

Broadband Tariff Time Series – 2010-2019

INTRODUCTION

For the first time, Point Topic has made its broadband Tariff Time Series (TTS) available to customers. The comprehensive dataset contains more than 170,000 fixed broadband tariffs from around the world. They have been offered during 2010-2019 by more than 500 operators from 98 countries. Both tariffs in local currencies and in [\\$PPP](#) are available¹.

In the sections below we present selected analysis of broadband tariffs from France and the UK, based on the Tariff Time Series data.

COVERAGE AND METHODOLOGY

Point Topic tracks quarterly changes in the standalone and bundled broadband tariffs provided by operators across the globe.

WHAT WE MEASURE

The tariff database covers all major fixed broadband operators from more than 90 countries across the world.

The data can be used to analyse global, regional and country level trends in tariffs and bandwidths offered. The data can also be used to track changes in the tariffs offered by individual operators.

Standalone and bundled

We report tariffs where fixed broadband is offered as the only service (standalone) and tariffs where broadband is offered with other services such as TV, telephony and mobile services (bundles).

Residential and business

We report both business and residential broadband tariffs.

Technologies

Within this report we look at differences between the three major fixed broadband technologies – copper, cable and fibre. These can be further split into ADSL, VDSL, FTTB, FTTH, etc. The tariff dataset also includes wireless (FWA, satellite) and mobile broadband tariffs.

¹ The PPP rates used are published annually by the World Bank for a selection of countries and are readily available to the public free of charge. Those PPP rates are published at the beginning of each year are used throughout the year and hence any quarterly changes in PPP rates are not taken into account during the analysis. Some retrospective adjustments to PPP rates were made for the period 2000–2010. All PPP rates during this period were updated accordingly.

Time scale

The current dataset includes tariffs from Q4 2010 up to Q1 2019. It will be updated every quarter.

Things to note

- Our analysis presented below excludes all tariffs with a monthly subscription charge higher than \$5,000 (PPP) or which report no monthly subscription charge. (This change does not affect the raw tariff data, only the current analysis.)
- All VDSL tariffs are included in the fibre category, rather than DSL/copper.

PRICE COMPARISON ISSUES

This dataset is intended as a general indicator of the trends in broadband pricing. There are several additional variables that complicate making a direct comparison of prices across various countries. These need to be taken into account when making a more in-depth analysis:

- **Recording bundles:** As convergence is becoming a norm, ISPs are increasingly bundling broadband with other services in order to increase revenue. Our database includes not just standalone broadband services but also bundles. The sheer number of them, given various possible combinations (broadband + TV, broadband + VoIP, broadband + TV + VoIP, broadband + mobile telephony, broadband + TV + mobile telephony + VoIP, ... etc) means that we have to record only a selection of bundles offered by each operator every quarter, making sure that we represent a broad enough spectrum in terms of features such as bandwidth, the number of services offered (double play, triple play, quad play) and prices. However, it must be noted that due to the constant changes in the bundled offerings from year to year, **there will be insufficient data in some years for comparing the same types of bundles.**
- **Comparing bundles:** even when comparing bundles of the same type (i.e. bundles including the same services), it can be tricky because the same type of service, for example, TV can have different features – the number of channels included, HD, catch up and other options. Likewise, telephony service may include different call allowances, destinations and other features. Our time series analysis is looking at generalised trends in pricing and bandwidth, rather than bundle by bundle comparison.
- **Comparing standalone versus bundled broadband pricing:** standalone broadband packages will often appear to be more expensive than bundled offerings. This is largely the case because more operators in a particular country will offer standalone broadband services which will often come with higher bandwidth. Even at the operator level, this will frequently be the case, especially in the business & enterprise segment.
- **Business pricing.** Not all operators disclose the pricing of their business broadband services, which may affect the real world picture of business prices.
- **Tax charges:** Sales taxes (such as value-added tax) are included in the residential monthly rental by most operators, although this is not the case in North America where telecommunications taxes are charged on top of the monthly rental. There would be a slight difference in the rankings if tax costs were included in the quoted monthly rentals of North American operators.

- **Time limits:** A few operators still offer broadband packages that restrict the time spent online without additional charges. For a monthly flat rate, customers can enjoy 'free' broadband access at particular times of the day/night, or for a certain number of hours per month. Any time spent beyond that limit is charged at an hourly rate. These charges are not reflected in the monthly subscription that we use in comparisons.
- **Download limits:** Some operators offer entry level services with data volume limits. In most cases, these limits are generous enough so as not to affect light or medium users. Point Topic includes this type of service as a reasonable entry level service, since it does not involve adding a usage charge to the monthly cost for the typical user.

WHY USE TARIFF TIME SERIES

This comprehensive dataset enables users to analyse the dynamics of broadband pricing, bandwidth and convergence (bundling) over the last 10 years at the global, regional, country and operator level.

TTS can help to answer the following questions:

- How did the monthly charge for broadband services change over time?
- What bandwidth could the users expect over copper, cable and fibre?
- What was the cost per megabit of broadband provided using different technologies?
- What bundle combinations were offered over time and how did they compare with standalone broadband?
- How did operators compare with each other?

A WORD OF WARNING

The analysis below is just one example of possible use of the **Tariff Time Series (TTS)** data. The interpretation of the pricing, especially that of bundles, will vary depending on the selection of bundles from specific operators and countries, and on the features included in each tariff (see tariff notes). Our interpretations of data presented below are not the only ultimate truth.

BROADBAND TARIFF TIME SERIES 2010-2019 - FRANCE

CONTEXT

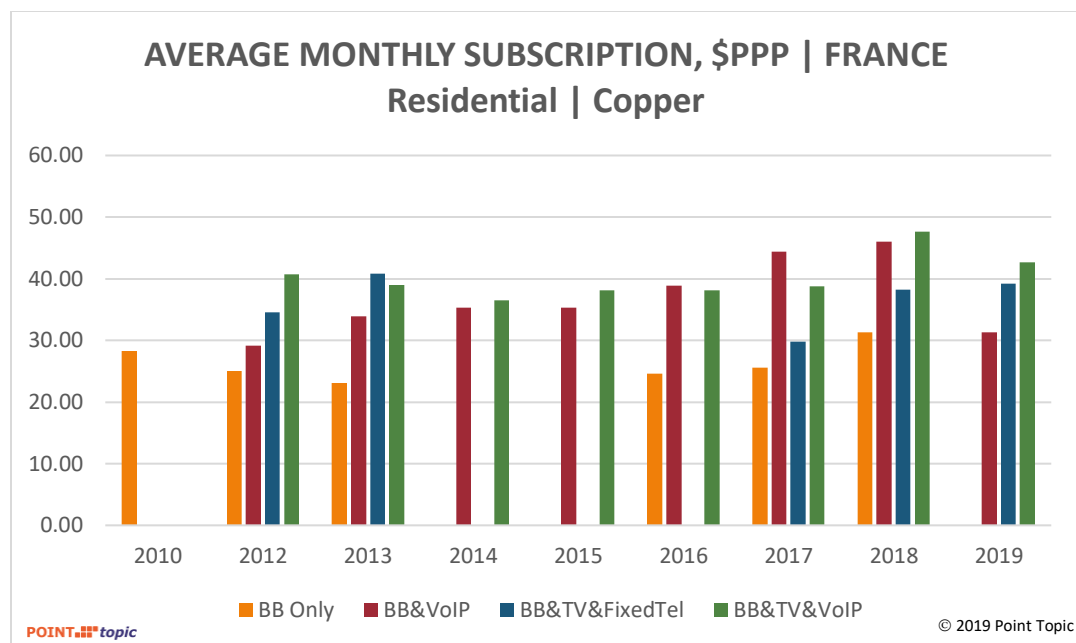
Since the introduction of local loop unbundling in 2000, French fixed broadband market has been fiercely competitive and dynamic. The telecoms industry has been shaped by two key trends – the widespread adoption of naked DSL coupled with VoIP services, and the popularity of bundled offers. DSL/VDSL remains the dominant technology, making up 74 per cent of all broadband connections at end-2018, followed by FTTH (16 per cent) and FTTLA / Docsis 3.0 (8 per cent). The share of FTTH connections has doubled over the last two years.

Fixed broadband penetration is one of the highest within EU countries, with 44.5 lines per 100 population at end- 2018. NGA subscriptions started making significant gains in recent years. France’s national superfast broadband strategy relies on FTTH deployment. The government aimed to cover 50 per cent of the country with NGA networks capable of delivering download speeds of at least 30Mbps by the end of 2017, with 100 per cent of the population to be eligible for ultra-high speed broadband services by 2022. The country is on track to achieving this target – as of 2018, NGA broadband was available to just under 60 per cent of French households, though this was below the EU average of 83 per cent. This was partly due to the late introduction of VDSL services and their limited reach.

The largest FTTH provider is France Telecom (trading as Orange). At end-2018, it had 54 per cent of all FTTH broadband connections in the country. Iliad followed with 20 per cent, Bouygues Telecom with 12 per cent and Numericable with 10 per cent. Over the last two years, Bouygues Telecom and Iliad grew their FTTH subscribers by 15-20 per cent every quarter, while France Telecom and Numericable saw quarterly growth of under 10 per cent.

TRENDS IN RESIDENTIAL BROADBAND TARIFFS

Despite the prevalence of VoIP services in France, over copper the best value added in terms of monthly charge appears to be provided by triple play bundles which include broadband, fixed telephony and TV services. For example, in 2018, consumers would pay on average \$31 PPP per month for a standalone broadband service. The triple play bundle with fixed telephony would cost them \$7 PPP more, while the triple play with VoIP would cost an additional \$16 PPP. The double play bundle (broadband and VoIP) would cost \$15 PPP more a month, which suggests a relatively low additional cost of the TV service.

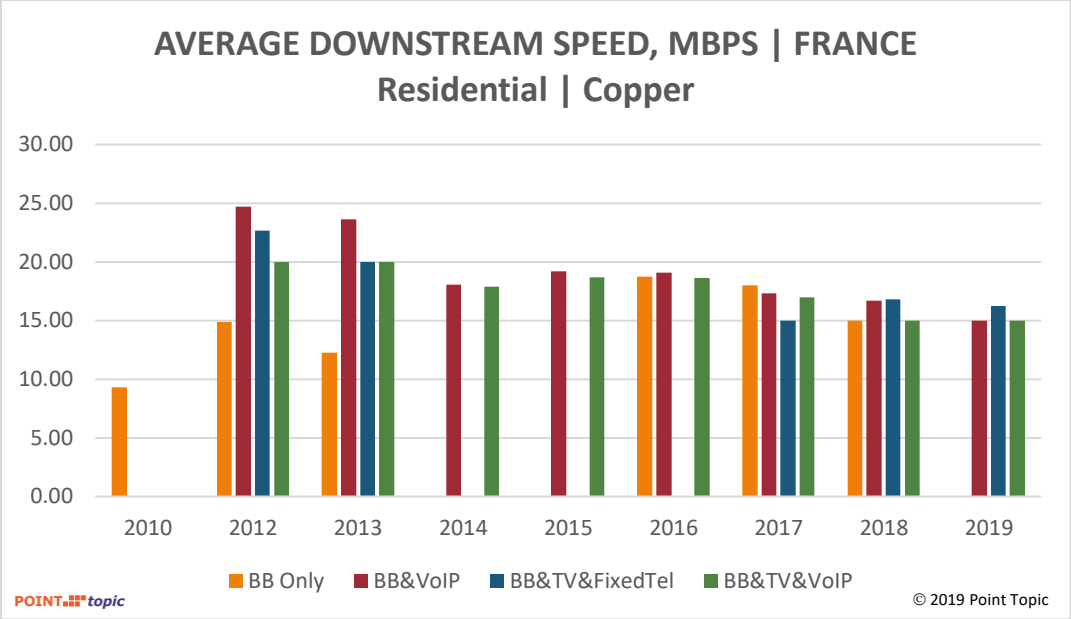


Average Monthly Bundle Premium Over Broadband Only (Copper, France)²

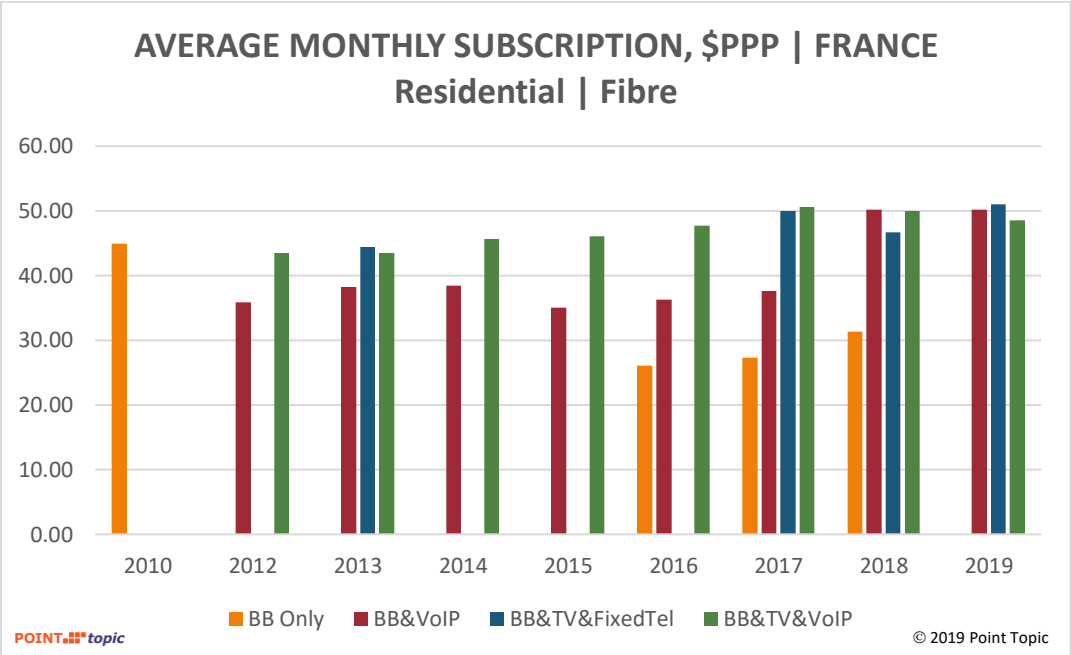
Year	BB Only (base price)	BB & VoIP premium	BB & TV & Fixed Tel premium	BB & TV & VoIP premium
2010	28.30			
2012	25.07	4.06	9.43	15.61
2013	23.07	10.79	17.80	15.88
2014				36.47
2015				38.10
2016	24.57	14.32		13.51
2017	25.53	18.92	4.27	13.26
2018	31.36	14.63	6.91	16.31

Over the last five years, the average download speed over copper networks (ADSL) remained under 20Mbps and has been declining slowly, as French operators have been focusing on expanding fibre based broadband offerings.

