



POLICY IN ACTION

France Makes Consistent Regional Development a Priority

Market context

In 2015, France ranked 26th among EU Member States for 4G coverage, and by the start of 2018, 4G coverage remained relatively low at 45%. Due to the slower rollout

and lower 4G coverage than anticipated, 4G 'white zones' were identified to focus attention on the locations deprived of the latest mobile connectivity.

Policy or regulatory action

In 2018, following intensive consultation by the regulator to determine how to improve broadband coverage in rural areas, the French government, regulatory authority Arcep and mobile operators announced the New Deal for Mobile.

Under this agreement, operators took on new 4G coverage obligations in exchange for renewed licences in the 900 MHz, 1800 MHz and 2.1 GHz frequency bands, which were due to expire between 2021 and 2024.

Why this is good practice

Based on the proposal from Arcep, the French Government chose to make territorial cohesion a priority in spectrum policy. As a result, rather than focusing on a single financial criterion, the government chose to steer operators' efforts towards future investment by setting out coverage

obligations of unprecedented ambition. This approach made it possible to improve mobile connectivity in a way that quickly became noticeable to French citizens, as 4G coverage increased to 96% by 2020.

[France's New Deal for Mobile](#)
[Bridging the mobile digital divide: the New Deal bet on 4G](#)
[The Connexion article on New Deal results, December 2020](#)

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