



An Coimisiún um
Rialáil Cumarsáide
Commission for
Communications Regulation

Irish Text Relay Service

Measures for disabled end-users Take up and usage statistics

Information Notice

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Commission for Communications Regulation

1 Lárcheantar na nDugaí, Sráid na nGildeanna, BÁC 1, Éire, D01 E4X0.
One Dockland Central, Guild Street, Dublin 1, Ireland, D01 E4X0.
Teil | Tel +353 1 804 9600 Suíomh | Web www.comreg.ie

Irish Text Relay Service (“ITRS”)

1.1 Background

1. One of ComReg’s objectives is to ensure that disabled end-users have access to electronic communications services equivalent to that enjoyed by the majority of end-users. In order to achieve this objective, on 30 December 2015, following a public consultation, ComReg, in ComReg Decision D09/15¹ (“D09/15”), decided that service providers with more than 100,000 subscribers must provide disabled end-users access to a Text Relay Service.
2. ITRS translates text into voice (“TTV”) and, voice into text (“VTT”), to facilitate deaf and hard of hearing people and those with speaking difficulties in making and receiving calls, including when using mobile devices, in the Republic of Ireland. Calls are relayed through ITRS agents who perform this translation. ITRS can be used with smartphones, tablets, computers and textphones. ITRS is a pathway for end-users with a disability to access services (e.g., banking, utilities, travel, etc.) by phone or online. Since 2017, the ITRS is available to end-users and full information on how to access and use the service is found on the official ITRS web site, www.itrs.ie.
3. The ITRS service is operated by Eircom limited (‘Eir’) acting as the host of the ITRS, and serving the customers of Three, Eir, Sky, Tesco Mobile, Virgin Media, and Vodafone and, is funded by each of these operators.
4. Eir and the relevant operators have carried out certain changes to the ITRS, notably, the introduction of a link (“URL”)² to access and use ITRS instead of an application. Since 1 July 2021, the ITRS can be accessed from the ITRS.ie URL.³

¹ ‘Provision of Access to a Text Relay Service’, Ref ComReg 15/143, Decision No. D09/15.

² URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator. A URL is a webpage address, such as www.itrs.ie

³ Previously, ITRS end users could make and receive text relay calls through downloading the ITRS Application from the Google Play Store or the iOS App Store.

1.2 Usage and Service Levels of ITRS

5. The following charts set out the usage and service levels of ITRS for the period from January 2022 to 30 June 2022.
6. Where “Abandoned ITRS calls” is referred to, this means the rate at which end-users of ITRS cancel an attempt to make an ITRS call via the ITRS service. The recommended rate of abandon calls for ITRS calls (both TTV and VTT calls) is less than 5% of calls per calendar month, as set out in ComReg Decision D09/154⁴.
7. Additionally, the Service Level is measured by the percentage of calls answered by the ITRS agent within 20 seconds of the call being made to them, the recommended % for ITRS calls (both TTV and VTT calls) is 80%, as set out in ComReg Decision D09/15. Both the TTV and VTT calls are handled by the same ITRS agent as part of the relay or translation service.
8. Chart 1 indicates that the number of TTV calls via ITRS have increased month on month, reaching 385 in June 2022.

