30/04/2021

Implementation Roadmap for the Connectivity Toolbox (Phase III)- Belgium

List of abbreviations

- BIPT: Belgian Institute for Postal Services and Telecommunications (www.bipt.be)
- AdN : Agence du Numérique de Wallonie (www.adn.be)
- DOMG: Department of Environment & Spatial Development (www.omgeving.vlaanderen.be)
- VVSG: Vereniging van Vlaamse Steden en Gemeenten (Union of Flemish Cities and Municipalities)
- EWI: Department of Economy, Science and Innovation
- Issep: Institut Scientifique de Service Public (http://www.issep.be)

List of competent authorities/administrations

- Government of Flanders, Department of Environment & Spatial Development, Koning Albert II-laan 20 bus 8, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
- Government of Wallonia
- Government of Brussels
- Cabinet of Petra De Sutter, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration, Public Enterprises, Telecommunications and the Postal Services
- BIPT (Belgian Institute for postal services and telecommunications)
- VVSG
- AdN (including the Giga Region Program), Avenue du Prince de Liège 133, 5100 Jambes
- Digitaal Vlaanderen
- POWALCO
- KLIM-CICC
- Géoportail de la Région bruxelloise
- Geoportal WalOnMap
- EWI
- Issep, Rue du Chéra, 200, B-4000 Liège

This list is not exhaustive.

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Best practices regarding the "net cost reduction" aspect (subgroup 1)

Streamlining permit granting procedures

Best practice 1 - Introduce permit exemptions and fast track procedures and promote the application of existing lighter permit granting procedures

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Permit exemptions already exist in Belgium, for instance in Flanders for environmental permits and antenna permits. Regarding signalisation permits, in Flanders a system of "year permit" is implemented, where a simple notification is sufficient within this year.

The Flemish legislative framework for granting permits on deployment of electronic infrastructure and civil works in Flanders is provided by the legislation on the integrated environmental permit ("omgevingsvergunning"). In the current state of this legislation, many operations are exempted from this permit requirement.

For limiting RF exposure, Flanders uses a software tool that contains existing useful map layers (e.g. location and height of buildings). This tool calculates the exposure in the vicinity of the antennas. If ok, the operator receives the attest of conformity.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of an assessment whether there are any other permit exemptions or notifications mechanisms that would be useful to implement, and, if applicable, an adaptation of the legislation when under review.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

Best practice 2 - Provide model regulations on electronic communications network deployment

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Currently this kind of model regulations does not exist.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Due to different competences on regional and local level, this kind of approach by using a national "model" is not deemed to be feasible in Belgium.

We propose an alternative implementation of this best practice where we would organize yearly workshops with the different administrations to exchange best practices, with the involvement of stakeholders if this is deemed desirable by the latter.

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Best practice 3 - Provide informative materials and workshops for municipalities and other competent authorities

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

BIPT is currently working on a project called the "fiber vademecum": a centralized point of information concerning the deployment of fiber, aimed at various stakeholders, including municipalities and other concerned authorities. This "fiber vademecum" will include a.o. the informative materials that are described in this best practice.

Regarding the environmental permit and the attest of conformity: these are regulated at the regional level. This is therefore not applicable for municipalities.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Publication of the first version of the "fiber vademecum" is planned for Q4 2021, but will be further updated and completed afterwards.

Once the fiber vademecum is published, an accompanying workshop can be organized.

Best practice 4 - Ensure the use of electronic means for permit applications

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The best practice is already implemented to a large extent (mainly at regional level): e.g. in Flanders for the application for environmental permits and the certificates of conformity for antennas.

Within the legal framework of the integrated environmental permit which is in force in Flanders the "environment desk" operates as the digital tool for the application of the permit and the delivery of the final decision. For the attest of conformity, there is also an digital tool for the application.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of a first phase that identifies the "missing digital links" and a second phase, when applicable, where a digitisation process is started for the permit application procedures that are not already electronically available.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

Best practice 5 - Digital administrative portal/single information point (SIP) coordination

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

In Belgium, there are different permit application processes because of different regional and local competences. Therefore it is not considered easy to combine all these in a "single entry point". A large cost and a labour-intensive process may be expected to implement this best practice, which seems not proportional. Within the same competence, this kind of "single entry point" is often implemented. E.g. in Flanders, the "environment desk" operates as the entry point of the handling of applications of integrated environmental permit.

