

Malta

	Malta				EU
	DESI 2017 value	DESI 2018 value	DESI 2019 value	rank	DESI 2019 value
1a1 Fixed broadband coverage % households	100% 2016	100% 2017	100% 2018	1	97% 2018
1a2 Fixed broadband take-up % households	79% 2016	83% 2017	83% 2018	7	77% 2018
1b1 4G coverage % households (average of operators)	99% 2016	99% 2017	83%¹ 2018	26	94% 2018
1b2 Mobile broadband take-up Subscriptions per 100 people	65 2016	88 2017	97 2018	12	96 2018
1b3 5G readiness Assigned spectrum as a % of total harmonised 5G spectrum	NA	NA	0% 2018	13	14% 2018
1c1 Fast broadband (NGA) coverage % households	>99.5% 2016	>99.5% 2017	>99.5% 2018	1	83% 2018
1c2 Fast broadband take-up % households	47% 2016	53% 2017	69% 2018	2	41% 2018
1d1 Ultrafast broadband coverage % households	NA	>99.5% 2017	>99.5% 2018	1	60% 2018
1d2 Ultrafast broadband take-up % households	3% 2016	11% 2017	23% 2018	13	20% 2017
1e1 Broadband price index Score (0 to 100)	NA 2016	NA 2017	NA 2018		87 2017

1. Progress towards a gigabit society

Thanks to its good performance on fixed, fast and ultrafast broadband coverage, Malta ranks first in the 2019 DESI (Digital Economy and Society Index) connectivity indicator.

There are two nationwide fixed access network infrastructures in Malta that are based on a next-generation network (NGN) set-up: GO plc and Melita Ltd.

Total FTTP coverage increased steadily in Malta from mid-2015 to mid-2018, reaching 31.6 % in 2018, thus outperforming the EU average (29.6 %).

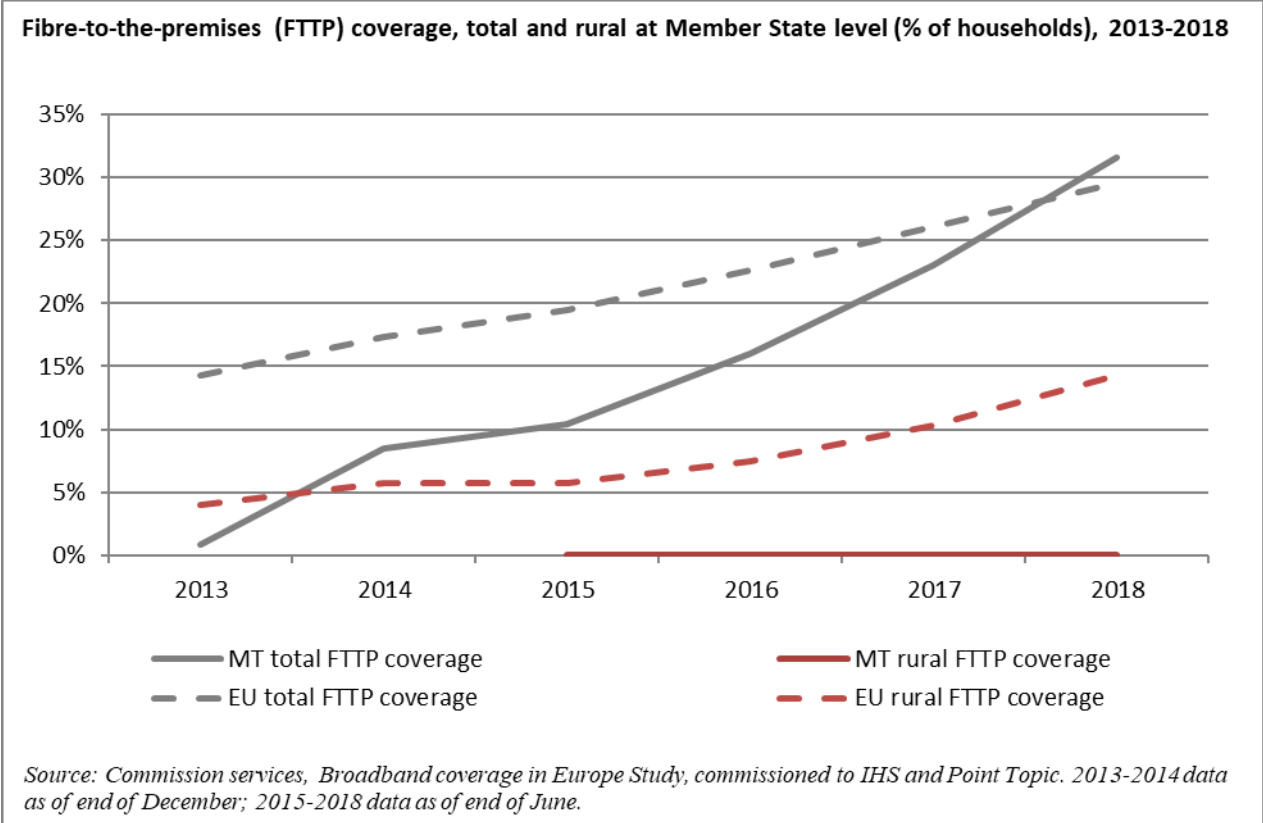
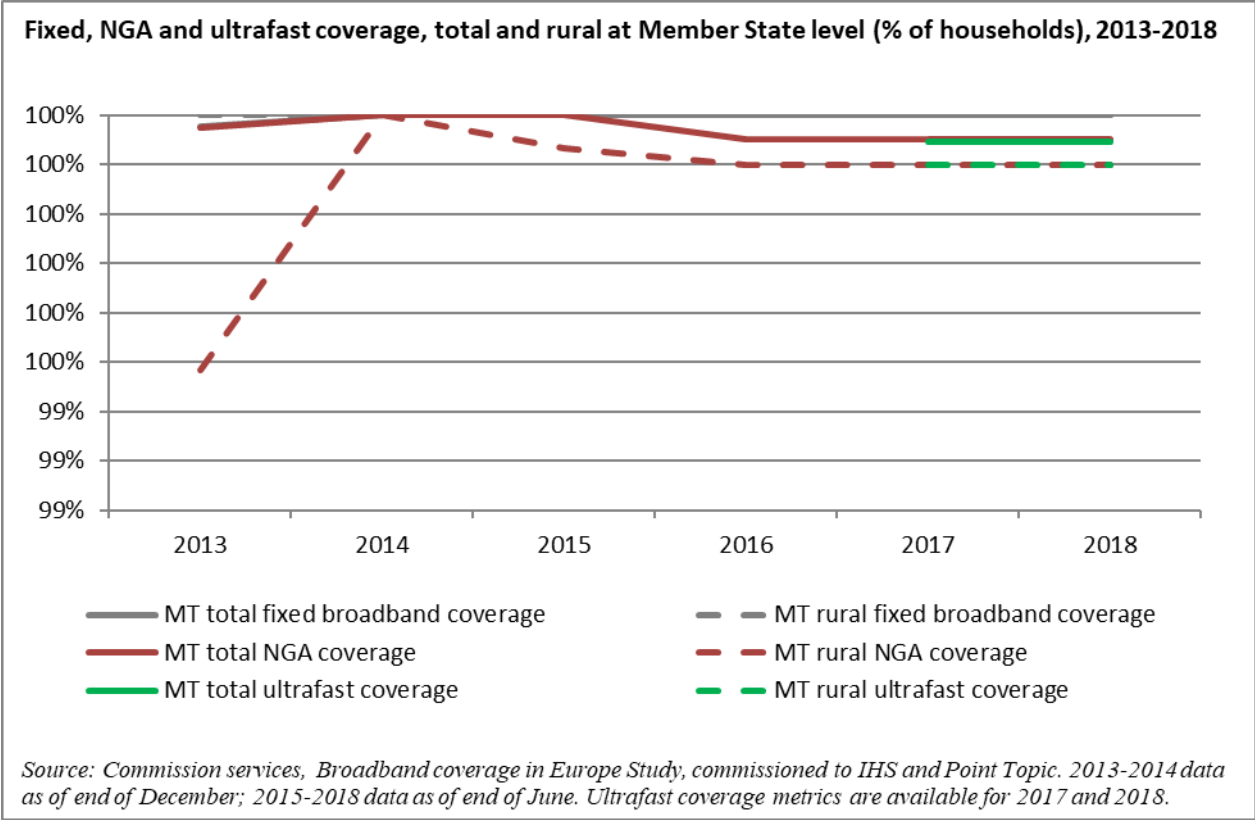
In terms of the deployment of next generation access networks, GO and Melita have nationwide coverage. As explained below, Melita has deployed DOCSIS 3.1 on a national scale. GO has a nationwide copper infrastructure in place alongside FTTC/FTTH.