² Note: empty cells here and in other tables mean insufficient data for comparison.



The fibre based broadband connections in France often come with a VoIP service, hence we regarded broadband plus VoIP as the base offering and looked at the additional prices paid by consumers who subscribe for triple play bundles.



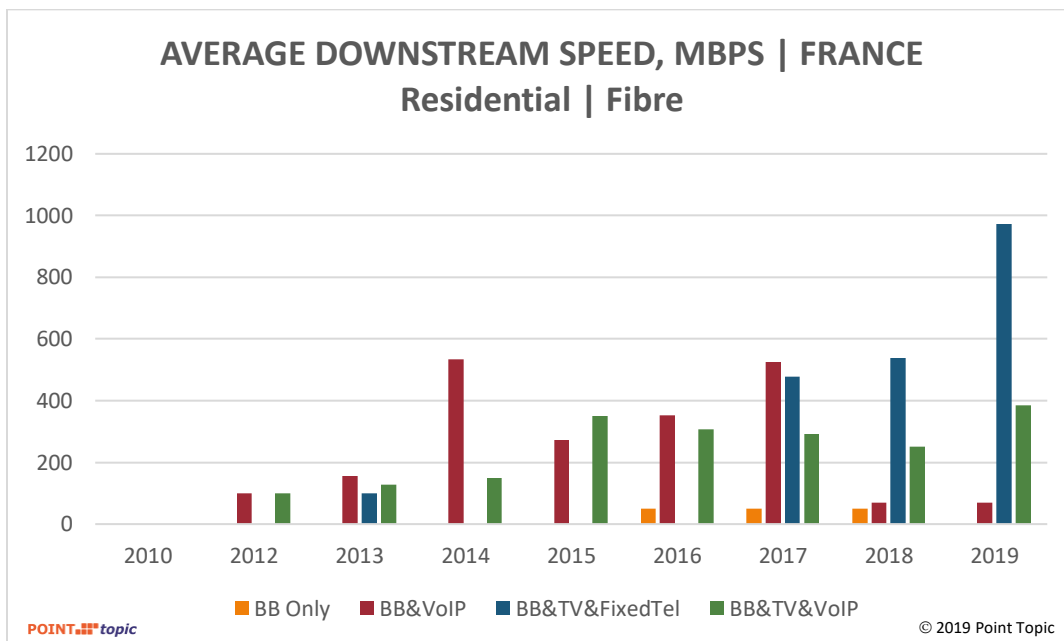
In recent years, the additional cost for triple play bundles on fibre appears to have gone down significantly. In 2019, subscribers choosing triple play bundles including broadband, TV and fixed telephony are paying only \$0.83 PPP more compared to those on double play packages consisting of broadband and VoIP. Those

on broadband, TV and VoIP bundles are paying \$1.65 PPP less than those subscribing to broadband and VoIP packages.

Average Monthly Bundle Premium Over Broadband and VoIP Double Play (Fibre, France)

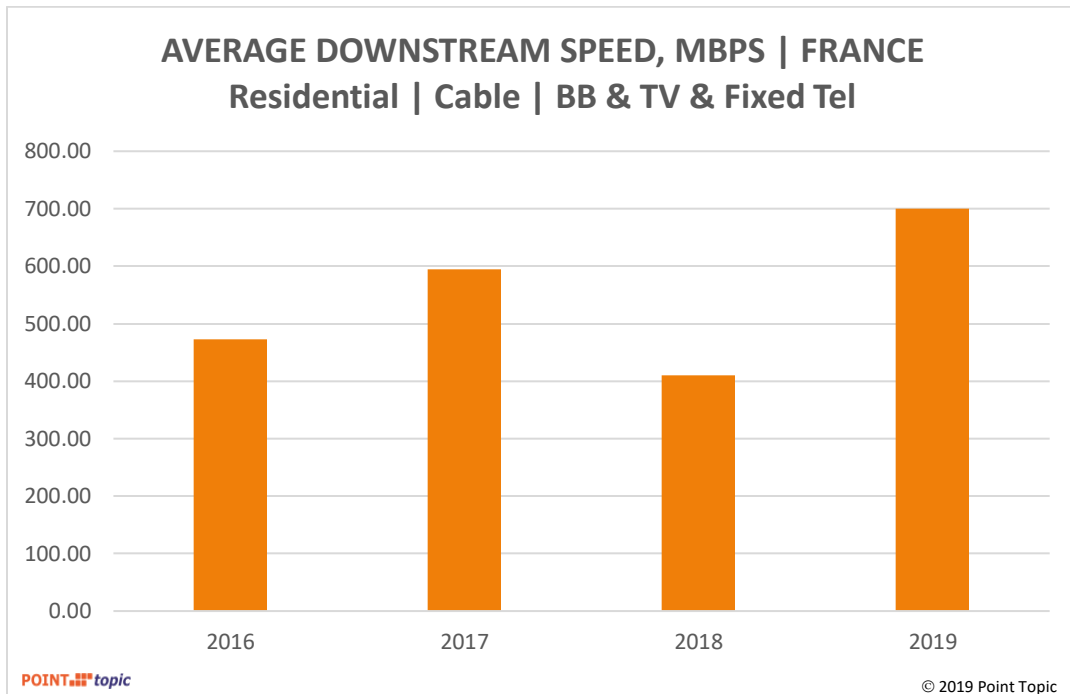
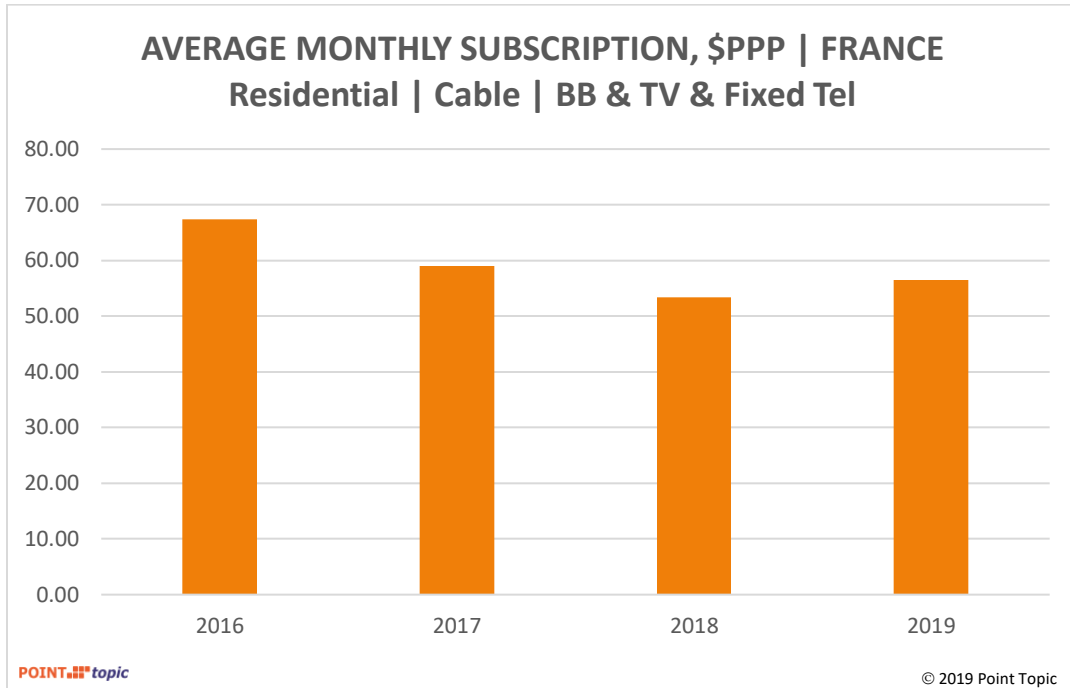
Year	BB & VoIP (base price)	BB & TV & Fixed Tel premium	BB & TV & VoIP premium
2012	35.83		7.60
2013	38.22	6.16	5.30
2014	38.42		7.25
2015	35.07		11.04
2016	36.26		11.47
2017	37.64	12.37	13.00
2018	50.20	-3.50	-0.17
2019	50.20	0.83	-1.65

At the same time, the average download speed offered on triple play packages over fibre, especially those including fixed telephony, has shot up significantly in recent years, from 100Mbps in 2013 to 973Mbps in 2019. On broadband, TV and VoIP bundles, the average speed has increased from 100Mbps in 2012 to 385Mbps in 2019. This seems to suggest that triple play bundles with fixed telephony provided over fibre offer the best value for money at the moment.



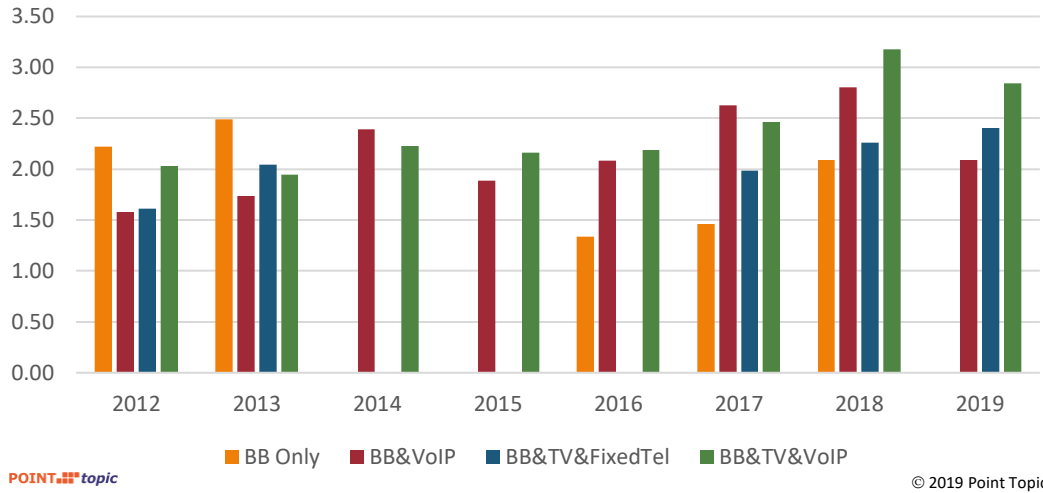
When it comes to cable broadband, the average monthly cost of a triple play bundle with fixed telephony has been coming down. It was \$67 PPP in 2016 and \$56 PPP in 2019. It went up slightly in 2019, along with a significant boost in the average download speed – from 473Mbps in 2016 to 700Mbps in 2019. In terms of average monthly subscription, cable based triple play bundles with fixed telephony are on average more

expensive than those on fibre and offer a lower average speed but they are still an attractive proposition to customers who are not covered by superfast fibre networks.

