

Press release

COPPER SWITCH-OFF

Arcep consults with the sector on Orange's copper network switch-off plan

Paris, 7 February 2022

In a letter dated 31 January 2022, Orange submitted its plan for the switch-off of its copper local loop to Arcep, so that it might be published for public consultation, as stipulated by the regulatory framework established by Arcep in December 2020. Stakeholders have until 4 April 2022 to share their remarks on and assessments of said plan.

Fibre to the home (FttH), which is poised to become the fixed infrastructure of reference in France, is due to replace the legacy copper network by 2030.

In Q3 2021, optical fibre networks covered 67% of premises in France, and around 60% of premises were serviced by all four commercial operators.

For reasons of technical performance and obsolescence, but also for efficiency, cost-effectiveness and environmental footprint 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). This switch-off process is already underway in several European countries, such as Norway, Sweden, and Spain.

In late 2019, Orange announced that it wanted the technical switch-off of its network to take place gradually, starting in 2023, and be complete by 2030. At the same time, in summer 2020 the Government announced its target of nationwide fibre access by 2025. The plan is thus for the legacy copper network to be replaced by fibre by 2030.

To support this technological switchover, in its Decision No. 2020-1446 of 15 December 2020, Arcep set out the conditions that Orange must meet before proceeding with the switch-off of its copper network. This Decision also stipulates that Orange must notify the Authority of its “copper local loop switch-off scheme,” and that it be subject to public consultation.

Arcep will examine both Orange's copper switch-off scheme and stakeholders' responses to the public consultation. It will work to **ensure that the copper network switch-off takes place at a pace and according to a procedure that protects the interests of every user, both consumers and businesses, and guarantees fair and effective competition between all operators.**

To find out more

Arcep Decisions affected by this public consultation:

- [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](#)

Associated documents:

- [Public consultation on the Orange copper local loop switch-off plan](#)
- [Orange’s copper local loop switch-off plan](#)

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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