



PRESS RELEASE

Paris, January 10, 2022



free is celebrating
**10 years of mobile
revolution**

On January 10, 2012, Xavier Niel launched Free Mobile, revolutionizing the market with its straightforward, generous and innovative plans. Today, as Free Mobile celebrates its tenth anniversary, we're taking a look back at all the advantages that the launch ten years ago has brought to people in France.

Exceptional tenth-anniversary offers for existing and prospective subscribers

For its tenth anniversary, Free Mobile is boosting the data allowance for the Free Mobile Plan to 210 GB/month of 5G data¹. This boost will take place automatically, and, as has always been the case for ten years now, at no extra cost for existing and new Free subscribers.

From January 10 through 18, on an exceptional basis, the Série Free plan will be offered to new subscribers with a maximum of data: 100 GB (+10 GB of roaming data), at only €10.99/month² for one year (then switching to the Free Mobile 5G Plan at €19.99).

In addition, between January 10 and 19, there will be special discounts available for existing and prospective subscribers on several smartphones in the Free Flex offering, both in store and on free.fr.

And Free Mobile is launching a competition on social media from January 10 through 14, with ten 5G smartphones that can be won³.







What hasn't changed

Jan.10,2012		Jan.10,2022
Values		
No-commitments plans	Liberty	No-commitments plans
2 plans	Simplicity	3 plans
Unlimited calls and texts ¹	Generosity	Unlimited calls and texts ¹
		unlimited
Prices		
€2	€2 Plan	€2
€19.99	Free Mobile Plan	€19.99
€0	Hidden costs ²	€0
Telephone assistance		
Included 7/7		Included 7/7

(1) Excluding the €2 Plan (2) Call waiting, conference mode, visual voice mail, charges for telephone assistance

What has changed (a lot)

Jan.10,2012		Jan.10,2022
Network		
3G: 27%	Population coverage	3G: 99%
700	Mobiles sites	4G: 99%
		5G: 77%
		21,600
Stores		
1		>150
		
Data		
0.3 GB	Average monthly usage per subscriber	13.2 GB
3 GB ³	Data allowance	210 GB ³
		
International ³		
40	International call destinations	100
0	Roaming destinations	>70
0	Roaming data	25 GB/month
Subscribers		
0		13.5 million
Employees		
2,000		>10,000
Market		
€27.30	Average monthly mobile bill ⁴	€13.30
		

(3) Free Mobile Plan (4) Source: ARCEP, Observatoire des Marchés des Télécommunications Electroniques, May 26, 2021

Free Mobile – a game changer for the mobile market, consumer usages and purchasing power

When Free Mobile was launched in 2012, it was based on fundamental values that haven't changed in ten years but which totally disrupted the French mobile market and consumer usages:

- **Liberty:** with its no-commitment plans and “SIM-Only” offering, Free Mobile revolutionized the standard practices of the mobile market, particularly the use of long-term locked-in contracts.
- **Simplicity:** because the more complex an offering, the less favorable it generally is to consumers, Free Mobile decided to make simplicity one of the pillars of its commercial strategy. Which is why in 2012 it kept its launch to just two plans. And ten years down the road, simplicity is still its watchword, with just three plans on offer.
- **Generosity:** by offering unlimited calls and text messages, Free Mobile imposed a new market standard in the mobile sector. And the data allowance for the Free Mobile Plan has been regularly increased since 2012 at no extra cost for subscribers (from 3 GB to 20 GB to 50 GB to 100 GB to 150 GB). But that's not all – 4G and then 5G were included in Free's mobile plans at no extra cost.
- **Transparency:** since they were first launched, Free's mobile plans have had no hidden costs (such as for call waiting, conference mode, visual voice mail or charges for telephone assistance). Recently, Free has once again provided complete transparency for its subscribers with its launch of the Free Flex offer⁴, whereby payments for a mobile phone can be spread without any additional fees or interest.
- **Fair prices:** by charging a fair price for its services, Free Mobile has halved the average cost of a mobile plan in France. When a price is fair it doesn't need changing, and the price of the Free Mobile plans launched in 2012 have stayed the same for the past ten years (€2 and €19.99).

Free's mobile revolution immediately drove up purchasing power for subscribers in France. According to estimates by INSEE (the French national statistics office), mobile telephony costs in France decreased by 9.5% in the first nine months of 2012. And based on data released by ARCEP (France's telecoms regulator), the average monthly mobile phone bill in France has dropped from €27.30 in 2012 to €14.30 in 2022 (source: ARCEP, *Observatoire des Marchés des Télécommunications Electroniques*, May 26, 2021).

Free Mobile's fair price policy had a structural impact on the market, because ten years later France has the lowest mobile telecom prices in Europe (source: *Rewheel Research Pro study*, November 2021).

A latest-generation mobile network rolled out in record time

Free Mobile took the gamble of building its own mobile infrastructure network as from 2011, i.e. nearly 15 years after France's long-standing operators. At January 10, 2012, it had some 700 active sites across the country.

