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ComReg Media Release

ComReg publishes results of 2017 Ireland Communicates Survey

The 2017 Ireland Communicates survey was conducted by the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) and its survey partner Ipsos MRBI. Over 1,500 Irish consumers and 500 SMEs were interviewed about their use and experiences of telecommunications in Ireland.

The trends highlighted in the 2017 Ireland Communicates survey reflect the growing importance of telecommunications in our everyday lives. We are using technology in more ways than ever before, from the streaming online TV content to video calling.

The vast majority of Irish consumers and SMEs interviewed as part of the 2017 Ireland Communicates survey were satisfied with their telecommunications providers. 16% of Irish consumers are likely to switch their telecommunications bundle from their existing service provider in the next 12 months, with 38% expecting they can make a saving of more than 5% with a new provider.

Below are some of the key highlights from the 2017 Ireland Communicates survey.

○ **Key Results – Consumer survey**

- There are significant differences in ICT usage across urban and rural areas. This is particularly evident for broadband; 73% of urban respondents have fixed broadband, compared to 58% of those from rural areas.
- Instant messaging apps have reduced the use of SMS services, but have not replaced them. 31% of those using these apps say that they still send the same number of text messages.
- Consumers expect their usage of “smart” technologies to increase over the coming few years. While 29% of households currently have a Smart TV, the majority (56%) expect that they will own one in five years’ time. Similar anticipated increases are evident for smart heating and other devices. Ownership of petrol or diesel cars is expected to fall from 84% to 72%, making way for hybrid, fully electric and autonomous vehicles.
- Most consumers are aware that EU roaming charges have ended, and consequently 78% are now more likely to roam in another EU country.
- Half of households in rural areas are using Saorview, compared with a quarter in urban areas. More than two out of every five households say they use Netflix. 95% of those with streaming services say they still watch live TV services, with 44% saying that the amount of live TV they view is unchanged.

- Usage of traditional forms of communication continues. In the six months prior to the survey,
 - 3% of respondents used a public phone box;
 - 17% of respondents used a printed telephone book; and
 - 15% of respondents sent or received a fax.

○ Key Results – Business survey

- While the vast majority of SMEs have an online presence (95%), fewer than half use this presence to trade online, with trading online more common in the services and retail sectors.
- Facebook is the most popular social media platform for SMEs; 60% of organisations surveyed had a Facebook account. LinkedIn and Twitter are also popular with usage at 34% and 33% of respondents respectively.
- Bundling of services has increased since 2013, with 67% of SMEs indicating that they bundle two or more services together. This has increased from just over half of SMEs in 2013.
- There is a movement away from traditional telephony. While 70% of SMEs never use VOIP services, 1 in 10 use it at least once per week.
- Usage of traditional forms of communication remain high. In the six months prior to the survey,
 - 12% of SMEs used a printed telephone book; and
 - 28% of SMEs sent or received a fax.

About the 2017 Ireland Communicates survey

Face to face interviews were conducted during November and December 2017, with 1,519 individuals responsible/jointly responsible for telecoms decision making in their household. Interviewing quotas were set by age, gender, region and social class.

Telephone interviews were conducted with 509 SMEs with up to 250 employees. Interviewing quotas were set for business sector, number of employees and region.

For more information about the 2017 Ireland Communicates survey and ComReg, visit www.comreg.ie – ComReg 18/23a (Consumer Survey) ComReg 18/23b (SME Survey)

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