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Regarding Flanders: Within the legal framework of the integrated environmental permit in force in Flanders the "environment desk" operates as the responsible manager of the information flow of procedures issued by all authorities with the understanding that other types of licences or authorisations are not covered. For the attest of conformity, there is also an digital tool for the application. Many antennas do not have to apply for an environmental permit. But for every antenna (unless there is an exemption) a attest of conformity is needed.

The best practice is therefore already implemented in Flanders to a large extent since the "environment desk" operates as the entry point of the handling of applications of integrated environmental permit. Due to cost/benefit analyses, other digital priorities and regulatory issues the extending of the functioning this portal to other types of licences or authorisations is not foreseen. The attest of conformity, needed for most antennas also uses an digital administrative portal.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider the implementation of this BP to be disproportional for the situation in Belgium, and believe the implementation of BP 3, which would create an overview of different permit application processes, to be of more use.

Best practice 6 - Tacit approval for rights of way

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

In the law of 1991 concerning the reform of certain public companies, art. 97/98 states that every operator is allowed to use the public domain to install cables and equipment. The operator wishing to install cables or other equipment has to ask the permission of the public body in question which has two months to reply. If it does not reply within this delay, the request is deemed to be accepted.

Due to public concern about RF exposure, there are no plans to implement this (at least in Flanders) for the attest of conformity of antennas.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Referring to the existing legislation, we believe this BP to be sufficiently implemented, with a tacit approval process of 2 months for installation of cables and equipment on the public domain.

Best practice 7 - Fast track procedures for rights of way

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

We refer to BP 6: existing legislation foresees in a 2 months tacit approval for the installation of cables and equipment on the public domain.

Because the period of this tacit approval process is rather short, we do not deem it proportional to implement additional fast-track procedures for rights of way.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

As explained above, the implementation of this best practice is not deemed proportional.

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Best practice 8 - Establish broadband coordinators

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

There are BCO contact points in Belgium, at national and regional level.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of an assessment how to expand the tasks of the current BCO in order to support the coordination described in this best practice.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

Best practice 9 - Use of joint preparatory coordination procedures for granting rights of way and permits necessary for civil works

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

This best practice asks for a coordination between different competences at local/regional level, that may be complicated and is difficult to assess at the moment.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of an assessment how this kind of preparatory coordination procedure could be implemented if feasible.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

Best practice 10 - Legal requirements with regard to the appropriateness of fees

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Regarding Flanders, for the attest of conformity and the environmental permit, there are fees to cover the to cover the handling of applications.

In Wallonia, the so-called “Accord ToP” (Tax on pylons) is an example of best practice. This agreement between the regional government and the 3 national Telecom operators (Proximus, Orange Belgium and Telenet Group) is aimed at cancelling any regional taxes on pylons and mobile infrastructure, and encourage the local entities to do the same. In exchange, the operators agree in investing on deploying mobile infrastructures in the white and grey zones. and is in charge of following up the process with the operators.

At regional level, fees are mostly cost based (e.g. in Flanders, fees for the environmental permit cover the handling of applications)

At local level, the situation is less clear.

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Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Current permit fees will be investigated whether they are objectively justified, transparent, non-discriminatory, proportionate and cost based. In the same way, usage fees/rent with regard to rights of way on public ground will be assessed. This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

In case of high and/or strongly varying fees at local level for civil works permits and rights of way on public ground, we will assess how guidance can be provided with regard to the calculation of fees, and the harmonisation of local policies. Timing based on the outcome of phase 1.

Improving transparency through the single information point (SIP)

Best practice 11 - Ensure the availability of information from different sources and enhance transparency of planned civil works

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Information is available on a request-reply basis in different SIPs (related to different competences):

- Physical infrastructure: KLIM/CICC and KLIP
- Planned civil works: GIPOD, OSIRIS, POWALCO

GIPOD is operational since 2014 and is a portal for information exchange between operators (regional, local authorities, utility companies) to plan and coordinate works on the public domain.

