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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Press release

ENVIRONMENT

"Achieving digital sustainability" survey: Arcep expands its environmental data collection to include fixed network equipment suppliers that manufacture fibre optic cables

Paris, 5 March 2025

Arcep has been collecting data from France's four largest electronic communications operators since 2020 to track the progression of their environmental footprint, and publishes this information in its annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey. The latest edition, which was published in March 2024, was enhanced with data collected from device manufacturers and data centre operators, along with an analysis of ISP modems, set-top boxes and Wi-Fi repeaters and extenders. The next edition, which is due to be published in early 2025, will incorporate tracking the progression of mobile network equipment suppliers' environmental footprint.

The 2026 edition will provide an accounting of the environmental impact of optical fibre production

With this new Decision, approved on 5 February 2025, the data collection carried out in 2025 will be expanded, with a view to the publication of the 2026 edition of the annual "Achieving digital sustainability" survey.

Arcep will thus expand its data collection to include a new category of player: fixed network equipment suppliers that manufacture fibre optic cables. The indicators that they will be required to provide include the volume of fibre optic cables sold in France, associated greenhouse gas emissions and the amount of energy, water and germanium used for their production.

New indicators collected from the largest electronic communications operators, data centres and device manufacturers

In addition to the data already being collected from market players, the 2026 edition will include:
-   More detailed segmentation of display technologies for three types of digital device (televisions, laptop computers and tablets) sold by manufacturers;
-   New indicators such as data centres' total artificialized surface area, greenhouse gas emissions tied to refrigerant leaks, and incorporation of indicators defined by the European Commission as part of its Revised Energy Efficiency Directive for data centres[1]. In addition, this Decision expands the data collection campaign to include new data centre operators, adding a minimum threshold of answers to the questionnaire based on data centres' installed capacity, and set at 100 kW;
-   New indicators for measuring the environmental impact of producing ISP modems and set-top boxes, along with new measurements of the energy consumed by these devices.

Stakeholders affected by this data collection process will be required to submit all of their data to Arcep by 31 March 2025

These new indicators were defined following a series of discussions with the stakeholders affected by this data collection process, then submitted for public consultation. Around a dozen contributions from businesses and business federations were received. Along with the Decision on data collection, the questionnaires that every category of player must complete, and the handbook of indicator definitions are also being published today.

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:

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[1] Directive (EU) 2023/1791 of the European Parliament and Council of 13 September 2023 on energy efficiency and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 (recast) (Tex with EEA relevance) - Légifrance

- **Inform** citizens, public sector players and all of the stakeholders on the digital technology 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 technology and the environment, and particularly the Authority's actions in this area.

Working to "Achieve digital sustainability" and Arcep's role in it

In June 2020, Arcep launched the "Achieving digital sustainability" collaborative platform, calling on associations, institutions, operators, tech companies and interested experts to contribute. After five thematic workshops and two "big discussions" with 127 participants, Arcep published a status report that was the culmination of this work, 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 Green barometer, covering the entire digital ecosystem. The "Chaize Act", on reinforcing regulation of the digital sector by Arcep, entrusted the Authority with newfound powers by giving it the ability to collect environmental data not only from electronic communications operators, but also from online retail communication service providers, data centre operators, consumer device manufacturers, network equipment suppliers and operating system providers. The "SREN Act", adopted in May 2024, expanded Arcep's data collection powers to include cloud computing providers.

To find out more: Core issue: "Digital technology's environmental footprint"

Associated documents:

Decision No. 2024-2545
Approval Order
Data collection questionnaires sent to stakeholders and handbook of indicator definitions
Responses to the public consultation launched on 26 July 2024

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