

Reference: 01786414

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

18 March 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about Fibre rollout costs by geographic region.

We received this request on 27 February 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

Your request & our response

I am looking for information on Fibre rollout costs by geographic region.

I have found Ofcom's data on fibre coverage by Local Authority. Is anything similar available with the cost of deploying fibre? Any other data related to fibre rollout costs would be useful too.

We do not routinely gather data on costs of fibre deployment, nor do we collect or hold it on a local authority basis as we do with coverage data.

Whilst we may hold some information falling within the scope of your request, we are unable to comply with your request for this information. This is because the data you have requested is not readily accessible and would require a considerable amount of time to locate, retrieve, identify and extract.

Section 12 of the FOI Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the “appropriate limit”. The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (the “Regulations”), and is, for Ofcom, £450. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour, which equates to 18 hours of time. We estimate that it would take us more than 18 hours to locate, retrieve, identify and extract all the information specified.

We have considered, under our duty to provide advice and assistance, whether we could assist you in narrowing the scope of your request in order to bring it within the time/cost limit, however the nature of the data you have requested and the format in which it is held means that this is not possible.

Although not specifically the data you have requested, you may be interested in our [Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Market Review 2021-2026](#) which looked at cost data, and includes geographic estimates.

This non-confidential statement includes redactions. Please note that we are withholding the redacted information as we consider it is exempt under section 44 of the FOI Act.

Section 44 exempts the disclosure of information which is prohibited by another enactment. We are prohibited under section 393 of the Communications Act from disclosing information which relates to a business or businesses, which we have obtained in exercise of our powers, unless we have the consent of that business or one of the statutory gateways for disclosure under section 393(2) of the Act is met, neither of which applies here. Section 44 is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

The current regulatory framework that we set under the Wholesale Fixed Telecoms Review, ends in March 2026. We will shortly start our next review which will set the regulatory framework from April 2026 to March 2031 and expect to publish our main consultation by Q4 2024/25.

If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress.

Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).