POWALCO (http://www.powalco.be) is mandatory in the Walloon region since January 2017. This centralized portal enables the communication between all operators (regional, local authorities, utility companies) to plan and coordinate works on the public domain. In accordance with the regional law (Décret Impetrant).

There are already some synergies:

- KLIP consults KLIM/CICC
- POWALCO is linked with KLIM/CICC
- The web portals of KLIP and GIPOD are not linked. The portals themselves are fully accessible via web services, so an integrated application is possible.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

A single data portal seems not achievable due to different competences, but an assessment will be made whether further synergies are possible.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

Best practice 12 - Ensure the availability of information via the single information point (SIP) in electronic format

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Information is available on a request-reply basis in different SIPs (related to different competences) and is mostly digital.

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KLIP is operational since 2007 and is a portal for information exchange between utility operators where/which cables/ducts are in the underground, situated on a common, uniform large scale map; the utility information is conform the IMKL standard (INSPIRE compliance).

In KLIM/CICC respondents have the option to send their information digital or on paper. However, there are studies going on to address this situation and force the respondents to answer with vector data.

POWALCO in Wallonia is in direct interoperation with KLIM-CICC and the Walloon geoportal WalOnMap, the central portal for all GIS and metadata linked to the Walloon territory, compliant with INSPIRE standard.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of an assessment to identify the "missing digital links" and to start a digitisation process for information on available physical infrastructure and planned civil works that is not yet available.

This process has been started for KLIM/CICC in 2021.

Best practice 13 - Include georeferenced information (maps and digital models) in the data made available via the SIP

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Information in KLIM/CICC, KLIP, GIPOD, OSIRIS and POWALCO is georeferenced, linked to geographic maps:

- Flanders Region:
  - Maps (eg large scale map of Flanders, orthophotomaps) used as background for KLIP and GIPOD;
  - INSPIRE portal www.geopunt.be with geodata available, operated by Digitaal Vlaanderen
- Brussels Region: Géoportail de la Région bruxelloise : https://geobru.irisnet.be
- Walloon Region : the geoportal WalOnMap (https://geoportail.wallonie.be/home.html) is the single and central source of georeferenced information linked to metadata.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We believe this best practice to be sufficiently implemented.

Best practice 14 - Make available indicative information on the occupation level of the infrastructure and/or the existence of dark fibre

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

It is important to note that information is available on a request-reply basis in different SIPs (related to different competences): concerning physical infrastructure these are the platforms KLIM/CICC and

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KLIP. There is therefore no general overview of available physical infrastructure (for which occupation level information seems more appropriate).

To adapt KLIP and KLIM/CICC to include extra fields is not straightforward as this would demand a change in the definitions and the code.

However, KLIM/CICC and KLIP also include information on cabling, and therefore also the existence of fiber in a certain area.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Regarding the inclusion of extra fields, we do not plan to implement this best practice, as it is not proportional regarding the costs-benefits, also considering the fact that current platforms already include information on cabling, so information on the presence of fiber is present.

It should be noted that there is an "empty" field in the KLIP database, and we will invite owners of physical infrastructure to use this field to give more information about the occupancy level and/or the presence of dark fiber. This is not the case for KLIM/CICC, that does not use a common format yet (contrary to KLIP using IMKL). The switch to IMKL is however planned, timing to be determined.

Best practice 15 - Ensure the provision via the single information point (SIP) of transparent information regarding the conditions of access to the existing physical infrastructure

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

In KLIP it is possible to attach a letter to an answer. This extra information can be consulted in the answer (if the information is provided by the responder).

The same applies for KLIM/CICC..

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

All contributors to KLIP and KLIM/CICC will be invited to add information concerning the terms and conditions of access to their physical infrastructure.

Expanding the right of access to existing physical infrastructure

Best practice 16 - Ensure access to physical infrastructure controlled by public bodies

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

This kind of obligation would demand changes in the legislation.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of an assessment how the legislation should be adapted.

