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Press release

## PRINT MEDIA DISTRIBUTION

### Arcep imposes a six-month freeze on Presstalis client publishers' termination notices

Paris, 17 December 2019

Today, the Arcep body responsible for settling disputes, legal proceedings and investigations (RDPI), adopted a Decision<sup>1</sup> on a provisional, six-month freeze on termination notices from publishers whose publications are distributed by the firm Presstalis.

This Decision comes in response to a consultation with the sector's players<sup>2</sup>. Seventeen print media distribution entities (couriers, cooperatives, publishers and publisher unions, labour unions) provided feedback in response to this consultation. Arcep examined these observations with the utmost attention, and extends its thanks to all those who responded for their valuable contributions.

The Decision and the contributions will be published in the coming days.

#### **A Decision justified by the need to ensure continuity in the distribution of daily general interest and political newspapers**

The Arcep body responsible for settling disputes, legal proceedings and investigations' (RDPI) attention was drawn to the number of termination notices from Presstalis client publishers, which were set to fall due shortly.

In light of the elements that were brought to its attention, Arcep's "RDPI" body concluded that Presstalis's already fragile economic situation would be significantly aggravated by the loss of additional publishers. This in turn would create a serious risk that the firm Presstalis would be forced to interrupt its print media distribution, and notably the distribution of daily general interest and political newspapers. As of this writing, Arcep's "RDPI" body has not identified a sufficiently complete alternative to ensure continuity in the distribution of daily general interest and political newspapers in the very short term. It therefore decided to impose a six-month freeze on current and upcoming termination notices, in accordance with Article 22 of the "Bichet" Act<sup>3</sup>, which stipulates that the continuity of daily general interest and political newspapers' distribution must be ensured when it is under serious and immediate threat.

#### **A temporary and exceptional decision**

The purpose of this decision is to address a short-term situation. Arcep is nevertheless keen to underscore its determination to carry its action through to the medium-term, with a view to updating and improving the efficiency of print media distribution. Publishers must be able to choose their distribution system, while complying with the principles of the Bichet Act, and any decision that comes to restrict that choice can only be exceptional and temporary. As it announced during the meeting with the sector's players, on 21 November, Arcep wants to establish a medium-term vision. To this end, it will be consulting with the sector's stakeholders in the very near future.

#### **Arcep at a glance**

The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications, Postal Affairs and Print Media Distribution (Arcep), a neutral and expert arbitrator with the status of independent administrative authority (IAA), is the architect and guardian of internet, fixed and mobile telecoms and postal networks in France.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision No. 2019-1868-RDPI

<sup>2</sup> [Arcep Press Release of 26 November 2019](#)

<sup>3</sup> Act No. 47-585 of 2 April 1947, on the status of newspaper and periodical shipping and distribution companies (aka the "Bichet Act") as amended on 18 October 2018.

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