

Tessares-Proximus' Access Bonding - offering faster Internet in large, sparsely populated rural areas – now successfully qualified to move to a countrywide deployment phase.

After a successful nine-month pilot trying out the Multipath TCP (MPTCP) technology in Frasnes-Lez-Anvaing, where a very high satisfaction rating was achieved among Proximus customers as they could enjoy Internet speeds up to 20 Mbps faster than before, Tessares is pleased to announce that its “DSL + 4G/LTE” solution has successfully gone through all the qualification steps needed for country-wide deployment. Proximus, for its part, now plans to upscale this pilot project to a nationwide Live User Test.

Strong partnership between Tessares & Proximus

Proximus has deliberately opted for an **open innovation culture** and chosen to co-create and work with partners. It is in this spirit that Proximus regularly looks for **solutions with start-ups and universities**.

Therefore, in April 2015, **Proximus** and VIVES II - Louvain Technology Fund - **invested in Tessares**, a spin-off of the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) based in Louvain-la-Neuve, which had developed an **innovative Hybrid Internet Access technology based on the "Multipath TCP" (MPTCP) protocol**. Thanks to this technology, which combines the speeds of existing fixed and mobile networks, it is possible to improve the Internet experience of customers living in large, sparsely populated rural areas (a long distance away from street cabinets).

From laboratory tests to country-wide deployments

After a study phase and laboratory tests, it was decided that Tessares' innovative MPTCP solution would be monitored and **tried out in real-life situations by Proximus customers** living in the most remote areas. Therefore, in June 2016, Proximus chose the municipality of **Frasnes-Lez-Anvaing** to launch a pilot. The idea was to combine the bandwidth of the customer's fixed network with that of the 4G network.

Today, after a successful pilot phase, achieving a **very high satisfaction rating** among customers, **Proximus** is pleased to announce that its "DSL + 4G/LTE" solution has successfully gone through all the **qualification steps needed for country-wide deployment**. Tessares' objective is to become the reference provider for hybrid telecommunications networks.

Willing to constantly **improve and offer the best quality networks**, Proximus, for its part, plans to upscale this pilot project to a **nationwide Live User Test** to assess the feasibility of a nationwide commercial launch later in 2017. This is a solution for its customers located a long distance away from a Remote Optical Platform (ROP), where an attenuation effect cancels out the efficiency of VDSL technology. Proximus' aim is to ensure access to high-speed Internet across the whole of Belgium in line with the objectives of the EU Digital Agenda which aims that, by 2020, all Europeans have access to Internet speeds of at least 30 Mbps, and half of all households enjoy at least 100 Mbps.

Geert Standaert, CTO of Proximus, explained:

*"The Frasnes-Lez-Anvaing pilot proved a great success, customers are highly satisfied as they can enjoy speeds up to 20 Mbps faster than before giving **a much better experience for internet & multimedia**. The successful integration of the Tessares MPTCP solution in our infrastructure has convinced us to deploy the service more widely"*

Tessares' CEO **Denis Periquet** remarked:

*"I'm pleased that our Multipath TCP solution has evolved to a **high level of maturity**, enabling country-wide availability of the service. This standardized technology has been enhanced with path management, giving operators the flexibility to enable intelligent traffic steering for **optimized usage of xDSL and LTE assets**. In addition, the system has been tuned for high performance on existing home gateways from several vendors, and is fully compatible with NFV, a major telecom trend. We are grateful for the **confidence Proximus has shown in the solution** which has led to substantial interest from operators across Europe, Asia Pacific and America. Tessares has three operator customers with several more expected during 2017."*

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About Tessares

Tessares is a spin-off from the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL), Belgium where researchers have, over a period of many years, greatly contributed to the design, implementation and standardization of a new Internet protocol, Multipath TCP (MPTCP), which is an evolution of TCP, invented 40 years ago and used by over 90% of the world's Internet traffic. In comparison with alternative solutions, MPTCP offers many benefits, in particular in terms of deployability, being simpler and cheaper to commercialize. Although any IP network can be bonded, the initial focus of the company is the Hybrid bonding of xDSL & 4G/LTE networks for Home/Office Gateways. Tessares has its headquarters in Belgium, with development and sales teams in Belgium and the UK.

More information: www.tessares.net

About Proximus

Proximus Group is a telecommunications & ICT company operating in the Belgian and international markets, servicing residential, enterprise and public customers. Proximus' ambition is to become a digital service provider, connecting everyone and everything so people live better and work smarter. Through its best-quality integrated fixed and mobile networks, Proximus provides access anywhere and anytime to digital services and easy-to-use solutions, as well as to a broad offering of multimedia content. Proximus transforms technologies like the Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, Cloud and Security into solutions with a positive impact on people and society. With 13,633 employees, all engaged to offer customers a superior experience, the Group realized an underlying Group revenue of EUR 5,871 million end-2016.

Proximus (Euronext Brussels: PROX) is also active in Luxembourg through its affiliates Telindus Luxembourg and Tango and in the Netherlands through Telindus Netherlands. Its subsidiary BICS offers best-in-class international wholesale solutions for voice and mobile data service providers worldwide.

