



OFCOM SLAPS VIRGIN MEDIA WITH RECORD £28M FINE

Virgin Media has been hit with a record £28 million penalty by UK communications regulator Ofcom for making it unnecessarily difficult for customers to cancel services and switch to competing providers.

Following a lengthy investigation covering the period between January 2022 and September 2024, Ofcom found that millions of customer interactions were mishandled through repeated call transfers, lengthy hold times, dropped calls and failures to process cancellation requests. The regulator also criticised Virgin Media's retention incentive programme, which rewarded agents for preventing customer churn.

The watchdog said the operator's two-tier cancellation process forced more than one million subscribers to repeat cancellation requests before they could terminate their contracts. Describing the penalty as the largest ever imposed under its consumer protection rules, Ofcom said the fine reflected the scale of customer harm, repeated regulatory breaches and the



company's lack of cooperation during the investigation.

Virgin Media said the findings relate to historic practices that have since been addressed through significant customer service reforms, including revised commission structures, enhanced staff training and new quality assurance processes.

HUNGARY SUSPENDS STATE NEWS BROADCASTS

Hungary's public broadcaster has temporarily suspended television and radio news programming as the country's new government begins a sweeping overhaul of the state media landscape following April's general election.



The move fulfils a key election commitment by Prime Minister Péter Magyar, whose administration has pledged to rebuild public broadcasting as an independent and credible news service after years of criticism over political influence under the previous government.

News services on M1 television and Kossuth Radio have been replaced with an on-air message acknowledging past editorial failures while restructuring is underway.

TV REPUBLIKA EYES PAN-EUROPEAN EXPANSION

Polish broadcaster TV Republika is planning to launch an English-language television news service aimed at audiences across Europe, positioning itself as a continental alternative to GB News.

The channel's owner, Tomasz



Sakiewicz, said discussions are underway with American and European investors to launch the service in 2026. The expansion follows TV Republika's rapid audience growth in Poland after changes to the country's public broadcasting landscape encouraged conservative viewers to migrate to private news outlets.

If launched, the new service would expand Republika's footprint beyond Poland and intensify competition in Europe's English-language television news market.

ARTE ADDS DUTCH BROADCASTER TO EUROPEAN ALLIANCE

European cultural broadcaster ARTE has strengthened its cross-border collaboration strategy by signing an association agreement with Dutch public broadcaster NPO, expanding its network of European partners to 14 organisations.



The partnership will focus on co-productions, editorial collaboration and content exchange, enabling both broadcasters to jointly develop programming while broadening the international reach of Dutch productions. ■