



Media Release- 2 December 2010

ComReg publishes Information Notice and Consumer Research on International Roaming practices

The Commission for Communication Regulation (ComReg) today published its 6th Information Notice showing the trend of international roaming charges for the period 1 January 2010 - 30 June 2010. Data provided by Irish mobile operators indicates a high level of compliance with the EU-wide Roaming Regulation.

In addition, ComReg recently commissioned research (from Ipsos MRBI) to examine the current behaviour and attitudes of Irish mobile phone owners when roaming in Europe. The findings of this research are also being published by ComReg.

Main points regarding the data in the report

- Irish retail roaming prices for calls made, and received, continue to indicate compliance with the regulatory price ceilings
- the retail price for sending a text message while roaming remains below the regulated cap of 0.13 cent, including VAT
- volumes of retail roaming data traffic have grown strongly - between Q4 2008 and Q2 2010 volumes increased by 88%, compared to an EU/EEA average of 78%.

ComReg also published today research (conducted by Ipsos MRBI) to explore Irish consumer's roaming behaviors and usage when abroad.

Main points to note from the consumer research findings

- Approximately 10% of customers now have a smartphone
- Reliability of service, cost of calls, and costs of texts are seen as the key considerations in consumers' choice of network provider
- Approximately 50% of consumers surveyed said they had found over the last couple of years it had become cheaper to use mobile phones when in Europe
- Overall, there is a significant lack of awareness about roaming charges
- there is a very low level of understanding about how data roaming charges are calculated and about the data required for various roaming functions

- almost 30% of those with bill phones stated that they had experienced some level of mobile roaming “bill shock”
- The vast majority of consumers endeavour to curtail their phone usage when roaming.

To further promote awareness and transparency for consumers while roaming, ComReg’s website www.callcosts.ie/roaming provides consumers with information about mobile roaming, a guide to mobile roaming and a **mobile roaming calculator** which assists consumers in estimating the cost of their planned roaming usage. The mobile roaming guide includes a “Top Tips” section for consumers who are planning to use their mobile abroad.

Key points to note, regarding mobile phone prices, if you are planning to travel in the EU:

- cost of making a call 0.47 cent per minute (incl. VAT)
- cost of receiving a call 0.18 cent per minute (incl. VAT)
- cost of sending a text message 0.13 cent per minute (incl. VAT)
- free to receive a text message
- no charge for consumers to receive a voicemail message (different from listening to a voicemail message)
- “bill shock” pricing transparency initiative - €60.50 (incl. VAT) spend cap in place.

ENDS

Issued By

Tom Butler

Public Affairs Manager, ComReg

Ph: 01 804 9639 Mobile: 087 2536358

tom.butler@comreg.ie