

Press release

## FREQUENCIES

### **Arcep provides clarification on the outlook for the use of 3410 – 3490 MHz band frequencies and on the future reorganisation of the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band in Metropolitan France**

Paris, 7 April 2026

The 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band is harmonised in Europe for the deployment of mobile networks. In Metropolitan France, this band is currently being used by different entities and different services:

- 3410 – 3490 MHz band frequencies are assigned in some departments to fixed internet access service providers. These licences are due to expire by 24 July 2026 at the latest;
- 3490 – 3800 MHz band frequencies were assigned in Metropolitan France to the four carriers, Bouygues Telecom, Free Mobile, Orange and SFR, which use them for mobile services.

Arcep wanted to provide operators with added clarity on the future of the 3410 – 3490 MHz band, after the initial public consultation in July 2024 on the sector's needs and observations regarding these frequencies, and a second public consultation that ran from 13 October 2025 to 9 January 2026 on the issues surrounding future frequency assignments in Metropolitan France, and notably in the 3410 – 3490 MHz band.

#### **Conditions not yet met for assigning the 3410 – 3490 MHz band for the operation of public mobile networks**

Stakeholders' feedback to the two aforementioned public consultations revealed a need for additional spectrum for public mobile networks in the medium term, due to the expected increase in traffic. This feedback thus confirmed operators' interest in obtaining additional spectrum in the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band, in which networks have already been deployed.

Most of the stakeholders' feedback nevertheless stressed the necessity of having contiguous blocks of 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band spectrum to ensure the new frequencies would be used efficiently. It also appears that assigning 3410 – 3490 MHz band frequencies without first reorganising the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band would result in operational constraints for which there is no satisfactory technical solution as yet.

A reorganisation of the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band in the short term is, however, likely to generate potentially substantial migration costs, depending on the characteristics of the equipment that each of the operators has deployed since 2020.

Together, these elements lead to the conclusion that the conditions are not yet in place for assigning the 3410 – 3490 MHz band for the operation of public mobile networks. The Authority will continue to work on establishing a timetable and the appropriate assignment arrangements, in accordance with the European strategy for using this band for the operation of mobile networks.

#### **A future reorganisation of the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band by operators to enable mobile networks to use the 3410 – 3490 MHz band**

Arcep wants to provide stakeholders with clarity on the conditions for organising the band after the initial 15-year licensing period for the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band that is currently in effect, i.e. post 2035. In the case of an extension of all or a portion of these licences, as permitted by their terms and conditions, and in the case where 3410 – 3490 MHz frequencies are assigned to mobile operators between now and 2035, Arcep wants to be able to proceed with a reorganisation of the 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band, in order to satisfy the objectives set forth in Article L. 32-1 of the French Postal and Electronic Communications Code (CPCE), particularly the goal of efficient spectrum management, and to satisfy the associated criteria, such as the contiguity of the frequencies assigned to each operator, fair conditions for accessing spectrum and minimising the number of spectrum

reorganisations that prove necessary. Such a reorganisation could lead to changes in operators' current positions across the whole of the 3410 – 3800 MHz band.

Arcep will begin work to achieve this, in concert with the sector's stakeholders, notably on the positioning arrangements for 3.4 – 3.8 GHz band frequency licenceholders, according to a timetable that allows operators to anticipate equipment replacement consequences as fully as possible, with the proviso that the cost of these reorganisations will be borne fully by the operators involved. This work will also include an assessment of the constraints specific to the use of the 3410 – 3420 MHz block, and should make it possible to confirm the outlook for assigning this block.

### **Possible extensions for the operation of wireless local loop and ultrafast wireless networks**

As it stands, frequencies in the 3410 – 3490 MHz band are allocated at the departmental level to fixed internet access services, supplied through wireless local loop (WLL) and ultrafast wireless networks. These licences are set to expire by 24 July 2026 at the latest.

In light of the elements set out here regarding the need to continue to investigate the allocation of these frequencies for the operation of public mobile networks, and in light of the objectives set out in CPCE Article L. 32-1, notably with respect to regional development targets, regional interests and efficient spectrum use and management, possible requests to extend or renew licences to use the 3410 – 3490 MHz band to provide fixed internet access services in the band, beyond 24 July 2026, could be examined by Arcep. If approved, these licences would be extended for a limited time to facilitate the migration of the last remaining WLL and ultrafast wireless network subscribers. The Authority must assess these requests before 19 June 2026.

### **Associated documents:**

- [Stakeholders' contributions to the public consultation that ran from 13 October 2025 to 9 January 2026 on the issues surrounding future mobile spectrum assignments in Metropolitan France](#)

### **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 (AIA), is the architect and guardian of internet, fixed and mobile electronic communications, postal and press distribution networks in France.