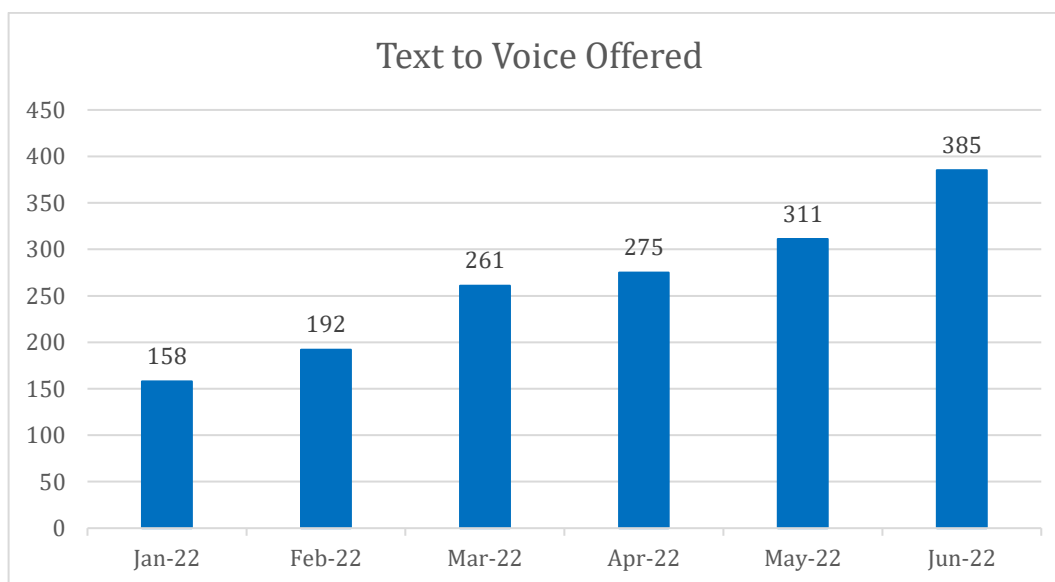


Chart 1: Text to Voice Calls, January to June 2022

⁴ <https://www.comreg.ie/publication/provision-of-access-to-a-text-relay-service>

- Chart 2 below reflects the Quality of ITRS TTV calls by month for the period January to June 2022.

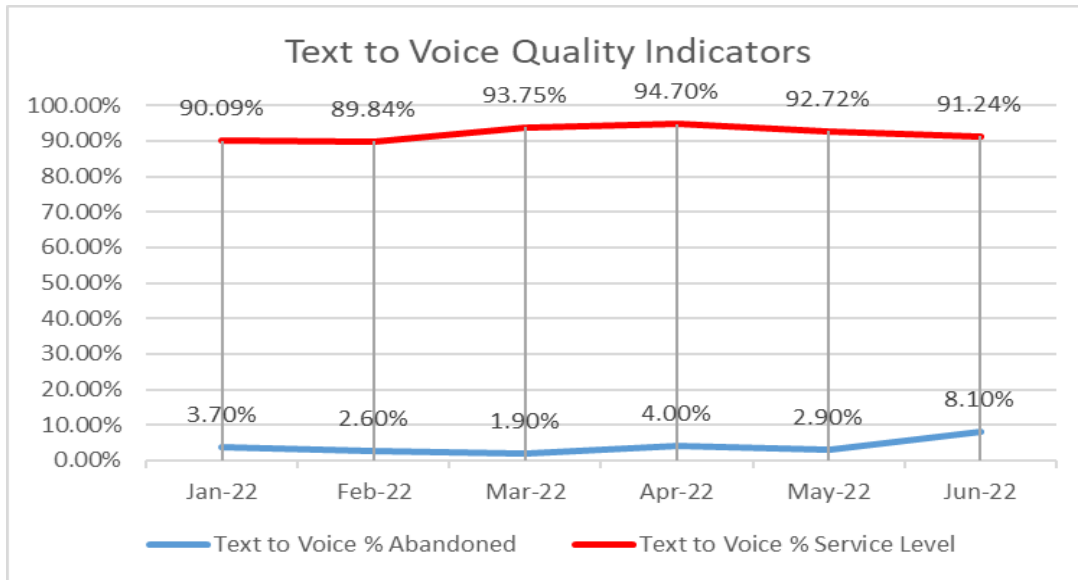


Chart 2: Text to Voice Quality, January to June 2022

NOTE: ComReg understands that the TTV higher than recommended abandonment rate in June 2022 is because of technical difficulties experienced because of a poor mobile signal.

- Chart 3, notes that in the same period, the voice to text calls (VTT) calls by ITRS end users continue to remain lower than TTV calls, peaking at 30 in June 2022.