During 2019, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) expects to launch a consultation on the new national broadband strategy. The strategy should pave the way for the future of fixed and mobile broadband in Malta, including the establishment of the 5G ‘path-to-deployment’. The strategy will also take into consideration the use of future 5G infrastructure to improve the performance of electronic communications services used for public safety and security.

The MCA is undertaking a number of demand-driven initiatives. The MCA ‘Free Wi-Fi’ project aims to make Malta one of the first wifi states in Europe. There are currently more than 420 free wifi hotspots around Malta and Gozo. In addition to the widespread use of the wifi hotspots network, the EU’s WiFi4EU initiative has been successful in Malta. 18 municipalities are to receive a voucher as beneficiaries of the first call for applications under the initiative. . The MCA is also promoting the

¹ 4G coverage measures the average coverage of those mobile operators providing 4G services. In Malta, a third operator started 4G services in 2018, which caused a downward change in average 4G coverage.

benefits of mobile technology connectivity through its programme named “GetSmarter I and II”, where courses are being organised for the general public.



As to international connectivity, the MCA initiated at national level a State aid process to establish an incentive programme that would support investment in submarine cables. These incentives aim at

improving the economic soundness of the submarine cable project and thus encourage private investment in this area, with minimal intervention from central government.

Following an announcement in November 2017, GO now has a direct connection to Marseille through the Tunisia Telecom Mediterranean submarine cable network, using one of its existing cables in Mazara, Sicily. In practice, this means repositioning the portion of GO's international traffic that used to pass through the Milan IXP, thus eliminating the total dependence on it.

Two operators, namely Melita and Vodafone Malta, reported that they are deploying a 5G-enabled network, prior to MCA having awarded them five licences in the 800MHz and 2600MHz bands. However, for the time being none of the three mobile network operators (MNOs) operating in the market has expressed particular interest in the deployment of 5G; non of the two operators has applied for frequencies for 5G during the reporting period. This might be linked to the fact that following the assignment of spectrum in the 800 MHz and 2.6 GHz bands, all three MNOs made significant investments in 4.5G rollout, which resulted in most the territory being now covered by 4.5G services.

With regard to 5G trials, during 2018, the MCA received an application from Huawei Technologies s.r.l. and granted a trial licence (MCA/L/18-3254). This trial licence enabled Huawei Technologies to carry out a demonstration of their 5G network equipment during a period of 5 days².

