



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

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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 1 July 2022 to 31 December 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 abandoned call rate for ITRS calls (both TTV and VTT calls) is 5% or less than 5% ($\leq 5\%$) of calls per calendar month, as set out in ComReg Decision D09/15.⁴
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) answered in 20 seconds 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 varied month on month during the period, TTV calls reached 354 in August 2022, decreasing to 212 in December 2022.

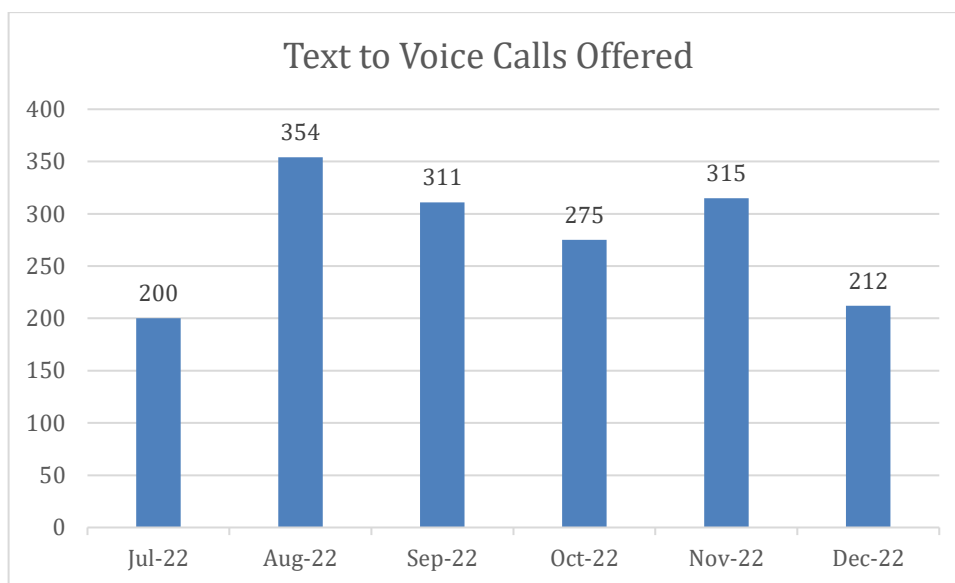


Chart 1: Text to Voice Calls, July to December 2022

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

9. Chart 2 reflects indicators of the Quality as regards ITRS TTV calls by month for the period July to December 2022.

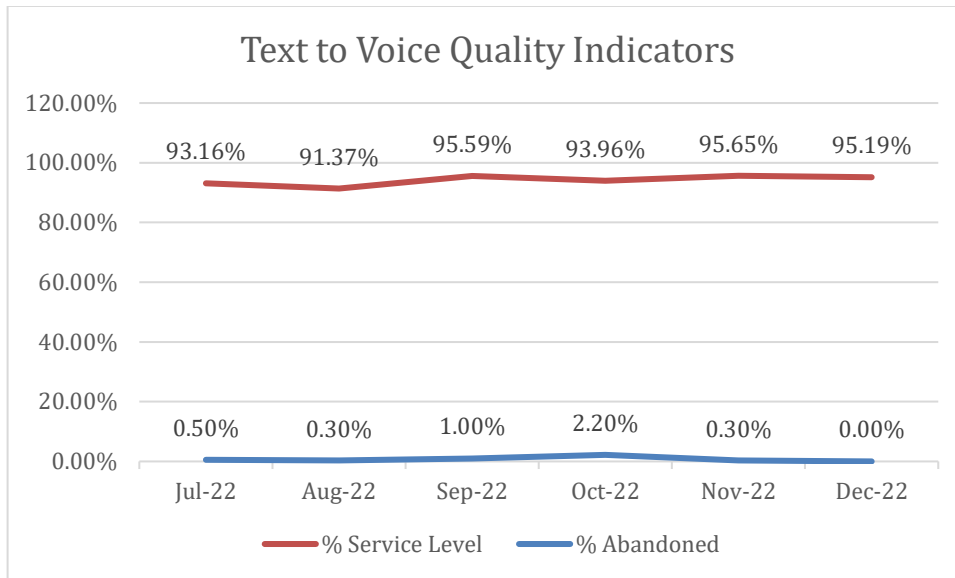


Chart 2: Text to Voice Quality Indicators, July to December 2022

10. As noted earlier, the recommended abandoned call rate for TTV ITRS calls is 5% or less than 5% ($\leq 5\%$) of calls per calendar month. In relation to month-on-month Voice to Text calls made from July 2022 to December 2022, in October 2022 the abandonment rate reached 2.2%, which is within the recommended threshold, in December 2022 the rate was 0%.
11. For the same six-month time period calls exceeded the 80% answered within 20 seconds threshold.
12. Chart 3, notes that in the same period, the voice to text calls (VTT) calls by ITRS end users continue to remain low and lower compared to TTV calls. VTT calls via ITRS varied month on month during the period, peaking at 19 in July 2022, decreasing to 2 in December 2022.

