

Press release

THE ENVIRONMENT

Arcep publishes a draft decision for public consultation, with a view to enhancing its annual “Achieving digital sustainability” survey

Paris, 27 July 2023

[Arcep has been collecting indicators since 2020](#) from France's four largest telecoms operators, to be able to track the evolution of their environmental footprint, [and relays this information through the publication of its annual “Achieving digital sustainability” survey](#). Arcep will be publishing the third edition of this survey in late 2023, which will include tracking the environmental footprint of a new set of stakeholders (device manufacturers and data centres) along with new indicators (internet boxes, STBs and Wi-Fi repeaters and boosters' energy consumption).

In future editions, Arcep wants to continue to steadily enhance its collection of environmental data: the draft decision being published today for public consultation proposes extending this collection to include a new group of stakeholders (mobile network equipment suppliers) and to incorporate new indicators.

Incorporating mobile network equipment suppliers into environmental data collection campaigns

Arcep plans to expand its data collection to include mobile network equipment suppliers, focusing on the main types of equipment that make up a cell site. The proposed indicators seek to evaluate the associated greenhouse gas emissions and the amount of rare earths and precious metals used to manufacture them.

Completing the survey with new indicators collected from stakeholders that have already been queried

For those stakeholders that have already been queried (the largest telcos, device manufacturers and data centres), the main purpose of the new indicators will be to:

- evaluate the environmental footprint of desktop computers that device manufacturers are selling in the France market;
- refine some of the indicators that have already been collected from data centre operators, such as energy and water consumption, to be able to factor in the heterogeneity of data centres' models;
- monitor the distribution of refurbished internet boxes and STBs, and assess what influence refurbishment has on how long these devices are used.

A gradual and cooperative enhancement of the annual “Achieving digital sustainability” survey: stakeholders invited to comment on the planned indicators

Arcep continues to engage in the collaborative process initiated by its “Achieving digital sustainability” platform, and furthered in 2022 by expanding the collection of environmental data to include device manufacturers and data centre operators. Since April 2023, it has been engaged in a dialogue with network equipment suppliers to define relevant and methodologically sound indicators. The Authority has also engaged with stakeholders that have already been queried, to discuss the planned changes and obtain their initial feedback.

To gather reactions and comments from the largest possible number of parties on the planned data collection, the public consultation will be open to every stakeholder until 30 September. Examination of the responses to this public consultation will help inform the final collection decision, which will be published before the end of the year.

Associated documents:

- [The public consultation](#)
- [Annual “Achieving digital sustainability” survey – 2023 edition](#)

Arcep’s annual “Achieving digital sustainability” survey, Informing public debate and devising a low-carbon strategy for digital technology

In April 2023, Arcep published the second edition of its annual survey, which included indicators collected from France’s four largest telecoms operators to track the evolution of their environmental footprint from 2017 to 2021. A tool designed to inform public debate and collective thinking about a low-carbon strategy for digital technology, this annual survey also aims to identify levers for action, as much from economic stakeholders as users. For this second edition, four types of indicator were collected from the four main operators:

- greenhouse gas emissions;
- networks’ energy consumption;
- their mobile phone sales, recovery, refurbishing and recycling activities;
- their refurbishing and recycling of internet boxes and STBs.

In late 2023, the third edition of the annual “Achieving digital sustainability” survey, based on [an expanded data collection campaign in January 2023](#), will include:

- new indicators collected from the main telecoms operators: internet boxes, STBs and Wi-Fi repeaters and boosters’ energy consumption;
- indicators collected from a new set of stakeholders: device manufacturers et data centres.

To obtain a full and detailed assessment of the digital environmental footprint, back in 2020, amongst the 11 proposals contained in its report on “Achieving digital sustainability”, Arcep proposed creating a Green Barometer. In 2021, the Government entrusted Arcep with the task of creating this barometer, covering the entire digital ecosystem. The “Chaize Act”, on reinforcing regulation of the digital sector by Arcep, strengthens Arcep’s powers by giving it the ability to collect environmental data not only from electronic communications operators, but also from online communication service providers, data centre operators, consumer device manufacturers, network equipment suppliers and operating system providers.

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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