Thanks to an unprecedented pace of rollouts over the last ten years, Free Mobile has more than made up for its late start. It now has **21,600 sites in France** and has the largest 5G network in terms of number of sites⁵, with 12,000 Free 5G sites, including 2,514 using 3.5 GHz frequencies. Free Mobile's population coverage rates in France are now 99% for 4G and 77% for 5G.

Free Mobile is keeping up its fast pace of rollouts and aims to have more than 25,000 sites throughout France by 2023. Its rollout effort encompasses the whole country, including the most rural areas. Since signing up to the French government's "New Deal for Mobile", Free Mobile has built over 5,000 new sites in areas that had little or no mobile coverage before.

Free Mobile's massive investment in its network is reflected in its very good subscriber satisfaction rates. For example, in the latest [customer satisfaction survey commissioned by ARCEP⁶](#) published in July 2021, Free had the same overall satisfaction score as France's incumbent operator (7.8/10), ranking above the country's two other alternative operators.

Over 150 Free stores across France

Free also made the choice to build its own distribution network. In line with its objective of having a local presence for subscribers, it now has over 150 stores located throughout France and is continuing its brisk pace of new store openings. These stores are staffed by over 800 people altogether, welcoming and advising current and prospective subscribers on a daily basis.

Ever since they were first launched in 2012, the Free stores have been designed as spaces offering a unique customer experience. And when it introduced its interactive subscription kiosks in its stores in 2014, Free once again proved its ability to constantly reinvent its subscriber services through commercial innovation.

Ten illustrations for Free's tenth anniversary

As part of its tenth anniversary celebrations, Free has asked ten illustrators to give their vision of the Free Mobile revolution: Vaïnui de Castelbajac, Flock, Kanako, Sophie Lambda, Fabienne Legrand, Mykaïa, Peter Patfawl, Mathieu Persan, Daria Piromalli and Ysope.

To download the visuals relating to ten years of mobile revolution, go to the Iliad Group [media library](#).

About Free

Free – the inventor of the world's first triple-play box – is a Fixed and Mobile Ultra-Fast Broadband operator in France, standing out for its innovative, straightforward and attractive offerings. In the third quarter of 2021, it had over 20.3 million BtoC subscribers (13.5 million Mobile subscribers and 6.9 million Fixed subscribers). Free is a subsidiary of the Iliad Group, which was created in France in the early 1990s and now also operates in Italy under the Iliad brand and in Poland under the Play brand. In March 2021, the Iliad Group launched its BtoB business in France under the Free Pro brand.

¹ Free Mobile Plan: 210 GB with a 5G or 4G mobile phone, 3 GB with a 3G mobile phone. Speeds reduced in excess of 210 GB/3 GB. 5G: activation required via the online subscriber space.

5G: accessible in Metropolitan France subject to a 5G-compatible plan and mobile device. Only available in areas covered by the Free 5G network. 5G network in rollout phase (3.5 GHz and 700 MHz). See mobile.free.fr for detailed information on 5G coverage.

² Série Free plan: this offer cannot be combined with any other promotional offers. It is not possible to switch from a €2 plan or the Free Mobile Plan to the Série Free plan. Unlimited calls, texts and MMS from Europe and the French overseas *départements* (DOM) to fixed and mobile lines in Europe, the DOM and Metropolitan France. 4 GB/month of 3G data from Europe and the DOM; data in excess of this allowance billed at €0.003/MB from Europe and the DOM. For details of the tariffs applicable to off-plan communications applicable for the twelve-month period, see the “*Fiche d'information Standardisé Série Free*” on mobile.free.fr.

³ Competition period runs from January 10, 2022 through January 14, 2022. Prizes: ten telephones (Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi and Oppo). Competition participants will be required to answer the competition questions posted on the relevant social media channels. The winners will be selected via a random draw. Only one competition entry per person. For full terms and conditions, see <https://free.fr/freebox/reglement-jeu-tirage-au-sort/>.

⁴ Free Flex: lease financing offer with a purchase option (without insurance). Available to private individual subscribers under the Free Mobile Plan and Série Free Plan residing in Metropolitan France. Subject to Free Mobile's final approval of the financing application. Minimum term: 24 months. The cost of the financing is borne by Free Mobile. Full terms and conditions available in Free stores or on mobile.free.fr

A credit agreement is binding and the funds must be repaid. Before entering into a credit agreement, make sure you will be able to keep up the repayments.

⁵ In terms of the number of 5G sites in service: 12,000 sites using 700 MHz/3.5 GHz frequencies (of which 2,514 sites using 3.5 GHz) in Metropolitan France at September 30, 2021. See the survey of 5G rollouts in France issued by ARCEP on December 16, 2021 (arcep.fr).

⁶ *Observatoire de la Satisfaction Client*, ARCEP, July 2021 (in French only): click [here](#).