Awaiting changes in the legislation, public bodies or entities will be informed and encouraged to meet all reasonable requests for access to their physical infrastructure.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

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Best practice 17 - Entrust a body with a promotor and/or coordinator role

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Publicly owned or controlled infrastructure is diverse and linked to different competences, so a prior assessment is needed to evaluate the installment/choice of this competent body.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Implementation of this best practice consists of an assessment how to install a competent body to advise the relevant public bodies and to ensure the coordination and/or promotion of access requests to publicly owned or controlled infrastructure.

This process has been scheduled to be started in 2021.

Best practice 18 – Development of guidelines for all governance levels

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Publicly owned or controlled infrastructure is diverse and linked to different competences, so a prior assessment is needed to evaluate this best practice.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The development of these guidelines shall also be one of the tasks of the competent body described in BP 17, and this task will be part of the assessment.

Timing based on the outcome of BP 17.

Dispute resolution mechanism

Best practice 19 – Include an optional prior/parallel conciliation mechanism

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The current DSB was installed with an (inter)federal cooperation agreement, installing this kind of conciliation mechanism is not straight forward in the Belgian situation.

There are no DSB cases yet, so it seems more advisable to focus on BP 20.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

In the Belgian context, where the installment of this prior/parallel conciliation mechanism would ask for legislative amendments in a cooperation agreement (which is complex), and where there are no DSB cases yet, we consider it disproportional to implement this best practice.

Best practice 20 – Ensure transparency, awareness and trust in the dispute resolution mechanism by issuing guidelines

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Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Currently the information on the DSB is not sufficiently transparent.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

A website for the dispute settlement body will be published in order to raise awareness. Reference will be made on other websites (e.g. from the BIPT).

This website shall publish all relevant decisions. This has been scheduled for 2021.

Because of the lack of experience with DSB cases, it is not possible yet to issue concrete guidelines for the moment. We would implement this once enough cases have been handled. Timing will be based on the utilisation of the Dispute Settlement Process.

Best practice 21 – Ensure electronic communication and submission for parties

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Currently the information on communication with the DSB is not sufficiently transparent.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Together with the publication of the website (BP 20) appropriate electronic means will be installed (either e-mail address or via the website)

Reducing the environmental footprint of networks

Best practice 22 – Ensure electronic communication and submission for parties

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Sharing of physical infrastructure for networks is encouraged. Network sharing (active and/or passive), multi-operator sites for mobile networks. The Mwingz (nationwide MORAN-sharing between Proximus and Orange) project is a good example of this.

The Use of energy-efficient processes, equipment and technologies is encouraged. BIPT recognizes the energy efficiency of 5G.

Operators in Belgium have long committed to increase their share in the use of renewable energy and several of them are already certified as CO2 neutral. In addition to 5G, which is receiving a lot of attention today, operators use new versions of equipment and software for updating fixed and mobile networks designed to reduce energy consumption. For example, smart meters become used for the targeted implementation of energy-efficient solutions that the limit energy consumption.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Best practice is already being implemented to some extent (network sharing for mobile networks is encouraged, operators in Belgium committing to increase their share in use of renewable energy, etc.).

We will continue to pay attention to the environmental footprint of electronic communications networks, and we will also follow European initiatives in this regard (an example is the BEREC report

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on this subject that is being followed by the BIPT). We could engage with stakeholders to agree on a common understanding of the environmental impacts of the electronic communications networks, to identify measures to pursue environmental goals and to discuss transparency of environmental data and self-regulatory measures in relation to electronic communications networks.

This process has been scheduled to start in 2021.

Best practices regarding the "spectrum" aspect (subgroup 2)

Environmental Impact Assessment

Best practice 23 – Assessment of environmental effects

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Belgium is of the view that, at the time of granting rights or issuing licenses for spectrum use, the prerequisites for the application of the Directives 2001/42/EC, 2011/92/EU and 92/43/EEC are not fulfilled.

This environmental screening can be done, when the network operator can evaluate the environmental impact, for instance, on a case-by-case analysis, when delivering the building permit for the base station or the environmental permit.

The Departement Omgeving (Flanders) is of the opinion that towards the building permitting for wireless infrastructure and the technical conformity check for the use of radio spectrum (5G), the application in Flanders of the EU directives for environmental impact assessment or the Natura 2000 test is very unlikely.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Up to now, we never applied this directives at the time of granting rights or issuing licenses in Belgium.

