



An Roinn Comhshaoil,
Aeráide agus Cumarsáide
Department of the Environment,
Climate and Communications

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Digital Connectivity Strategy

PAC Quarterly Update (including the National Broadband Plan Progress) – Q3 2023

Digital Connectivity Strategy for Ireland

Harnessing Digital - Digital Ireland Framework is the driving force behind the fast-paced digital transformation currently underway across the Irish economy and society.

The *Digital Connectivity Strategy for Ireland*, launched by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications in December 2022, sets out the targets to be achieved by the telecommunications sector in providing digital connectivity across the State and identifies the key strategic enablers for ensuring these targets are met.

National Broadband Ireland (NBI) and commercial operators are working to ensure that the Gigabit digital connectivity ambitions of this Strategy are realised across the length and breadth of the country.

1. Targets

The overall targets are:

- All Irish households and businesses will be covered by a Gigabit network no later than 2028,
- All populated areas covered by 5G no later than 2030 and
- Complete the delivery of digital connectivity to all schools and Broadband Connection Points by the end of 2023.



2. Key Strategic Enablers for delivering the Digital Connectivity Strategy

Commercial Investment in Gigabit Services:

Digital connectivity will be delivered across the State primarily through commercial investment by the telecommunications industry in Gigabit services.

National Broadband Ireland and 5G rollout

Government is taking measures to drive increased Gigabit and 5G connectivity by complementing commercial investment in infrastructure with Government-led initiatives including the current state investment in National Broadband Ireland (NBI). Under the Contract with NBI, high-speed and future-proofed broadband will be rolled out to over 1.1 million people living and working in over 560,000 premises, including almost 100,000 businesses and farms along with some 283 Broadband Connection Points and 672 primary schools across rural Ireland.

Other enablers include:

- Implementation of the National Cyber Security Strategy;
- Ensuring international connectivity infrastructure to and from Ireland is resilient, diverse and robust;
- Transposition of the Communications Regulation Amendment Bill; and
- Implementation of the actions of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Taskforce.



Overall progress to date

Progress to date is strong:

- There has been a rapid expansion over the past three years of Gigabit capability in every county across Ireland. 70% of households across the country can now access a broadband speed of 1 Gigabit or more.
- The 5G network rollout continues to expand. Three Ireland currently provides 5G coverage to over 85% of the population in all 26 counties, Eir provides 70% population coverage and Vodafone's 5G network is currently live in selected areas across the 26 counties.
- In Quarter 2 2023, 39,612 connections to fibre were made according to the most recent ComReg Quarterly Report, representing a 33% year on year increase in Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) subscriptions and there was also an 80% year on year increase in 5G subscribers.
- The recent transposition of the European Electronic Communications Code will see the State guarantee all citizens access to adequate broadband under the Universal Service Obligations for broadband.



