

Mapping Relay Services in Europe



Report 2026

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Mapping Relay Services in Europe

Executive Summary

For most people, making and receiving a telephone call is an ordinary part of daily life: contacting a doctor or employer, speaking to a bank, arranging transport, calling family, or reaching emergency services. Many public services, especially healthcare consultations are offered over the telephone. For many deaf and hard of hearing people, however, making and receiving the same call depends on the availability of a relay service. If that service is closed, difficult to access, subject to long waiting times or cannot be used abroad, a call that would be straightforward for a user without hearing disabilities may become difficult or impossible to make.

Relay services enable people using different modes of communication to communicate with each other in real time. A Video Relay Service (VRS) connects a sign language user with a voice user through a sign language interpreter. A Text Relay Service (TRS) supports communication between text and speech through a Communication Assistant. A Speech-to-Speech Relay Service (SRS/STS) supports people whose speech may be difficult for others to understand by using a trained Communication Assistant to repeat or clarify what is said. These are not supplementary conveniences: they are a means of accessing mainstream electronic communications on an equivalent basis with other users.

EUD and EFHOH undertook this mapping because the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) requires equivalent access for end-users with disabilities, but does not impose a general obligation on every Member State to provide relay services. It refers to relay services among the measures to be made available where necessary, leaving Member States considerable flexibility over whether and how they are provided. The proposed Digital Networks Act (DNA) maintains this approach. The mapping examines what this means in practice across Europe. Since the implementation of the legislation shows a great disparity in the provision of relay services, the current revision of the EECC through the proposed DNA provides an opportunity to strengthen how those obligations are implemented. The survey ran from 8 April to 22 May 2026 and produced 51 responses covering 30 European countries, including responses from organisations of deaf and hard of hearing people, relay-service providers and national telecommunications regulatory authorities. The findings show that the existence, availability and quality of relay services still depend heavily on where a person lives.

The mapping identified several clear patterns:

- Relay-service coverage remains uneven. Video Relay Services were identified in 25 of the 30 countries mapped, although some are limited to particular sectors or purposes. Only 12 countries have a confirmed operating Text Relay Service. Finland previously operated a national TRS but the service ended in 2024. Only one dedicated national Speech-to-Speech Relay Service could be confirmed.
- 24/7 access is still far from consistent. Only 8 of 25 countries with VRS provide continuous access, compared with 7 of the 12 confirmed TRS. Where services operate only during set hours, users may simply be unable to make a call when the service is closed.

- Waiting times and call restrictions create additional barriers. Waiting queues are widespread in VRS and TRS, with substantial differences between countries. Some services additionally limit individual calls or monthly use, even though relayed communication may take longer than a comparable direct voice call.
- Emergency access is inconsistent. Some countries provide emergency communication through the same relay service, others use a dedicated emergency relay service. Different structures can provide effective access, but the essential benchmark should be the outcome: a person relying on relay should be able to reach emergency services rapidly, at any time, without additional procedural barriers compared with a mainstream voice caller.
- Most relay services are free to users, but additional restrictions remain. Some services apply relay-specific charges, time allowances or usage limits. These should be distinguished from ordinary telephone, data or roaming costs that any user may incur.
- Cross-border access and interoperability remain major weaknesses. Being able to access a home-country relay service from abroad does not mean that national systems interoperate, while language can make a host-country service unusable. This becomes particularly important when travelling or when urgent contact with essential services is needed abroad.
- Common quality requirements and transparent monitoring are lacking. Some countries set measurable response-time and quality requirements, but comparable information on waiting, abandoned calls, accuracy, outages, complaints and interruptions is often unavailable. This makes it difficult to establish whether relay services provide equivalent access in practice.

The report shows a clear gap between the right to equivalent access in European law and what deaf and hard of hearing people experience in practice. Relay services are still governed by very different rules across Europe, with no consistent minimum requirements for availability, quality or continuity. Where a service is only available at certain times, involves long waits, limited calls, cannot be used abroad or depends on temporary funding, users cannot rely on telephone services on the same basis as others.

