

BEREC Update

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5th December 2019

Agenda

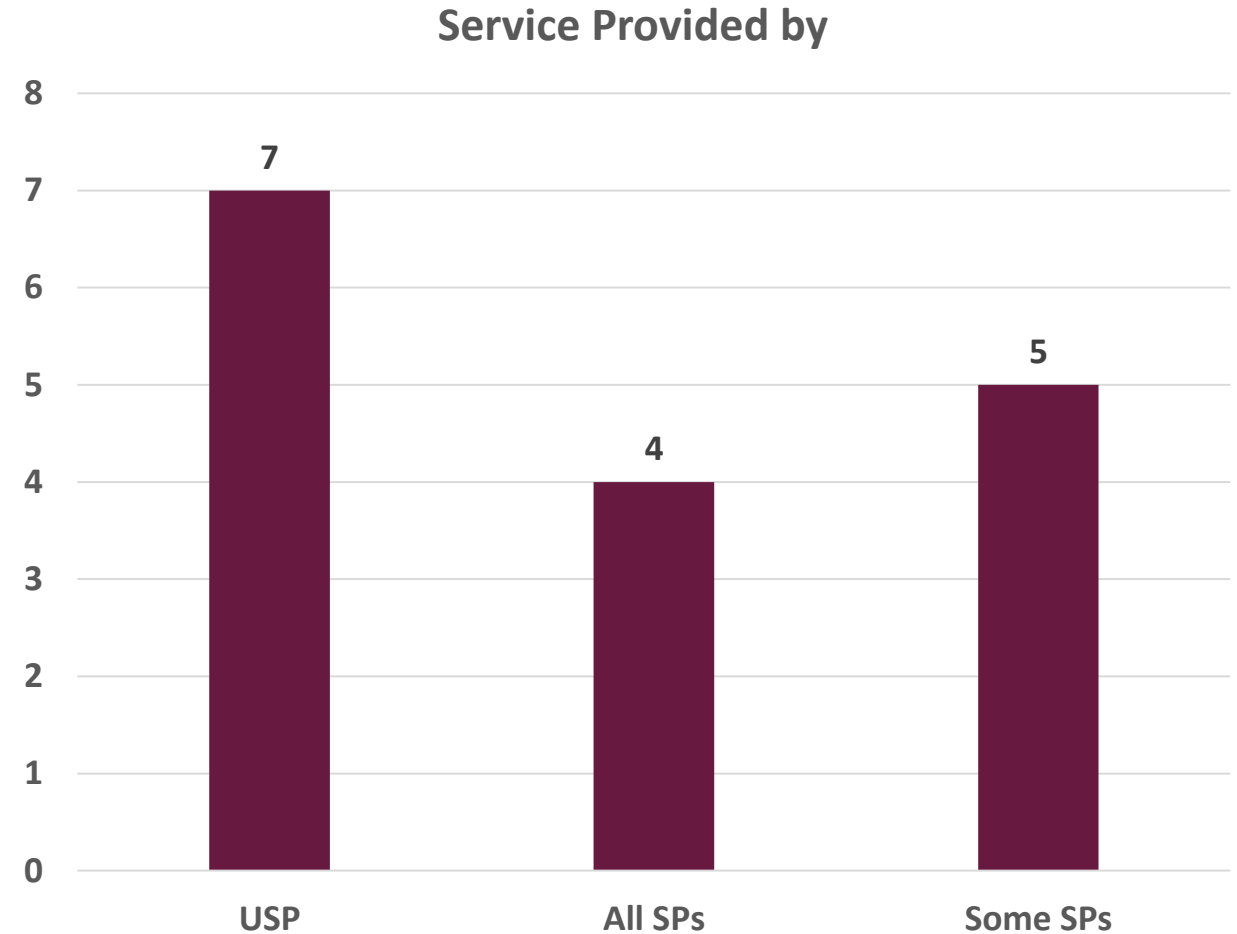
- BEREC's strategic priorities
- BEREC's work to date
 - Benchmark of Services offered in Member States
 - Quality of Service
- Country Cases (UK & Ireland)