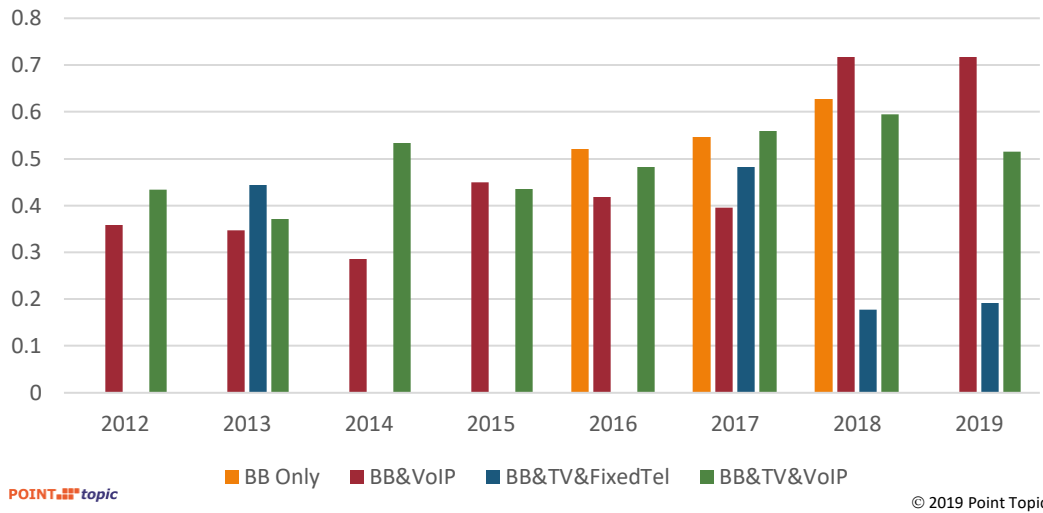


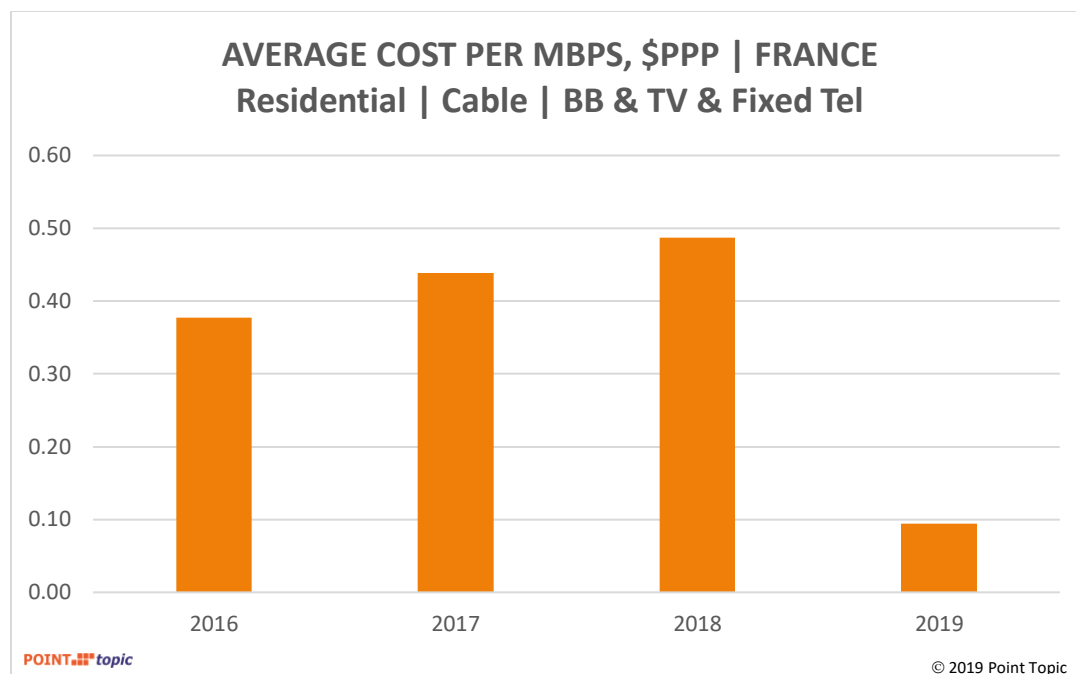
The average cost per Mbps tends to be the lowest on cable and fibre packages, especially in recent years when ultrafast fibre and cable packages have become more prevalent. For example, for broadband, fixed telephony and TV packages, the average cost per Mbps on copper varied between \$1.61 PPP in 2010 and \$2.40 in 2019, on cable between \$0.38 PPP in 2016 and \$0.09 PPP in 2019, and on fibre between \$0.44 PPP in 2013 and \$0.19 PPP in 2019.

AVERAGE COST PER MBPS, \$PPP | FRANCE Residential | Copper



AVERAGE COST PER MBPS, \$PPP | FRANCE Residential | Fibre





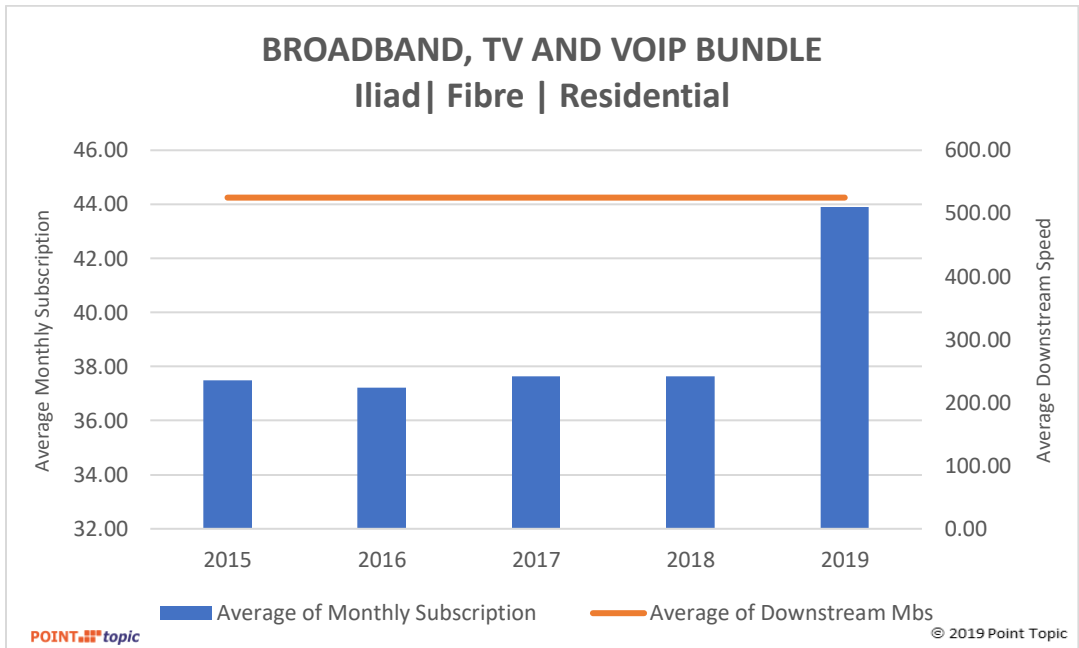
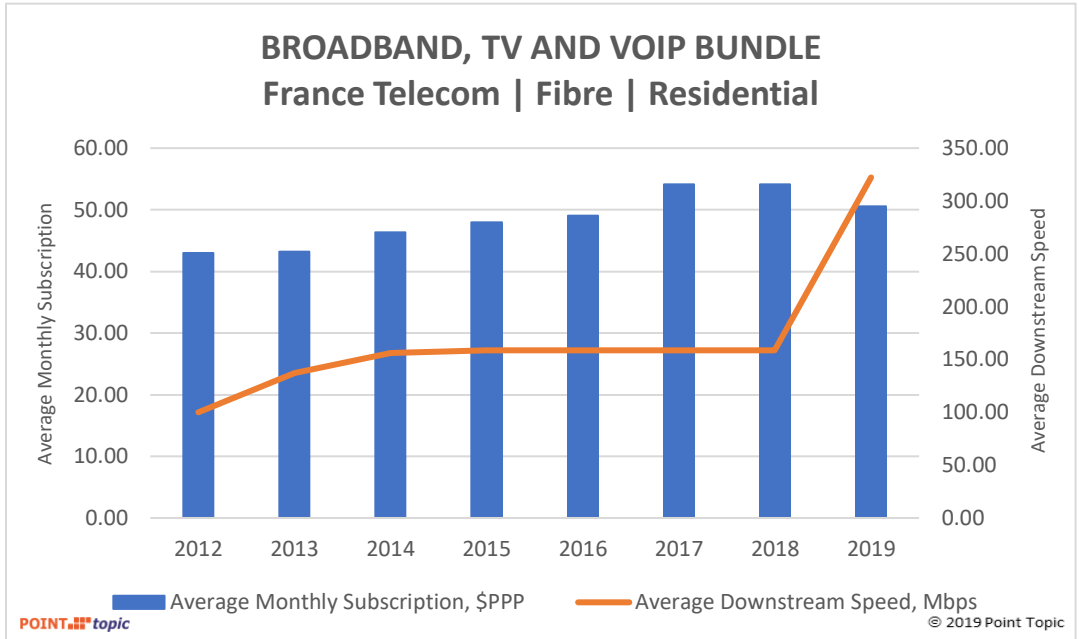
Tariff Trends by Operator

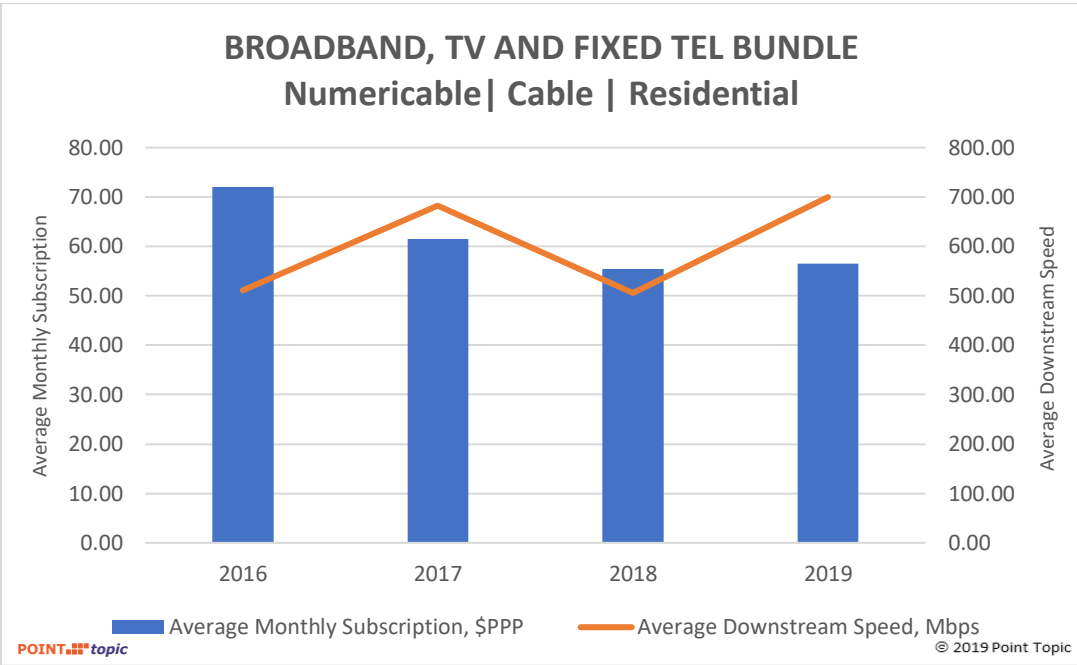
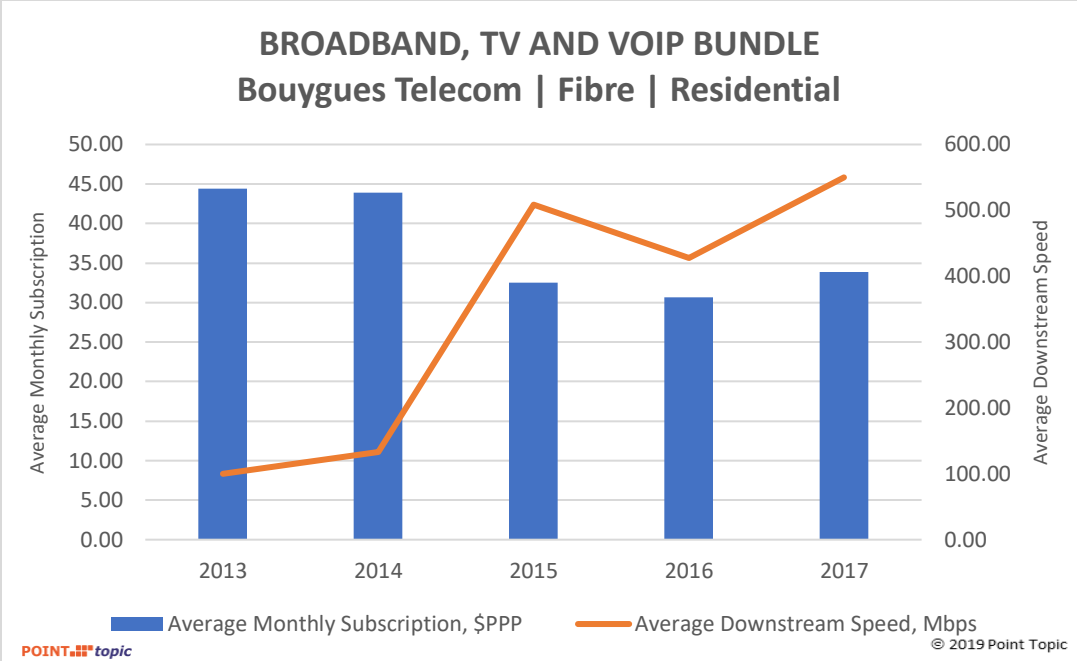
We have compared the average monthly pricing and download speeds offered by the largest operators. When it comes to triple play bundles over fibre, the altnets such as Iliad, Numericable³ and Bouygues Telecom appear to offer better value than the incumbent France Telecom (Orange). During the last few years, the alternative providers have been offering significantly higher bandwidth compared to France Telecom, which resulted in lower average cost per Mbps on Iliad's, Numericable's and Bouygues Telecom's packages.