The forthcoming Digital Networks Act is an opportunity to strengthen the right of deaf and hard of hearing people to use mainstream telephone services on an equal basis with other users. EUD and EFHOH call for relay services to be explicitly recognised in the legal framework and for Member States to ensure that they are reliably available in practice, including for emergency communication and when users are abroad. Responsibility for funding, continuity and oversight should be clearly defined, and the quality of services should be measurable and transparent.

The central message of this research: deaf and hard of hearing people should be able to make and receive a telephone call with the same freedom, reliability and independence as anyone else. Relay services are the infrastructure that makes this possible. Their availability and quality should therefore not depend on the country, the time of day or the type of communication a person uses.

Introduction

This report presents the results of a joint mapping of relay services across Europe, carried out by the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH). It is organised so that the reader can move from the legal and political background to the evidence, and from the evidence to what should change through policy recommendations.

The first chapter sets out the context of this research: the obligations established under the European Electronic Communications Code, the European Accessibility Act and the Commission Delegated Regulation on access to 112 as well as the treatment of relay services in European standardisation. It concludes with the opportunity now presented by the proposal for a Digital Networks Act.

The second chapter defines the scope of the report, distinguishing video relay services, text relay services and speech-to-speech relay services, and explaining which arrangements fall inside and outside each definition.

The third chapter presents the state of play, showing which countries provide which types of relay service.

The fourth chapter presents the results on video relay services in 25 countries, and the fifth the results on text relay services in 12 countries, each covering communication modes, availability, languages, areas of use, emergency call handling, cost, response and waiting times, access from abroad, interoperability, funding and how the service is organised and supervised. The sixth chapter concerns speech-to-speech relay services, where the single response received allows only one country to be described. Because the three service types differ in the number of countries covered and in the depth of the responses received, each of these chapters stands on its own evidence and should be read as such.

The seventh chapter describes the methodology, covering the development of the questionnaire, the responses received and how they were validated and consolidated at country level. The eighth chapter states the limitations of the evidence, both those that recur throughout and those noted at the point where they affect a particular result. The ninth chapter closes the report with recommendations addressed to the European Union, to Member States, to telecom operators, and to relay service providers, followed by a short conclusion.

An annex sets out, for each country, the relay services identified through this research, together with the organisation delivering each service and the means by which users reach it, as reported by respondents during the survey. The annex serves as reference material rather than as a basis for comparison, and it is the place to look for what has been reported in a particular country rather than for how countries compare with one another.

1. Context of this research

A phone call is rarely just a phone call. It is how a medical appointment is arranged, how a parent learns that their child is safe, how help is summoned. Most people make such calls without a second thought. Deaf and hard of hearing people cannot. A telephone carries sound, and a service that answers only in speech cannot be used independently. Many deaf people use a national sign language as their first language, so being asked to send a written message, or to have someone else call on their behalf, does not amount to equal access. Many hard of hearing people can use speech but cannot follow it reliably over a telephone line, where there is no lip pattern or facial expression to support understanding. In either case the outcome is the same: reliance on another person to conduct one's own affairs, or no call at all.

A relay service removes that reliance. It connects two people who communicate in different ways, converting between sign language and speech, between text and speech, or supporting speech that others find difficult to follow, so that a conversation can take place in real time. The deaf or hard of hearing person calls whoever they need to reach, and the person on the other end receives the call as they would any other. European law establishes the principle that people with disabilities must be able to use electronic communications on the same terms as everyone else. In 2026, that is still far from the reality for deaf and hard of hearing people in Europe.

Indeed, in 2025 the EUD assessed the implementation of the Directive (EU) 2018/1972 (hereafter European Electronic Communications Code or EECC),¹ and the EFHOH assessed the implementation of the Directive (EU) 2019/882 (hereafter European Accessibility Act or EAA)² and both identified relay services as the point at which the framework fails deaf and hard of hearing end-users. With the revision of the Code now under way and the Commission's proposal for a Digital Networks Act before the European Parliament, the moment to address those issues has arrived. Any strengthening of the obligations, however, had to be substantiated by evidence of what relay services across Europe currently provide, hence this report.

