orange now offers top 4G connectivity to 98% of the population in Wallonia, to fully enjoy their digital life thanks to our peace of mind mobile subscriptions with abundant mobile data.”

### Lead by example – unique solution in Vresse-sur-Semois

At the end of February 2018, Orange Belgium upgraded its existing network site in Vresse-sur-Semois with 4G technology and immediately launched full 4G coverage (and associated 4G capacity) in the villages of Membre and Bohan, both in the western valley of the Semois river in Vresse. An innovative microwave solution was used to cover the area’s unique landscape and reach its inhabitants. Orange installed two microwave dishes back-to-back on a newly constructed pylon in between Vresse-sur-Semois and Membre and Bohan. They allow the microwave link to hop across the hills without involving any active element: there is no power connection. This environmentally friendly approach makes the pylon 100% passive.

Thanks to this solution outdoor 4G coverage now stands at 96% (compared with 38% in 2016) and indoor coverage has risen to 57%, from only 15% in the Vresse sur Semois municipality. Orange remains the only operator providing 4G coverage in these two villages and continues to bring 4G speed and capacity to other municipalities.

### Unmatched customer experience on top quality network

Orange Belgium has been investing heavily in its mobile network for many years to guarantee a top-quality experience for its customers. Orange’s 4G network covers 99.7% of the Belgian population today ([coverage maps](#) issued by telecom regulator BIPT). The recent [BeCover+ results](#) of a well-known consumer organization recognize the top quality of Orange’s 4G network.

### About Orange Belgium

Orange Belgium is one of the leading telecommunication operators on the Belgian market, with over 3 million customers, and in Luxembourg through its subsidiary Orange Communications Luxembourg.

As a convergent actor, we provide mobile telecommunication services, internet and TV to private clients, as well as innovative mobile and fixed line services to businesses. Our high-performance mobile network supports 2G, 3G, 4G and 4G+ technology and is the subject of ongoing investments.

Orange Belgium is a subsidiary of the Orange Group, one of the leading European and African operators for mobile telephony and internet access, as well as one of the world leaders for telecommunication services to enterprises.

Orange Belgium is listed on the Brussels Stock Exchange (OBEL).

More information on: [corporate.orange.be](http://corporate.orange.be), [www.orange.be](http://www.orange.be) or follow us on Twitter : [@pressOrangeBe](https://twitter.com/pressOrangeBe).

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