In June 2018, the MCA adopted a roadmap for the UHF band between 470-790 MHz. The roadmap lays out the key initiative and milestones concerning the availability of the 700 MHz band for the provision of wireless broadband (WBB) applications and other national specific applications such as public protection and disaster relief (PPDR), the internet of things (IoT) and wireless audio programme making and special events, and for the usage of the sub-700 MHz band. Malta subsequently reported that it expects permission for the use of the 700 MHz band for terrestrial systems capable of providing wireless broadband electronic communications services to be postponed by 1 year after 30 June 2020. The obstacles that would justify such a delay are: (i) cross-border coordination restrictions; and (ii) the complexity of the technical migration of the existing digital terrestrial television (DTT) platform to more advanced broadcasting standards³.

As to the other pioneer bands, the MCA is currently working to develop the relevant spectrum framework for the licensing of radio spectrum in the 3.6 GHz and 26 GHz bands. The MCA expects to publish a proposed framework for public consultation around Q3-2019. With regard to the 3.4-3.8 GHz band and the 24.25-27.5 GHz band, no difficulties are foreseen in making large blocks of radio spectrum available. In particular, the 26 GHz band is currently unused and therefore Malta has no migration or band clearance issues.

he transposition of the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) will be carried out through amendments to the Malta Communications Authority Act, the Electronic Communications Act and subsidiary legislation included under these laws. The technical analysis is ongoing in MCA. The 24 months available for the transposition process are expected to be fully used.

2. Market developments

Competitive environment

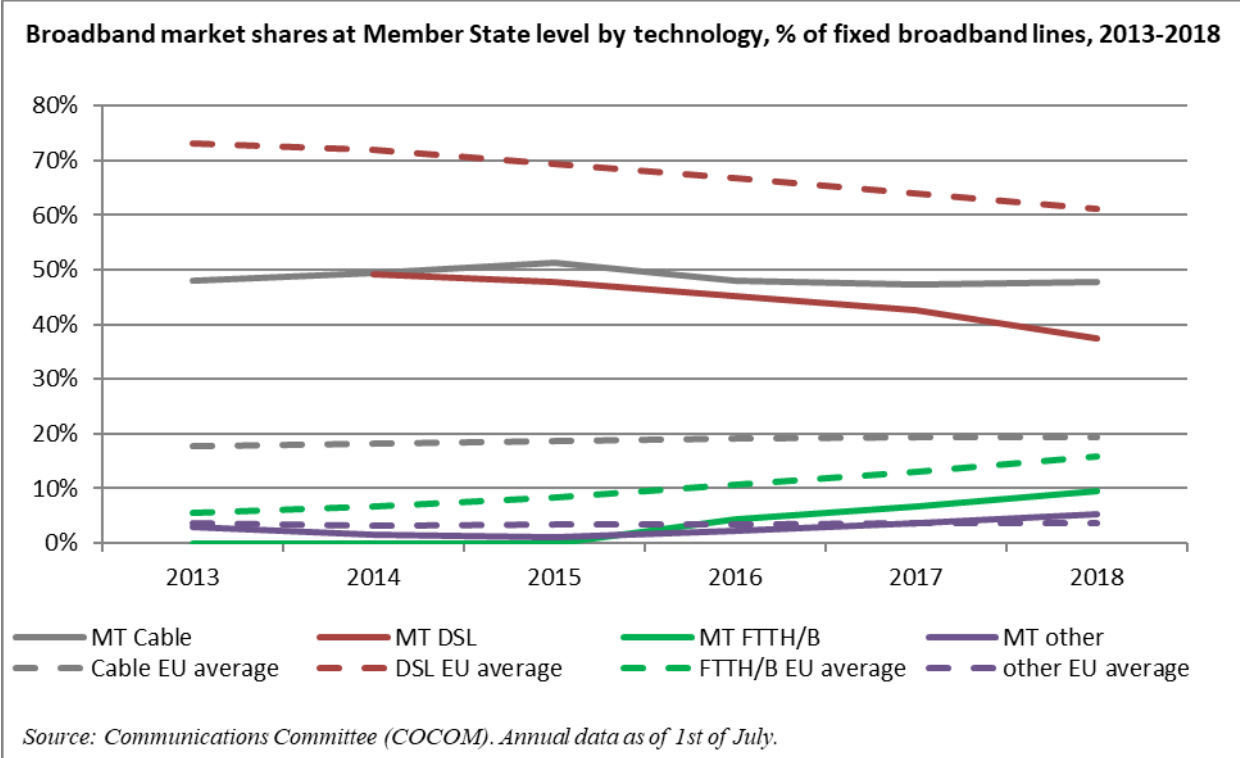
Triple-play subscriptions, specifically those including fixed telephony, fixed broadband and pay TV, are the most common in Malta. As at end of 2018, 72.23 % of total digital Pay TV subscriptions are purchased on a bundle offer. In 2018, Vodafone and Melita officially declared that they have abandoned their merger plans.

² See: [https://mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/List %20of %20T-T %20licences_R11_0.pdf](https://mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/List%20of%20T-T%20licences_R11_0.pdf)

³ As laid down in the Annex to Decision (EU) 2017/899

Melita and GO signed an agreement, with the intervention of the MCA, aimed at offering a single sport package, ending an ongoing competition to secure rights to top-tier football games.