The regions or local authorities can however decide whether they will carry out an environmental screening at the time they deliver the building permits or environmental permits.

In Flanders, the application of these directives is very unlikely and the issue cannot generate added value.

Incentives for investment

Best practice 24 – Promote adequate reserve prices

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The reserve prices are set based on an economic analysis of the Belgian market using a bottom-up discounted cashflow model. The analysis takes into account the characteristics of the Belgian market, the objectives of the BIPT, the views of MNOs, international benchmarks and best practices, as well as the professional judgment of an external consultant, based on wide experience of previous similar studies.

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E.g.: https://www.bipt.be/operators/publication/bipt-council-communication-of-13-november-2019-regarding-the-analysys-mason-study-of-7-november-2019-on-the-valorisation-of-the-spectrum-for-public-mobile-systems-on-3600-mhz-and-26-ghz

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The current working method is considered to be in line with this best practice.

Best practice 25 – Timely availability of 5g harmonised bands

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The 700 MHz and the 3600 MHz are expected to be auctioned early 2022.

Local private networks will be authorized in the part of the band 3400-3800 MHz which will remain unsold after the auction, as well as in parts of the band 3800-4200 MHz. These licences will be assigned on a "first come first served"-basis in a short administrative procedure and will be subject to the payment of a moderate annual fee.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Timing can't be accelerated due to political lack of approval in the legislation process.

Timing of the auction process:

- 05/2021: Concertation Committee
- 06/2021: advice Council of State
- 07-08/2021: publication of legal texts
- 09/2021: call for candidates
- Auction in Q1 2022

Best practice 26 – Review national spectrum plans on a regular basis

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

A review of national spectrum plans (allocation table and/or award strategy plans) has taken place to develop the national 5G plan in the period 2017/2018.

A new revision is planned after the multiband auction.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The current working method is considered to be in line with this best practice.

Next revision: 2022 Q2

Best practice 27 – Enable payments of award fees in instalments

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

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The auction fee can be paid in yearly installments. (art 30 §1/3 of the law of 13 June 2005)

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The current working method is considered to be in line with this best practice.

Best practice 28 – Individual authorisation regime for the 24.25-27.5 GHz frequency band

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

A public consultation in July 2018 showed no interest for the 26 GHz band. At the time, only MNO's replied. There are currently no plans to auction the band.

Test licenses in this band can be obtained at a very limited cost.

A new approach will be defined after the multiband auction which is planned early 2022, taking into account the possible need for a flexible licensing mechanism.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

This new approach will be in line with the best practice. Expected timing for new approach: in the course of 2022.

Best practice 29 – Combine coverage obligations with financial incentives

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

- In the Walloon region, there is an agreement between the authorities and the MNO's to abolish the tax on pylons in exchange for a better coverage.
- The reserve price for the 700 MHz band has been reduced considerably in exchange for higher coverage obligations.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Therefore, we consider this best practice to be already implemented.

Best practice 30 – Promote the opportunity of infrastructure sharing

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

BIPT has existing guidelines on infrastructure sharing since 2012. Art 25§2 of the law of 13 June 2005 obliges each operator who owns a support to allow reasonable and non-discriminatory sharing of the antenna site (passive sharing). The operators shall take the necessary measures to make the stability and height of the pylons of the antenna sites, as well as other parts of the antenna sites that they build, have built or modified, suitable for shared use with other operators who have requested it.

Two out of the 3 MNO's are planning to share their RAN network in a MORAN configuration (active sharing). The competition authority is currently examining the case.

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Sharing of frequencies will be subject to the approval of the BIPT.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider this best practice to be sufficiently implemented.

Best practice 31 – Structure of recurrent spectrum fees to incentivise roll-out

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The annual fee is a flat rate and independent of the number of base stations in the network.

The fee structure allows for self-planning without prior registration in block licenses which means that there are no extra fees for activating a new base station/radio transmitter and most likely a faster roll out of the networks.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider this best practice to be sufficiently implemented.

Best practice 32 – Use financial aid as a complement to incentivise investments

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

A project which is already running is the blueprint project (https://5g-ppp.eu/5g-blueprint/). The overall objective of 5G-Blueprint is to design and validate a technical architecture, business and governance model for uninterrupted cross-border teleoperated transport based on 5G connectivity. This project started on the 1st September 2020.

