

MANIFESTO

ARCEP, COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK ARCHITECT AND GUARDIAN

Internet, fixed and mobile telecom and postal networks constitute **"Infrastructures of freedom"**. Freedom of expression, freedom to communicate, freedom to access knowledge and to share it, but also freedom of enterprise and innovation, which are key to the country's ability to compete on the global stage, to grow and provide jobs. Because it is essential to be able to enjoy these freedoms fully in any open, innovative and democratic society, national and European institutions work to ensure that these networks develop as a **"common good,"** regardless of their ownership structure, in other words that they meet high standards in terms of accessibility, universality, performance, neutrality, trustworthiness and fairness.

Democratic institutions therefore concluded that independent state intervention was needed to ensure that no power, be it economic or political, is in a position to control or curb users' (consumers, businesses, associations, etc.) ability to communicate. France's Electronic Communications and Postal Regulatory Authority (Arcep), a neutral and expert arbitrator with the status of quasi autonomous non-governmental organisation, is the **architect** and **guardian** of communications networks in France.

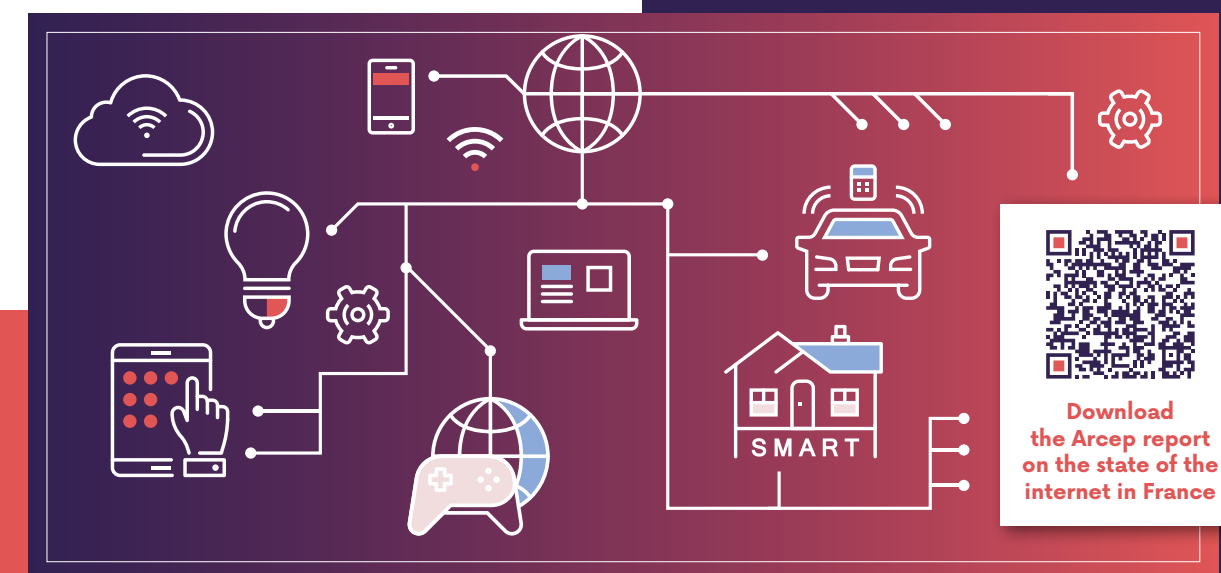
As network architect, ARCEP creates the conditions for a plural and decentralised network organisation. It guarantees the market is open to new players and to all forms of innovation, and works to ensure the sector's competitiveness through pro-investment competition. ARCEP provides the framework for the networks' interoperability so that users perceive them as one, despite their diversity: easy to access and seamless. It coordinates effective interaction between public and private sector stakeholders when local authorities are involved as market players.

As network guardian, Arcep enforces the principles that are essential to guaranteeing users' ability to communicate. It oversees the provision of universal services and assists public authorities in expanding digital coverage nationwide. It ensures users' freedom of choice and access to clear and accurate information, and protects against possible net neutrality violations. From a more general perspective, Arcep fights against any type of silo that could threaten the freedom to communicate on the networks, and therefore keeps a close watch over the new intermediaries that are the leading Internet platforms.

