

Press release

MOBILE NETWORK SHARING**Roaming agreement between Free Mobile and Orange:
Arcep concludes that no amendment to the contract is required**

Paris, 16 October 2025

A new roaming agreement was submitted to Arcep in May 2025: it extends the sunset period on roaming on Orange 2G and 3G networks in view of the Free Mobile network's migration to 4G/5G technologies

On 5 May 2025, Arcep received a new contract entitled, *"Roaming agreement on Orange France networks coming to the end of their life"* that defines the conditions under which Free Mobile is able to roam on Orange 2G/3G networks from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028 in Metropolitan France¹, including in those areas covered by Free Mobile's network and where Free will choose to sunset 3G technology on its own network, with a view to replacing it with 4G and 5G technologies using the spectrum resources that have become available as a result.

In the contract's preamble, the parties state that: *"Free Mobile's request is part of a new context of 2G and 3G technologies reaching the end of their life in France, while the investment and innovation momentum has shifted and now centres around 4G and 5G technologies – in addition to creating the ability to achieve more efficient use of frequency spectrum."* They refer in the preamble to the case of mobile network sharing for technologies at the end of their life² mentioned in the mobile network sharing guidelines that Arcep published in 2016.

In a press release dated 3 June 2025³, Arcep informed the sector's stakeholders of the contract's existence, and invited them to submit any remarks they might have. Today, Arcep is publishing the comments received from the firm Bouygues Telecom.

The Law gives Arcep the power to request that mobile operators amend their network sharing agreement *"if required to meet regulatory objectives set forth in Article L. 32-1 or to fulfil the commitments written into licences to use radio frequencies"*⁴. Arcep published a set of guidelines on 25 May 2016 that set out an analytical framework for assessing mobile network sharing agreements. It was in light of these elements that the Authority examined the contract submitted by the firms Free Mobile and Orange, and began an adversarial phase with Orange and Free Mobile, which is protected by business secrecy.

After an in-depth examination, Arcep concluded that it does not appear necessary to request that Free Mobile and Orange amend their agreement

Arcep concluded that the execution of this contract is not likely to create an obstacle to achieving the regulatory objectives set out in CPCE Article L. 32-1, particularly those of safeguarding fair and effective competition between operators for the benefit of users, and the development of investment, innovation and competitiveness in the electronic communication sector, at a time when operators have announced the sunset of their 2G and 3G networks, and particularly given:

- the market situation;
- the pace of Free Mobile's investment in its own 4G and 5G networks;

¹ Excluding those geographical areas already covered by a 3G network sharing agreement, signed between Bouygues Telecom, SFR, Orange France and Free Mobile on 23 July 2010.

² The sunset for 2G networks was announced for end of 2026 by Orange, SFR and Bouygues Telecom. The 3G network sunset has been announced for end of 2028 by Orange and SFR and for end of 2029 by Bouygues Telecom. For more details (in French): <https://www.arcep.fr/mes-demarches-et-services/consommateurs/fiches-pratiques/extinction-reseaux-mobiles-2g-3g.html>

³ Press release of 3 June 2025: <https://en.arcep.fr/news/press-releases/view/n/mobile-network-sharing-030625.html>

⁴ This authority is stipulated in Article L.34-8-1-1 of the French Postal and Electronic Communications Code (CPCE), created by Law No. 2015-990 of 6 August 2015 on Growth, economic activity and equal economic opportunity.

- the terms set forth in the agreement, including pricing, which create an incentive for Free Mobile to continue to invest in its own network, and phase out the use of roaming on the Orange 2G/3G network over the course of the new agreement. These arrangements include the following:
 - o increasingly lower caps on voice and SMS roaming traffic,
 - o cap on attainable upstream and downstream speeds for roaming customers at 384 kbit/s, and
 - o cap on 2G/3G roaming data traffic at 1% of total traffic being relayed over Free Mobile's own networks.

Arcep will work to ensure that Free Mobile continues to invest in the deployment its own networks.

Associated documents:

[Remarks from the firm Bouygues Telecom](#) (in French)

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.