

The Nançay Radio Observatory and the 4G cellphone coverage experiment: How citizens and science can co-exist

The Nançay Radio Observatory (ORN) is surrounded by a radio quiet zone protected by a ministerial decree, which has long held back all attempts to install cellphone coverage in the local area. With cellphone usage becoming more wide-spread, the pressure increased around 2020, and the citizens requested the village of Nançay to receive 4G cellphone coverage. We will describe the conflicting priorities between science and citizens, the tensions this generated, the technical challenges and tests performed in 2025, leading to a solution which allows for a peaceful co-existence.