STATE OF THE INTERNET IN FRANCE

PUBLICATION OF THE ARCEP REPORT

Press conference
at La Paillasse, Paris
30 May 2017



Download
the Arcep report
on the state of the
internet in France

A bridge between billions of human beings, and tomorrow between even more machines and things, the internet has unleashed an unprecedented freedom of communication, information and innovation. A centrepiece of economic, social and government life, the internet has become a **"common good"**.

Despite its decentralised structure, the internet has given rise to new intermediaries along the chain that connects users to content and applications, and who are capable of undermining its openness. Aware of this new state of affairs, lawmakers in Europe and France have considerably strengthened the provisions aimed at guaranteeing an open internet, and have given the regulator the powers it needs to tackle these new challenges. This then is the backdrop to Arcep's **first report on the state of the internet in France**.

Architect and guardian of communication networks, Arcep has made protecting an open internet **one of its four strategic priorities**. It works to guarantee that the internet meets high standards in terms of performance, and that no economic force is in a position to control or curb users' ability to exchange information.

Arcep's report on the state of the internet in France focuses on the threats that could undermine **the internet's proper functioning** and **neutrality**, and sets out the regulator's actions to contain these threats. Looking beyond the current legal framework, Arcep wanted to expand its investigation to include **platforms**, these new intermediaries, and zero in on one issue in particular: **the openness of devices**. Regional development and the market's investment dynamic, two vital components for internet access, are the topic of separate work and reports.

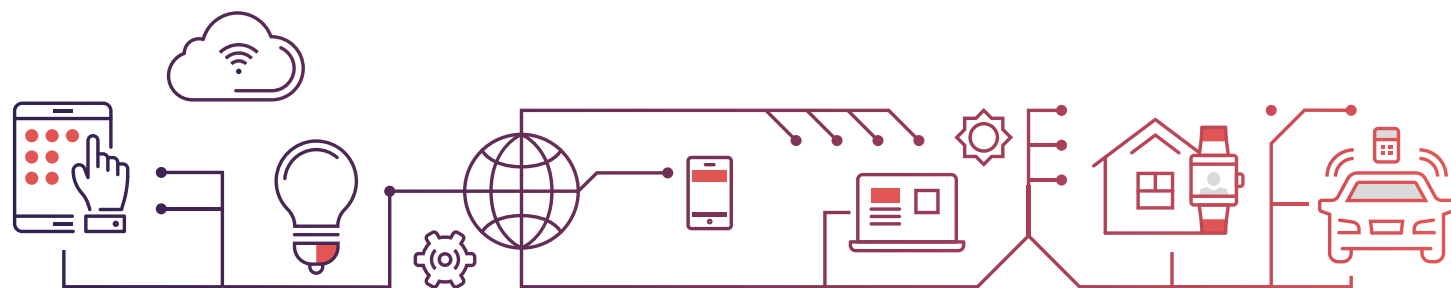
PROTECT AN OPEN INTERNET IN FRANCE, and guarantee that these communication networks develop as a “common good”

To fulfil its mandate and the guarantor of an open internet, Arcep acts as network architect, by creating the right conditions for the markets and the networks' efficient organisation, and as network guardian by monitoring the players' behaviour and, if necessary, by exercising its sanctioning powers. In its report on the state of the internet in France, Arcep revisits three of its courses of action.

1 GUARANTEE THE PROPER FUNCTIONING OF THE INTERNET

Evaluate the quality of internet access services

To improve the information that is available to users on the quality of internet access services, Arcep has updated its evaluation method which, up until now, had been confined to a controlled environment. By providing a detailed map of existing crowdsourced tools, Arcep has taken a first step towards adopting new approach: that of facilitator of an ecosystem – whose stakeholders include QoS measurement providers, operators, experts, consumer associations, etc. – to achieve a more accurate and more visible assessment of operators' performances, which must encourage them to do better.