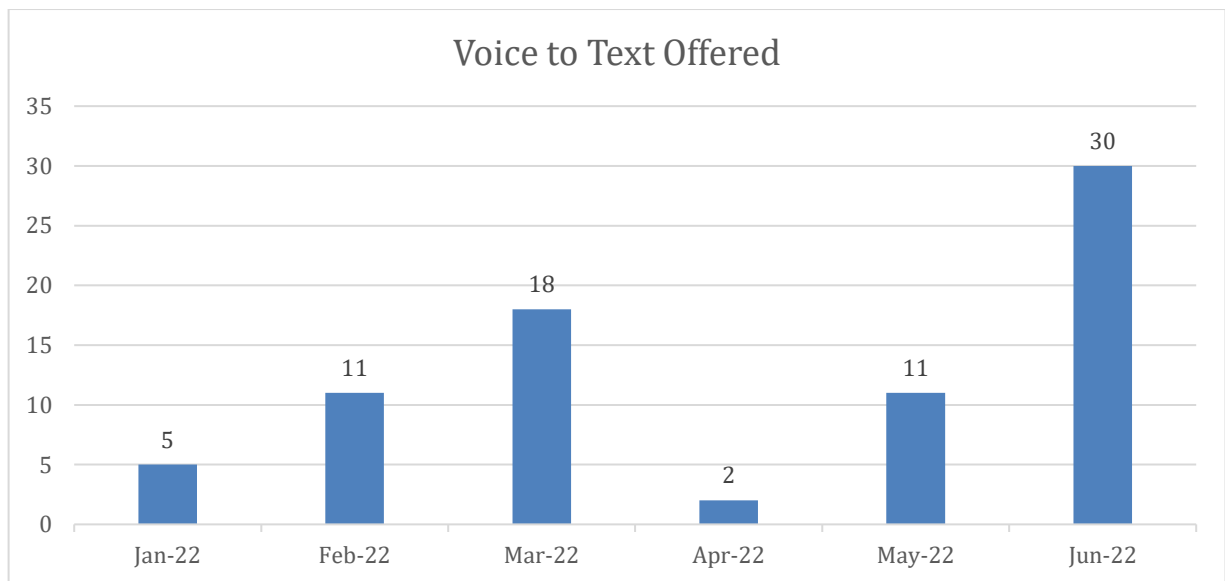


Chart 3: Voice to Text Calls, January to June 2022

11. Chart 4 below reflects the Quality of ITRS VTT calls by month.

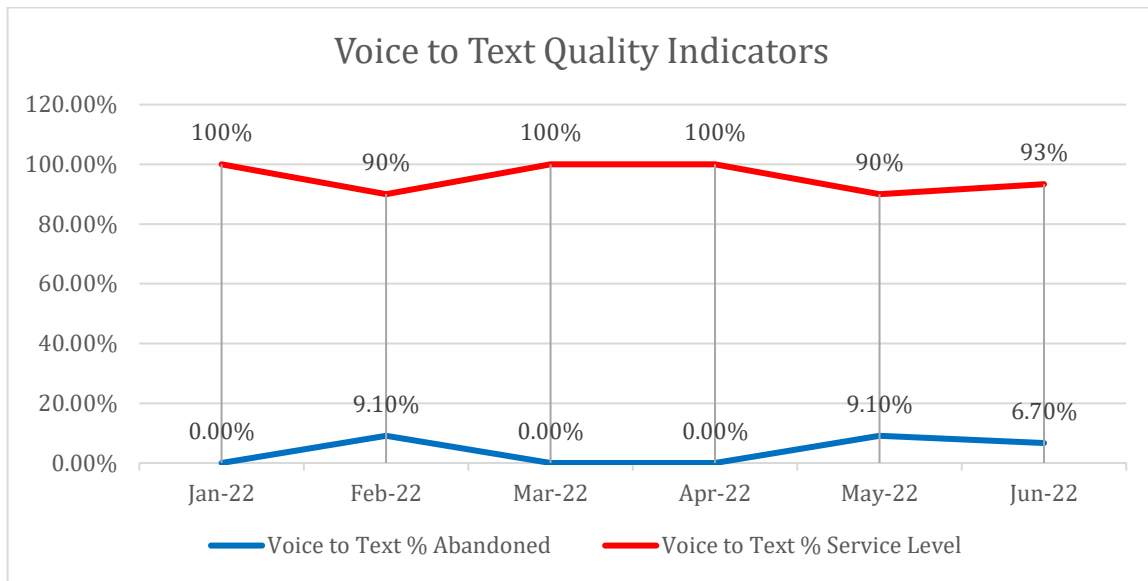


Chart 4: Voice to Text Quality, January to June 2022

NOTE: ComReg understands that the VTT higher than recommended abandonment rate during some of the reported months is because of technical difficulties experienced because of a poor mobile signal.