Orange Belgium is the first to launch a 5G testing hub for business in Belgium: the Orange Industry 4.0 Campus in the port of Antwerp

Today Orange Belgium is the first to activate a 5G testing hub for business in Belgium. By creating an open innovation hub, Orange Belgium will start using the full potential of 5G technology together with industrial partners on real-life applications. Thanks to the 5G testing network deployed on the campus, the partners will benefit from a dedicated connectivity and guaranteed quality of services required for industrial use cases. Orange Belgium chose the region around the port of Antwerp because of its industry and wide variety of testing options.

This 5G testing network of Orange is the first 5G stand-alone architecture network in Belgium that will be used by industrial partners. This means that 5G capacities are not just added on top of regular 4G/3G technologies, but deployed as a separate network enabling network slicing, very low latency and massive IoT.

5G is the latest development in mobile networks, that supplements and is compatible with previous generations (2G, 3G, 4G). It will provide various improvements (in terms of speed, latency, reliability, scalability, flexibility, security, coverage and capacity) allowing new uses for residential and business customers, such as critical IoT, connected vehicles, eHealth, industrial applications, etc. Beyond this technological development, 5G will foster the digital transformation of most economic sectors (health, transport, industrial production…).

For the Orange Industry 4.0 Campus, Orange Belgium has chosen ZTE as a technical partner.

The Orange Industry 4.0 Campus illustrates the possibilities of the 5G stand-alone technology in a highly industrialized environment

At first, the Orange Industry 4.0 Campus is powered by 7 sites in the area of the port of Antwerp. By the end of April 2020, 14 sites will be on air, providing coverage in different places in the region of the port of Antwerp ($150km^2$). The area is a great nest for such experimentations, as it welcomes several large industrial players that could benefit from the industrial applications of 5G. For now, the Flanders region is the only region allowing such testing due to the environmental regulation even if further improvements are needed. To roll-out 5G nationwide, an updated regulation is mandatory.

Today Orange Belgium demonstrated a real-life data connection with a download speed up to 1.42 Gbps, an uplink speed up to 329 Mbps and a latency of 7 millisecond over the 5G end to end technology.

Stefan Slavnicu, Chief Technology Officer at Orange Belgium, reacts: "Today we can provide 5G stand-alone (SA) connectivity in our 5G testing hub for business: this is the most advanced version of 5G. It provides some of the key benefits of the 5G technology like very high throughput, low latency, enhanced security for critical applications and network slicing for Public & Private Networks, specifically needed to deploy industry 4.0 applications. Moreover, we will also use new generation antennas which strongly increase the cell capacity and throughput. These tests are a great opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of such new technology for our B2B customers."

The Orange Industry 4.0 Campus will enable tailor-made connectivity adapted to specific requirements of new innovative applications

Orange Belgium CEO Michaël Trabbia adds: "As a Bold Challenger, also in the enterprise market, we are very proud to open our Orange Industry 4.0 Campus in the port of Antwerp to start testing 5G use cases that can benefit from the full potential of 5G, needed to increase the competitiveness for business. Because in the professional sphere, 5G will allow us to offer dedicated and tailor-made connectivity adapted to specific requirements of new innovative applications such as wireless manufacturing, real-time automation, smart cities, Internet of Things… "

Orange Belgium strongly believes in the potential of 5G with regard to the development of new services that will benefit for citizens and enterprises. To make it a success, an evolution of the legal, regulatory and administrative framework as well as the spectrum attribution for operators is still required. The major investments from the operators will ensure a seamless connectivity in areas that are essential to all users.

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