2.1. Fixed markets

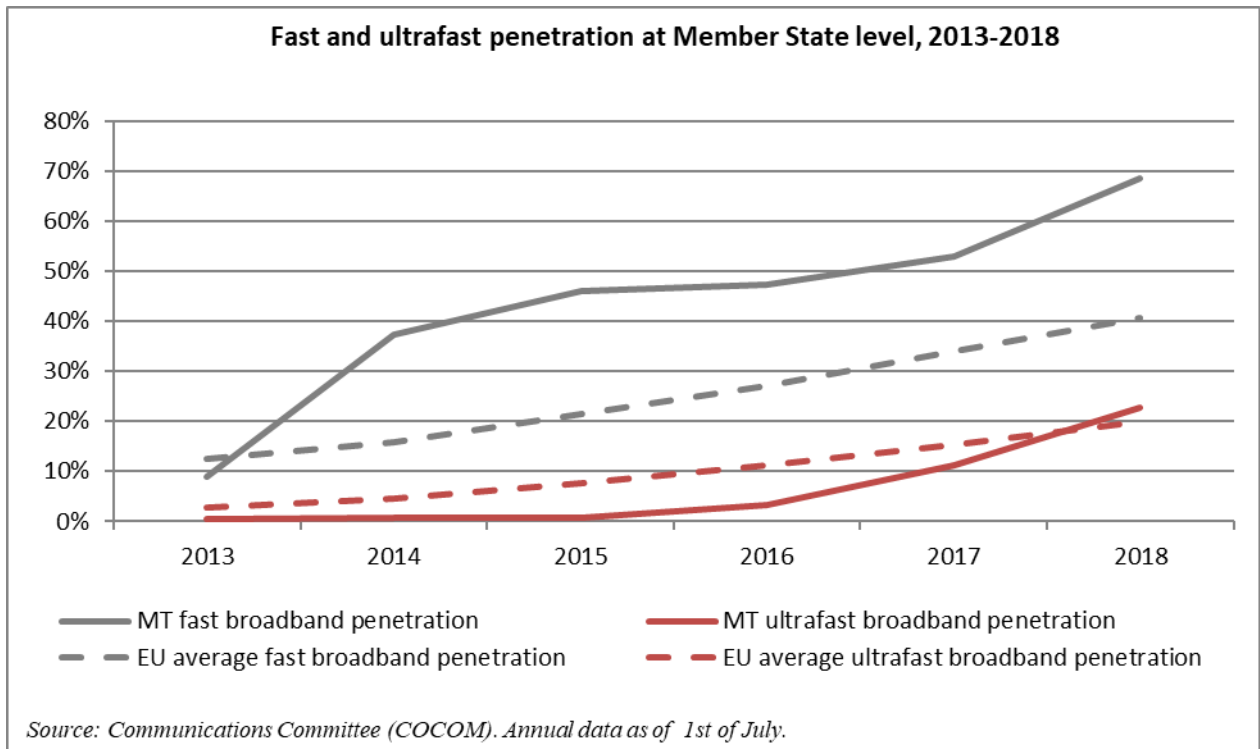


The share of cable on the Maltese market is 47.9 %, significantly higher than the EU average (19.4 %), while the share of DSL (37.5 %) is significantly lower than the EU average (61.1 %). The operator offering DSL is progressively shifting its customers onto fibre, and this explains the drop in DSL subscriptions in favour of fibre. The share of FTTH shows an increasing trend but is still below the EU average (9.4 % versus 15.9 %).

As to penetration, the graph above shows that the take-up of high (>30 Mbps) and very high (>100 Mbps) bandwidths in the fixed line segment has steadily increased in the last few years and in both cases outperforms the EU average (to a more limited extent in the case of ultrafast broadband penetration).

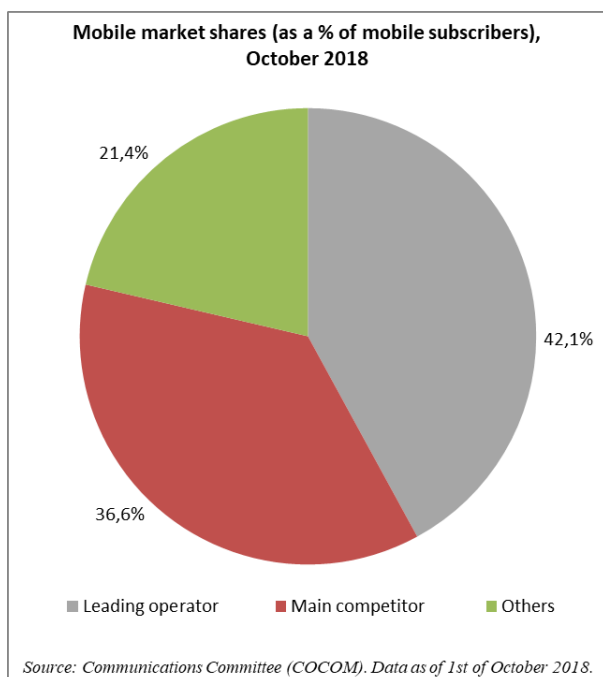
Over its copper DSL infrastructure, GO provides broadband connections with download speeds of up to 70 Mbps. GO is also upgrading its entire network, with street cabinets having been upgraded to fibre (FTTC) in most areas of the national territory. GO’s rollout of a FTTH network has made good progress over a number of years, with a third of the national territory being served via the FTTH network, allowing speeds of up to 500 Mbps. As is the case with other mobile network operators, GO supports its LTE mobile broadband network with its fibre deployment, launched in the fourth quarter of 2015.

Melita’s network is based on a cable HFC DOCSIS3.1 standard. Melita has upgraded its network over the past few years, with fibre up to street cabinets, and built many additional optical nodes. In 2019 it should be able to provide nationwide coverage with speeds up to 500 Mbps. Melita also provides its subscribers with access to around 75,000 high-speed wifi hotspots in main public areas and in home modems that have been re-programmed to also provide mobile data coverage.



Other ISPs provide electronic communications services using different wireless network infrastructures. These are Vodafone Malta, Ozone Malta and Vanilla Telecoms, which use wireless technologies to offer retail fixed telephony and fixed broadband services on a limited scale, given the technological limitations and footprint constraints associated with their wireless access infrastructures. An important difference relates to Vodafone’s wireless network, which operates on licensed spectrum, whilst the wireless networks of Ozone Malta and Vanilla Telecoms operate on unlicensed.

