Press release

OPTICAL FIBRE

Economic future-proofing of fibre public initiative networks: Arcep publishes a cost model and draft guidelines on pricing

Paris, 15 October 2026

Today, Arcep is publishing draft guidelines on pricing that take into account the operational maintenance costs for public initiative networks, along with an associated cost model. Arcep's aims in conducting this work are to provide the sector with tools that enable them to obtain objective cost figures, and to ensure that infrastructure operators are able to recover those costs from commercial operators (i.e. ISPs).

The cost model being published today factors in feedback from the public consultation that ran from 24 March to 22 May 2026.

Stakeholders' contributions to the consultation led the Authority to adjust the model in several respects, including:

- improving the estimated number of curative maintenance service calls, which was reduced to more accurately align with stakeholder observations;
- increasing the rate used to calculate indirect preventative maintenance and curative maintenance costs;
- increasing the costs of the information systems used for maintenance and sales/marketing.

Accompanying the model is a proposed method for calculating the minimum recurring monthly fee for covering operational maintenance costs

Several respondents to the public consultation requested that the Authority provide a more detailed explanation of how prices might be adjusted, beyond the changes allowed by existing contracts, to cover operational maintenance costs.

Based on the results of the operational maintenance cost model published today, in its draft guidelines Arcep thus proposes a method for calculating a recurring minimum monthly fee for ensuring the operational maintenance of each fibre public initiative network. It is this method that is being published today for consultation.

In those instances where, according the abovementioned method, operational maintenance costs do not appear to cover the existing recurring monthly fee listed in FttH access line contracts, Arcep recommends that the parties review and amend the pricing terms and conditions.

According to simulations conducted by Arcep using data provided by infrastructure operators, the fees charged for a little over half of FttH public initiative networks are lower than[1] the costs calculated using the proposed method. For most of these networks, the fee increase that would make it possible to cover operational maintenance costs would be between €0.50 and €2.00 per active access line, per month.

The pricing guidelines and the accompanying cost model are intended to serve as supporting documents, when required, during contract negotiations – between the infrastructure operators supplying the lines and

[1] In the SAP-PTO segment: between the shared access point and the optical termination point

ISPs – over the pricing terms and conditions governing FttH public initiative network access lines, to ensure the financing of these networks' operational maintenance costs.

These documents will also serve as an analytical tool for the Authority when implementing the regulatory framework, notably in terms of compliance with the principles of relevance and objectivity.

This work, carried out with contracting local authorities and ISPs, must help future-proof the infrastructures financed by the "plan France très haut debit" ultrafast access rollout scheme

The "Plan France très haut debit" scheme enabled the rapid deployment of fibre-to-the-home (FttH) networks thanks to the mobilisation of private sector operators and public funding. More than 12 years after its launch in 2013, the "Plan France très haut debit" ultrafast access rollout scheme has proven a success in terms of both deployment and sales: as of 30 June 2026, 95.3% of all households in France were able to subscribe to an FttH plan, and 85.0% were subscribing to a fixed broadband or ultrafast broadband service using this network.

The purpose of the work being published today is to ensure that the ISPs that use public initiative networks fully finance, including in the most rural areas, the operational maintenance of these networks, which includes ongoing maintenance, repairing outages, installing new connections for new buildings, and leasing Orange civil engineering infrastructures without requiring additional public financing.

This work does not cover certain issues tied to the economics of fibre public initiative networks that were raised by local authorities or infrastructure operators, such as covering complex access line installation work, or possible investments required to shore up network resilience. These matters do not fall under the remit of operational maintenance, and would require *ad hoc* work between the different stakeholders.

There are also certain persistent challenges that remain a priority for the regulator, including: first, deployment completeness has not been achieved in certain areas, even though the legacy copper network switchoff is imminent and, second, the processes for handling outages and connection failures are not yet entirely satisfactory, and still need to be improved.

Stakeholders have until 16 November 2026 to respond to the public consultation on draft pricing guidelines.

Associated documents

- Draft pricing guidelines
- FttH network operational maintenance cost model (xlsx - 57 Ko)
- Supporting document for the model
- Responses to the public consultation opened on 24 March 2026 (zip - 16,65 Mo)

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.

Press liaison
Victor Schmitt
victor.schmitt@arcep.fr
Tel.: 01 40 47 71 84