NBI progress update: Q3 2023

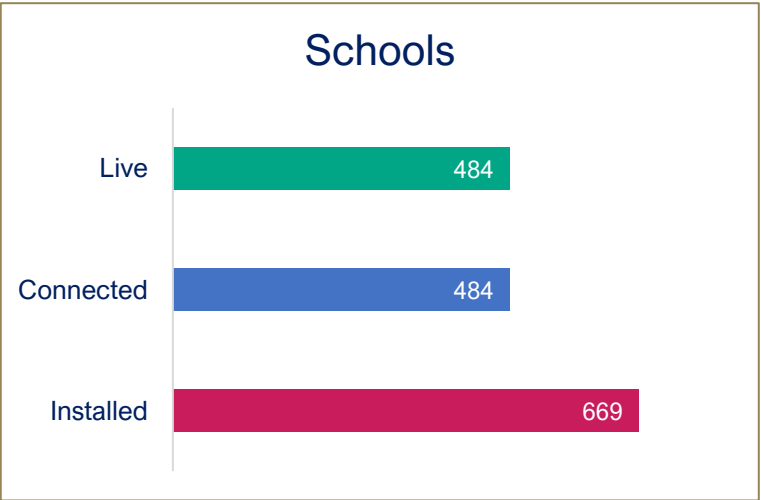
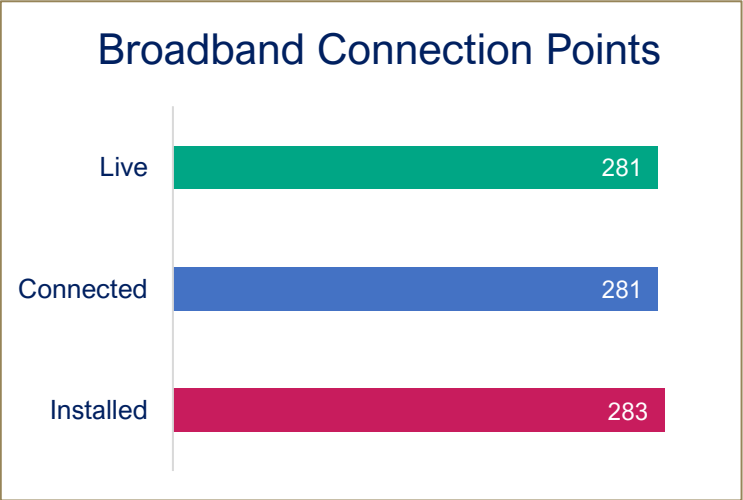
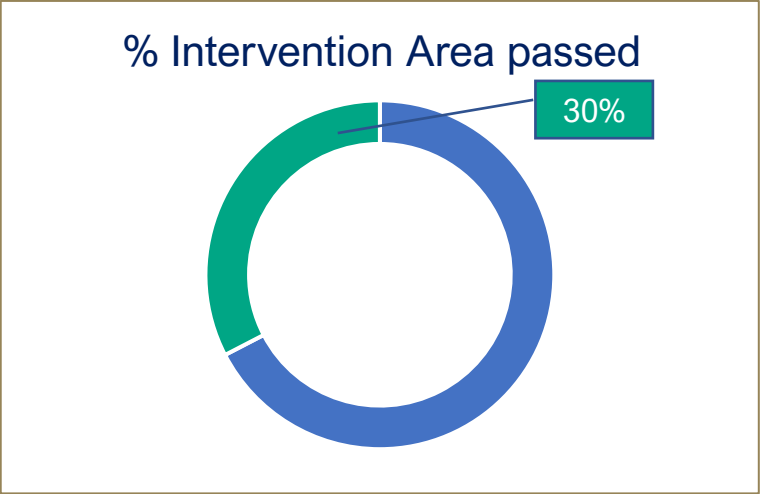
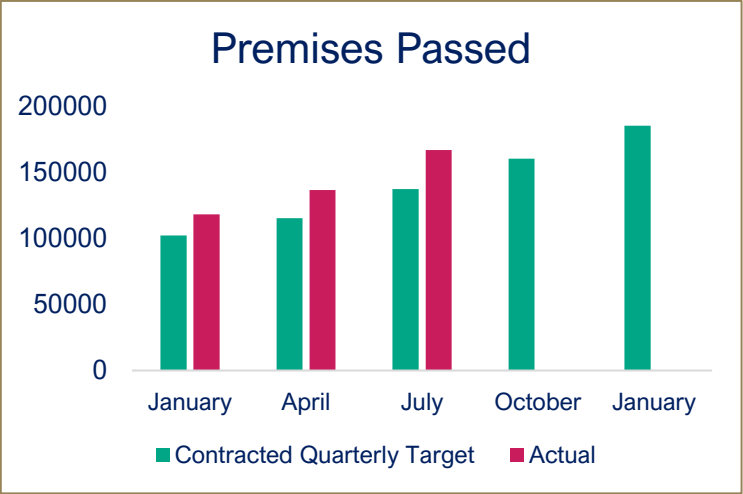
NBI is currently on track to deliver Premises Passed in line with the agreed revised Contract milestones and targets. By the end of Q3 2023, more than 182,200 premises were passed and over 196,500 premises were ready to order and pre order a minimum service of 500Mbps with full fibre connections.