2.2. Mobile markets



There are three nationwide mobile network infrastructures, which are owned by GO, Melita and Vodafone Malta. These operators have been upgrading their networks over the years, rolling out 4G+ and using wifi and small cells to improve mobile and data coverage.

The mobile telephony sector witnessed growth in the 12-month period to December 2018, both in terms of the subscriber base and usage levels and particularly for active access to mobile broadband services.

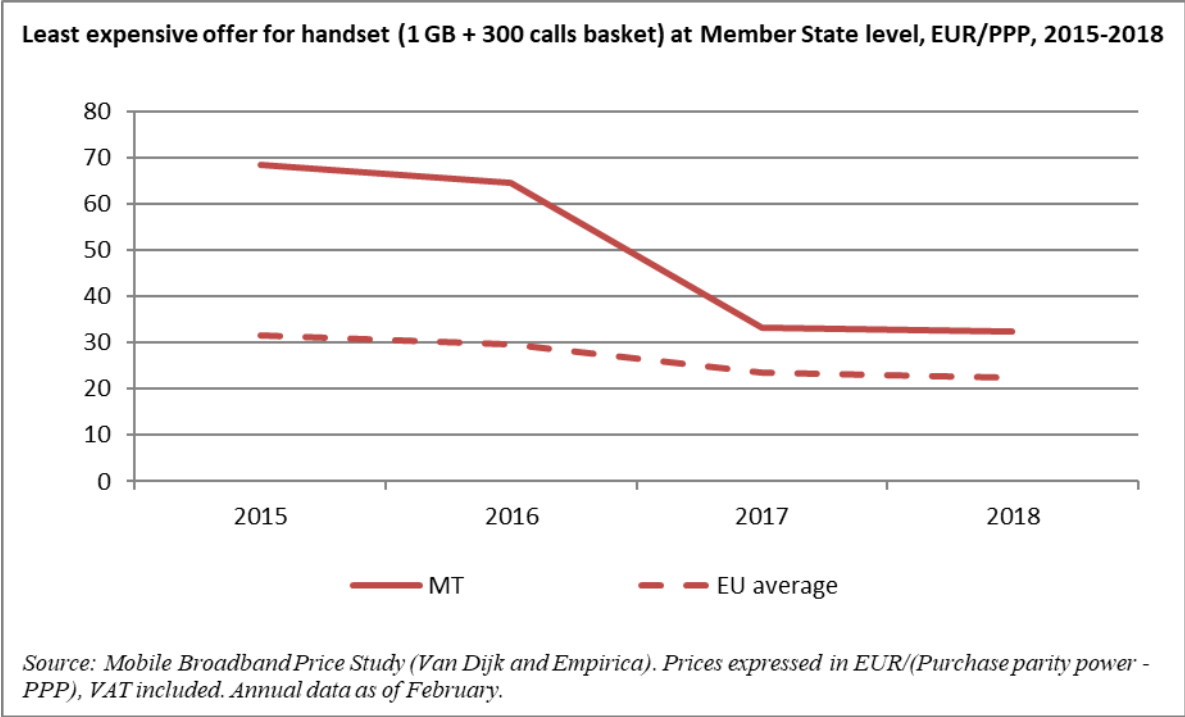
Average revenue per user for mobile telephony was slightly down, which may suggest the onset of a more competitively priced environment, typically involving bigger voice and data allowances. In fact, apart from rising voice usage levels, the number of end-users actively using

mobile broadband services surged markedly, with a 4 % increase in the number of mobile telephony subscriptions actively using these services⁴.

Mobile telephony has further consolidated its position as the most commonly used form of voice communication in Malta, with traffic volumes rising rapidly year-on-year. End-users are increasingly making use of mobile voice calling rather than fixed line calling, also considering that people nowadays are increasingly on the move. In Malta, the number of mobile-originated voice call minutes has been exceeding the number of fixed-originated voice call minutes since 2013. The gap between the two continued to widen since 2017. The continued fixed-to-mobile substitution in terms of voice telephony services is underscored by the falling rates per minute of communication for mobile telephony.

As showed by the chart above, in Malta the leading operator in the mobile sector has a market share of 42,1 %, while the main competitor has a market share of 36,6 %.

In Malta, mobile broadband prices are higher than the EU average. This is reflected in the Mobile Broadband Price Study, where Malta is considered among the ‘relatively expensive’ countries (the price for a 1 GB + 300 minutes is €32.50, versus an EU average of €22.30). However, there are signs of convergence in Malta’s mobile broadband prices to the EU average.



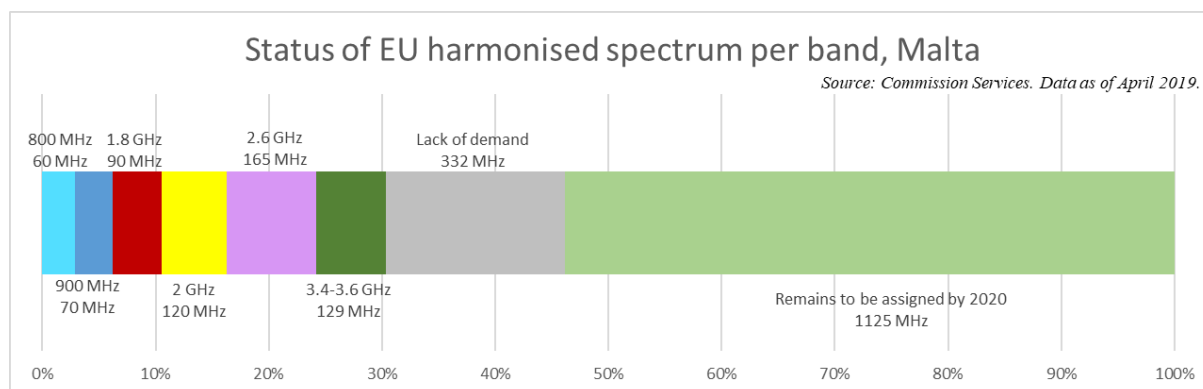
3. Regulatory developments

3.1. Spectrum

In Malta, 30 % of the total 2090 MHz of spectrum harmonised at EU level for wireless broadband has been assigned⁵. Radio spectrum in the 700 MHz, 1.5 GHz and 26 GHz bands, as well as part of the 3.4 - 3.8 GHz band, is not as yet assigned for the provision of wireless broadband electronic

