



Alliance of Telecommunications Terminal Equipment Manufacturers (VTKE)  
Alt-Moabit 90a • D-10559 Berlin  
+49 173 628 62 44 • info@vtke.eu

PRESS RELEASE

## Dutch Internet users have been enjoying “router freedom” for a year now

*Individuals and corporate clients are able to choose modems and routers tailored to their security, technology and functionality requirements.*

Amsterdam, 27 January 2023 – VTKE, an alliance of European telecommunications terminal equipment manufacturers, notes with satisfaction that the opening-up of the modem market a year ago, on 28 January 2022, has been very well received by customers in the Netherlands. Since then, consumers have been able to choose a device that fits their expectations exactly in terms of technology, security and functionality rather than being forced to use the one supplied by their Internet provider.

### Freedom to choose

A VTKE survey\* has revealed that the Dutch are very happy about their ability to pick any modem they like, with over two thirds (68 per cent) of respondents regarding it as very important. In addition, more than a third (35 per cent) said that they would buy their own terminal device if they changed provider, while 45 per cent would use the one they were given by their supplier.

For a long time, many providers claimed that a free choice of modem was not feasible on technical and security grounds, even though their arguments had already been extensively discussed and refuted. Neither have these fears been realised in the countries that already allow people to select their own router. Following in the footsteps of Finland (2014), Germany (2016) and Italy (2018), end users in the Netherlands (2022) can now choose between using their own device or their provider’s.

### Benefits for consumers

Consumers benefit in various ways from a free choice of terminal device. For one thing, it gives the end user greater independence and digital autonomy. For another, it allows them to pick a router tailored 1:1 to their requirements and how they use the Internet. These requirements might include incorporating smart home applications or certain security specifications. If they are free to choose, they can find a router that offers them precisely these features. Another aspect is the open competition that the move creates and that results in a wider selection of increasingly innovative and affordable products becoming available. When end users switch Internet providers, they can keep their existing device and continue to use it without any reconfiguration required. As well as being very practical, this is also good for the environment. Similarly, the fact that a combo modem/router can replace the two devices that were previously used also enables energy and resource savings.

“In the past, anyone with a fibre, cable or DSL Internet connection had to use the devices supplied by their provider,” said a VTKE spokesman. “This ‘one-size-fits-all’ solution meant that the devices often didn’t offer the features people needed. Giving them the freedom to choose their own router allows consumers to pick the device that’s right for them. We feel relieved that the Dutch regulator introduced this last year and hope that other European countries will follow the Netherlands’ example.”



Alliance of Telecommunications Terminal Equipment Manufacturers (VTKE)  
Alt-Moabit 90a • D-10559 Berlin  
+49 173 628 62 44 • info@vtke.eu

Lucas Lasota, Router Freedom Coordinator at the Free Software Foundation Europe (FSFE), backs the decision by the Dutch regulator: “We’re watching the regulatory authorities closely as they implement the new telecommunications legislation. The Netherlands are playing a pioneering role in improving consumer protection in terms of the freedom to choose your own devices. A whole year of being able to choose any modem you like: that has to set a positive example for other EU countries to follow.”

*\*Survey commissioned by VTKE and conducted by the Kantar market research institute between 3 and 7 February 2022. Representative group in each country, age: 16–65*