

Introduction to Rural and Mountain Connectivity Ireland

Our everyday lives are becoming far more digital. We are using the internet more, working from home and relying on technology and digital services. People can access the internet at home, work, other places or on the move. This document reports and analyses the connectivity for rural and mountain enterprises in Ireland. It starts with an overview of general Irish internet usage and geographical coverage and then goes into further details from a rural mountain perspective.

Ireland, like most countries there are varied options, some may have a fixed broadband connection (such as cable, optical fibre, satellite, etc.) or mobile broadband connection (via the mobile phone network with minimum 3G) or in some cases, narrowband connection (dial-up access over a normal telephone line or ISDN or mobile narrowband connection of less than 3G). Enterprises may have more than one type of internet connection at home or at work, this chapter covers internet access, types of connection used and future improvements improving connectivity and accessibility.

Internet Use in Ireland 2022

The internet is an important contributor to Ireland's economy and education including rural and mountain areas. The telecommunications infrastructure in Ireland provides Internet access to businesses and home users in various forms, including fibre, cable, DSL, wireless, Fixed Wireless and mobile. In 2019, 91% of households have access to the Internet in Ireland at home, with 88% of individuals reporting that they had used the internet in the three months prior to the interview. As of 2018, 82% of adults aged 16 to 44 years in Ireland were recent internet users; in aggregate, the sixteenth-highest in Europe.

Ireland's internet penetration rate stood at 99.0 per cent of the total population at the start of 2022. Kepios analysis indicates that internet users in Ireland increased by 388 thousand (+8.5 per cent) between 2021 and 2022. For perspective, these user figures reveal that 50.0 thousand people in Ireland did not use the internet at the start of 2022, meaning that 1.0 per cent of the population remained offline at the beginning of the year. However, issues relating to COVID-19 continue to impact research into internet adoption, so actual internet user figures may be higher than these published numbers suggest (see here for further details). For the latest insights into internet adoption and use around the world, follow regular Global Statshot reports.

Ireland's total population was 5.00 million in January 2022. Data show that Ireland's population increased by 41 thousand (+0.8 per cent) between 2021 and 2022. 50.3 per cent of Ireland's population is female, while 49.7 per cent of the population is male.

Rural and Mountain Populations

At the start of 2022, 64.2 per cent of Ireland's population lived in urban centres, while 35.8 per cent lived in rural areas.

Go global: see how Ireland's current "state of digital" compares with connectivity in other countries by reading our flagship Digital 2022 Global Overview Report, which includes hundreds of slides of global digital data, and our in-depth analysis of what these numbers might mean for you.

Internet Connection Speeds in Ireland in 2022

Data published by Ookla indicate that internet users in Ireland could have expected the following internet connection speeds at the start of 2022:

Median mobile internet connection speed via cellular networks: 27.96 Mbps.

Median fixed internet connection speed: 65.29 Mbps. Ookla's data reveals that the median mobile internet connection speed in Ireland increased by 12.25 Mbps (+78.0 percent) in the twelve months to the start of 2022. Meanwhile,

Ookla's data shows that fixed internet connection speeds in Ireland increased by 15.85 Mbps (+32.1 percent) during the same period.

Rural and Mountainous Broadband

Rural broadband is broadband that's available in rural and mountainous parts of the country. (Link) It can be difficult to get a reliable, fast internet service if you live in a remote area of Ireland compared with a large urban area.

Although broadband in rural areas of Ireland can be slow, the broadband speeds you get depends on what type of broadband connections are available in your area and the plan you choose. [Broadband available in rural and mountainous Ireland](#)

Who Provides Broadband in Rural and Mountainous Ireland?

If you live in a or mountainous rural area, you can get broadband from these providers:

1. eir
2. Pure Telecom
3. Sky
4. Vodafone

Best Broadband and Internet for Rural and Mountain Areas

The best broadband package for you will depend on what features you're looking for. If you want a reliable connection, with unlimited usage, an ADSL plan is a good place to start.

Satellite broadband is ideal for people in remote areas because it can provide a connection to any home. However, there can be download limits, so if you're a heavy user, or you have a busy household, this may not be the best solution.

Likewise, mobile broadband could be a good option, but you'll need to make sure you have a strong mobile phone signal where you live, to ensure you'll have a reliable internet connection.

How to get Internet in Mountain and Remote Areas

Satellite broadband is set up in a household by installing a satellite dish. It can provide an internet connection to any home, even very remote properties.

Mobile Broadband is provided through a mobile phone signal. Most networks offer mobile broadband via modems, mobile dongles and 4G/5G SIMs.

Dial up or DSL is the best for rural and mountain areas. Since DSL delivers high-speed internet using your landline, it is one of the most widely available forms of internet, making it a better overall service for rural areas. The other options are satellite, wireless internet service provider (WISP) and cellular broadband.

How to boost mountain internet is to choose a directional antenna, like a Yagi, which concentrates transmissions in one direction and, therefore, gets better range. However, if you are located in a mountainous or forested area, you should consider an Omni-point antenna.

Mobile hotspot isn't a great solution for rural and mountain areas in Ireland. If the location where you're going doesn't have cell service, the mobile hotspot is unlikely to help

When Is Faster Broadband Being Rolled Out To Rural Areas?

If you want to see when faster broadband is on its way to you, check out the High Speed Broadband Map on the Gov.ie website.

It's part of The National Broadband Plan that aims to deliver 'quality, affordable high-speed broadband to all parts of Ireland where such services are not available commercially.'

What is SIRO?

SIRO is a joint venture between ESB and Vodafone that's working to deliver a 100% fibre-to-the-building (FTTB) broadband network, using the existing ESB network. SIRO is offered on an open-access basis to all telecoms retailers in Ireland and can deliver speeds up to 1,000Mbps. It's being rolled out to regional Ireland first, here are the counties in the planned roll out. You can find out more about how SIRO works and when you'll get it near you in our SIRO in Ireland guide.

How To Improve Slow Broadband

If you live in a rural area and are having issues with slow internet, consider switching your broadband provider. As well as the potential to improve the speed of your broadband, you may also benefit from an introductory discount and save money too. If you've recently switched, or you can't get a faster plan where you live, try our tips on improving slow broadband, which could make a big difference.

National Broadband Ireland

NBI is rolling out the largest infrastructural project in rural Ireland since rural electrification, stretching across 96% of Ireland's land mass. It will bring high-speed broadband to 23% of Ireland's population. Find out more <https://nbi.ie/>