

*Press release*

## **2G AND 3G MOBILE NETWORK SUNSETS**

### **5.6 million “2G” and “3G/2G” SIM cards in circulation as of end of September 2025**

Paris, 11 December 2025

As part of the retirement of 2G and 3G technologies in Metropolitan France, whose timetables have been announced by mobile operators, in September 2025 Arcep launched a dedicated quarterly observatory of “2G” and “3G/2G” SIM cards. The purpose is to be able to assess the effect of the actions that operators have implemented with their customers to raise their awareness of the upcoming retirement of 2G and 3G technologies, and to assist them in migrating to 4G or 5G technologies.

Today, Arcep is publishing the second edition of this observatory. It includes quarterly monitoring figures as of end of September 2025 for the number of SIM cards installed on devices that are compatible only with 2G or with 2G and 3G, belonging to Bouygues Telecom, Free Mobile, Orange and SFR subscribers, and only in Metropolitan France<sup>1</sup>.

#### **A 4.8% decrease over the past three months in the number of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G or 3G/2G-compatible**

The number of SIM cards installed on devices that are compatible only with 2G or with 2G and 3G, belonging to Bouygues Telecom, Free Mobile, Orange and SFR subscribers, and only in Metropolitan France, decreased by 285,000 units in a single quarter. The total base of SIM cards in 2G and 3G/2G-only compatible devices stood at 5.6 million at the end of September 2025.

2.6 million (47%) of these SIM cards – of which 1.6 million “2G” and 1.1 million “2G/3G” – were being used in devices to access voice/SMS/mobile internet services, and 3 million (53%) – of which 1.1 million “2G” and 1.9 million “3G/2G” – in devices used for Machine-to-Machine services<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Pace of the decrease in SIM cards in 2G-only compatible devices expected to accelerate**

Between June and September 2025, the base of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G-compatible, used for voice/SMS/mobile internet services, shrank by 4%, and the base of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G-compatible, used for M2M services, by just over 10%. In light of the timetables for the sunset of 2G technology on operators’ networks, the pace of the decrease in 2G-only compatible devices in circulation is expected to intensify in the coming months. Arcep will pay especially close attention to the actions that operators are taking to accelerate the transition to devices compatible with 4G or 5G technology as the retirement deadlines for 2G then 3G technology approach.

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<sup>1</sup> SIM cards belonging to foreign operators’ subscribers installed in devices that are only “2G” and “3G/2G” compatible being used for roaming in France are not included in the scope of this observatory.

<sup>2</sup> A machine-to-machine (M2M) service is a solution that enables connected hardware or objects to talk to each other automatically over a network, without human intervention, to exchange data and perform actions.

## For more information, visit the Arcep website

- For consumers (in French): [2G and 3G mobile network sunset: are you ready?](#)
- For businesses, local authorities and property managers (in French): [2G and 3G mobile network sunset: are you ready?](#)

## Annex

- [Data published on the Arcep website](#)

## 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

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## Number of SIM cards belonging to Bouygues Telecom, Free Mobile, Orange and SFR subscribers used in devices that are only 2G or 2G/3G compatible

### SIM cards in devices used to access voice/SMS/mobile internet services

The number of SIM cards in devices used for voice/SMS/mobile internet services that are only compatible with 2G and 3G technologies stood at 2.6 million units as of 30 September 2025, or 3.3% of the active SIM cards used in this type of device.

Between end of June 2025 and end September 2025, there was a 4% decrease in devices that are only 2G compatible and a 1.9% decrease in devices that are only 2G and 3G compatible.

<i>SIM card base (million)</i>	<b>End of June 2025</b>	<b>End of September 2025</b>
2G	1.63	1.57
3G/2G	1.07	1.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.62</b>

### SIM cards installed in devices used for Machine to Machine<sup>3</sup> services (excluding SIM cards installed in vehicles by automakers)

The number of SIM cards installed in devices used for Machine to Machine services that are only compatible with 2G and 3G technologies stood at 3 million units at the end of September 2025, or 12.1% of the SIM cards used in this type of device.

Between end of June 2025 and end September 2025, there was a 10.4% decrease in devices that are only 2G compatible and a 3.7% decrease in devices that are only 2G and 3G compatible.

<i>SIM card base (million)</i>	<b>End of June 2025</b>	<b>End of September 2025</b>
2G	1.22	1.09
3G/2G	1.97	1.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>2.99</b>

<sup>3</sup> SIM cards used for communications between remote equipment (remote management of fixed and mobile equipment, devices and servers). Most of the communication emanating from these cards occurs without human involvement.