



Media Release- 29 April 2005

ComReg survey shows emergence of “mobile-only” homes

A survey published by the Commission for Communications Regulations (ComReg) has estimated that 24% of homes are now “mobile-only”, with no fixed line subscription. This trend is predominantly among younger age groups and lower income groups.

The figures are included in ComReg’s Trends Survey of the telecommunications sector for the first quarter of 2005. The survey of 1,000 people aged between 15 and 74, which is carried out by Amárach Consulting for ComReg, examines trends and developments in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors. The purpose of the survey is to gain an understanding of the attitudes and perceptions of residential consumers to electronic communications services available in Ireland.

The highlights of the survey included the following

- Mobile subscription levels continue to exceed household fixed line penetration in the residential market, with younger demographic age groups, lower income groups and singles most likely to be “mobile only” households.
- Broadband connections continue to grow in the residential market at the expense of standard dial-up internet connections. DSL is the most popular means of broadband internet access, followed by cable broadband services.
- Almost 40% of consumers are aware of 3G services, with around 7% of the overall sample suggesting they are likely to subscribe to 3G in the next three months. 15-24 year-olds indicated most interest in subscribing to 3G. This age group also constitutes around 50% of the market for current mobile multi-media services.
- 69% of households now have some form of Pay-TV service, while 32% subscribed to digital TV.

Inadvertent Mobile Phone Roaming in Border Counties

Amárach also surveyed 250 people living in border counties to ascertain their attitudes and experiences of inadvertent cross-border roaming onto UK mobile networks while still within the Republic of Ireland. The results estimated that,

- 63% of those in border counties had inadvertently roamed onto UK mobile networks in Northern Ireland while still in the Republic of Ireland.
- While 84% of respondents expressed concern at additional charges for making and receiving calls while inadvertently roaming onto UK networks while still in the Republic of Ireland.
- Only 1% of respondents had received advice from their mobile operator on what to do if their handset was receiving a UK network signal.

ComReg and its Northern Ireland counterpart, Ofcom, have established a Joint Working Group to examine a number of cross border telecommunications issues, including cross-border roaming. In January, the ComReg and Ofcom published its first report on cross-border telecoms issues. ComReg is continuing to work with the mobile operators to find solutions to this on-going problem.

Full details of survey are available on the ComReg website www.comreg.ie in document ComReg 05/34a.

The sample size for this survey was 1000 individuals, aged 15-74 years at 101 locations nationwide. The margin of error on the overall sample is 2-4%. The booster sample carried out in the border counties interviewed 250 individuals. This booster sample has a margin of error of 4-6%.

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