Average Cost per Mbps, Triple Play (Broadband, TV, Telephony)

Year	France Telecom, Fibre	Iliad, Fibre	Bouygues Telecom, Fibre	Numericable, Cable
2012	0.43			
2013	0.34		0.44	
2014	0.53		0.55	
2015	0.61	0.39	0.19	
2016	0.62	0.39	0.20	0.31
2017	0.66	0.40	0.19	0.28
2018	0.66	0.40		0.23
2019	0.54	0.46		0.09
Grand Total	0.60	0.40	0.28	0.27

³ Currently known as the merged entity, SFR/Numericable

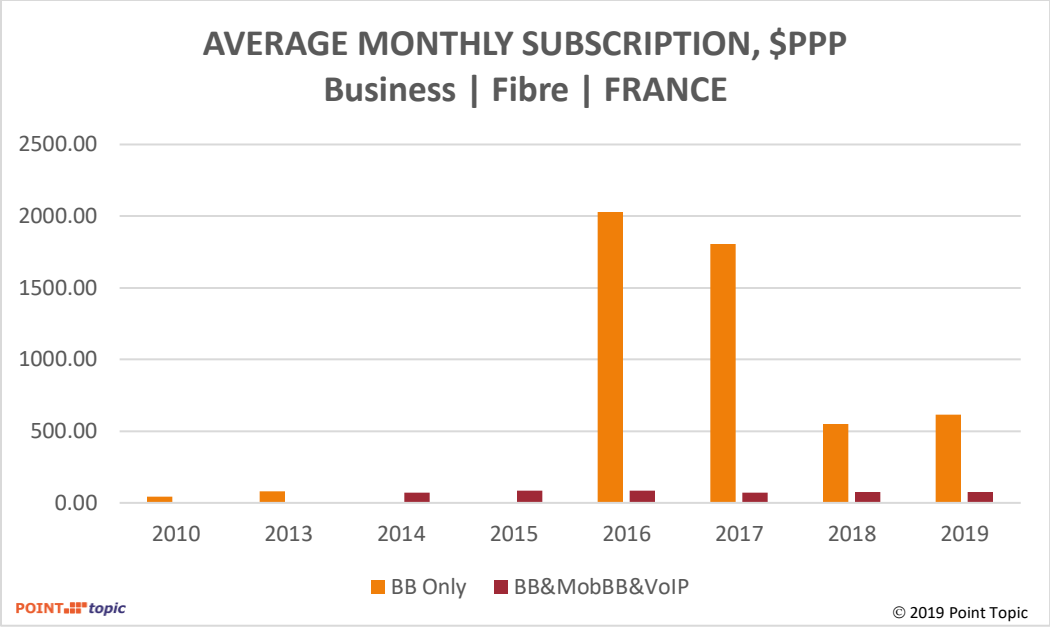




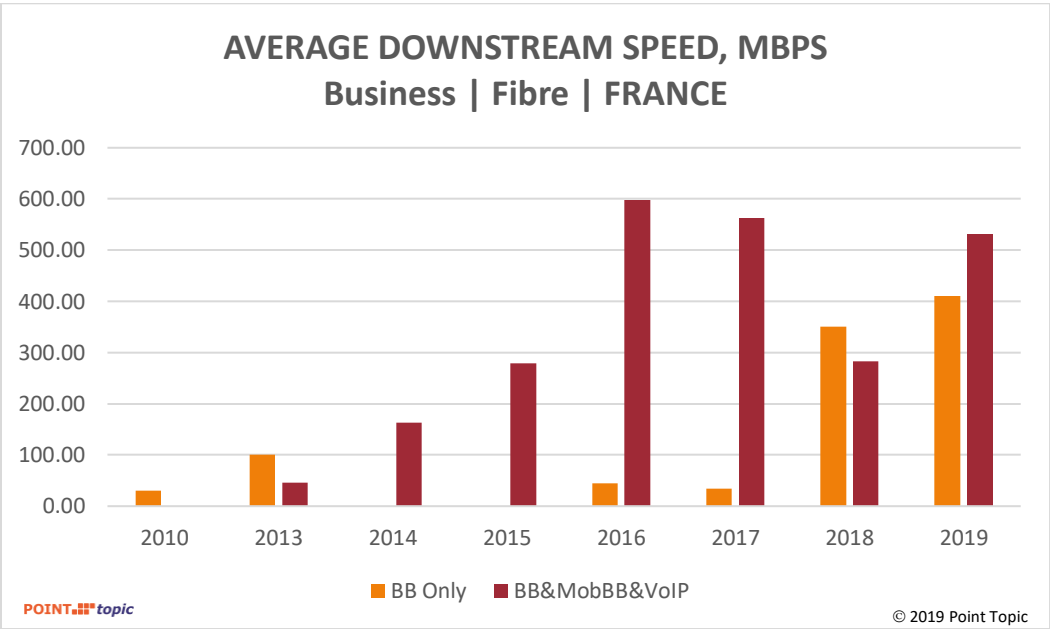
TRENDS IN BUSINESS BROADBAND TARIFFS

As mentioned before, not all operators disclose their business tariffs, so this needs to be taken into account when interpreting the analysis below.

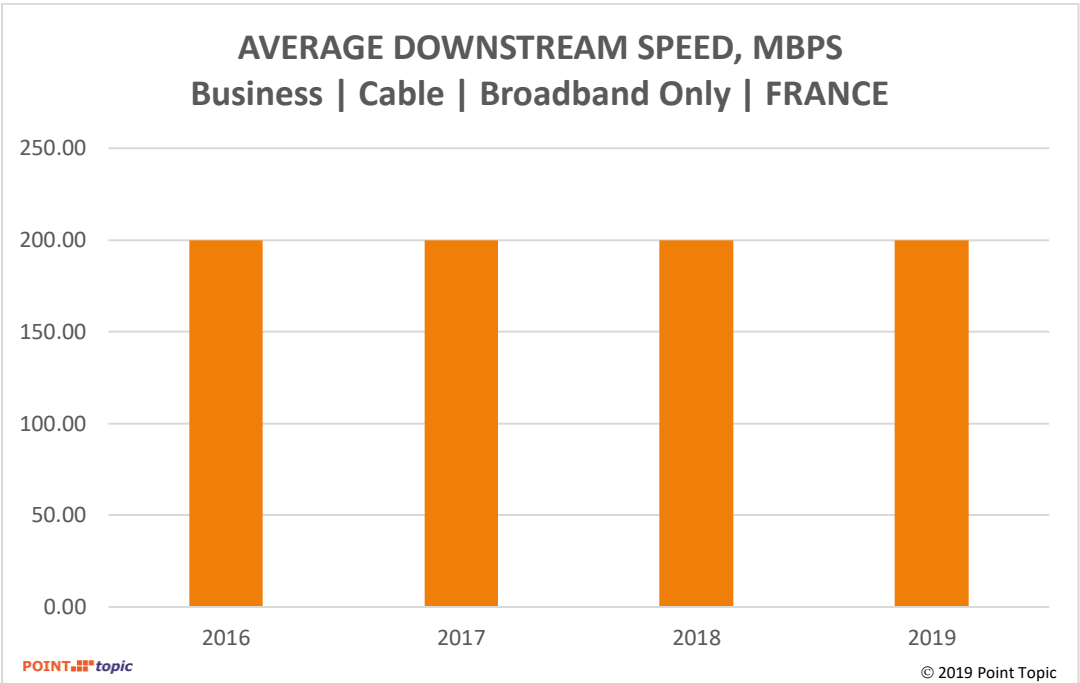
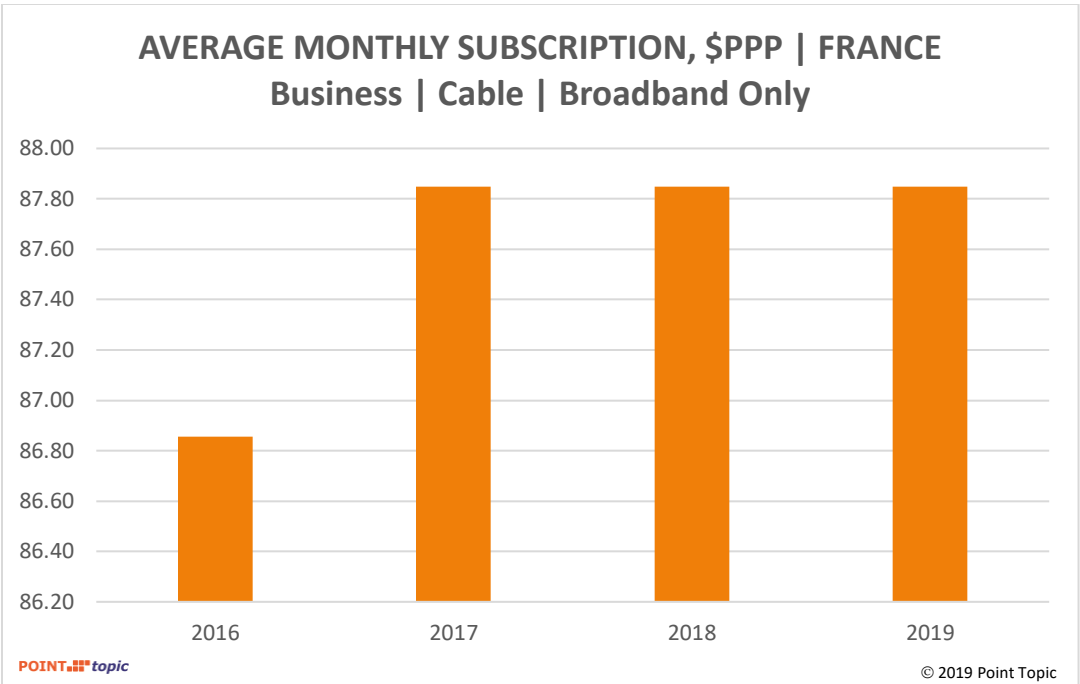
In the business broadband sector, one of the trends appears to be a dramatic increase in the average bandwidth provided over fibre and a significant drop in the average monthly tariffs. For standalone broadband, the average monthly cost of a fibre based tariff dropped from \$2,029 PPP to \$ 617 PPP in 2019, while the average bandwidth increased from 45Mbps in 2016 to 411Mbps in 2019.



One of the most popular bundles in this segment includes fixed broadband, mobile broadband and VoIP. France is one of the leading European countries in terms of 4G mobile broadband availability, with more than 99 per cent coverage, and healthy competition in the 4G sector, especially after the new entrant Iliad has challenged the existing 4G providers with ambitious new offerings. Between 2014 and 2019, the average monthly subscription for broadband, mobile broadband and VoIP bundles varied from \$71 PPP to \$74 PPP. The average bandwidth of fixed broadband in the same period jumped from 163Mbps to 532Mbps.



Average speeds and pricing of business broadband packages provided over cable has remained largely stable.



BROADBAND TARIFF TIME SERIES 2010-2019 – UK

CONTEXT

Fixed broadband penetration in the UK stood at 86.8 per cent of households at the end of 2018, up from 85.4 per cent in 2017. DSL technology stood at just over 9.5 million connections at the end of 2018 compared with over 11.4 million in 2017. Total cable modem lines were estimated at nearly 5.23 million. FTTx technology accounted for over 11.87 million lines, which includes FTTC, FTTB and FTTP. Our estimate for fixed wireless access connections was 105,000 across the UK. Overall connections of 30Mbps and above represented 63 per cent of the country's broadband market.

The UK Government has set a target to build a country-wide full fibre network by 2033, with 15 million premises connected by 2025. The overarching approach is to promote commercial investment by encouraging a competitive market to build fibre infrastructure. The Government believes that with policy reforms and targeted regulatory intervention in some areas, private investment should be able to deliver full fibre to 90 per cent of premises, with the remaining 10 per cent requiring further public funding.

