

# Rural Broadband Scheme



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I know if I already have coverage?

You can check the names of the internet service providers operating in your county on the Callcosts website – [www.callcosts.ie](http://www.callcosts.ie).

You can also check if you are living in an area covered by the National Broadband Scheme (NBS) on the NBS website, [www.three.ie/nbs](http://www.three.ie/nbs) . If you live in an NBS area, then you are guaranteed to be offered a service by 3, the NBS internet service provider.

### How do I know if I qualify for the Rural Broadband Scheme?

You are eligible to apply under the RBS if

- You live outside of the areas covered by the NBS
- You live in a rural area ( the following cities and towns are excluded from the RBS: Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford, Dundalk, Sligo, Letterkenny, Athlone, Tullamore, Mullingar, Cavan, Ennis, Kilkenny, Mallow, Monaghan, Tuam, Wexford, Ballina, Castlebar, Tralee and Killarney.)
- You are unable to obtain a broadband service from the internet service providers operating in your area, and
- You are willing to allow your contact details to be passed to internet service providers to assess whether they can offer you an internet service.

### How and where can I apply ?

You can apply online by visiting the website of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources [www.dcenr.ie](http://www.dcenr.ie) , and follow the links for the Rural Broadband Scheme. You can also download an application form from the website and send it in the post and you can also apply by phone, call the RBS on 1850678100 or (01) 6782020. **Applications are open between Monday May 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 and Friday July 29<sup>th</sup> 2011.**

### **Who is running the Scheme?**

The Scheme is an EU funded measure under the Rural Development Programme operated by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

### **Where can I get further information?**

Details of the Scheme can be found by visiting the website of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources [www.dcenr.ie](http://www.dcenr.ie) , and follow the links for the Rural Broadband Scheme.

### **What areas are covered by the Scheme / What areas are not covered by the Scheme?**

The Scheme is open to un-served rural premises excluding premises in areas covered by the NBS or premises in the following cities and towns: Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Waterford, Dundalk, Sligo, Letterkenny, Athlone, Tullamore, Mullingar, Cavan, Ennis, Kilkenny, Mallow, Monaghan, Tuam, Wexford, Ballina, Castlebar, Tralee and Killarney.

Coverage maps for each county can be found on the website of the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources [www.dcenr.ie](http://www.dcenr.ie) , and follow the links for the Rural Broadband Scheme.

### **The service I receive at the moment is poor/ Can I be included in the Scheme/ Will the RBS address the issue of quality?**

**If you have a complaint about your existing service, you should take the matter up with your service provider. The Scheme is only open to people who are unable to get a service from existing service providers.**

Under the Scheme, applications will be checked to see if the applicant can be offered a service by existing internet service providers. Under competition and State Aid rules, existing customers of internet service providers or premises which can be serviced by existing internet service providers cannot be included in the Scheme.

### **When will I know if I have been accepted into the Scheme?**

Once your application has been accepted you will receive a letter in the post acknowledging your application and this will explain the way the Scheme will operate.

**When will the service under the Scheme be available?**

Once the application period is closed, all of the applications under the Scheme will be checked to assess whether the applicants can be served by existing service providers. Some applicants may be offered a service during this phase of the Scheme which is expected to last about six months. We will be writing to applicants during this period to inform them of the position with the Scheme.

During this period the Department will also be carrying out a procurement process to select a service provider under the Scheme. It is intended that this service provider will be in place towards the end of 2011 and the service under the scheme will be offered to applicants early in 2012. The service under the Scheme will be fully rolled out in 2012.

**How will the service provider be appointed?**

The service provider for the Scheme will be selected in a procurement process to be carried out under EU rules. This process will be technology neutral – it will be up to the bidders in the process to choose the technical basis for their bids.

**Who will provide the service under the Scheme?**

The Department of Communications Energy and Natural Resources will carry out a procurement process to select a service provider under the Scheme. It is intended that this service provider will be in place towards the end of 2011.

**Under what circumstances will satellite be used to provide the service under the Scheme?**

The service provider for the Scheme will be selected in a procurement process to be carried out under EU rules. This process will be technology neutral – it will be up to the bidders in the process to choose the technical basis for their bids.

**What speeds can subscribers expect at launch?**

Details of the service under the Scheme, speeds etc. will be established in a procurement process to select a service provider for the Scheme. It is intended that the service under the Scheme would be comparable with the service offered under the NBS.

**Will there be download and upload limits, what will they be?**

Details of the service under the Scheme, speeds etc. will be established in a procurement process to select a service provider for the Scheme. It is intended that the service under the Scheme would be comparable with the service offered under the NBS.

**Are there plans to upgrade speeds?**

Details of the service under the Scheme, speeds etc. will be established in a procurement process to select a service provider for the Scheme. It is intended that the service under the Scheme would be comparable with the service offered under the NBS.

**How much will it cost?**

Details of the service under the Scheme, speeds etc. will be established in a procurement process to select a service provider for the Scheme. **While the Department will be making a contribution towards the infrastructure cost of providing the service under the Scheme, the applicant will be responsible for paying for the service itself and this may include an up-front charge as well as an on-going monthly fee.** The costs of the Scheme will be decided in the procurement process.

**What will happen if deadlines are not met by the service provider?**

The service under the Scheme will be rolled out under a contractual arrangement with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.