

NON-GEOGRAPHIC TELEPHONE NUMBERS

WHO IS COMREG?



ComReg is the statutory body responsible for the regulation of the electronic communications (telecommunications, radio communications and broadcasting) and postal sectors.

As part of its functions to protect consumers and promote competition, ComReg is conducting a review of certain telephone numbers known as the Non-Geographic Numbers (NGNs). The NGNs covered by this review begin with '1800', '1850', '1890', '0818' and '076'.

ComReg is carrying out a public consultation on its NGN proposals. Add your voice to the consultation process. See www.comreg.ie/ngnreview.

WHAT ARE NGNs?

NGNs are telephone numbers used by organisations and businesses ('Service Providers') to provide services (e.g. public services, helplines, banking) to consumers and clients. Unlike geographic (landline) numbers (e.g. 01 for Dublin or 061 for Limerick), a NGN does not relate to a particular geographic area.



WHAT NGNs ARE AVAILABLE?



1800
e.g. 1800 123 456

Free to call from landline and mobile. The organisation being called (service provider) pays for the call.



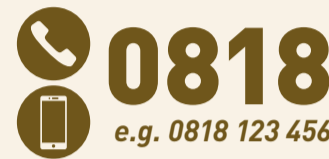
1850
e.g. 1850 123 456

Caller is charged a fixed cost per call regardless of call duration. Cost of the call is split between the caller and the organisation being called (service provider).



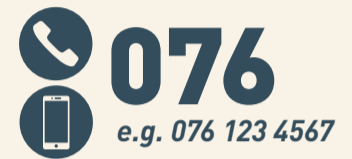
1890
e.g. 1890 123 456

Caller is charged a fixed cost per minute of the call. Cost of the call is split between the caller and the organisation being called (service provider).



0818
e.g. 0818 123 456

Caller is charged a fixed cost per minute. This NGN is accessible internationally.



076
e.g. 076 123 4567

Caller is charged a fixed cost per minute. This NGN is accessible internationally.

COMREG'S RESEARCH

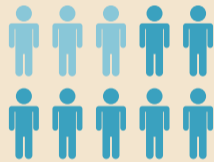


As part of its NGN Review, ComReg commissioned economic research and conducted consumer and organisational surveys.

Full research results are available at www.comreg.ie/ngnreview.

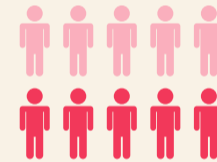
Preliminary findings included:

67%



67% of adults surveyed prefer to contact organisations by telephone (43% via mobile, 24% via landline).

49%



1800
1850
1890
0818
076

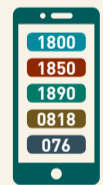


Many consumers think that calling NGNs is expensive. 49% of those aware of NGNs thought calls to NGNs were expensive, compared with 15% for calls to landlines.

86%



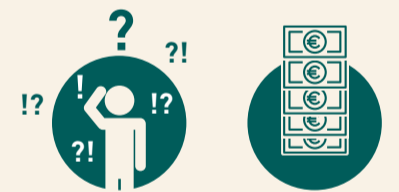
86% of consumers were unable to estimate the costs per minute/per call when making calls to NGNs.



40%



40% of organisations who do not use NGNs, because they consider them too expensive for customers, may consider using them if the customer call costs were reduced.



Failure to understand the NGN pricing structure by consumers and the high cost of using NGNs shows that the current NGN platform is not working efficiently or in the best interests of users and that it needs improvement.

COMREG'S PROPOSED SOLUTION

ComReg has a two-step proposal:

STEP 1 - PRICING

To have two types of pricing for the NGNs: Retain **Freephone (for 1800)** and introduce **'Geo-linked' pricing (for 1850, 1890, 0818 and 076)**.

STEP 2 - CONSOLIDATION

To reduce the five types of NGNs to two types of NGNs, **1800** and **0818**.

1850, 1890 and **076** NGNs will be phased out over a period of 2 - 3 years.

You can view the full consultation paper at www.comreg.ie/ngnreview.

CURRENT NGN STRUCTURE

1800

1850

1890

0818

076

STEP 1 - PRICING

Free to call

Geo-linked pricing

Geo-linked pricing

Geo-linked pricing

Geo-linked pricing

STEP 2 - CONSOLIDATION (OVER 2-3 YEARS)

PROPOSED NGN STRUCTURE

1800

0818

Geo-linked pricing means that calls to NGNs would cost the same as a call to a geographic number at that point of use. This would mean, for example, that if all calls to geographic numbers are included in a customer's "bundle" of free call minutes then calls to NGNs must also be included in that bundle.