In May 2019 BT Group announced that its FTTP build targets had increased from three to four million premises passed by March 2021, and that its longer term ambition had increased from 10 to 15 million by the mid-2020s, subject to the right conditions. Openreach had passed around 1.2 million premises with FTTP by end-March 2019. Based on self-reporting the alternative network operators collectively reached 1.29 million premises, the majority with full fibre, by the end of 2018/early 2019. Virgin Media added 102,000 marketable Project Lightning premises in Q1 2019 of which 86 per cent used FTTP technology. Its footprint now passes 14,510,700 premises.

Meanwhile the Vodafone Gigafast rollout in partnership with CityFibre was live in five cities as of May 2019 with a further seven cities due to go live over the next year. We estimate the FTTP footprint is 50,000 premises. TalkTalk has a plan to roll out FTTP to three million premises through independent company, FibreNation. Meanwhile Kingston upon Hull's incumbent KCOM says it completed its FTTP network covering 96 per cent of its addressable network area of around 200,000 premises by March 2019.

TRENDS IN RESIDENTIAL BROADBAND TARIFFS

Average Monthly Subscription

For standalone residential broadband services over copper, consumers have paid a fairly consistent average of around \$30 PPP since 2010 to 2019. The lowest average pricing occurred in 2017 at \$25 PPP although 2019 figures are fairly close at \$29 PPP, still lower than that paid back in 2010. For those using cable technology the picture is slightly different, with pricing steadily rising over the years from \$39 PPP in 2010 to \$67 PPP in 2019.

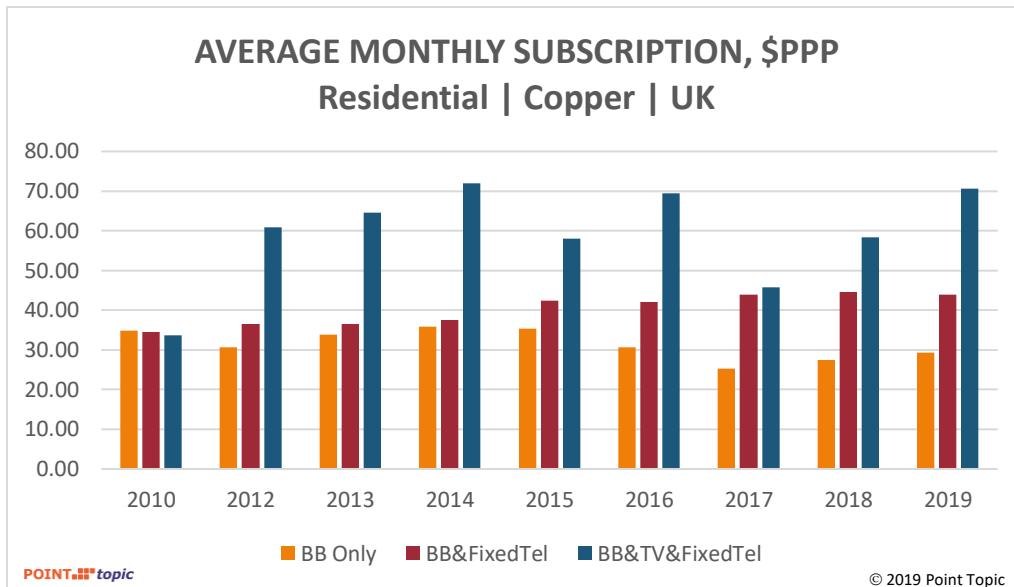
Those using FTTx services have paid more for their standalone broadband at just under \$50 PPP, with a peak in 2016 at \$65 PPP and then dropping back to \$61 PPP. This is perhaps a warning for the industry, which will be tempted to compete heavily on price to stimulate full fibre service take up. There are dangers

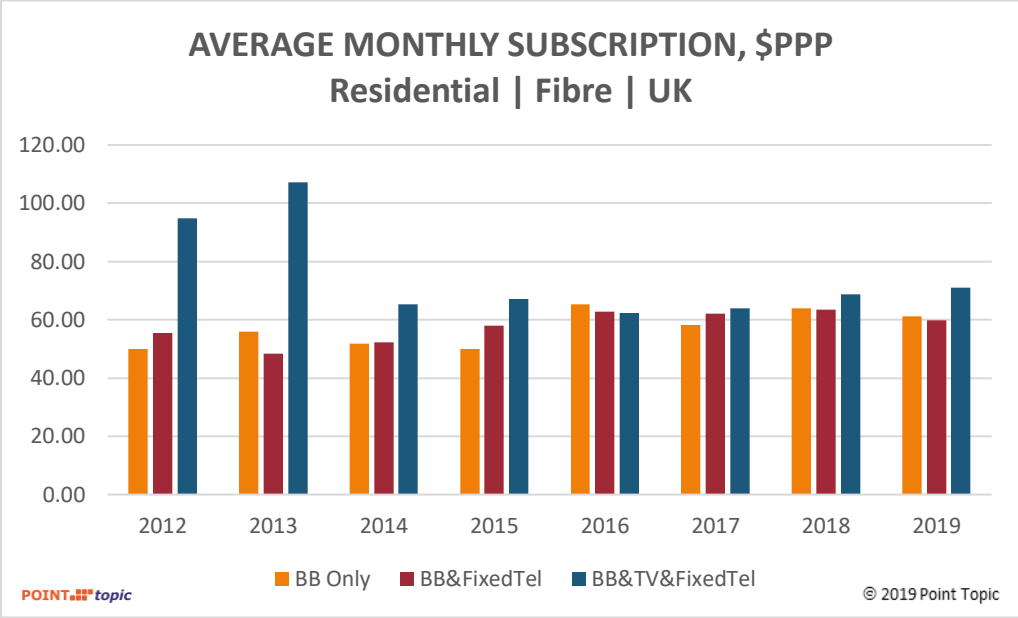
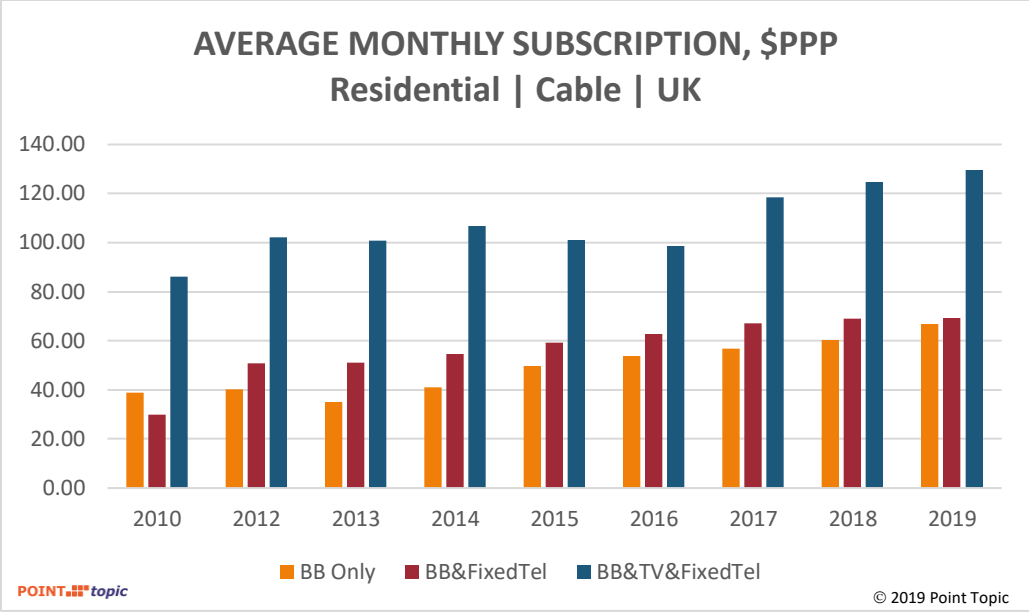
in underselling full fibre services as a result, and a race to the bottom would bring problems in creating the investment required to continue sustainable FTTP deployment.

In terms of bundles, dual play combined broadband and fixed telephony packages have risen in price over time on copper going from an average \$34.5 PPP in 2010 to just under \$44 PPP in 2019. We see a similar pattern over the years for cable technology with average tariffs just over \$69 PPP in 2019. FTTx has experienced more of a plateau, hovering around the \$60 PPP to \$63 PPP mark for the past four years.

The full bundle of broadband, fixed telephony and TV is far more varied in terms of tariff trends. Consumers using copper technology have seen three periods of lower to higher price increases following fairly large discounting in 2015 and 2017 reaching \$70.5 PPP in 2019, close to a high of \$72 PPP in 2014. For cable the picture is of steady price acceleration going from \$86 PPP in 2010 to nearly \$130 PPP in 2019. Triple play bundles on FTTx technology dropped from a high of \$107 PPP in 2013 to around \$62 PPP to \$71 PPP for the past six years.

The best value by far for triple play packages is on FTTx technology with very little extra cost over standalone broadband and dual play services. In fact in 2016 it was actually slightly cheaper on average for consumers to purchase triple play over both dual and standalone broadband options.

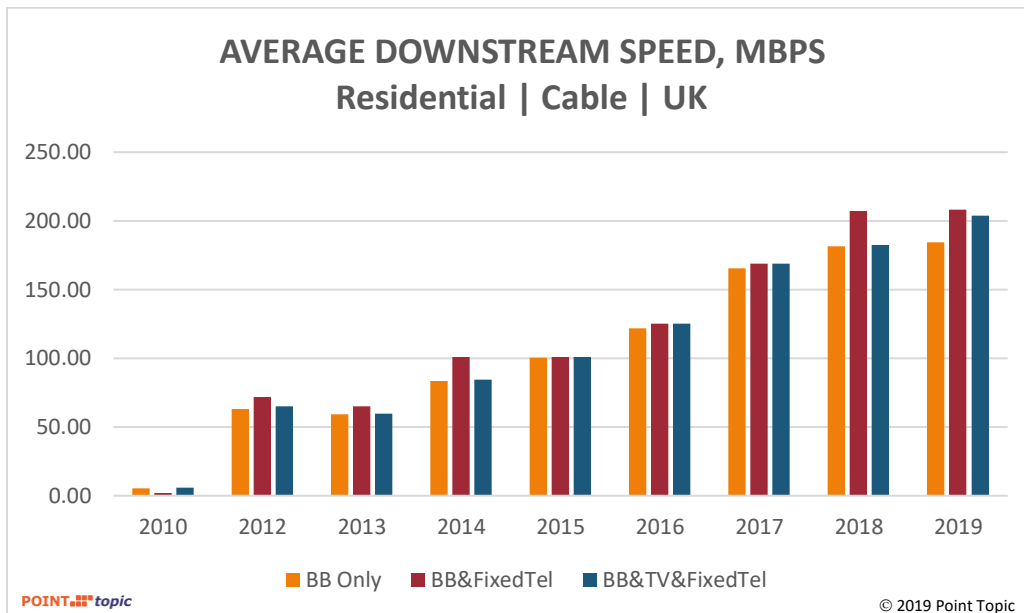
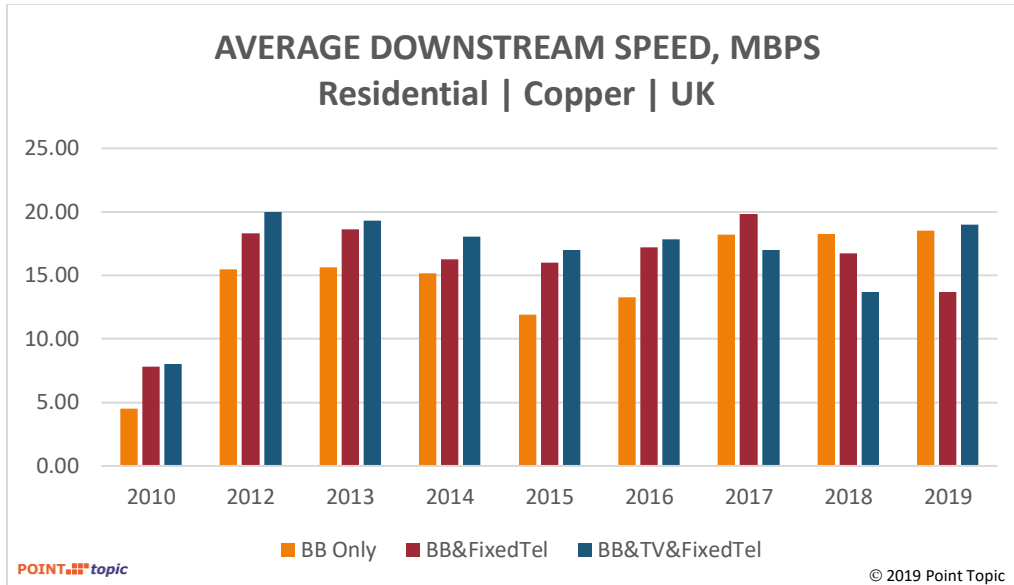


