

French telecoms: Orange in talks about buying rival Bouygues

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French telecoms giant Orange is in talks about a possible buyout of rival phone provider Bouygues Telecom.

It's the latest effort at consolidation in the sector, after Bouygues rejected a bid last year by Altice, owner of rival operator SFR. The French government objected to that bid out of fears a deal would reduce competition and jobs.

Orange said in a statement Tuesday that it's in "preliminary discussions" with Bouygues and "is exploring the opportunities available within the French telecoms market." Orange, the former state phone monopoly, is France's biggest [phone](#) and Internet provider and is now present in more than 30 countries.

Bouygues Telecom's parent company Bouygues Group said it is interested in "any arrangement that would allow it to strengthen its long-term foundation in telecoms."

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