



Media Release- 18th December 2006

ComReg announces launch of Ireland's first Commercial Service for ENUM

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) today announced that a commercial ENUM service will open in Ireland in first quarter of 2007. The agreement to provide the service was signed today by ComReg and the service provider, IENUM Limited, a consortium led by the IE Domain Registry (IEDR).

ENUM provides a highly efficient mechanism for Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services to locate called persons, even when their VoIP addresses are unknown. It does this based on the called party's telephone number, which is still the most widely used form of address, world-wide.

The Chairperson of ComReg, Mike Byrne today signed a formal agreement to provide a full Irish ENUM service with the service providers IENUM Limited. The IENUM consortium is comprised of Ireland's internet domain registry body (IEDR) and the Internet Foundation of Austria (IPA).

ComReg's Chairperson, Mike Byrne, said "ComReg wishes the IENUM joint venture every success and looks forward to the enhancements it will provide to Ireland's developing communications facilities." He added "The new services provided by IENUM should form a firm basis for linking disparate islands of VoIP and should also offer real potential for carriers to enhance their interconnection routing and thereby reduce overall operational costs.

The Chief Executive of the IE Domain Registry (IEDR), David Curtin, said: "We look forward to working with ComReg and the ENUM Policy Advisory Board (PAB) to provide a commercial registry for the supply of ENUM services in Ireland. We will also be working closely with the telecommunications and internet service providers to enable them to provide new and converged services to Irish consumers. Together with our Austrian partner, IPA which was the first in the world to offer an ENUM registry, we plan to introduce a world-class ENUM registry and ENUM infrastructure to Ireland. We were pleased that our joint venture was selected in an international tender in the face of international and national competitors."

The Chairman of IPA Austria, Michael Haberler, said: "This initiative is about establishing a trusted entity which will have a key role in the transition of communication services onto the Internet in the Irish market. It is the first international cooperation of national domain registries to deploy a critical service and I believe it could be a blueprint for others to follow. Personally I am glad to see our pioneering efforts being acknowledged."

ENDS

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Explanatory Note and Abbreviations:

What is ENUM?

Have you ever wanted to contact someone by email or fax or mobile phone but only have their fixed-line telephone number? ENUM (Electronic Numbering) is an emerging telecoms protocol that enables you to do exactly that.

ENUM is an addressing protocol that enables a range of communications mechanisms to be used to contact a participating customer. ENUM is a communications service into which users opt for on a voluntary basis. It is capable of giving you any type of address that a telephony consumer cares to register (e.g. web URL, email address, Fax number, mobile number or an IP number).

ENUM automatically returns the set of corresponding contact addresses when someone's telephone number is entered, making it easy for service providers to then automate an actual connection over the most appropriate, efficient and cost-effective medium.

The evolution of ENUM in Ireland was initiated by ComReg, with support from the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. Many countries are carrying out ENUM trials but Ireland is now the seventh EU country, to move fully into commercial operation, after Austria and Germany, Finland, Netherlands, Poland and Romania.

ENUM (short for tElephone NUmber Mapping) is an Internet protocol as well as a physical Domain Name Registry architecture.

IEDR means IE Domain Name Registry

The IE Domain Registry Limited (IEDR) is the registry for all Internet domain names ending in .ie. It controls, manages and operates the .ie country code Top-Level Domain (ccTLD) and provides complementary registry services.

IPA means Internet Privatstiftung Austria

The IPA is the Austrian organisation that operates the .at Internet domain name registry and which provided the world's first ENUM commercial registry service

DNS means the Internet domain name service, which ensures that domains such as www.comreg.ie can be converted to an Internet Protocol (IP) address of the type 123.134.145.156 which could be understood by Internet routers.

VoIP means Voice over Internet Protocol, which is a service using packet-based IP technology to compete very effectively with traditional PSTN voice.