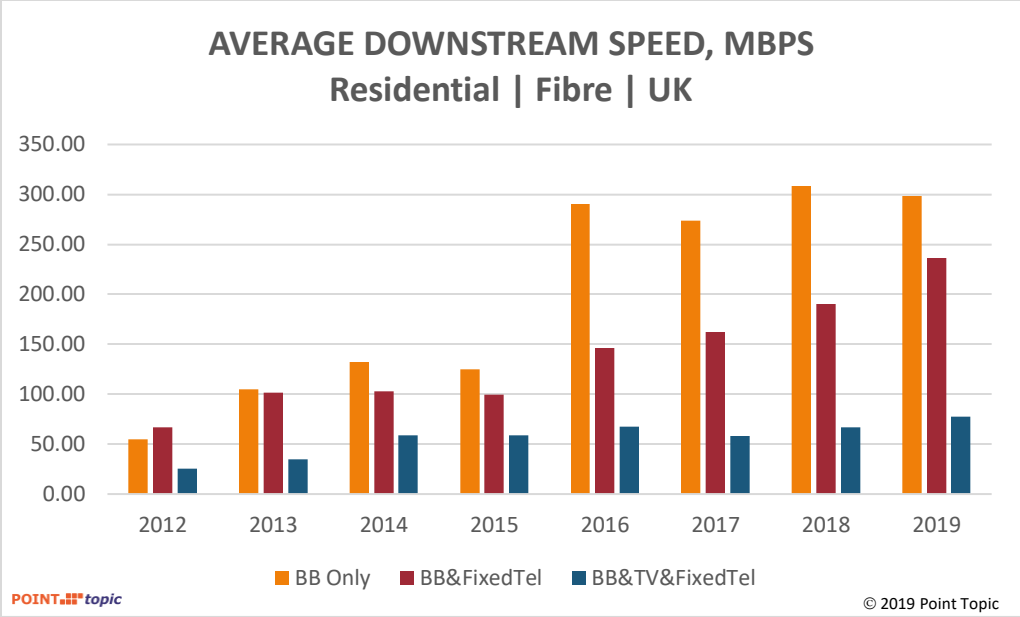


Average Download Speed

Average download speeds on copper have levelled out since a jump from 8Mbps in 2010 to 20Mbps in 2012 for triple play services. For cable the trend has been one of increasing average download speeds, rising each year from 2010 to reach 208Mbps for dual play packages in 2019. FTtx services saw their big bandwidth leap take place between 2015 and 2016 when the average speed for standalone broadband jumped from 125Mbps to 290Mbps. This has remained fairly consistent since, with average download bandwidth at 298Mbps in 2019.

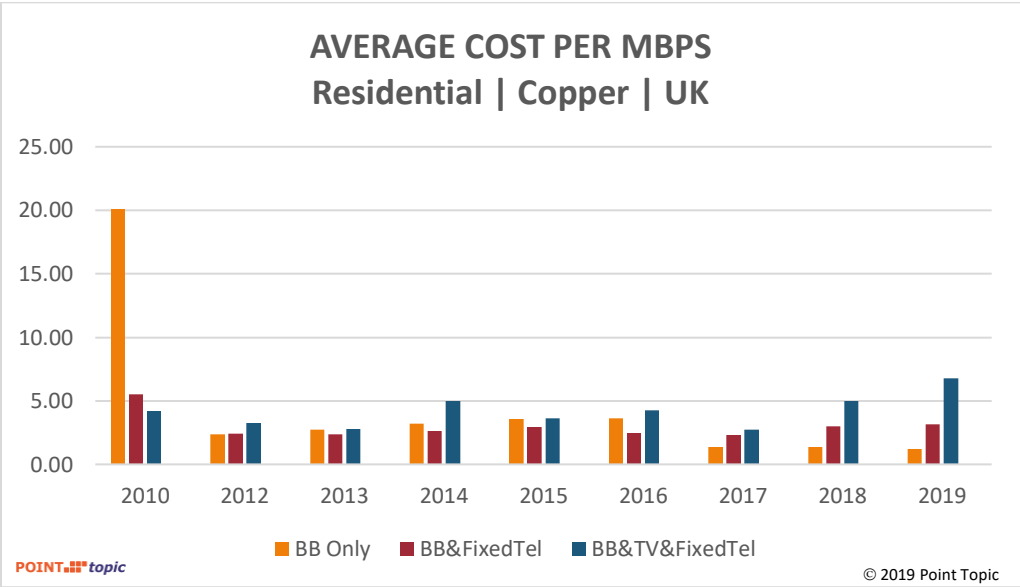
Interestingly standalone broadband registered far higher average speeds on FTTx services than either dual or triple play offers. This perhaps indicates that speed is what operators are competing on when it comes to broadband alone, in the absence of convenience and price in the case of dual play with fixed telephony plus content in the case of triple play services.

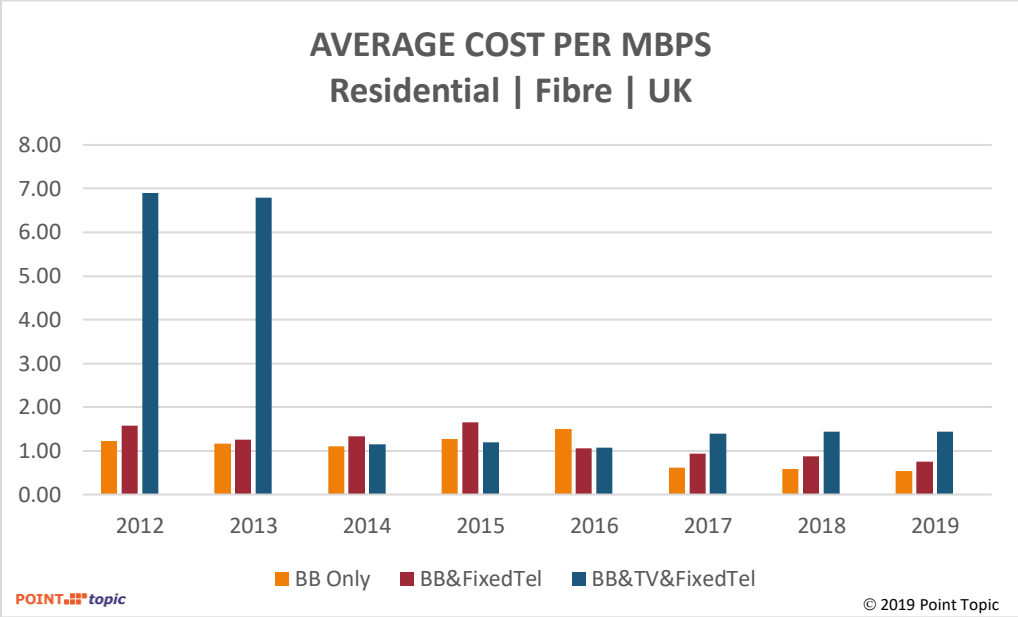
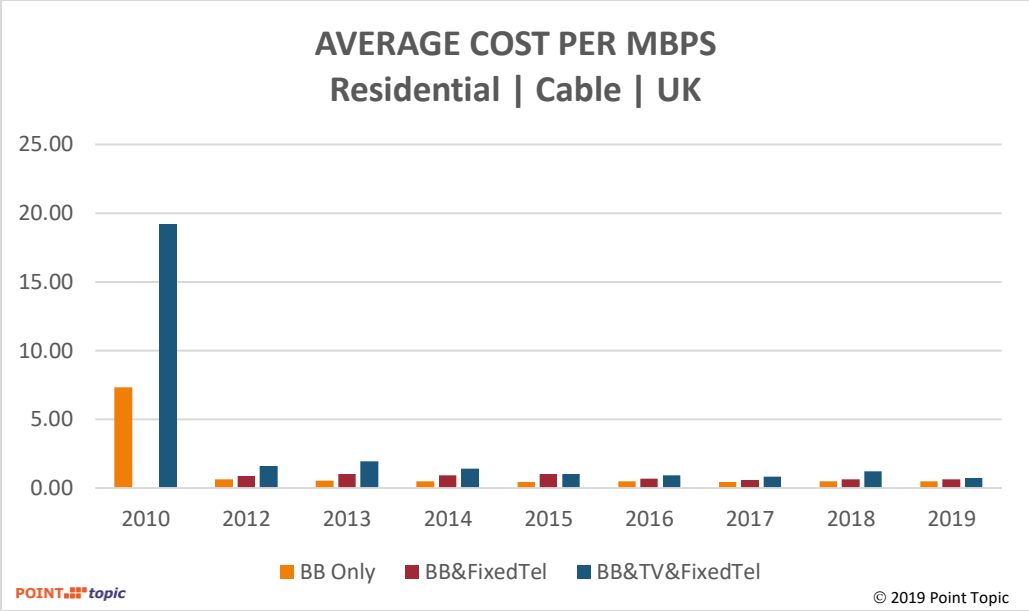




Average Cost per Mbps

The average cost per Mbps for residential broadband is lowest on cable followed by fibre packages. Copper services cost on average 2.5 times more than those on cable for standalone broadband, and a hefty nine times more for triple play bundles. The trend in average cost per Mbps has been fairly level for all three technologies.



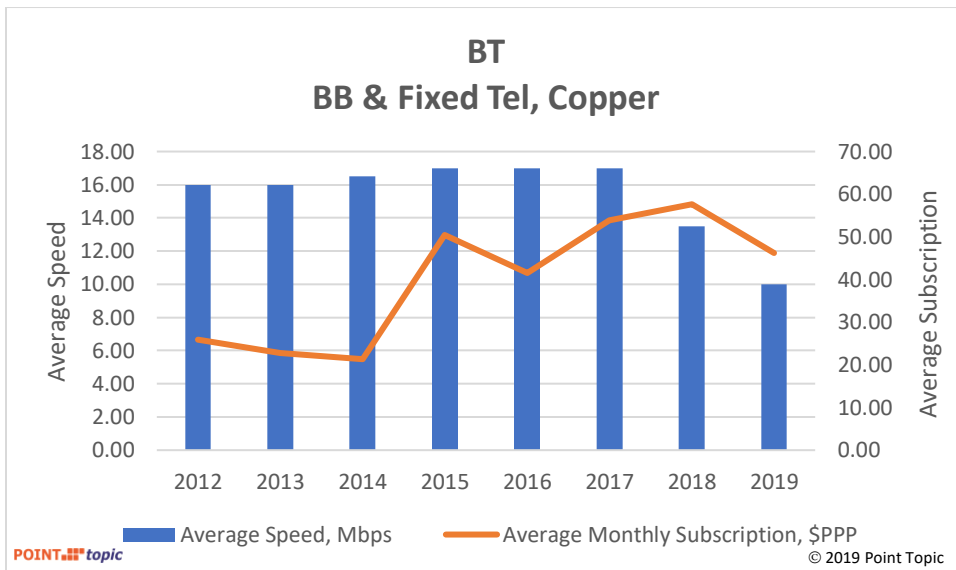
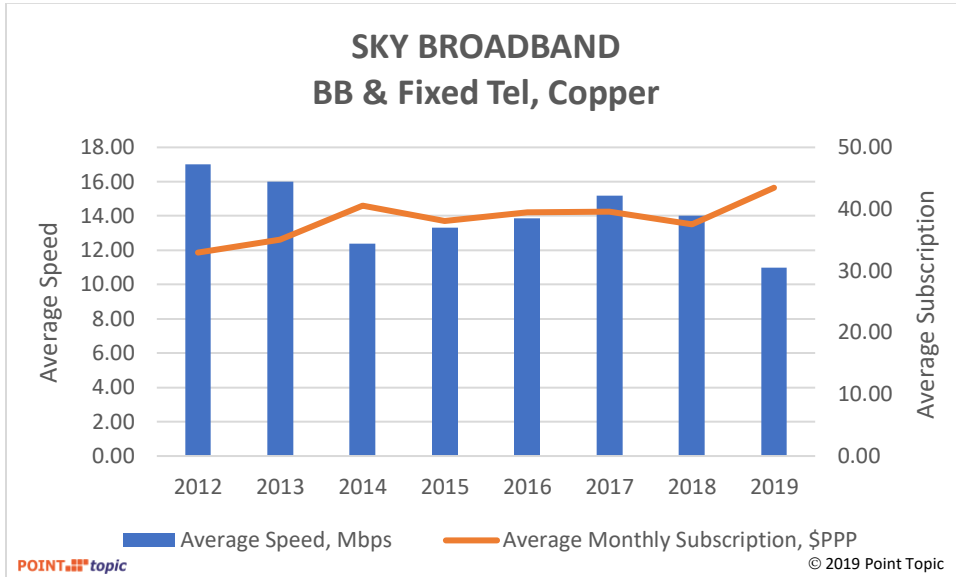