The European Electronic Communications Code established the obligations to guarantee equivalent access for end-users with disabilities and to make relay services available and affordable. The Code contains two obligations that matter here. Article 111(1) says that Member States must make sure their national authorities set out what telecom companies have to do, so that people with disabilities can use phone and internet services on the same terms as everyone else, and have the same choice of companies and services. Article 85(4) says that Member States must take specific measures, taking national circumstances into account, so that the devices and services people need for equal access are available and affordable. Total Conversation and relay services are named among them. Recital 226 adds that a relay call should cost no more than an ordinary phone call. However, despite these recommendations in the EECC, many Member States have failed to guarantee accessible communications. Due to the flexibility of the EECC

¹ European Union of the Deaf, Report on the implementation of the European Electronic Communications Code, 6 June 2025, available at: <https://eud.eu/euds-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-european-electronic-communications-code/>

² European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, *European Accessibility Act: from consultation to implementation, a Hard of Hearing perspective*, December 2025, available at: <https://efhoh.org/2025/12/european-accessibility-act-from-consultation-to-implementation-a-hard-of-hearing-perspective-new-efhoh-report-released/>

provisions, many persons with disabilities are still excluded from everyday communications and emergency communications.³

The European Accessibility Act (Directive 2019/882) sets accessibility requirements for electronic communications services that go considerably wider than relay services: they extend to the accessibility of websites and mobile applications, of help desks and support services, and of contractual and tariff information.⁴ For the purposes of this report, two requirements matter in particular. Electronic communications services must provide Real-Time Text alongside voice, and Total Conversation where video is provided in addition to voice. And the most appropriate emergency answering point must reply to an emergency communication by the same means through which it was received.

The Commission Delegated Regulation 2023/444 supplementing the Code defines equivalent access to 112, including two-way interactive communication, access without pre-registration and while roaming, and routing without delay to the most appropriate answering point. These instruments bind respectively providers of electronic communications services and emergency answering points.

The harmonised standards then make relay services part of how those obligations can be met. EN 301 549, the European standard for ICT accessibility, addresses ICT providing relay or emergency service access. The draft standard of EN 18340 on the accessibility of support services covers help desks, call centres and technical support, and states that relay services are a means of communicating in the provision of support services. In other words, organisations required to make their services accessible are expected to rely on relay services to do so.

Yet no European legal instrument nor European harmonised standard explicitly requires a Member State to provide a relay service in a defined form, to a defined standard, at defined hours. The Code stops short of the point where its own obligations would become enforceable: it leaves the meaning of equivalent access to be determined by Member States and refers to relay services as a measure to be taken where necessary rather than requiring their provision. That omission explains why implementation has failed. An obligation that cannot be measured cannot be enforced, and one whose content is left to each Member State produces 27 different answers. Deaf and hard of hearing people have therefore not obtained the equivalent access promised by Article 111, nor the available and affordable services promised by Article 85(4) as part of universal service. This also falls short of Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, binding on the Union and its Member States, which requires access to information and communications on an equal basis with others and expressly includes the provision of intermediaries, including professional and qualified sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility.

The Commission's proposal for a Digital Networks Act, now before the European Parliament with negotiations to follow with the Council, is the opportunity to correct this. Restating the principle

³ European Disability Forum, European Emergency Number Association (EENA), European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, and European Union of the Deaf, *Joint Letter on Electronic communications for all: 24/7 relay services across the EU*, September 2026, available at: <https://www.edf-feph.org/publications/electronic-communications-for-all-24-7-relay-services-across-the-eu/>

⁴ European Disability Forum, *Transposition Toolkit: the European Accessibility Act, 2021*, available at: https://www.edf-feph.org/content/uploads/2021/05/FINAL_EDF-transposition-toolkit_Accessibility-Act.pdf

will not be enough. The obligations must be specific and enforceable: relay services available at all hours, minimum requirements they must meet, quality parameters that regulators can measure, and interoperability across providers and borders. The findings in this report are intended to feed into that process, setting out what relay services in Europe currently deliver and where they fall short, so that the obligations adopted are grounded in the reality deaf and hard of hearing people face.

2. Scope of the report

This report concerns relay services, and within them the three types on which EUD and EFHOH have focused in the survey that led to the research are: video relay services (VRS), text relay services (TRS) and speech-to-speech relay services (SRS).