Exploring new ways to boost consumer empowerment

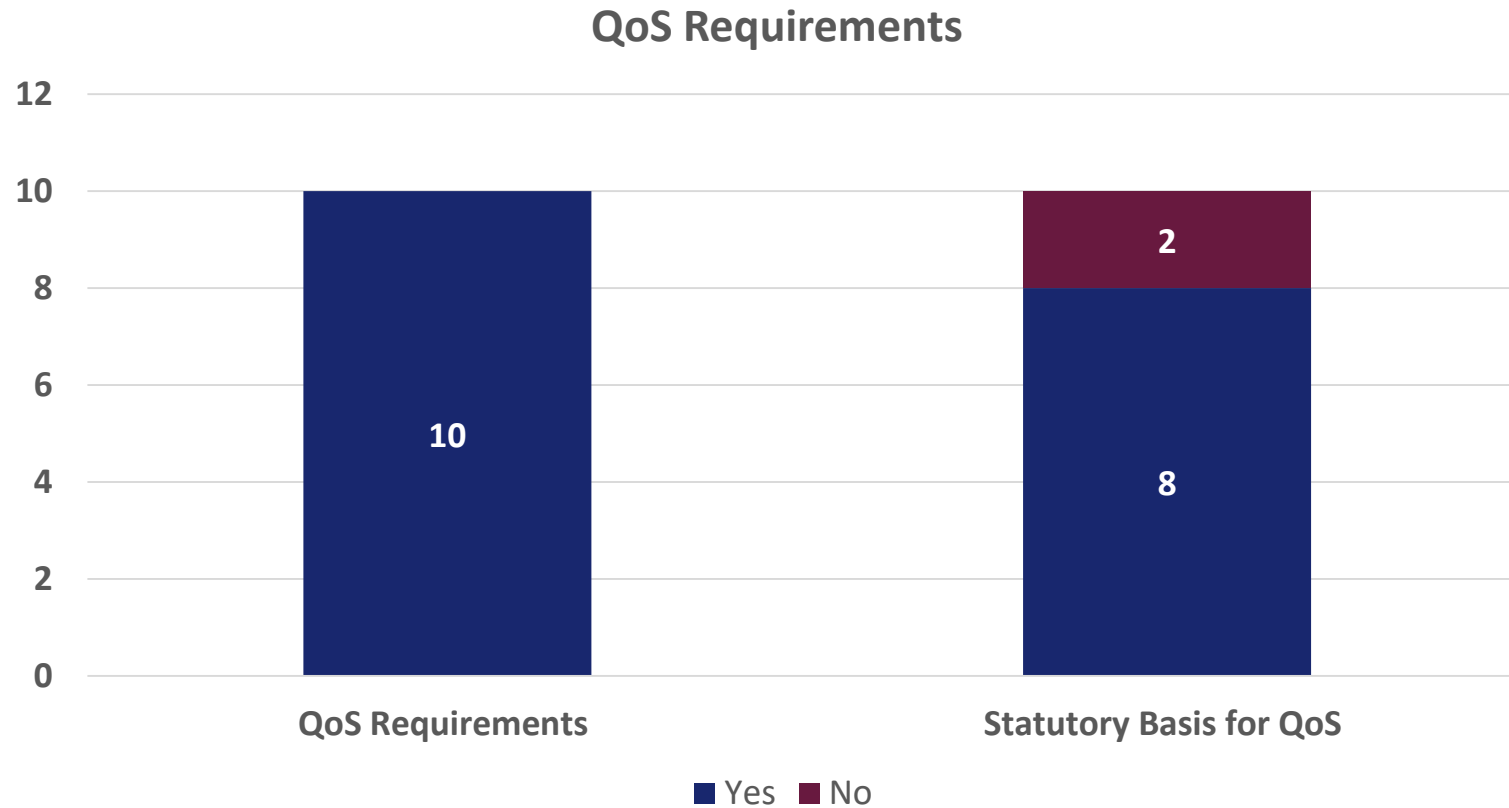
- BEREC's Strategic Priority outlines our role in promoting the interests of EU citizens and protecting **the interests of vulnerable end-user groups**.
- It includes a role for BEREC to study demand side aspects of the market, to monitor market evolutions and, to respond to ensure end-users' **continued ability to use the services of their choice**, at appropriate levels of price and quality.
- Today I will provide an update in respect to text relay services from information provided by National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) that provides a status update of the provision of text relay services for disabled end-users across Europe.

