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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Press release

ENVIRONMENT

"Achieving digital sustainability" survey: Arcep begins its annual campaign to collect data from operators, device manufacturers and data centres

Paris, 5 January 2023

Since 2020, Arcep has been collecting data from the country's main operators on their environmental footprint, which led to the publication of the first edition of the annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey. A second edition, which is identical in scope, will be published in spring 2023.

A third edition, expanded to include indicators collected from other digital industry stakeholders, starting in January 2023, will be published towards the end of the year.

In 2023, Arcep will extend measurement of the environmental footprint to device manufacturers (smartphones, computers, smart TVs…) and data centre operators

In 2021, Arcep's data collection powers (see inset) were expanded to include other digital industry players. After a series of talks with the economic stakeholders affected by the data-collection process, associations interested in the digital environmental footprint and experts on the topic, Arcep published a draft decision on the matter for public consultation, which garnered some 30 contributions. On 21 December of last year, Arcep published the collection Decision, specifying the data that would be expected from the stakeholders.

Today Arcep is publishing the responses to the public consultation, the questionnaires submitted to the different stakeholders, along with the protocol for measuring home devices' electricity consumption.

Device manufacturers and data centres have until 31 March 2023 to provide Arcep with the requested data

For device manufacturers these data concern, in particular, the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the devices' production and sales, the amounts of rare earths and precious metals used during production, the volumes of new and refurbished devices, their total active lifespan, and televisions' and computer displays' electricity consumption levels.

For data centre operators, these data concern their greenhouse gas emissions in France, the maximum allowable electrical power of IT hardware in data centres' computer rooms, their energy and electricity consumptions, but also the volume of water used.

A protocol for measuring ISP routers, Wi-Fi extenders and set-top boxes' electricity consumption.

As an adjunct, Arcep is publishing this protocol to obtain detailed information on these devices' electricity consumption, to create the ability to compare this information between hardware, and inform users on the factors that influence these devices' electricity consumption.

Annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey: a tool to inform public debate and discussions over a low-carbon strategy for digital

There are four main objectives attached to Arcep's annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey:

- **Inform** citizens, public sector players and all of the stakeholders on the digital sector's environmental footprint;
- **Identify** economic players' activities that are likely to have an impact on the environment;
- **Encourage** stakeholders to take steps to achieve the most efficient measurement possible of their environmental footprint;
- **Monitor** the progression of these indicators over time, creating the ability to assess the impact of environmental protection actions put in place by businesses', and to supply relevant information for evaluating public policies on digital and the environment, and particularly the Authority's actions in this area.

"Achieving digital sustainability" and the new powers conferred on Arcep

In June 2020, Arcep launched the "Achieving digital sustainability" collaborative platform, calling on associations, institutions, operators, tech companies and interested experts to contribute to the investigative process. After six months punctuated by five thematic workshops and two "big discussions" with 127 participants, Arcep published a status report which was the culmination of the work done thus far, and included 42 contributions authored by participating stakeholders.

In this report, the regulator set forth 11 proposals for successfully combining the ongoing increase in the use of digital tech and reducing its environmental footprint, which included the creation of 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.

To find out more: Core issue: "The digital environmental footprint"

Associated documents:

Decision No. 2022-2149
The approval order
Data collection questionnaires sent to stakeholders
Protocol for measuring devices' electricity consumption
Responses to the public consultation launched on 28 July 2022

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