⁴ Data provided by the MCA.
⁵ The 5G spectrum readiness indicator is based on the amount of spectrum already assigned and available for use for 5G by 2020 within the ‘5G pioneer bands’ in each EU Member State. For the 3.4-3.8 band this means that only licences aligned with the technical conditions annexed to Commission Decision (EU) 2019/235 are considered 5G-ready. However, the percentage of harmonised spectrum takes into account all assignments in all harmonised bands for electronic communications services (including 5G pioneer bands), even if this does not meet the conditions of the 5G readiness indicator.

communications services. According to the Maltese authorities, the assignment of radio spectrum in any of these bands will be subject to market demand.



In September 2018, the MCA revised the radio spectrum licences in the 900 MHz and 1800 MHz band to allow the respective right holders to deploy IoT technologies in these bands (in addition to voice and WBB). The radio spectrum licences are in line with Commission Decision 2009/766/EU as amended by Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2018/637.

In 2018, the MCA granted new rights of use of radio spectrum for the provision of electronic communications services. These are set out below.

In April 2018, the MCA granted: (i) GO, Melita and Vodafone Malta with 2x10 MHz in the 800 MHz band for a duration of 15 years; (ii) GO with 2x40 MHz in the 2.5 GHz band for 15 years; and (iii) Vodafone with 2x30 MHz FDD⁶ in the 2.5-2.6 GHz band and 25 MHz TDD⁷ in the 2.5 GHz band. Malta has completed coordination agreements concerning spectrum in the 700 MHz band with neighbouring EU countries. Greece and Malta agreed that it was not necessary to enter into a bilateral frequency coordination agreement due to the large distance between the two countries.

Italy and Malta signed an agreement on the distribution of radio frequencies, based on the principle of equitable access. In the various bilateral discussions with Italy, it was agreed that such an agreement should also include Tunisia and Libya. Due to the political situation in Libya it has so far been impossible to organise a multilateral meeting. Multilateral meetings between Italy, Tunisia and Malta took place in 2018. Further to a request submitted by Malta for EU assistance, the Commission facilitated multilateral discussions with Tunisia, which were held in May 2018. Nevertheless, only limited progress was registered so far in the frequency coordination process with the Tunisian authorities.

In December 2018, Malta updated its national frequency plan. The plan lists the allocations made for the radio frequency spectrum for Malta⁸.

3.2. Regulated access

In Malta, most of the markets included in the 2014 Recommendation on relevant markets⁹ are subject to *ex ante* regulation, as is the legacy market related to wholesale trunk segments of leased lines (Market 14 under the 2003 Recommendation), which remains partially regulated by way of the MCA

⁶ Frequency Division Duplex

⁷ Time Division Duplex

⁸ See https://mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/NFP_edition%206.pdf

⁹ These include Market 1 (Wholesale call termination on individual public telephone networks provided at a fixed location), Market 2 (Wholesale voice call termination on individual mobile networks) Market 3a (Wholesale local access provided at a fixed location), Market 3b (Wholesale central access provided at a fixed location for mass-market products), and Market 4 (Wholesale high-quality access provided at a fixed location). Market 3b (Wholesale central access provided at a fixed location for mass-market products) is not regulated.

Decision published in 2017 for Market 4/2014¹⁰. In 2018, the MCA undertook market reviews for the wholesale call termination market on individual public telephone networks provided at a fixed location (Market 1) as well as on individual mobile networks (Market 2). The conclusions of both market reviews maintained the previously existing remedies rather than review the regulatory remedies or revise or update the cost models to calculate new tariffs.

In particular, the MCA's 2018 review for the fixed call termination market maintained all the regulatory remedies previously in place, such as the obligations of access, transparency, non-discrimination and price control on each SMP operator. The obligation of cost accounting was maintained only on GO and Melita. With regard to price control, the MCA maintained the pre-existing fixed termination rate (FTR) of 0.0443 euro cent/min for the next regulatory period, based on a pure BU-LRIC model adopted in 2012. Similarly, the MCA's 2018 market review for mobile call termination maintained the pre-existing mobile termination rate (MTR) of 0.4045 euro cent/min for the next regulatory period, which was set using a pure BU-LRIC model adopted in 2014.

While acknowledging that both the Maltese FTR and MTR were among the lowest in the EU, the Commission noted that the MCA had not revised or updated the cost models to calculate new tariffs for the next regulatory period. In its comments to the notified draft measures, the Commission explained that it was working on a delegated act aimed at setting single maximum EU-wide fixed and mobile termination rates (Eurorates), based on a pure BU-LRIC model applicable to all operators. The delegated act will be adopted by 31 December 2020. The Commission stressed that during the period of transition to Eurorates, all national regulatory authorities were still encouraged to continue updating their existing BU-LRIC models with the most recent data as they become available (e.g. traffic patterns, volumes of voice and data, financial parameters, etc.), to the extent possible with reasonable effort. Such updates would, not, in the Commission's view, be overly burdensome and may result in more accurate estimates of the termination costs for the relevant review period. In conclusion, the Commission asked the MCA to consider, at a draft stage, updating its proposed models for both FTRs and MTRs using readily available more up-to-date input data (including traffic volumes) and to assess the pertinence of the outcomes to the transition to the Eurorate, which shall take into account the weighted average of efficient costs in the EU.

