
Press release

COPPER NETWORK SWITCHOFF

Arcep publishes the responses to the public consultation on the Orange copper network switchoff plan

Paris, 29 July 2022

Arcep is publishing all of the contributions it received to the public consultation on the Orange plan for the switchoff of its legacy copper network, which ended on 4 April 2022¹. In the wake of this consultation, Arcep wanted to ask Orange some additional questions. Orange's answers to these questions, which provide more detail on or complete the plan published for consultation, are also being made public today.

Fibre to the Home (FttH) will replace the legacy copper network

In Q1 2022, FttH networks covered approximately 72% of premises in France, and subscriptions to FttH plans stood at more than 15 million. For reasons of technical performance and obsolescence, but also for efficiency, cost-effectiveness and environmental footprint-related reasons, it does not make sense in the long run to keep and maintain two complete, parallel, networked infrastructures (i.e. the legacy copper network and new FttH networks).

In late 2019, Orange announced that it wanted the technical switchoff of its network to take place gradually, starting in 2023, and be complete by 2030. In accordance with the framework established by the market analysis decisions of December 2020, in January 2022 Orange submitted its draft copper network switchoff plan to Arcep, which in turn submitted the plan to a public consultation that ran until 4 April 2022. Today, Arcep is publishing the responses it received to that consultation.

At the Authority's request, Orange provided additional details and supplementary information on its initial plan. Other adjustments may also be made, after having obtained initial feedback.

Following its public consultation, Arcep submitted additional questions to Orange. Today, the Authority is also publishing the answers provided by Orange, which further detail and complete its initial plan.

Orange also plans on mapping out its switchoff plan through "thematic handbooks" which will be amended over time according to the feedback from the first areas to experience the switchoff, and thereby adjust Orange's copper switchoff plan accordingly.

Arcep will work to enforce the regulatory framework defined for Orange's switchoff of its copper local loop network

Among the factors that will ensure the switchoff plan's success, Arcep believes it is essential that Orange set up (national and local) governance schemes, and project management tailored to the challenges and difficulties that such an endeavour represents. The additional answers from Orange provide details on these matters.

In addition, Arcep will ensure compliance with the framework established by its decisions, and particularly the conditions laying out the criteria for the network switchoff, and the obligations regarding transparency and sharing data with third-party operators, be they operators deploying FttH networks, commercial operators or business market operators. It will also work to ensure ongoing healthy competition in the broadband and superfast broadband market.

Conscious of the impact that this switchoff plan will have on every user, both consumers and businesses, as well as operators, particularly when it comes to maintaining a decent quality of service, Arcep will also be very mindful of the feedback on the first switchoff operations, in its future market analysis decisions.

¹ [Arcep public consultation on the Orange copper local loop switchoff plan \(7 February 2022 – 4 April 2022\)](#)

The operational execution of the Orange switchoff plan marks an important step in the drive to achieve nationwide fibre access in France

Orange is currently working on creating a set of municipalities where it wants to carry out a technical switchoff of its copper local loops by the end of 2024.

Orange's plan for switching off its legacy copper network will therefore enter into the operational implementation stage. Arcep underscores the importance of this milestone which marks a major step in the transition to fibre as the infrastructure of reference for the supply of fixed electronic communication services.

Associated documents:

- [Draft of the Orange copper local loop switchoff plan](#)
- [Responses received by Arcep to the public consultation that ran from 7 February to 4 April 2022](#)
- [Orange's answers to Arcep's questions, posed in the wake of the public consultation on the Orange copper local loop switchoff plan](#)

To find out more:

The Arcep Decisions establishing the framework for the copper network switchoff

[Decision No. 2020-1445 on analysis of market "GC" – wholesale infrastructure access](#)

[Decision No. 2020-1446 on analysis of market "3a" – wholesale local access provided at a fixed location](#)

[Decision No. 2020-1447 on analysis of market "3b" – wholesale central access provided at a fixed location](#)

[Decision No. 2020-1448 on analysis of market "4" – high-quality wholesale access](#)

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 communications and postal networks in France.

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