![arcep logo] autorité de régulation
des communications électroniques,
des postes et de la distribution de la presse

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

*Press release*

## ENVIRONNEMENT

## Arcep launches a public consultation on its draft decision to enhance its "Achieving digital sustainability" survey

Paris, 28 July 2022

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 in April 2022. The draft decision being published for consultation seeks to expand this data-collection process to include new stakeholders and indicators, to steadily enhance future editions of the annual survey, and to more accurately measure the digital environmental footprint in France.

**Extend measurement of the environmental footprint to devices (TVs, computers, smartphones, computer displays, tablets), data centres, and the consumption of ISP routers and set-top boxes**

With this new stage, Arcep plans on expanding its data collection to include the makers of consumer devices (which account for 79% of digital's carbon footprint[1]) and data centre operators (16%). The proposed indicators are designed to calculate:

- For devices: the number of devices in circulation and their lifespan, to measure their greenhouse gas emissions and the amounts of rare earths and precious metals used in their production;
- For data centres: greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption but also the volume and sources of water used.

In concert with the four main electronic communications operators, Arcep is also proposing a new protocol for measuring ISP routers' and set-top boxes' electricity consumption.

**Gradual and concerted enhancement of the annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey: contributors to the consultation are invited to comment on which economic actors and indicators should be priorities for the next stages**

Continuing the collaborative approach begun with the "Achieving digital sustainability" platform, Arcep has been expanding its dialogue with stakeholders since March 2022, to discuss methodologically relevant and robust indicators. A series of talks was held with the economic stakeholders affected by the data-collection process, associations interested in the digital environmental footprint and experts on the topic. The public consultation also seeks to gather feedback from stakeholders on the direction to take for the next steps in enhancing its annual survey.

**Background: New powers assigned to Arcep**

To be able to fully measure the digital sector's environmental footprint, among the 11 proposals contained in its 2020 "Achieving digital sustainability" report was the creation of a Green barometer. In 2021, the

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[1] The first two parts of the joint ADEME – Arcep study on assessing the digital environmental footprint in France, and delivering forward-looking analysis

Government entrusted Arcep with the task of creating this barometer, covering the entire digital ecosystem[2]. The "Chaize Act", on reinforcing regulation of the digital sector by Arcep[3], 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.

**Every stakeholder is invited to comment by contributing to the public consultation on this draft decision**

To gather feedback and comments from the largest possible number of stakeholders on the planned data collection initiative, the questionnaires and collection methods, the public consultation is open to every stakeholder.

Comments must be sent to the following address by 6 pm on 30 September: numeriquesoutenable@arcep.fr.

Responses to this public consultation will be examined, and used to inform the final data-collection decision to be adopted before the end of 2022.

### Associated documents

- The draft decision on the establishment of an annual collection of environmental data from electronic communications operators, data centres and terminal manufacturers

- Annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey – 2022 edition

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**Arcep's annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey, furthering public debate
and helping craft a low-carbon strategy for digital**

In April 2022, Arcep published the first edition of its annual survey, releasing the first indicators collected from the four main telecoms operators to track their environmental footprint over time. A tool designed to inform public debate and the crafting of a low-carbon strategy for the digital sector, this annual survey also seeks to identify levers for action, to be taken by both economic actors and users. For this first edition, three kinds of indicator were collected from France's four main operators:
- greenhouse gas emissions;
- their networks' energy consumption;
- their mobile phone sales, collection, refurbishment and recycling activities.

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[2] In the "Digital and the Environment" roadmap published in February 2021, the Government underscores the need to create a "*barometer of the digital environmental footprint, by giving Arcep data-collection powers*"

[3] Act No. 2021-1755 of 23 December 2021 on reinforcing regulation of the digital sector by the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications, Postal Affairs and Print Media Distribution (Arcep)

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**Arcep's commitment to "Achieving digital sustainability"**

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, Arcep sets forth 11 proposals for successfully combining the ongoing increase in the use of digital tech and reducing its environmental footprint.

To find out more: Core areas of focus: "The digital environmental footprint"

**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.