Over 55,200 premises across the country were connected to high-speed broadband under the National Broadband Plan (NBP) by the end of September.

There are now over 280 Broadband Connection Points (BCPs), as well as more than 650 National Primary Schools, installed by NBI across the country. The BCPs are currently offering all citizens across rural Ireland access to a high-speed broadband network in close proximity to their home or business while they are waiting for a full fibre connection.



National Broadband Plan (NBP) Roll Out – Q3 2023



Key Updates

NBI's current targets

- 185,000 Premises Passed by end January 2024.
- 283 Community Connection Points installed in 2023*.
- 672 School Connection Points installed in 2023*.

Milestones achieved

- 182,585 Premises Passed by end September 2023.
- 55,209 Premises connected to the NBP Network by end September 2023.
- 30% of Premises Passed have been connected – rate exceeding expectations.

For updates on individual Counties / DAs please visit: <https://nbi.ie/reps/>

Data as of 30 September 2023.*Targets shown are NBI targets for installation under the NBP Project Agreement, H2 2023 (end December). Connection of BCPs and Schools is dependent on agreements with the Dept of Rural and Community Development and Dept of Education respectively.

NBP Roll Out – Q3 2023

Key Updates

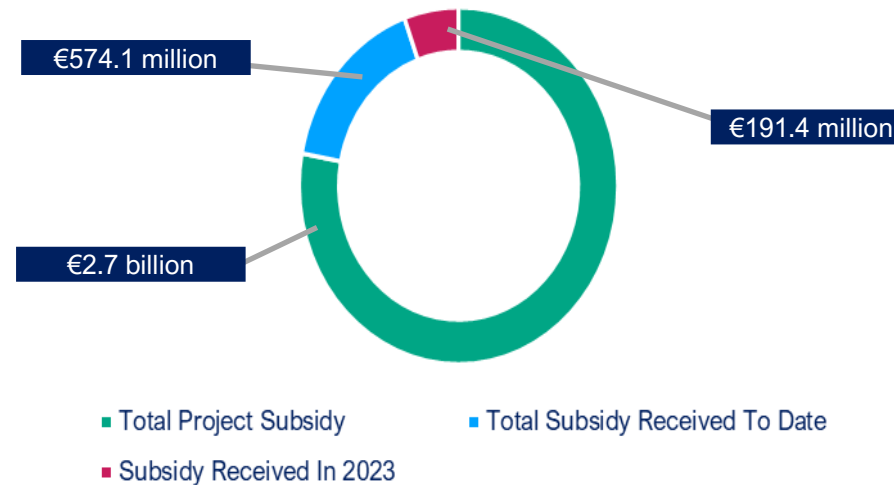
Subsidy Drawdown

- €191.4m subsidy paid to NBI from January to September 2023.

State Clawback

- €42.7million of returns to the State under clawback provisions.

Subsidy Drawdown



Milestones Managed

- The contract with NBI contains a comprehensive set of protections and legally binding obligations. Under the contract NBI have significant reporting obligations regarding costs and revenue to be submitted to the Department. Subsidy is released upon achievement of contract milestones which are verified via an independent certification process.
- To end September 2023, delay sanctions totalling €1,794,400 have been imposed in relation to build-related milestones for delays in passing deployment areas. This may be refundable if (or when) NBP achieves other build milestones ahead of its target. In addition, a performance credit sanction of €45,614 has been applied under the KPI regime.



Digital Connectivity Office

The Digital Connectivity Strategy is being led and driven by the Digital Connectivity Office with governance and oversight functions put in place for each area.

The Strategy itself will be reviewed, updated and republished on a regular basis but by no later than 2025.

The Digital Connectivity Office can be contacted at dco@decc.gov.ie



Contact Details

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