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Press release

## 2G AND 3G MOBILE NETWORK SUNSETS

### Pace of the migration from 2G-only devices needs to accelerate

Paris, 10 June 2026

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 effects 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.

Six months after the announced shutdown of 2G networks Metropolitan France, and now that it has become a reality in several municipalities<sup>1</sup>, today, Arcep is publishing the fourth edition of this Observatory. It includes quarterly monitoring figures as of end of March 2026 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.

#### **A more significant decrease in the number of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G or 3G/2G-compatible than in Q1 2026**

The decrease in 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, accelerated significantly: by 688,000 units in Q1 2026, compared to a decrease of 394,000 units during the previous quarter. The total base of SIM cards in 2G and 3G/2G-only compatible devices stood at 4.5 million at the end of March 2026.

#### **This decrease is even more significant for 2G-only SIM cards, although there were still 2 million of them in use at the end of March 2026**

In Q1 2026, the base of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G-compatible shrank by 17.1%, compared to 13.2% for SIM cards installed on devices that are compatible only with 2G or with 2G and 3G. The decrease in the base of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G-compatible represents 60% of the total quarterly decrease.

At the end of March 2026, the base of SIM cards in devices that are only 2G-compatible, used for voice/SMS/mobile internet services, represented 1.5% of active SIM cards in all devices used for voice/SMS/mobile internet services, and those in 2G-only devices used for M2M services accounted for 3% of active SIM cards in all devices used for M2M services.

The quarterly decrease in the number of SIM cards in 2G-only devices used for M2M services was especially significant: 21.5%, compared to 9.2% in December 2025, while the decrease in devices used for voice/SMS/mobile internet services stood at 14% as of end of March 2026 compared to 9.5% in December 2025.

The total number of SIM cards in 2G-only devices stood at 2 million at the end of March 2026.

The steady pace of the decrease in the 2G-only SIM card base that has occurred since the Observatory first launched needs to continue to accelerate, to reach a rate that will ensure that all 2G-only devices have been replaced by the time 2G networks have been completely shut down.

The timetables for the shutdown of 2G and 3G technologies provided by operators are available on the Arcep website Arcep (cf. **“For more information, visit the Arcep website”**).

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<sup>1</sup> Since 31 March 2026 in the metropolitan areas of Bayonne, Anglet and Biarritz, since 12 May 2026 in Departments 64 and 40 and since 9 June 2026 in Departments 47, 46, 32, 65, 31, 82 and 09.

## 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 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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**Base 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 2.13 million units as of end of March 2026, or 2.6% of the active SIM cards used in this type of device.

Between end of December 2025 and end of March 2026, there was a 14% decrease in devices that are only 2G compatible and a 7.4% 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>	<b>End of December 2025</b>	<b>End of March 2026</b>
2G	1.63	1.57	1.42	1.22
3G/2G	1.07	1.05	0.98	0.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>2.40</b>	<b>2.13</b>

**SIM cards installed in devices used for Machine to Machine<sup>2</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 2.4 million units at the end of March 2026, or 9.3% of the SIM cards used in this type of device. Between end of December 2025 and end of March 2026, there was a 21.5% decrease in devices that are only 2G compatible and an 11.1% 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>	<b>End of December 2025</b>	<b>End of March 2026</b>
2G	1.22	1.09	0.99	0,78
3G/2G	1.97	1.90	1.82	1.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>2.82</b>	<b>2.40</b>

<sup>2</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.