Monitor the data interconnection market

Interconnection is essential to creating the illusion of a single, seamless network for users, despite the diversity of networks in play. Arcep keeps a close watch over this market, to be in a position to react quickly when a problem arises, and to guarantee that market players behave properly. The Authority continues to believe that the interconnection market is working well, and does not require an ex-ante regulation decision.

Arcep's report contains new findings, taken from its biannual information gathering campaign (change in and distribution of transit, private and public peering...)

Encourage the transition to IPv6

Arcep has begun publishing a scorecard on the transition to IPv6. Its aim is to accelerate deployments of this new protocol by fostering coordination between the internet's stakeholders, and by informing users on the progress that each operator is making in this transition.

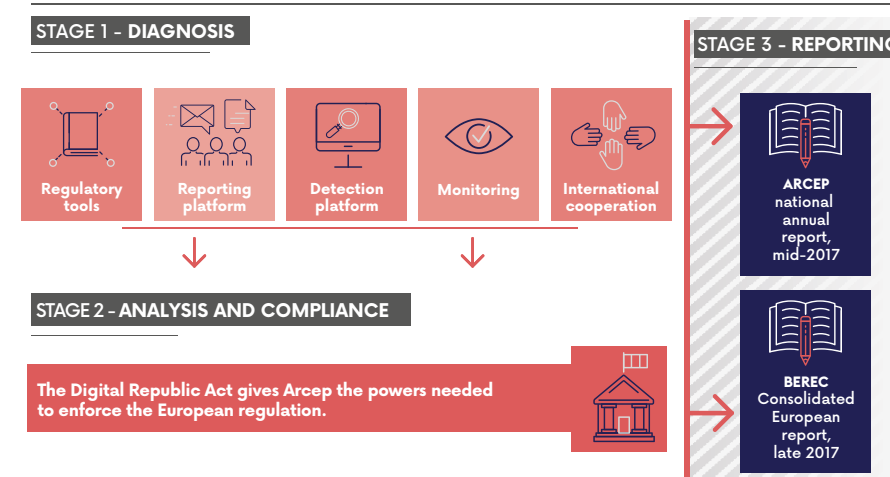
The scorecard will be enhanced in late 2017, thanks to data collected directly from the main operators in France regarding their fixed and mobile networks.

2 GUARANTEE NET NEUTRALITY

With the introduction of the new European framework on the open internet, the European legislator has given operators new obligations which national regulators are tasked with enforcing, and imposing penalties if necessary. In 2016, the Digital Republic Act and the BEREC (Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications) guidelines gave Arcep new powers and a roadmap for fully enforcing the net neutrality principle in France.

The first step for Arcep was to engage in a constructive dialogue: establish with operators those practices that need adjusting to bring them in line with the provisions set out in the Regulation.

// Arcep roadmap for the enforcement of the Open Internet Regulation



3 CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF OPEN PLATFORMS, WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON DEVICES



In addition to access networks, some intermediaries (platforms, etc.) have the power to limit users' ability to access certain content and services. The use of devices, which have certain affinities with the networks, has increased tremendously over the past several years, and they are now controlled in part by a small group of economic stakeholders. Arcep conducted an investigation into these devices: an initial assessment of the impact they have on the openness of the internet has been published, and Arcep is calling on all stakeholders to provide their feedback on this assessment.

Arcep is also keeping a close watch on debates taking place in France and in Europe over regulating platforms in general.

THE FOUR PILLARS OF ARCEP'S ACTIONS

Having completed this open and collaborative process, Arcep's strategic review resulted in the identification of four pillars that guide the Authority's actions:

- Investing in infrastructure
- Connected cities and regions
- **An open internet**
- A pro-innovation prism

Arcep created a new dedicated unit to carry out its work on the open internet successfully.

ARCEP, A NEUTRAL AND INDEPENDENT EXPERT

Arcep's independence does not mean that it acts singlehandedly. The regulator is regularly called upon by Parliament and the Government to advise on issues relating to the networks that it regulates. The adoption of the Macron Act on 6 August 2015 introduced the ability for the Government to solicit Arcep's opinion on all matters that fall under its purview.