



Commission for
Communications Regulation

14/12/2015

ComReg Media Release: Proposed strategy to manage the radio spectrum in Ireland 2016 to 2018

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) today issued a consultation on its proposed strategy to manage the radio spectrum in Ireland for the period 2016 to 2018 (Document 15/131).

Radio spectrum is an essential input for many important services and applications, such as radio and TV broadcasting, mobile communications, wireless broadband services, the safe operation of air and maritime transport and the day-to-day operation of emergency services. Based on ComReg's analysis, companies that use radio spectrum make considerable contributions to the Irish economy in terms of employment (28 000 jobs in 2013) and to Irish Gross Domestic Product (over €4.2 billion or approximately 2.4% of GDP in 2013) (see Figure 1 below).

Some highlights identified in ComReg's proposed strategy are:

- that data usage on Irish mobile networks increased by nearly 500% between 2011 and 2015;
- circa 82% of all Irish mobile subscribers now use smartphones; and
- mobile data usage in Ireland is estimated to increase 33 times by 2035 (see Figure 2 below).

ComReg's proposed strategy therefore includes making an additional 740 MHz of harmonised radio spectrum available to the market in the coming years, which would nearly treble the amount of relevant radio spectrum currently assigned (see Figure 3 below).¹

Proposals are also identified to meet the ongoing demands of many other important radio communication services in Ireland. The proposed strategy also sets out ComReg's current thinking on a number of topical spectrum management issues.

For further information please read Document 15/131.

Issued by

Tom Butler

Public Affairs Manager, ComReg

Ph: 01 8049639

Mobile: 087 2536358

tom.butler@comreg.ie

¹ In 2015, an independent cost benefit analysis ("CBA") commissioned by ComReg estimated that a change of use of the 700 MHz band from broadcasting to mobile would result in a positive net present value of over €91m. This assisted ComReg in forming the view that Ireland can and should repurpose this band in line with international harmonisation measures.