- 2011 Feb BEREC published a report on Electronic Communications Services: Ensuring equivalence in access and choice for disabled end-users ref BoR (10) 47 Rev 1
- 2013 Oct BEREC held a public Workshop discussing what has been done so far to improve accessibility for disabled citizens and what are the main challenges faced by disabled users accessing electronic communication services
- 2015 BEREC held a further public workshop and in December produced a report BoR (15) 201 that set out the current state of provision of ECS & Insights into the needs of disabled end users
- 2018 March BEREC produced a further update 'Reports on best practices for ensuring Equivalence for Disabled End Users' BoR (18) 30 the highlights of which I now present

- Relay services represent a communication facility for the deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired people in order to help them to have a real time conversation via their telephony services, mostly intermediated by a communications assistant.
- Regarding the implementation of such services, in total 16 out of 28 NRAs mentioned that at least one solution is in place.
- Service provided by
 - USP: CH, CY, DK, HR, NL, NO, SK,
 - All SPs: BE, DE, FR, UK,
 - Some SPs: FI, IE, PL, PT, SE



- Quality of Service – 10 of the 16 countries with text/video relay services have set some quality of service requirements



Country Case Studies

– UK

– Ireland

Calls from and to people with hearing and speech impairments: a guide to the Text Relay service



Ofcom requires all landline and mobile telephone companies to provide a number of **services for customers with disabilities**.

One of these is **access to an approved text relay service** for people with hearing or speech impairments.

What is text relay?

Text relay offers text-to-speech and speech-to-text translation services. A relay assistant in a call centre acts as an intermediary, enabling people with hearing or speech impairments to communicate with other people over the telephone.

Ofcom approves text relay providers and has set out minimum standards for the service to ensure users have a good experience. BT is the first provider to have gained Ofcom's approval for its Next Generation Text Service. All other telephone companies currently give their customers access to BT's service.

We have been working with disability and industry stakeholders to deliver improvements to the text relay service to give a better experience to its users.

More information on our work to improve text relay services can be found [here](#).

The improved 'next generation' text relay enables:

- a wider range of mainstream equipment to be used to access the service (e.g. PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones);
- simultaneous voice, hearing and text, allowing for a more natural flow of conversation with the ability to interject, and without the need to say or type 'go ahead' after each part of a conversation; and
- increased conversation speeds for users with good/understandable speech.

Country Case Study - UK

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0015/10923/text-relay.pdf

Phone conversations a problem? Relay UK is the answer.

Relay UK app

Download the Relay UK app to enjoy fast, natural conversations with anyone you want to talk to.

Choose your device

By simply downloading the app and linking it to your phone number, you can use the relay service on your smartphone, tablet or PC.

Textphone

You can still make calls with your textphone, same as you've ever done. So there's no need to worry about changing it.

Connect

Relay UK helps you communicate in English over the phone: hearing, deaf, or speech-impaired.

Relay Assistant

Use the confidential relay service and a Relay Assistant will speak, or type what you're saying to the other person.

Type direct

You can type directly to the other person if they're also using the app or a textphone, so there's no need for the Relay Assistant.



A little bit of history

People have been using the UK's national relay service since 1991, when it was known as TypeTalk.

Back then, it was only available to textphone users (because that was the only technology available).

In 2012, Ofcom decided that UK users needed an improved relay service, one that would allow for more natural conversations on a wide range of devices that weren't around when the first relay service started: smartphones, computers, and tablets.