Operators are further encouraged to use financial aid from EU-level programmes, by notifying them of available financial aid programs (such as CEF).

In the framework of the RRF (relance plan):

- The Walloon government is running a project of 70 M € for improving the internal (via wifi) and external (via optical fiber) connectivity of schools, but also of the 35 business parks in Wallonia.
- The German-speaking community will roll out fiber in its entire territory with (20 M € under RRF - total public money is 40 M €).
- A Broadband plan providing a 50M € subsidy for white zones is planned in the period 2022-2024.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider this best practice to be sufficiently implemented.

Enhanced coordination at union level on spectrum assignment for cross-border use

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Best practice 33 – Use coherent practice for granting rights of use for radio spectrum based on the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC)

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

Belgium uses a coherent practice for granting rights of use for radio spectrum, in accordance with the legal framework for granting rights of use for radio spectrum as given by the European Electronic Communications Code.

Once the law will have been adopted, the current working method is therefore considered to be in line with this best practice.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider this best practice to be implemented once the EECC is implemented in Belgian law.

Timing implementation of the EECC in Belgian law:

- 03/2021 approved by federal government
- 04/2021: approval by the Consultation Committee
- 06/2021: receipt of the advice of the Council of State
- 09/2021: law adopted by Parliament
- 10/2021: publication of the Belgian Official Journal

Best practice 34 – Facilitate interoperability through the development and application of standards

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

3GPP standards are implemented.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The current working method is considered to be in line with this best practice.

Best practice 35 – Make use of harmonised technical conditions developed by the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications administrations (CEPT) / Electronic Communications Committee (ECC), if common dedicated frequency ranges are deemed necessary

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The technical conditions of CEPT are respected.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The current working method is considered to be in line with this best practice.

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Best practice 36 – When identifying the appropriate authorisation regime member states should pay particular attention to any specificities resulting from a cross-border dimension

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

For cross border coordination of TDD systems, a harmonized frame structure in the BENELUX will be implemented.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

Decision is expected in the course of the year 2021.

Aspects related to electromagnetic fields and public health

Best practice 37 – Promote continuous scientific research on electromagnetic field (EMF) emissions carried out by credible and independent institutions

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

- At federal level: https://www.sciensano.be/nl/pershoek/5g-technologie-fact-check
- Flanders collects the scientific research on radiation and health and publishes it on the research portal of the Flemish government. Measurement and simulation studies are also carried out to investigate the RF exposure, this research too is published via the research portal. https://omgeving.vlaanderen.be/onderzoek-straling-en-gezondheid
- In Walloon Region an expert group is installed: https://www.wallonie.be/fr/actualites/creation-dun-groupe-dexperts-pour-la-5g , https://penserlascience.ulb.ac.be/

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider this best practice to be sufficiently implemented.

Best practice 38 – Coordinated and targeted communication for informing and educating on 5G implementation

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

The federal government launched an initiative to set up an online knowledge and learning platform about 5G, as part of their spectrum allocation powers, to provide better information to the public about the applications of 5G and its benefits to society. This platform also addresses concerns about possible health effects and 'fake news'.

In Flanders, The Department Omgeving (Flanders) actively contributes knowledge and expertise so that the population can find scientifically substantiated information about 5G on a single platform.

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

The portal is expected to be online by mid 2021.

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Best practice 39 – Inform the public on the compliance of radio base stations installations with applicable EMF safe limits

Initial assessment as to the usefulness of the best practice, according to the national situation

- BIPT – general antenna site: https://sites.bipt.be/?language=EN
- Flanders: https://zendantenneskaart.omgeving.vlaanderen.be/
- Brussels Region: https://geodata.environnement.brussels/client/view/3a33e35f-6b64-4b28-bb50-5b4c6b7cb29c
- Walloon Region: https://geoportail.wallonie.be/catalogue/3de9790e-529f-431f-ac4f-e86d827bde8e.html

Expected plan and indicative timing or, when not deemed useful, reasons why not

We consider this best practice to be implemented.

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