The MCA is currently working on the review of the markets for wholesale local access provided at a fixed location and for wholesale central access provided at a fixed location for mass-market products (markets 3a and 3b of the 2014 Recommendation on relevant markets¹¹ respectively). This review had been temporarily postponed in 2017 in light of a notification of concentration registered that same year with the national competition authority (namely, the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority – the MCCA), in which Vodafone and Melita stated their interest to merge their commercial electronic communications services activities. However, in 2018, Vodafone and Melita officially stated that they had abandoned their merger plans. Consequently, this overdue market review is now scheduled for Q3-2019, with the publication of the consultation document now envisaged to take place by the end of the year.

¹⁰ See https://mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/mca_decision_market_2-14_24_%2001_%202016.pdf#overlay-context=consultations-decisions/high-quality-access-and-connectivity-services-provided-fixed-location-0

¹¹ Commission Recommendation of 9 October 2014 on relevant product and service markets within the electronic communications sector susceptible to *ex ante* regulation in accordance with Directive 2002/21/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on a common regulatory framework for electronic communications networks and services (OJ L 295, 11.10.2014, p. 79-84).

In addition, in February 2016 the MCA issued its virtual unbundled local access (VULA) decision¹², in which it imposed non-discrimination obligations on GO through an economic replicability test (ERT) framework, while equivalence of outputs was considered sufficient and efficient to maintain technical replicability. Following this decision, GO updated its VULA reference offer to include wholesale prices, which are subject to the ERT. In October 2018, Vodafone, after several months of negotiations, signed a VULA-based reference offer agreement to start offering fibre-based services. The agreement is expected to be operative by April 2019. Meanwhile, in December 2018, the MCA issued another decision introducing a framework for KPIs, SLAs and SLGs¹³ for VULA¹⁴.

Although Directive 2014/61/EU¹⁵ (the BBCRD) has been transposed into Maltese law, problems persist with the concrete functioning of the single information point (SIP) and the dispute resolution body (DRB). According to the information available, a ‘coordinating committee’ composed of members of Transport Malta, Infrastructure Malta, the MCA, and the water and energy regulator (the most relevant authorities) was reported to be under creation. The committee’s aim was to ensure the correct application of the provisions transposing the BBCRD, in particular with regard to the appointment of the members of the DRB and to the internal organisation of the SIP.

In this respect, the SIP function is currently assigned to Transport Malta. The Ministry reported that the SIP is already active, but operators pointed out that it is not duly populated with relevant infrastructure information or available in digital form.

It must be stressed that Malta is currently in the process of implementing the government’s €700 million plan to upgrade all the roads within 7 years, meaning that the island is witnessing a huge number of major infrastructural projects in various localities. While this would be a good opportunity for operators to boost infrastructural competition, this would be prevented by the lack of a well-functioning single information point and a complete mapping of the existing infrastructure, caused by the above-mentioned partial implementation of the Cost Reduction Directive.

4. End-user matters

According to the 2018 Consumer Markets Scoreboard, the overall market performance from a consumer perspective decreased considerably between 2015-2017 for ‘TV subscriptions’ (-7.6 points, market ranks in 24th position out of 25 services assessed), 6.2 points below the market’s EU average score. ‘Fixed telephone services’ equally saw a decrease in the market’s MPI¹⁶ score by 2.6 points between 2015-2017 (22nd position), nonetheless the market scores higher compared to the market’s average EU score (+2.9 points). Both ‘mobile telephone services’ and ‘internet provision’ did not see a statistically significant change in their scores between 2015-2017 (13th and 18th position respectively) and have scores which are higher than the markets’ EU average scores (+5.5 and + 4.2 points respectively).

Between 1 January and 31st December 2018, the MCA received 249 complaints, an increase of 15.8 % compared to the complaints received in 2017. During the period under review, the MCA also received 682 requests for information on different matters it regulates.

¹² Reference: MCA/D/16-2513. ‘Virtual Unbundled Access to Fibre-To-The-Home: Implementing the VULA Remedy Response to Consultation and Decision’. Published: 26 February 2016.

¹³ Service Level Guarantees

¹⁴ Reference: MCA/D/18-3403. “Virtual Unbundled Access To Fibre-To-The-Home: Enhancing the Non-Discrimination Obligation - Response to Consultation and Decision”. Published: 11 December 2018.

¹⁵ Directive 2014/61/EU of the European Parliament of the Council of 15 May 2014 on measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks (OJ L 155, 23.5.2014, p. 1-14).

¹⁶ The market performance index (MPI) is a composite indicator ranging from 0 to 100. It takes into account how easy/difficult it is perceived to compare offers; if consumers trust that retailers/suppliers comply with consumer laws; if they encountered problems and harm (including but not limited to financial loss); if services live up to their expectations and if they are satisfied with the number of providers in the market.

More than half (58 %) of the complaints received during 2018 concerning electronic communications services related to quality of service. Billing issues accounted for 27 % of complaints. Other complaints related to termination and switching of services (10 %), contractual issues (2 %) and other matters (2 %).

In 2018, the MCA started publishing monthly reports that include information on the main changes in the product line-up of local service providers, alongside an overview of prices and allowances of new plans¹⁷. It also published: (i) a table that enables end-users to compare the different fault repair timeframes and compensation schemes implemented by service providers¹⁸; and (ii) a table that enables end-users to compare the different installation charges applied by service providers¹⁹.