So, in 2014 BT launched the Next Generation Text service -, now called Relay UK, which they run for everyone on behalf of all UK landline and mobile phone providers

BEREC Relay UK -Performance Measures

Measures: service performance

All measures are averaged over a calendar month and include:

- 90% of standard relay calls answered within 15 seconds (PCA15)
- 95% of emergency relay calls answered within 5 seconds (PCA5)
- less than 3% of standard relay calls abandoned
- less than 2% of emergency calls abandoned

We publish data after the end of each quarter.

Source <https://www.relayuk.bt.com/about-relay-uk.html>

Measures: supplier management performance

Measures are averaged over a calendar month:

- More than 94% of calls correctly handled (relay assistants are monitored at least quarterly for speed of transcription, accuracy, and process conformance).
- More than 40 words per minute (wpm) in conversation voice-to-text transcription speed (when the Relay UK user is able to receive 40wpm or faster).
- More than 98% voice-to-text transcription accuracy.
- Less than 1 complaint per 1000 calls.

Users of the NGT service are typically frequent users who predominately have been using the service for more than a year. They are likely to have a great deal of experience using the service which will frame their recent experiences

Length of time using the NGT service



Less than 6 months **8%**



6 months-1 year **21%**



1-4 years **65%**



More than 4 years **6%**

Frequency of using the NGT service



Everyday **44%**



At least once a week, but not everyday **46%**



Less than once a week **10%**

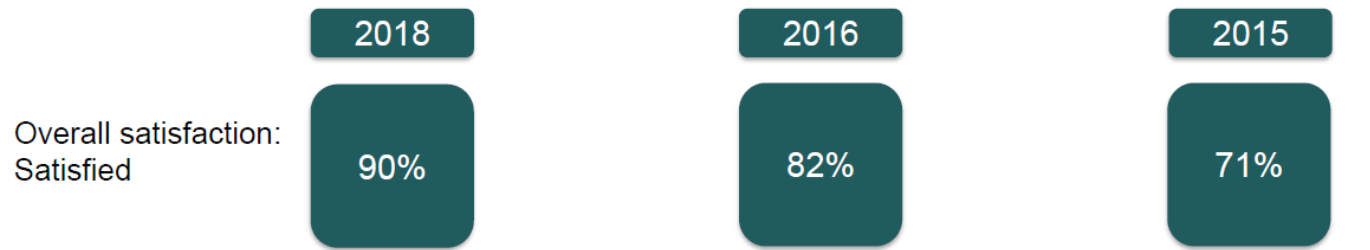
Watermelon

13. How long have you been using the NGT Service for? All Respondents (431)

A1. How often do you use the NGT service involving a relay assistant/operator, including both making and receiving calls? All Respondents (431)

Customer Satisfaction Survey 2018

Satisfaction with the NGT service is very high and has continued to increase wave on wave

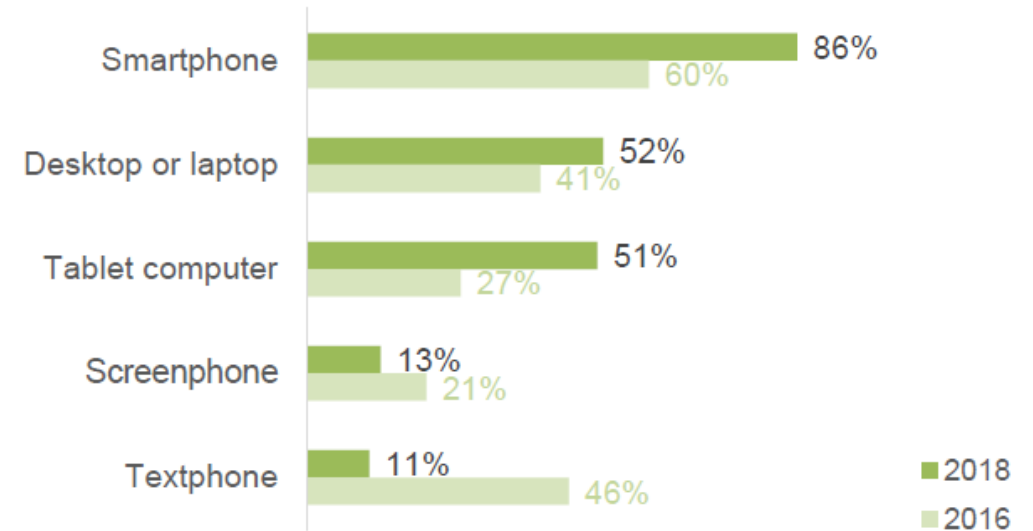


Those who are dissatisfied are:

- Have no hearing: 11 out of 17
- Don't find the service easy to use: 10 out of 17
- Have been using the service for more than a year: 13 out of 17

Watermelon 11. Thinking about the NGT service in general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service overall?, All respondents 2018 (431), 2016 (110)

Devices used for NGT calls



Average number of devices used **2**



Welcome to the Irish Text Relay Service

What is it?

Where can I get it?

How do I use it?

What is it?

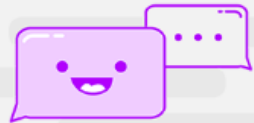
ITRS translates text into voice and voice into text to facilitate Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in making and receiving calls in the Republic of Ireland. Calls are relayed through our ITRS agents who perform this translation.



Text



Voice



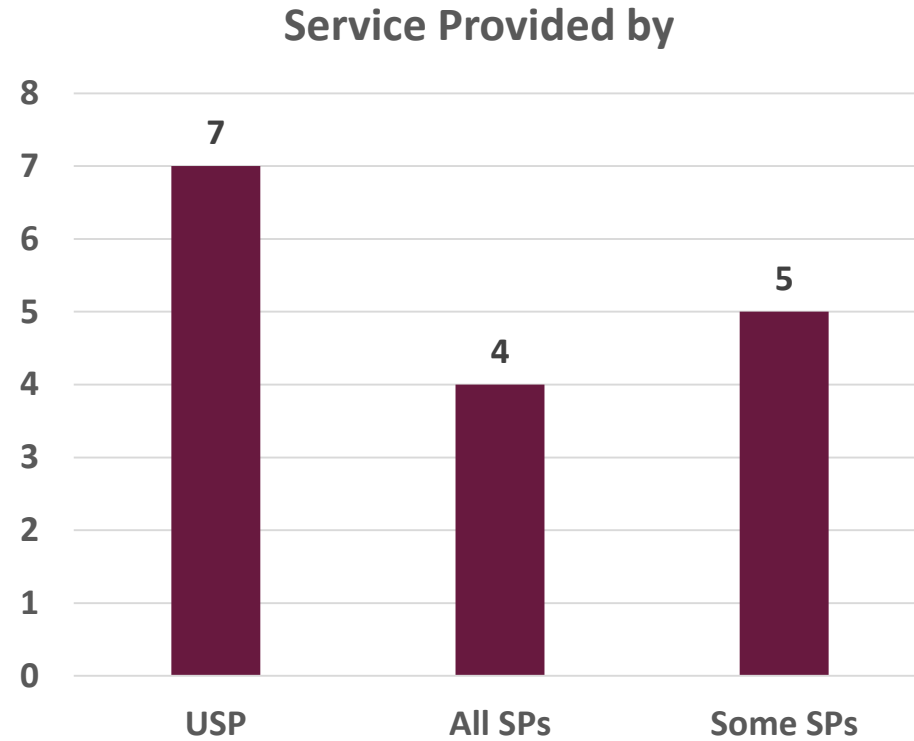
About ITRS

The ITRS service is operated by eir serving the customers of Three, eir, Sky, Tesco Mobile, Virgin Media, and Vodafone and is funded by each of these operators. ITRS incorporates multimedia access through the use of the ITRS app.

Country Case Study - Ireland

- <https://www.itrs.ie/>

Measure		Target
1	Relay Calls answered within 20 Seconds.	80%
2	Relay Calls Abandoned Rate.	≤ 5%
3	Service availability per calendar month.	99.9%
4	Call waiting – End-Users must be informed (dependent on their method Of contact) if they are in a queue.	100%
5	Relay assistance to be monitored for Accuracy.	94% of calls handled Correctly.