Supporting charts

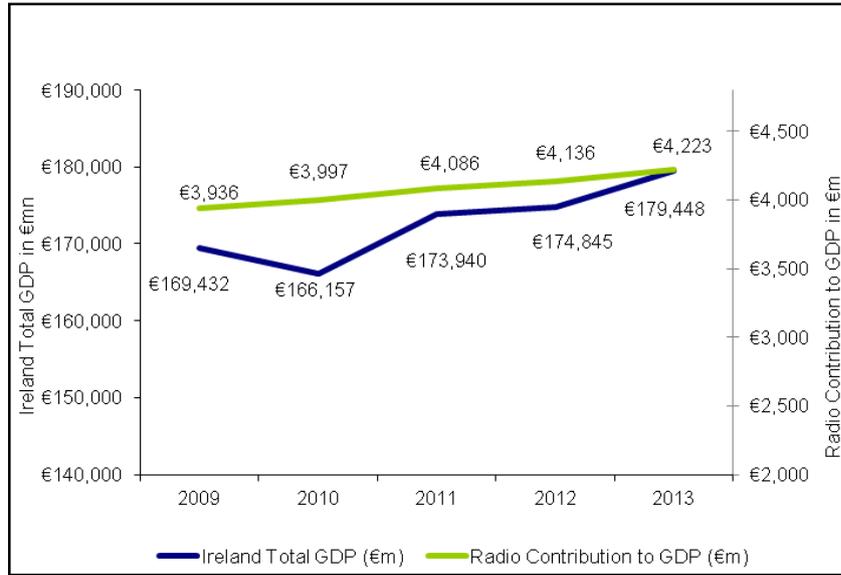


Figure 1: Contribution of Radio Spectrum to GDP: 2009 – 2013

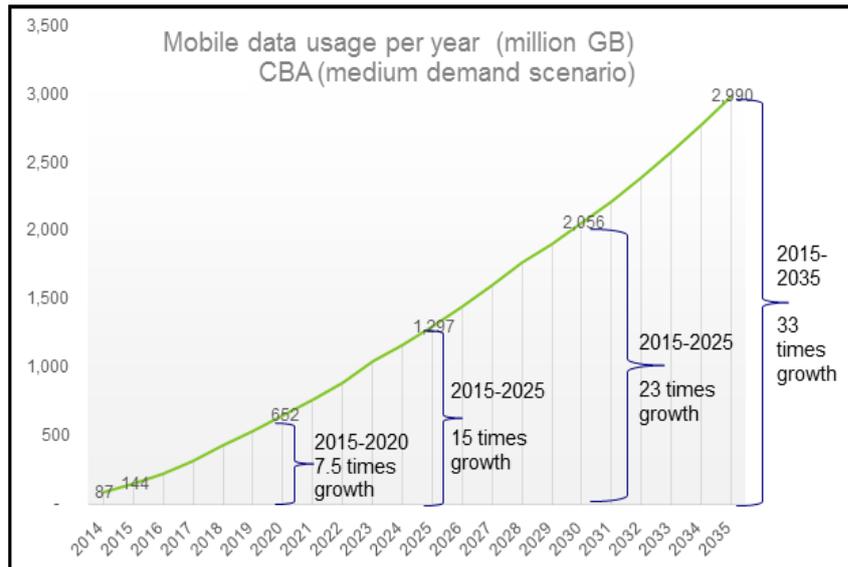


Figure 2: Predicted total mobile data usage in Ireland per year (million GB)²

² A report for ComReg by Frontier Economics Ltd conservatively estimated that between 2015 and 2035 mobile data usage demand in Ireland could increase 33 times (see ComReg Documents 15/62, 15/62a and 15/62b).

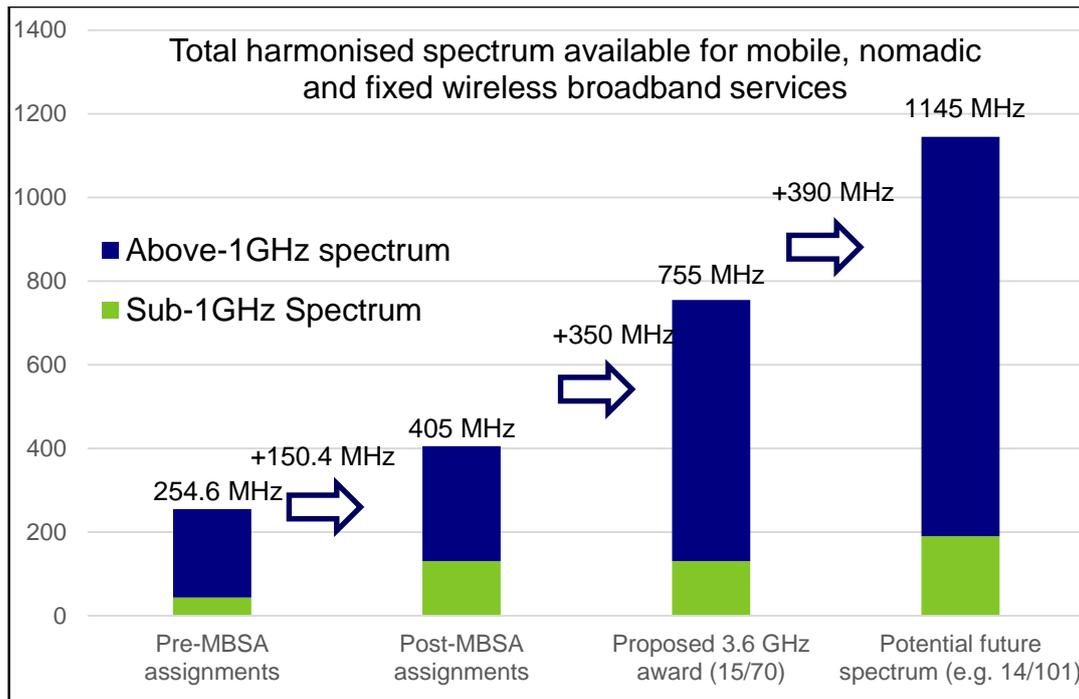


Figure 3: Total harmonised radio spectrum for mobile, nomadic and fixed wireless broadband services³

-ENDS-

**Issued by
Tom Butler
Public Affairs Manager, ComReg**

Ph: 01 8049639

Mobile: 087 2536358

tom.butler@comreg.ie

³ Multi-Band Spectrum Award (MBSA), refers to ComReg’s award in 2012 of spectrum rights in the 800 MHz, 900 MHz and 1800 MHz frequency bands. See ComReg Document 12/123 for further details.