



An Coimisiún um
Rialáil Cumarsáide
Commission for
Communications Regulation

Information Notice

ComReg's Independent Comparison Tool – Development Project

Information Notice

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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Commission for Communications Regulation (“ComReg”) has an obligation pursuant to Regulation 88 of the European Union (Electronic Communications Code) Regulations 2022¹ (“the Regulations”) to ensure that end-users have access free of charge to at least one independent comparison tool meeting the requirements of that Regulation. Regulation 88 provides a basis for ComReg’s comparison tool, called Compare (provided on its website at www.comreg.ie/compare), and for other comparison tools. [See Appendix for further information.]
- 1.2 ComReg currently fulfils this obligation through the provision of its comparison tool on ComReg.ie. ComReg is in the process of updating its comparison tool. ComReg’s updated Compare tool will have (but not be limited to):
- (a) User experience improvements with updated display, usability, and comparison functionality
 - (b) Improved navigation
 - (c) Updated search functionality
 - (d) Updated plan features
 - (e) Full integration into the ComReg.ie web domain
 - (f) New data upload processes for Retail Service Providers.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Information Notice is to provide notice to all Retail Service Providers of internet access services or publicly available interpersonal communications services of the redevelopment of ComReg’s Compare tool on ComReg.ie, and to invite authorised Retail Service Providers to engage in this redevelopment and data submission process.

¹ S.I. No. 444 of 2022: <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2022/si/444/made/en/pdf>

2 Background

- 2.1 In 2005, ComReg launched its price comparison tool at www.callcosts.ie. Callcosts.ie was a price comparison tool for mobile phone services and was modified and further developed to include home phone, broadband and directory enquiry services. In 2017, ComReg launched its Compare tool at www.comreg.ie/compare which replaced Callcosts.ie.
- 2.2 ComReg is in the process of updating its Compare tool on ComReg.ie.
- 2.3 Authorised Retail Service Providers of internet access services or publicly available interpersonal communications services currently input price plan data directly into the Compare tool on a voluntary basis, using a username and password facility on ComReg.ie. A new process will require authorised Retail Service Providers to input price plan data using the existing ComReg data portal and upload facility that is in operation for data uploads. ComReg will supply Providers with details of the data format to be used when uploading price plan data. Data submissions will be required at least quarterly and/or as price plans change.
- 2.4 As part of the update underway, ComReg has developed a data schema [data template and data dictionary] for authorised Retail Service Providers to complete and submit price plan information in bulk to ComReg.

3 Next Steps

- 3.1 ComReg invites authorised Retail Service Providers of internet access services or publicly available interpersonal communications services who wish to feature in the Compare Tool to engage in the set-up of the new data collection process.
- 3.2 A workshop will take place for representatives (no more than two) from each authorised Retail Service Provider who will be engaging with the tool, online on **Thursday, 13th June 2024, 11.00 – 13.00** to introduce the Compare tool development and new data upload process to Retail Service Providers.
- 3.3 To attend this workshop, email comparefeedback@comreg.ie.
- 3.4 Next steps in the Compare tool development project include:
- (a) Workshop with authorised Retail Service Providers to introduce Compare tool data schema and new data submission process
 - (b) Update data schema as relevant
 - (c) Development of web tool interface and user testing

- (d) Set-up of authorised Retail Service Providers for data submission process
- (e) Complete final testing before launch of the updated Compare tool.

3.5 The launch of the updated Compare tool on ComReg.ie is estimated to be by Q4 2024.

4 Appendix – Legal Basis

- A 1.1 Regulation 88 (5) of the Regulations states that “The Regulator shall ensure that end-users have access free of charge to at least one independent comparison tool which enables them to compare and evaluate different internet access services and publicly available number-based interpersonal communications services, and, where applicable, publicly available number-independent interpersonal communications services with regard to - (a) prices and tariffs of services provided against recurring or consumption-based direct monetary payments, and (b) the quality-of-service performance, where minimum quality of service is offered or the undertaking is required to publish such information in accordance with Article 104 of the Directive.”
- A 1.2 Regulation 88 (6) of the Regulations states that “A comparison tool referred to in paragraph (5) shall – a) (i) be operationally independent from the providers of such services referred to in the paragraph (5), and (ii) ensure that those providers are given equal treatment in search results, b) clearly disclose the owners and operators of the comparison tool, c) set out clear and objective criteria on which the comparison is to be based, d) use plain and unambiguous language, e) provide accurate and up-to-date information and state the time of the last update, f) be open to any provider of internet access services or publicly available interpersonal communications services making available the relevant information, and include a broad range of offers covering a significant part of the market, and where the information presented is not a complete overview of the market, a clear statement to that effect, before displaying results, g) provide an effective procedure to report incorrect information, and h) include the possibility to compare prices, tariffs and quality of service performance between offers available to consumers and, if required by the Regulator, between those offers and the standard offers publicly available to end-users.”
- A 1.3 Regulation 88 (9) of the Regulations states that “The Regulator may provide a comparison tool for the purposes of this Regulation either itself, or by way of third party procurement, even where another comparison tool meeting the requirements of this Regulation is available to end-users.”