

Press release

THE ENVIRONMENT

“Achieving digital sustainability”: Arcep delivers a progress report on the latest milestones, and work that is underway

Paris, 5 October 2021

On 4 October 2021, Arcep hosted a webinar for its “Achieving digital sustainability” platform participants: they include associations, institutions, operators, tech companies and experts who contributed to the workshops that Arcep hosted last year, and to the publication of the [“Achieving digital sustainability” report](#).

Laure de La Raudière reasserts Arcep’s goal of successfully combining the ongoing increase in the use of digital tech and reducing its environmental footprint

Since January 2021, Arcep Chair, Laure de La Raudière, has reiterated the commitment she expressed during her pre-appointment hearing before Parliament to making environmental issues one of Arcep’s top priorities, following through on the work that began back in 2019: “*I am fully committed to the goal of successfully combining the growing usage of digital technology and reducing its digital footprint*”.

She recalled Arcep decisions, adopted in March 2020¹ et 2021², which created the ability to collect the first environmental indicators³ from telecom operators, and expressed her desire to see that process extended to other digital industry players (datacentres, device manufacturers...). This information gathering power is a vital step towards measuring and understanding the sector’s environmental issues and challenges.

Serge Abiteboul recalled that Arcep began tackling the issue of digital’s carbon footprint back in 2019, as part of “Future networks” cycle of inquiry.

The mobilisation of public sector players – and particularly the work assigned by DGE, in collaboration with Broadcasting authority, CSA, and France’s Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) – helps achieve a more complete assessment of the digital carbon footprint.

During the webinar, the Directorate-General for Enterprise (DGE) provided details on the scope of the Government’s “Roadmap on Digital and the Environment”⁴ which was published on 23 February 2021. Among the key measures that were announced, certain responsibilities were assigned to Arcep.

As a result, Arcep carried out a study on mobile device replacement and the impact of distribution models, and published a report on the topic in July 2021⁵.

This year, for the first time, the collection of the first environmental indicators made it possible to incorporate questions relating to users’ habits and their environmental impact in the [Digital market barometer](#), which is published each year.

¹ [Decision n°2020-0305 of 26 march 2020](#)

² [Decision n°2021-0375 of 16 march 2021](#)

³ [Arcep press release of 6 April 2020](#)

⁴ <https://www.Government.fr/numerique-et-environnement-la-feuille-de-route-du-Government>

⁵ [Arcep press release of 12 July 2021](#)

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At the Government's request, Arcep and ADEME are carrying out a joint assignment to identify and assess those factors that make it possible to quantify networks' environmental footprint. This study is currently underway, and its findings are due to be released in 2022.

Arcep will also be conducting a study on the carbon footprint of audio and video consumption, in collaboration with CSA and with the support of ADEME. This work is due to begin in 2022.

The 26 GHz band and environmental footprint indicators: Arcep invites participants to new workshops being held as part of its "Achieving digital sustainability" collaborative platform

Committed to continuing the process of dialogue, listening and mutual enrichment that it has sought to build since launching its environmental work, Arcep has invited participants to a new series of workshops, being held in late 2021 and early 2022, to explore two of the topics that have been identified thus far:

- Taking environmental issues into account in the criteria set for assigning spectrum in 26 GHz band, which will host new 5G applications.
- Work on defining the objectives and indicators for Arcep's future environmental barometer.

Arcep will continue to promote its work on achieving digital sustainability within the European and international bodies in which it participates

Arcep spoke about promoting its work on achieving digital sustainability at the European and international level. Within BEREC, the body of European telecoms regulators, it helped create the working group on sustainability, co-chaired by Arcep policy officer, Sandrine Elmi Hersi. The group's first publication on its work is expected in the first half of 2022.

Arcep's commitment to "Achieving digital sustainability"

In June 2020, Arcep launched the "Achieving digital sustainability" platform, calling on associations, institutions, operators, tech companies and experts to participate. After the first six months, which were punctuated by five thematic workshops and two "big discussions," in which 127 participants took part, Arcep published a progress report on the work done up to that point, containing written contributions from 42 of the participating stakeholders. In the report, the regulator 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: [Key issue: "The digital footprint"](#)

Associated documents:

["Achieving digital sustainability": progress report of 4 October 2021](#)






[Press release of 15 December 2020 announcing the of the report on "Achieving digital sustainability" and 11 proposals](#)

[Press release of 11 June 2020 announcing the platform's launch.](#)

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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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