autorité de régulation
des communications électroniques,
des postes et de la distribution de la presse

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Press release

ANNUAL REPORT

Arcep publishes its annual report

Paris, 23 September 2021

Arcep is publishing its annual report, "Arcep and regulated markets" (Volume 1). What were the highlights and key driving forces of Arcep's work and actions in 2020?

Environmental issues: a new regulatory chapter
In June 2020, Arcep launched a collaborative platform: "Achieving digital sustainability," and called on associations, institutions, operators, tech companies and any interested individuals to contribute. Participants focused on telecoms networks as a whole (fixed and mobile), but also on devices and usage. A series of thematic workshops provided an opportunity for everyone to trade views, practices, tools and skills, and so help further the brainstorming process. This work culminated in a co-authored report in late 2020, and a set of 11 proposals for successfully combining the ongoing increase in the use of digital tech and reducing its environmental footprint.

The Covid-19 crisis, its impact on telecoms, postal and press distribution networks, and Arcep's role
The public health crisis and lockdown in spring 2020 disrupted our habits and put telecoms, postal and press distribution networks to the test. It also provided an opportunity to measure the role they play in French people's daily lives, and in helping the country to run smoothly. The surge in voice calling from both fixed and mobile networks reached a 20-year record high during the first lockdown: 21% year-on-year (YoY) in the first half of 2020. On the fixed internet, changes in users' habits during the lockdown in spring 2020 drove online traffic up by an remarkable 30%, according to some estimates. A summary of the outstanding facts and figures from this singular year.

Operators rising to the challenge of pro-investment regulation
Through the size of their investments in fixed and mobile infrastructures (11.5 billion euros in 2020), operators demonstrated that they could meet French people's expectation of having nationwide access to competitive infrastructures. Fibre rollouts (3.3 million additional households passed in 2020) and the New Deal for Mobile (96% of the country covered for 4G by at least one operator at the end of 2020) are becoming a reality for a growing number of our fellow citizens.

Arcep working on consumers' behalf
For the third year in a row, Arcep has delivered a scorecard of the actions it has carried out on behalf of consumers, in part thanks to the 33,000 user reports received on its "J'alerte l'Arcep" site over the course of 2020. This sizeable increase in reports (37% YoY) is due in large part to fixed internet malfunctions, which took on a new dimension during the Covid-19 crisis, and the widespread adoption of remote working. Also on the consumer protection front, Arcep opened a new version of its "Ma connexion internet" website, giving users the ability to find out which internet access technologies are available at any given address, and to be better informed about fibre rollouts. It also makes it possible, for any given address, to display all of the operators, access technologies, and maximum speeds available at that location.

5G frequency assignments
In autumn 2020, Arcep assigned 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band frequencies, the core 5G band, in Metropolitan France. The principal auction, which was held from 29 September to 1 October 2020, served to determine the amount of spectrum assigned to each of the winning bidders. The "positioning auction", whose purpose was to determine each winning bidder's position on the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band, took place on 20 October 2020. In the wake of these frequency assignments, Arcep created a 5G deployment observatory, broken down by operator, which can be accessed on its website.

Regulation of print media distribution: a new responsibility
In late 2019, the "Bichet Act" assigned Arcep the responsibility of regulating the press distribution sector, making it the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications, Postal Affairs and Print Media Distribution. After the emergency measures that it was required to take in early 2020, Arcep created a series of forums for dialogue with the sector's stakeholders: a press distribution consultation committee, a series of hearings with some 15 press distribution companies to help build its medium-term vision, and the creation of a working group to keep stakeholders apprised of the progress being made in inter-professional negotiations over assortment rules.

Creation of an Arcep – CSA "joint division"
In March 2020, Arcep and French Broadcasting Authority, CSA, signed an agreement to form a joint division between the two institutions. The aim is to draw on their complementary expertise to deepen technical and economic analyses of digital markets. A first joint session of Arcep and CSA plenary boards was held on 9 October 2020, at which time the joint digital division's work programme was also published.

A [digital summary of the annual report](#) was developed that year, delivering a snapshot of the key figures and outstanding events that punctuated Arcep's activity in 2020.

A three-volume annual report: three facets of Arcep's actions

For the fifth year in a row, and in accordance with the Independent Authorities Act (*Loi sur les Autorités administratives indépendantes*, AAI) adopted in January 2017, Arcep is publishing its 2020 report in three volumes:

[Volume 1 "Arcep and regulated markets"](#) provides an update on Arcep's responsibilities, and the actions and decisions carried out in 2020. It also details Arcep's European and international activities, which have contributed to the building of Europe and the promotion of French telecoms regulation.

[Volume 2 "Regulation in support of smart territories"](#) is devoted to Arcep's actions in support of regional connectivity. This document is addressed to elected officials, local authority and operator representatives, and was published on 9 April 2021, during the annual "Connected Territories" conference which was held entirely online.

[Volume 3 "The State of the Internet in France"](#) complies with European Open Internet Regulation which requires Arcep, and all national regulatory authorities, to publish an annual report on their net neutrality monitoring actions, along with their findings. This report also complies with the obligation set out in the Independent Authorities Act for Arcep to include "*issues relating to neutrality and the use of IPv6 addressing technologies*" in its annual report. Published on 7 July 2021, it was presented to the media and digital ecosystem experts at a dedicated press conference. Since 2020, it has included a chapter devoted to incorporating environmental issues into regulation.

Associated documents:
- [Volume 1 of the annual report "Arcep and its regulated markets",](#) 2021 edition
- [Digital summary](#)
- [Snapshot: key figures for the telecoms sector and the postal sector](#)
- [Arcep 2020 milestones](#)
- [Networks during the Covid-19 crisis](#)
- [All three volumes of the Arcep annual report](#)

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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