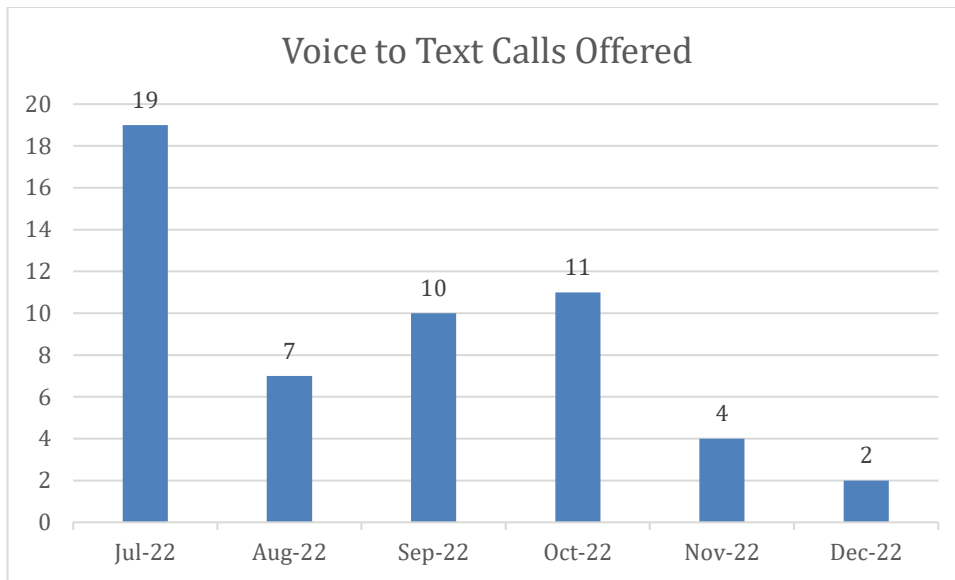


Chart 3: Voice to Text Calls, July to Dec 2022

13. Chart 4 below reflects indicators of the Quality as regards ITRS VTT calls by month.

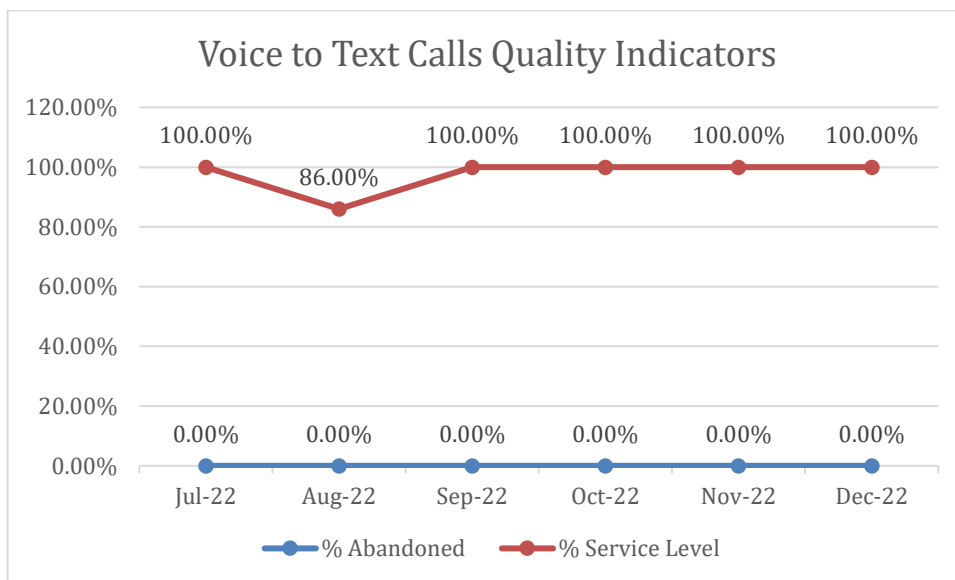


Chart 4: Voice to Text Quality Indicators, July to December 2022

14. As noted earlier, the recommended abandoned call rate for VTT ITRS calls is 5% or less than 5% ($\leq 5\%$) of calls per calendar month. In relation to month-on-month Voice to Text calls made from July 2022 to December 2022, the abandonment rate was 0% of calls.

15. For the same six-month time period calls exceeded the 80% answered within 20 seconds threshold.
16. Text to voice calls are declining, from 4090 in 2020 to, 3249 in 2022. The TTV calls have continued to decline since Q3 2021, the included the initial refresh of the service in July 2021. The website was refreshed in July 2022, within Q3, the TTV calls declined again by the end of Q4 2022. VTT calls in 2022, declined in 2022, (from 240 to 130), but increased on 2020s figure of 58 calls.

Annex 1: Call Volume Trends

17. The number of TTV calls declined from 4,090 in 2020 to, 3,249 in 2022. The TTV calls have continued to decline since Q3 2021.
18. The number of VTT calls in 2020 was 58. VVT call volumes reached 240 in 2021 and then there was a decline to 130 in 2022. Table 1 ITRS Calls and Texts offered 2020 - 2022 by Quarter

ITRS Calls	2022		2021		2020	
	Text to Voice	Voice to Text	Text to Voice	Voice to Text	Text to Voice	Voice to Text
Dec-22	212	2	307	3	428	1
Nov-22	315	4	285	4	428	1
Oct-22	275	11	333	4	438	6
Q4 Sub Total	802	17	925	11	1294	8
Sep-22	311	10	352	3	260	7
Aug-22	354	7	269	40	400	4
Jul-22	200	19	583	88	302	11
Q3 Sub Total	865	36	1204	131	962	22
Jun-22	385	30	219	30	357	4
May-22	311	11	263	21	195	9
Apr-22	275	2	439	31	185	3
Q2 Sub Total	971	43	921	82	737	16
Mar-22	261	18	262	9	462	4
Feb-22	192	11	193	3	333	4
Jan-22	158	5	267	4	302	4
Q1 Sub Total	611	34	722	16	1097	12
Total	3249	130	3772	240	4090	58

Table 2 ITRS Annual Calls and Texts

ITRS	TTV	VTT
2022	3249	130
2021	3772	240
2020	4090	58
2019	3094	169