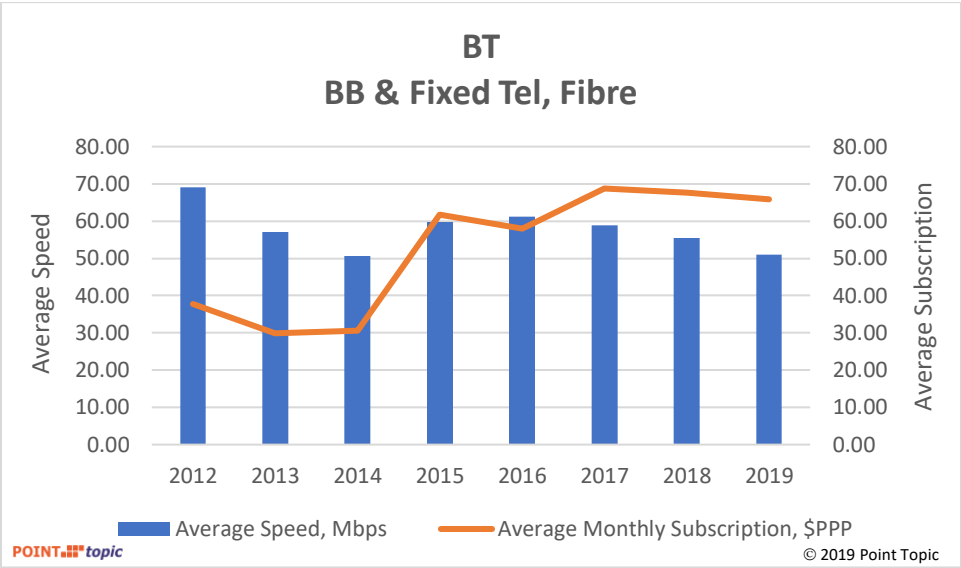
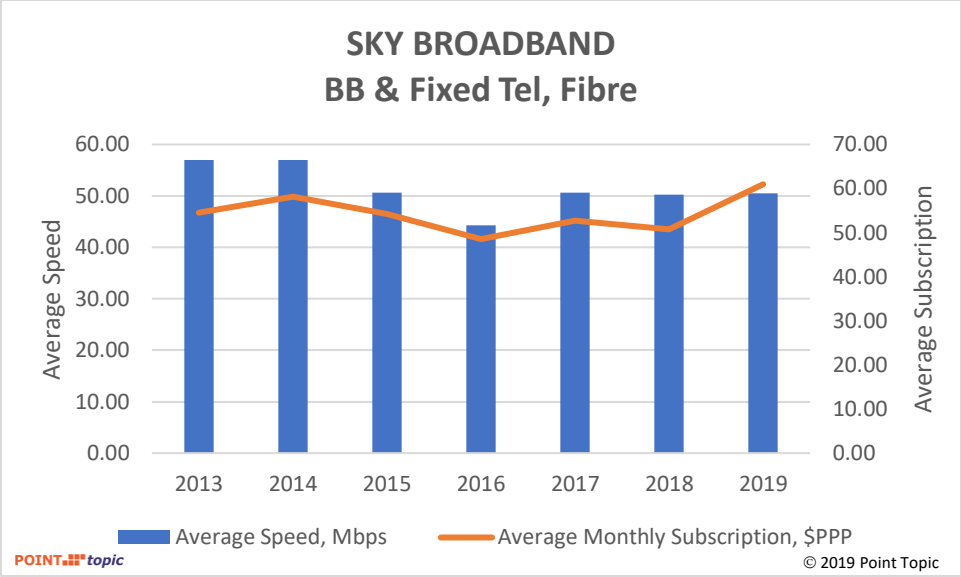
Tariff Trends by Operator

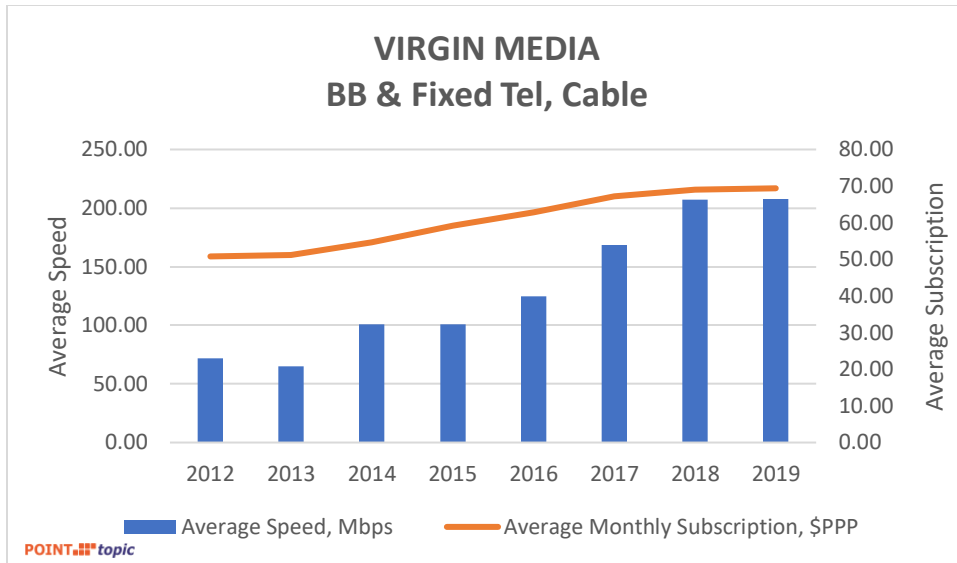
Comparing average monthly pricing and download speeds offered by the UK’s three largest operators for dual play residential services shows that Sky currently provides best value for money on copper with average monthly subscriptions at \$43 PPP and average download speeds at 11 Mbps. BT’s copper pricing is at \$46 PPP with 10Mbps as the average download speed.

On FTTx technology, BT does a little better with average download speeds at 51Mbps compared with Sky at 50Mbps. However Sky’s pricing beats BT’s, with \$61 PPP versus \$66 PPP.

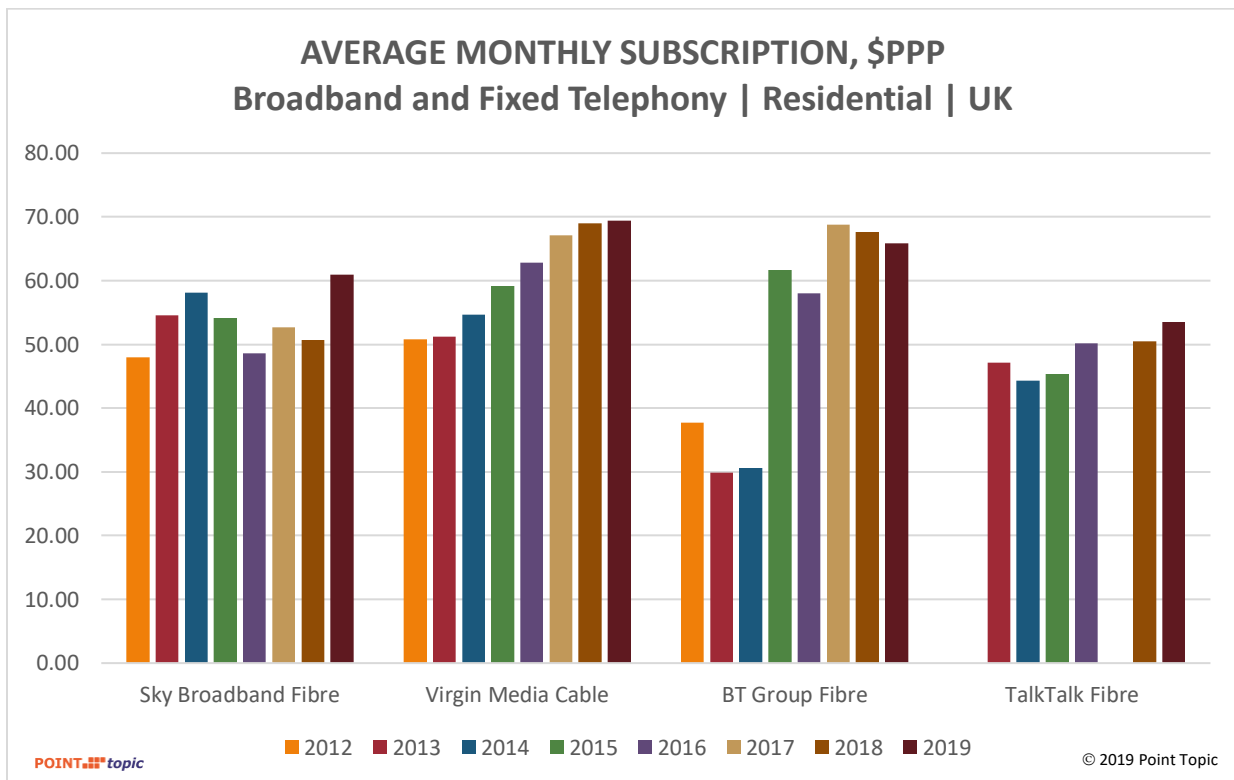
The UK's main cable operator Virgin Media has a far higher average download offer at 208Mbps but also a higher average cost at \$69 PPP. Over time Virgin Media has been much more consistent on pricing, showing a smooth and gradual yearly increase, whereas the trend at both BT and Sky is of peaks and troughs. This illustrates Virgin Media's continued success in retaining its premium pricing approach.

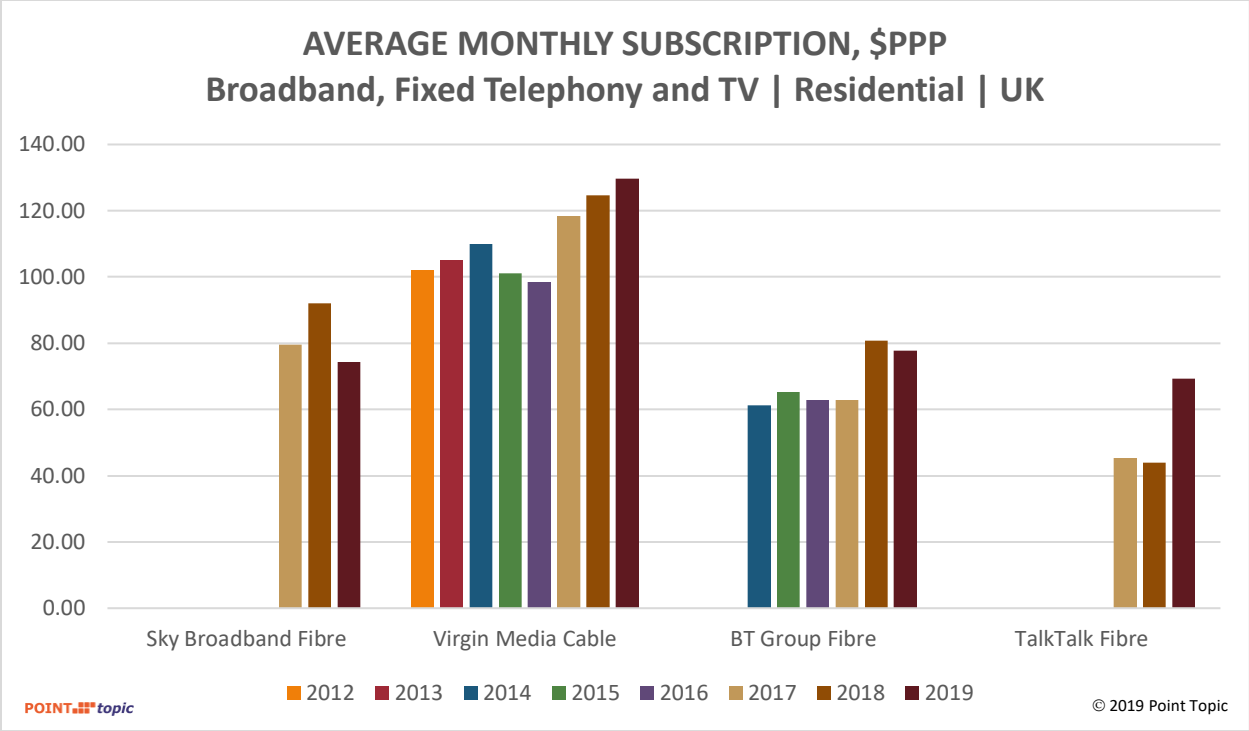






We have also included TalkTalk Fibre in our charts showing average monthly subscription over time for both dual and triple play bundles, which show the operator's discounted or value for money strategy in action. TalkTalk Fibre's 2019 pricing for dual play is at \$53.5 PPP compared with the next lowest which is Sky at \$61 PPP. For triple play packages TalkTalk charged on average \$69 PPP compared with BT, its nearest rival in terms of pricing, at \$78 PPP.





