

Annex I Country briefs: UK – United Kingdom

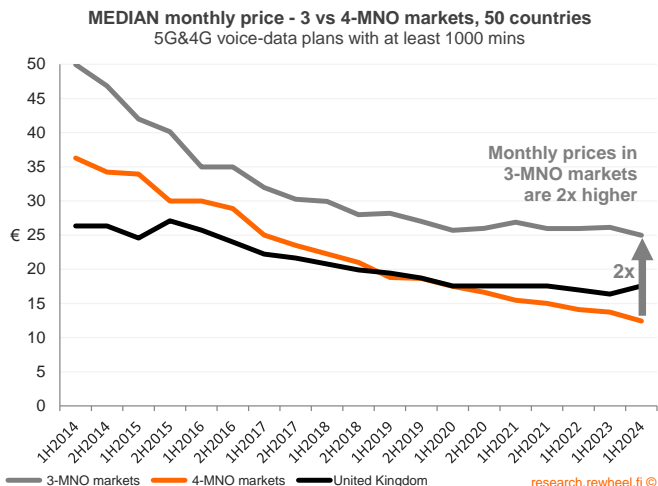
The proposed 4-to-3 Vodafone & Three merger has already pushed mobile prices higher

The proposed Vodafone / Three UK 4-to-3 merger, if approved, will most certainly lead to higher monthly prices for mobile services and on top of that will probably also lead to higher monthly prices for fixed broadband services.

Minimum monthly prices of mobile plans with large (100 or more gigabytes) data allowances have already gone up by 7%.

The UK's mobile market price competitiveness ranking fell 10 places the last 4 years: from the 8th to the 18th most competitive market.

While in the UK mobile prices were historically lower than the average prices among 4-MNO markets, this is no longer the case. UK monthly mobile prices are increasing while monthly prices in 4-MNO markets are still falling.



Four mobile network operators are present in the United Kingdom. In July 2023 Vodafone the no.3 MNO and Three (Hutchison) the no.4 MNO agreed to merge their operations and consolidate the UK mobile market down to 3 mobile network operators. The merger is currently under Phase II in-depth investigation by the UK's Competition and Market Authority (CMA). Rewheel's February 2024 research study¹ titled "The four-to-three Vodafone / Three mobile merger in the UK will lead to substantial 26% to 51% monthly price increases if the merger is approved without the upfront creation of a new 4th mobile network operator" predicted the likely price increases in the UK mobile market if the proposed merger were to be approved without the upfront creation of a new 4th MNO.

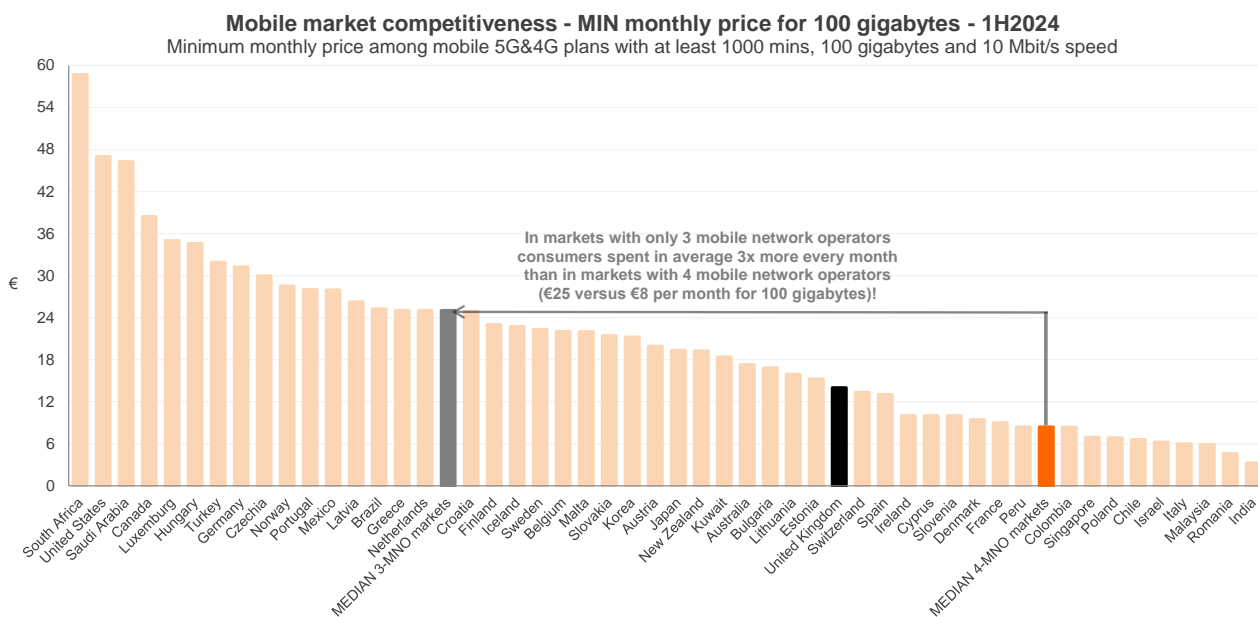
Population: 67,736,802

Mobile market: 4 MNOs, EE-UK (British Telecom), Telefonica-UK (Virgin Media), Vodafone-UK, 3-UK (Hutchison)

Mobile and broadband service providers: EE, Lycamobile, UW, O2, giffgaff, TescoMobile, Sky, Vodafone, Voxi, Talkmobile, Lebara, Asdamobile, 3, Smarty, idmobile, Superdrugmobile, Honestmobile, BT, PlusNet, Virginmedia, Now, Talktalk, Linkbroadband, CommunityFibre

Minimum monthly price for a mobile voice-data plan with 100 gigabytes: €13.98 sold by Talkmobile MVNO on Vodafone

Minimum monthly price for a broadband plan with Gigabit download speed: €30.42 sold by CommunityFibre



Minimum monthly retail price (incl. VAT & tax) for the given gigabyte volume and speed among all eligible tariffs logged in the database for country.

¹https://research.rewheel.fi/downloads/Predicted_price_increases_Vodafone_Hutchison_4_to_3_UK_mobile_merger_PUBLIC_VERSION.pdf