

Press release

DIGITAL AFFAIRS

“Generative AI: challenges for the future of the open internet” **Arcep publishes a report on the 10th anniversary of net neutrality in Europe**

Paris, 14 January 2026

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools, which are a major innovation for our economy and our society, have very rapidly been widely adopted, and are becoming a new gateway to the internet, in the same way as search engines and social media sites. What impact is this evolution having on users' capacity to access all internet content, and to share it? And on the freedom to communicate and the visibility of innovations? The Arcep report is being published to coincide with the “*Open Internet turns 10: What's next?*” event that the Authority is hosting today at the European Parliament in Brussels, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Open Internet Regulation. The aim is to reassert the importance of the Open Internet Regulation, and to discuss the looming issues.

To obtain this initial diagnosis, Arcep interviewed some fifty experts and carried out technical tests on generative AI services, in collaboration with the Centre of Expertise for Digital Platform Regulation (PEReN)

Adopted in 2015, the EU's Open Internet Regulation enshrines one of the internet's founding principles in law: users' right to access and distribute information and content, and to use and provide applications and services without discrimination. In particular, it imposes net neutrality obligations on internet service providers (ISPs), guaranteeing equal treatment for traffic, irrespective of its origin, destination or content.

Arcep has been overseeing the application of this regulation in France since 2016, against a backdrop of ever-evolving digital technologies. Here, the vast dissemination of generative AI tools, which is upending the conditions governing access to and sharing of online content and services, raises the question of how they will affect the open internet.

To inform its analysis, the report draws on interviews with some fifty experts from the public and private sectors and NGOs, on work conducted with the Centre of Expertise for Digital Platform Regulation (PEReN), including technical tests carried out on multiple generative AI services, and on a review of scientific and institutional literature on this topic.

Six recommendations to combine the development of generative AI and the open internet

The development of generative AI tools constitutes a major innovation, full of promise and rife with the potential to transform our economies and society. Arcep has established six recommendations to reconcile their development with the need to safeguard the principles of an open internet.

1. **Reassert the principles of the open internet in the generative AI era**, by continuing to analyse how these tools affect internet openness, and by incorporating these issues into the regulatory frameworks for digital technology and AI governance, notably at the European and international levels.
2. **Develop open and interoperable protocols for interconnection between generative AI service providers**, and digital content and service providers, to foster more transparent, balanced and pro-innovation technical and economic relations.
3. **Enable the emergence of fair conditions for the access, use and monetisation of the content and services extracted by generative AI tools**, to reconcile content monetisation and an environment that stimulates competition and the emergence of new players.
4. **Mobilise existing regulatory tools at the European level**, notably the Digital Markets Act (DMA), the Data Act, and the Digital Services Act (DSA), to prevent the risks of locking in users, concentration and discriminatory practices in generative AI ecosystems.
5. **Support the development of more transparent and auditable generative AI services**, by strengthening the traceability of their sources, the audibility of performances and, when relevant, the use of more frugal and more easily auditable models.

6. **Give internet users the means to define and control their use of generative AI tools**, by improving the information made available to them, by giving them the ability to control their settings, and by engaging in digital training and literacy efforts.

This report constitutes this first stepping stone in analysing a rapidly changing field. Arcep will continue its work and its dialogue with all stakeholders, so that the principles of an open internet, guaranteeing freedom of choice for internet users, and the ability to innovate on the web, are taken into account in the deployment of generative AI services.

“Are generative AI tools a threat to the future of the internet?”: a four-page comic strip to give users and innovators a concrete understanding of the issues

To make the issues and analyses presented in its report more concrete and more accessible, Arcep is also publishing a four-page comic book. To better understand the threats that generative AI tools pose to an open internet, the comic book, *“takes us to 2030, a time when virtually everyone is using generative AI tools. Most queries on the internet now go through generative and agentic AI chatbots. These tools are part of the daily lives of internet users like Louise, who is planning her summer holidays, and Naël, who is developing a travel service...”*

Programme for the “Open Internet turns 10: What’s next?” event on 14 January 2026 at the European Parliament in Brussels

What would our digital world look like without net neutrality? What has the open internet given European users over the past ten years? What challenges are taking shape for the coming decade?

At the end of 2025, we celebrated the **10th anniversary of the Open Internet Regulation**, which protects net neutrality in the European Union. Its adoption marked a decisive step in the ongoing effort to safeguard an open internet, guaranteeing users’ freedom of choice and capacity to innovate on the web. Thanks to collective efforts, the European Union continues to be at the vanguard of protecting freedoms and innovation on the internet. At the same time, new challenges are emerging, driven by the growing role that digital platforms and artificial intelligence services play in the distribution of online content.

Speakers:

Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, European MP

Laure de La Raudière, Chair of Arcep

Tom Wheeler, Former Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the USA

Panel discussion:

- **Cláudio Teixeira**, Head of Digital Policy, BEUC
- **Maarit Palovirta**, Deputy Director-General, Connect Europe
- **Romain Bonenfant**, President, EuroISPA
- **Cecilia Rikap**, Associate Professor in Economics, University College London (UCL)

Moderator:

Michel Van Bellinghen, Vice-Chair of BEREC (2026) and Chairman of IBPT

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The Open Internet, a principle upheld by Arcep beyond the network layer, faced with the clout of gatekeeper platforms

Promoting an open internet means giving internet users the ability to exercise their freedom of choice with respect to the content they view and share, the services they use and the innovations they can design. It means preventing gatekeeper intermediaries from using any unjustified methods to lock users in.

But ISPs are not the only players capable of influencing users' freedom of choice and ability to share content and services online. The large digital platforms also have a decisive influence over knowledge access and distribution pathways. This paradigm shift has gone hand in hand with new risks of locking users in and having more concentrated digital markets.

Which is why, in 2017, Arcep expanded its approach to the open internet beyond just the network layer, by analysing how devices ([cf. 2018 report](#)) and gatekeeper platforms ([cf. 2019 briefing note](#)) affect users' freedom of choice. These issues are the focus of increasing attention at the European level, notably with the adoption in 2022 of the Digital Markets Act (DMA), designed to protect the contestability of markets and users' freedom of choice.

In 2024, Arcep began to investigate how generative AI tools affected the principle of an open internet, by engaging in a dialogue with stakeholders and affected institutional partners. The "*Generative AI: challenges for the future of the open internet*," report presents the findings of this work, along with a set of initial recommendations.

Associated documents

- The "Generative AI: challenges for the future of the open internet" report and its Executive Summary available in [French](#) and [English](#)
- [Comic book: "Are generative AI tools a threat to the future of the internet?"](#)
- [State of the art on the 10th anniversary of the Open Internet Regulation](#)

Arcep at a glance

The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications, Postal Affairs and Press 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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