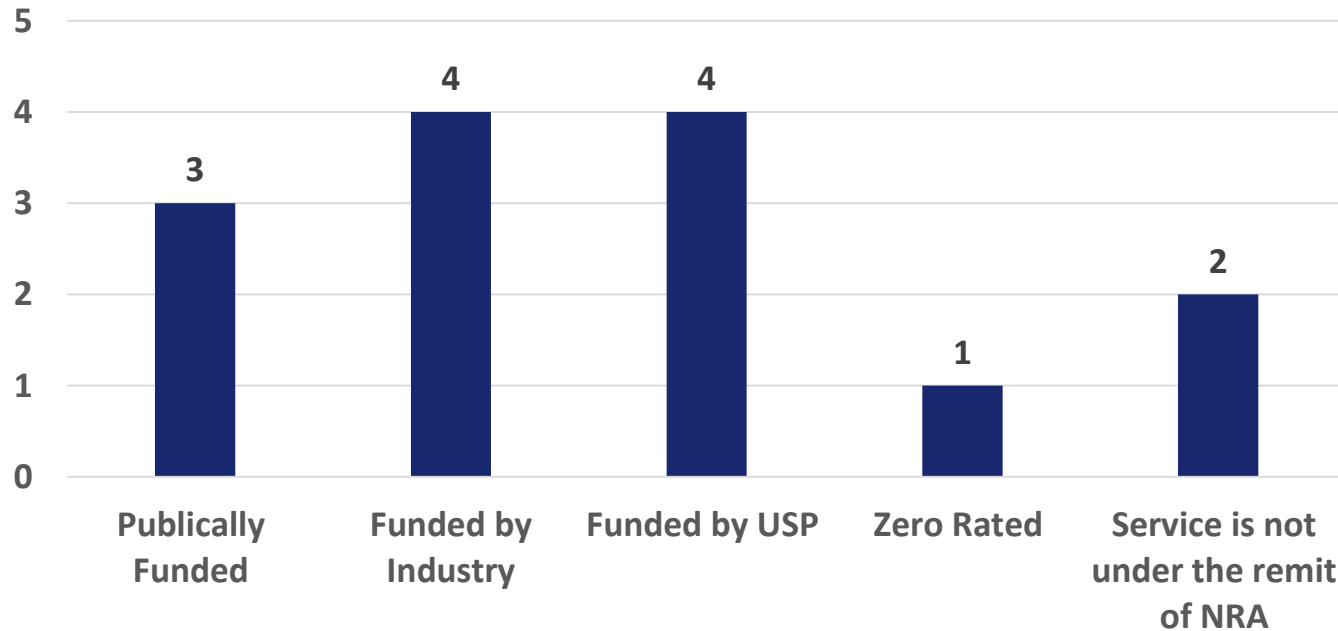
Thank You

Questions?

Funding – services are generally provided free of charge with the costs being covered

- either by providers and/or USP
- public funds

How is the service funded?



- Art 84 **Affordable** adequate broadband internet access and voice communications to all consumers.
- Art 85: **Affordability** measures for low-income or special social needs consumers: if retail prices are not affordable: support or tariff options.
- Art 85: **availability and affordability** of related terminal equipment, **specific equipment and specific services for consumers with disabilities, including where necessary total conversation and relay services.**
- Art 102 Information requirements for contracts: **in an accessible format for end-users with disabilities**; to include information on the extent to which the products and services are designed for end-users with disabilities.
- Art 103 Transparency: **information to be published in an accessible format for end-users with disabilities.**

- Art 104 Quality of service: **information on the quality, including on measures taken to ensure equivalence in access.**
- Art 109: **Emergency communications:** access for end-users with disabilities to emergency services through emergency communications available and equivalent in accordance with ... the Accessibility Act.
- Art 111: **Equivalent access and choice** for end-users with disabilities: requirements to be met by providers of electronic communications services.
- Art 114: **Must carry obligations:** may be imposed by MSs (requirements) on providers of ECN or ECS used for the transmission of radio and TV broadcast ... in particular services to enable appropriate access for end-users with disabilities.