TRENDS IN BUSINESS BROADBAND TARIFFS

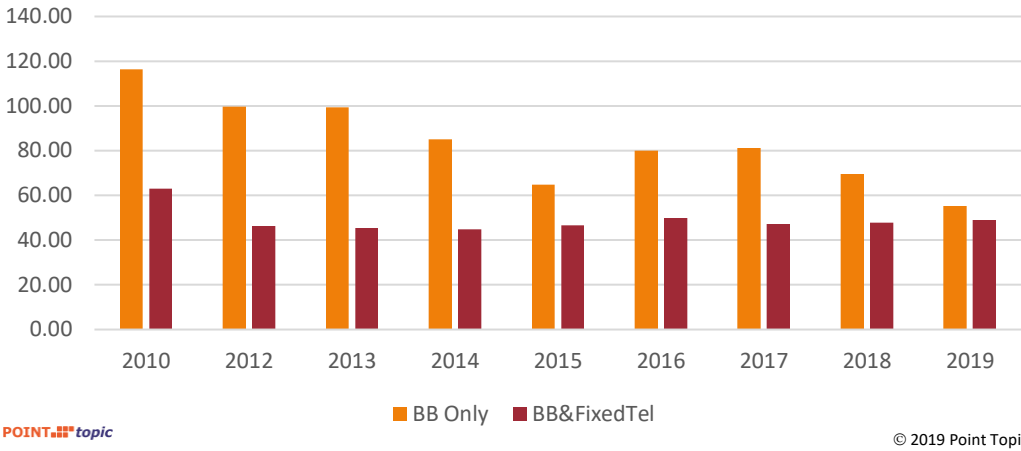
In the UK’s business broadband market as in France, a key trend has been a decrease in average monthly tariffs with a rise in the average download speeds provided. The sector still lacks transparency with some players making it difficult to view their tariffs. Indeed, it tends to be the newer players that openly publish business broadband pricing, take more flexible approaches to contracts and innovate on customer care, as they seek to build market share.

Average Monthly Subscription

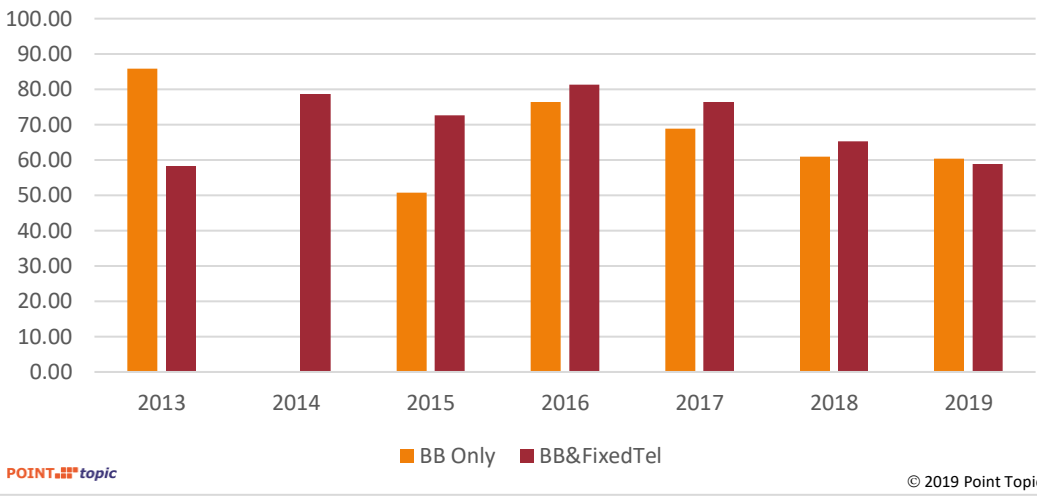
On copper average pricing for standalone broadband has halved from \$116 PPP in 2010 to \$55 PPP. There has been less of a decrease in dual play services offering broadband and fixed telephony, which now sits at \$49 PPP. Cable pricing is much higher at \$60 PPP for standalone broadband and \$59 PPP for dual play in 2019, again illustrating Virgin Media’s ability to maintain a pricing premium.

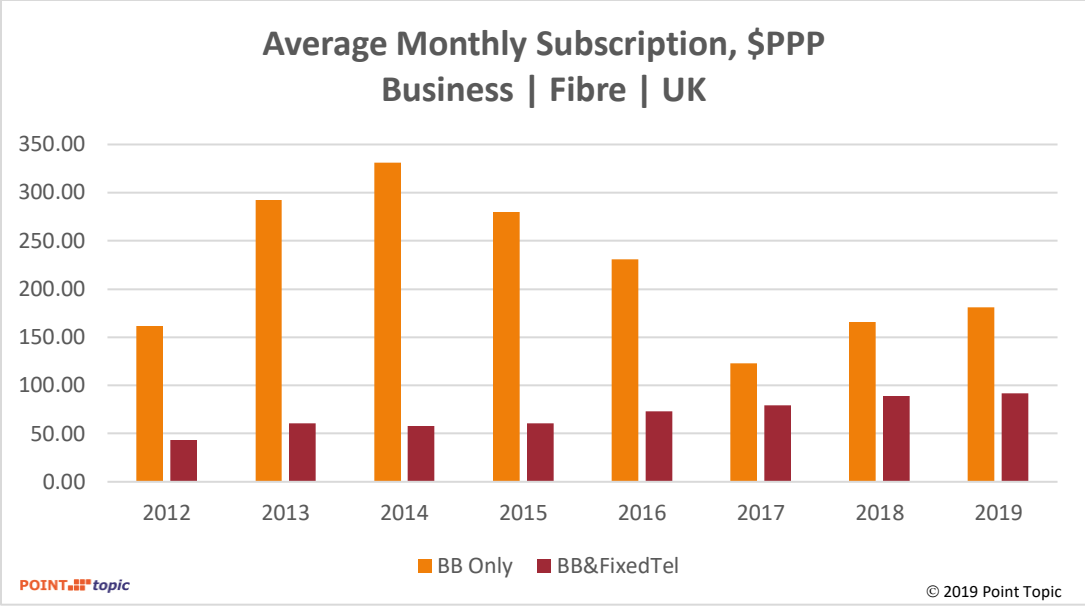
FTTx technology pricing for business services has been more erratic, hitting a peak in 2014 for standalone broadband at \$331 PPP, dropping to \$123 PPP in 2017 before beginning to rise again to a current average of \$181 PPP.

AVERAGE MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION, \$PPP Business | Copper | UK



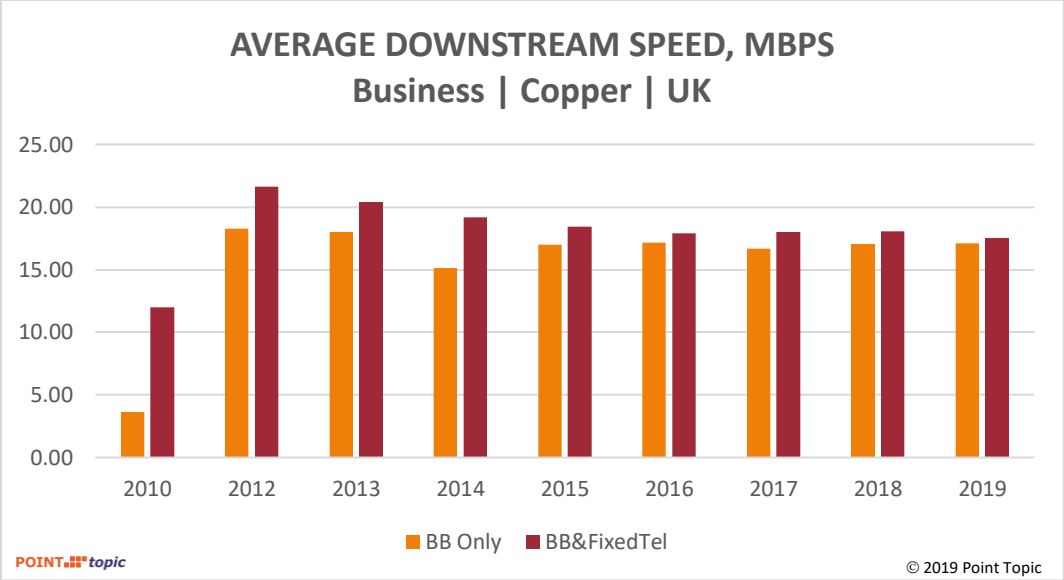
AVERAGE MONTHLY SUBSCRIPTION, \$PPP Business | Cable | UK

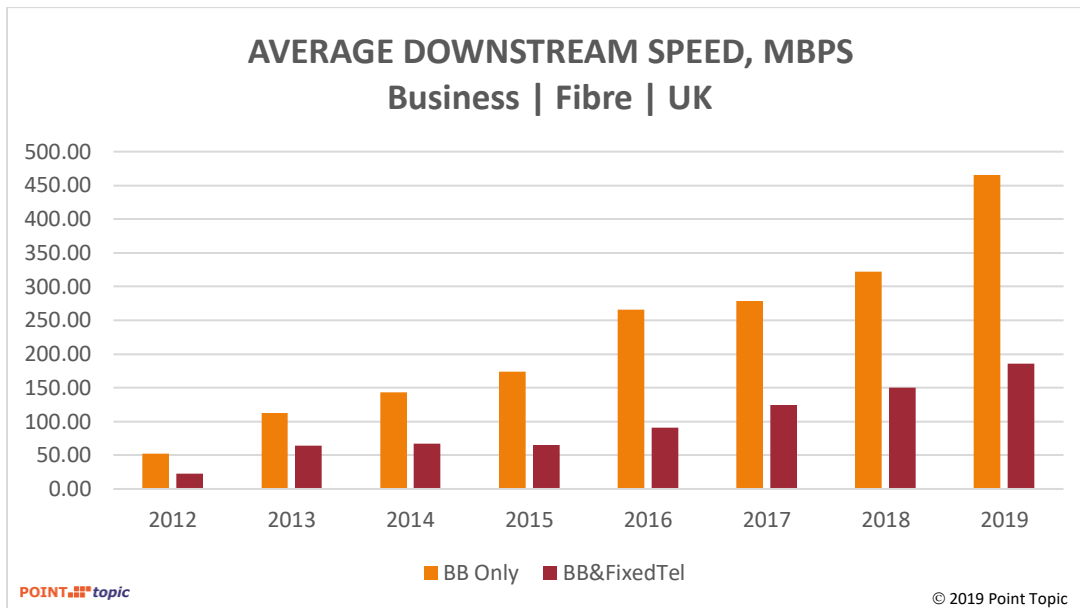
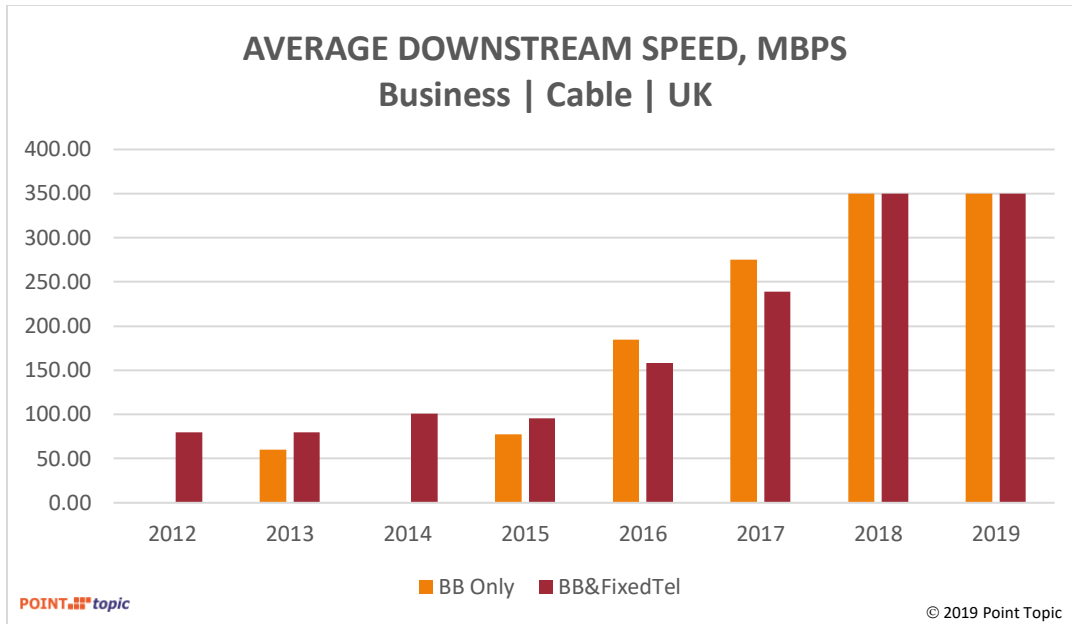




Average Downstream Speed

On copper average download speeds have remained fairly static between 2010 and 2019, in sharp contrast to both cable and FTTx technology, which have both seen big increases. FTTx now outperforms cable with average download speeds at 466Mbps compared with cable at 350Mbps. FTTx however, still lags cable for dual play offerings.





GET ACCESS TO DATA

To perform your own analysis, get access to the full global dataset which covers more than 170,000 tariffs offered by more than 500 operators from 98 countries between 2010 and 2019. For pricing information see our [Tariff Time Series page](#).