In Q4-2018, the MCA carried out a nationwide educational campaign to raise awareness about what end-users should look out for when subscribing to an electronic communications service, during their use of the service and when terminating a service²⁰.

a. Net neutrality

MCA reported in its annual report that there were no cases that required regulatory intervention in the reporting period²¹. None of the ISPs engaged in commercial practices restricting end-users' right to choose and transmit the content of their choice²². The MCA also investigated two zero-rating cases, but determined that the offers involved did not necessitate actual enforcement measures.

The MCA applied the BEREC guidelines in determining whether the relevant zero-rating offers complied with the Regulation. In the case involving the zero-rating of IPTV transmission services, the MCA concluded that in light of the limited scale and scope, it was unlikely the product could have a negative effect on either subscribers or CAPs²³. The other case also related to the zero-rated offering of TV services. The MCA concluded that no regulatory intervention was required and found that although the Regulation applied to the internet access service (IAS) over which the product was delivered, the content was restricted to the confines of the provider's network. For that reason it was not considered to be available on the open internet and therefore not subject to the Regulation²⁴. However, the MCA did also note that all zero-rating offers currently present in the market shall continue to be monitored and reviewed²⁵.

Between 1 May 2017 and 30 April 2018, the MCA received 14 complaints regarding discrepancies between the contractual speed and the actual speed of the IAS. One other complaint related to traffic management practices²⁶. All complaints referred to in the annual reports have been settled.

b. Roaming

Maltese end-users consumed 1.5 times more roaming minutes (calls made) in Q1-2018 than in Q1-2017.

¹⁷See for example:

[https://www.mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/Price %20developments %20for %20Publication %20October.pdf](https://www.mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/Price%20developments%20for%20Publication%20October.pdf)

¹⁸[https://www.mca.org.mt/articles/ %E2 %80 %98service-providers %E2 %80 %99-repair-timeframes-and-compensation %E2 %80 %99](https://www.mca.org.mt/articles/%E2%80%98service-providers%E2%80%99-repair-timeframes-and-compensation%E2%80%99)

¹⁹ <https://www.mca.org.mt/articles/installation-services-what-you-need-know>

²⁰ In this respect, the MCA published a set of guidelines on its website. See the Consumer Tips' section on the MCA's website: <https://www.mca.org.mt/consumertips>.

²¹ MCA (2018), Report of the Malta Communications Authority on its monitoring and findings in accordance with Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2015/2190 concerning the European net neutrality Rules (NN-report MCA), p. 6.

²² NN-report MCA 2018, p. 7.

²³ Content and application providers. NN-report MCA 2018, p. 6-8.

²⁴ NN-report MCA 2018, p. 8-9.

²⁵ More information available in the 'Study on the implementation of the net neutrality provisions of the Telecoms Single Market Regulation' (SMART 2017/0011).

²⁶ NN-report MCA 2018, p. 8.

Data published by the MCA in early 2019 found that total mobile data downloads by Maltese individuals while abroad rose by 124 % from 2017 to 2018, reaching a total of 393.2 million MB. Domestic use also rose, reaching 6,206 million MB. These increases are reportedly due to the EU's abolition of roaming charges. During 2018, the MCA continued to monitor local operators' tariff plans. The MCA is publishing a monthly update on new and / or updated tariff plans launched by local operators²⁷

c. Emergency communications — 112

In Malta, calls to the single European emergency call number 112 are received at the first level public-safety answering point (PSAP) and redirected to emergency response organisations (EROs). Dispatch of the intervention resources is done by the ERO operators. Two or more EROs may be dispatched on the same mission, using the same backend platform. Average answer time is 4.76 seconds.

E-Call is available at first level PSAP, with localisation of car with minimum set of data (MSD) is provisioned as soon as a major accident occurs, or otherwise triggered manually. Advanced mobile location (AML) is available only for Android phones for the time being, providing additional accuracy of cell based localisation services.

The 112mt mobile app has been upgraded with an additional feature, namely the registration of the mobile app for localisation services. The 112mt mobile app already included direct call, SMS, reports, emergency response addresses, and telephone details as well as news. The new feature provides users with the possibility to send a SMS by which a location service is established through the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) coordinates, thus enabling first-level PSAP call takers to interact with the caller via return text or through web chat services.

5. Institutional issues

The MCA is currently establishing a national framework to encompass aspects related to numbering resources for non-interpersonal communications services which include M2M/IoT services.

Until the national numbering plan in Malta is updated to cater for M2M/IoT services, the MCA has adopted a temporary solution by allowing numbering resources to be used for the provision of M2M/IoT services specifically to end-users in Malta from publicly available telephony service (PATS) number ranges currently allocated to authorised providers. This is conditional on the provider in question keeping a record of any sub-ranges allocated specifically for M2M/IoT services and adhering to the condition that these numbering resources are not used on an extra-territorial basis.

To be exempted from adhering to all PATS obligations, service providers may inform the MCA of the sub-ranges they have allocated specifically for M2M/IoT services. In turn, the MCA indicates the sub-ranges allocated specifically for M2M/IoT services in its national numbering allocations plan matrix on the MCA website.

Meanwhile, the MCA is undertaking a public consultation to update the National Numbering Plan.

6. Conclusion

Malta performs well in broadband connectivity, ranking first in the DESI indicators fixed, fast and ultrafast broadband coverage, and thus achieving the European broadband coverage objectives. Malta should now focus on paving the way for 5G deployment by proceeding as soon as possible with the expected update of the national broadband plan and by making available the pioneer bands for effective use by 2020. To ensure full implementation of the Broadband Cost Reduction Directive, the

²⁷ See <https://mca.org.mt/articles/pricing-developments-february-2019>

persisting problems with creating the SIP and establishing the DRB should be swiftly solved by the Maltese Government.