

Press release

DIGITAL DEVICE OWNERSHIP AND USAGE

Digital Market Barometer: 2024 edition reveals that, on average, people spend a quarter of their waking hours on digital devices for personal use

Paris, 19 March 2025

Today, Arcep, the Economic Council (CGE) and France's National Agency for Territorial Cohesion (ANCT) are publishing the findings of the Digital Market Barometer, an annual survey conducted by CREDOC¹ in 2024 on the adoption of digital devices, and how their use has evolved over time.

Virtually every person aged 12 and up is connected

Digital devices have already been widely adopted, and continue to be increasingly pervasive. In 2024, 98% of people in France aged 12 and up owned a mobile phone (+4 points YoY). Of particular note, the already massively adopted smartphone has become virtually ubiquitous: 91% of people aged 12 and up own one, alongside computers which are owned by 89% of the population. Smart speaker ownership is also rising (33%, +4 points) and their rate of daily use has overtaken that of landline phones. Other connected devices (health, security, home automation, household appliances) are found in 40% of households (+3 points). Online storage services, whose free versions are the most widely used, have been adopted by 50% of the population. Underpinning this trend is the increasingly widespread access to fibre. In 2024, 75% of people aged 12 and up with a fixed internet connection had a fibre or a cable plan (+8 points YoY), whereas copper line access was still predominant in 2020. This percentage of fibre users is rising even more significantly thanks to a surge in the proportion of fibre customers in municipalities with a population of under 20,000, which reached 69% in 2024 and is nearing the fibre subscription rates found in large cities.

Users seeing the first effects of the DMA (Digital Markets Act)

While the smartphone is taking hold as an essential tool, handset, operating system (OS) and browser suppliers have become key players in free and open access to content and services. Europe's Digital Markets Act (DMA) came into force in March 2024, and seeks to guarantee open digital markets. Among its rules: operating systems are prohibited from imposing any software by default on their users. Four months after the DMA came into force, close to a third of smartphone owners report having been given the option of switching their mobile browser or being informed of these new provisions.

One in two people say they spend too much time on their devices; one in five say they spend "far too much"

Queried about how much time they spend on their devices for personal use, close to three out of four people report spending more than two hours a day, and one in four report spending more than five hours a day on their screens. Average screen time is around four hours a day, or a quarter of people's waking hours. Also queried about how they perceive their screen time, 42% of respondents said they feel that they spend too much time and, for 19% of them, far too much time on their devices. The youngest among them stand out for being the heaviest consumers, but also the most sensitive to their overexposure: 61% of 18 to 24-year-olds who spend more than three hours a day on their devices consider it excessive, compared to 31% of people aged 70 and over.

An apparently determining factor in this sentiment is the use of digital platforms with a business model based on capturing users' attention: 59% of users who go on social media multiple times a day feel that their screen

¹ Methodology: Conducted by the CREDOC research centre devoted to the study and observation of living conditions, the survey polled a representative sample of 4,066 people, aged 12 and up, who were interviewed by phone and online.

time is excessive. For equal screen time, regular social media users are two to three times more likely to feel that they spend too much time online compared to those who never use social media.

Mobile plans' data allowances are much larger than customers' actual consumption

The percentage of mobile customers with a monthly allowance of more than 100 Gb has more than doubled in four years, going from 15% to 32%. Despite which, two thirds of people almost never consume their entire monthly allowance. It has nevertheless been observed that average data traffic on mobile networks (16.5 Gb a month per SIM card) continues to grow, albeit more slowly: an over 10% increase in 2024, compared to around +25% a year between 2020 and 2023.

Premature smartphone replacement decreasing, but reuse remains low

Every household in France owns an average of around 10 digital devices with a screen, of which two are never used and could be recycled or sold. Smartphones in particular are kept after no longer being used: by more than half the population. People are keeping their smartphones longer, however. In 2020, only 16% of those queried kept their smartphone for more than three years. This percentage grew to more than a quarter in 2024 (27%), marking an 11-point increase in four years. Despite this trend, buying a new smartphone remains the norm, representing 78% of all handset sales, compared to 22% for used or repurposed smartphones.

Only a minority of users are aware of the information that is available on their carbon footprint

Information has been available to mobile service users since January 2022² on their data traffic's carbon footprint. Only a minority of users are aware of this fact, however: 40% are aware that this information exists, and 28% have consulted it. Among those who are aware, only a third say this information created an incentive for them to limit their data consumption, or 14% of all mobile phone owners.

Associated documents:

- [Infographic: snapshot of the main findings of the Digital Market Barometer](#)
- [Presentation given at the press conference](#)
- [The complete survey \(in French\)](#)
- [Open datasets: the complete Digital Market Barometer since 2007 can be found at: data.gouv.fr](#)

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 electronic communications, postal and press distribution networks in France

² Anti-waste and Circular Economy Law (AGEC) of 10 February 2020