The definitions used are those established in European law and standardisation. Recital 227 of the European Electronic Communications Code defines relay services as services enabling two-way communication between remote end-users of different modes of communication by providing conversion between those modes, normally by a human operator. EN 301 549, in its 2026 revision, defines a relay service for the first time as an electronic communication service enabling real-time bidirectional communication between remote end-users of different modes of communication. Both definitions share three elements that shape this report: the users are remote from one another, the communication is in real time, and the service converts between different modes.

Video Relay Service (VRS)

For video relay service specifically, this report uses the definition in ETSI ES 202 975, under which a video relay service enables sign language users and other users to interact by providing conversion between sign language and speech in substantially real time. A video relay service exists so that a deaf person can make and receive telephone calls on the same terms as anyone else: the deaf person and the other person are in different places, and a sign language interpreter connects them in real time. That is the obligation against which the findings in this report should be read.



Figure 1. Video relay service: how a call is relayed between a deaf sign language user and a hearing person.

The word “remote” in the EECC, the EN 301 549 standard and the ETSI definitions marks the boundary of what the report covers. Video remote interpreting, where the deaf person and the other person are in the same room and the interpreter joins by video, falls outside them, since the parties are not remote from one another. Several respondents nonetheless described both arrangements as one service, and some services are used to arrange interpreting for appointments in person. Where that is the case, the service is included in the results, with an

indication that it operates more like an interpreting scheme than like a telephone service. Excluding such services would remove countries where deaf people do reach other people by video through an interpreter, while including them without comment would suggest that provision across Europe is more comparable than it is.

Text Relay Service (TRS)

For text relay services specifically, this report uses the definition of Text Relay Service in [ITU-T Recommendation F.930 \(2018\)](#), [Multimedia telecommunication relay services](#): “A telecommunications relay service that allows communication by individuals with speech and hearing disabilities. Text is converted by a Communication Assistant into verbal information over a voice telecommunication service.” ITU-T F.930 defines a Communication Assistant as a person working in a relay service as a human intermediary. The defining feature of TRS for the purposes of this report is therefore the relay between text and speech through a Communication Assistant. SMS or Real-Time Text (RTT) between users without a Communication Assistant, is not classified as TRS.

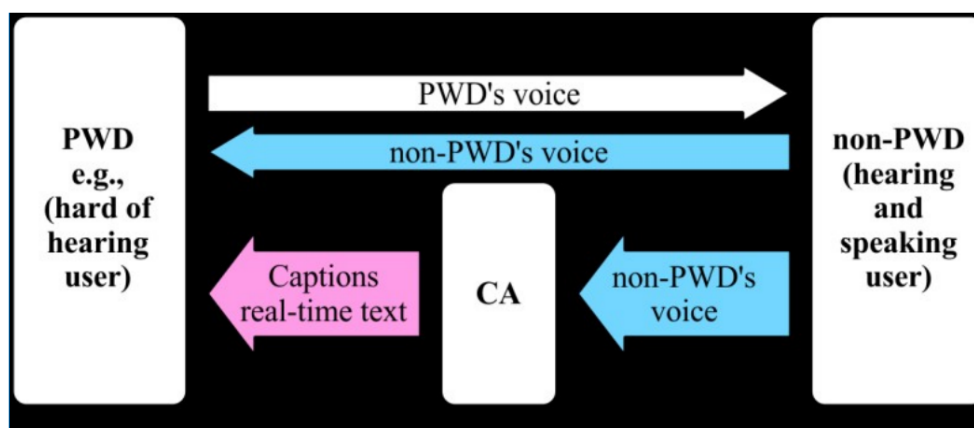


Figure 2. Captioned telephony relay service. Source: ITU-T Recommendation F.930 (2018), Figure 5.

Difference between Text Relay Service and Real-Time Text

Real-Time Text (RTT) is text that is transmitted immediately as it is typed, so that the person receiving it can read the text progressively during the conversation rather than waiting for a completed message to be sent. This distinguishes RTT from conventional SMS or chat messaging, where a message is normally received only after the sender presses “send”.

RTT can be used directly between users, without a Communication Assistant, or it can be used as the text channel within a Text Relay Service. In TRS, the Communication Assistant provides the relay between text and speech. RTT therefore does not replace TRS, but can be one of the technologies used within it. RTT can also be integrated directly into devices and networks, without requiring a separate application.

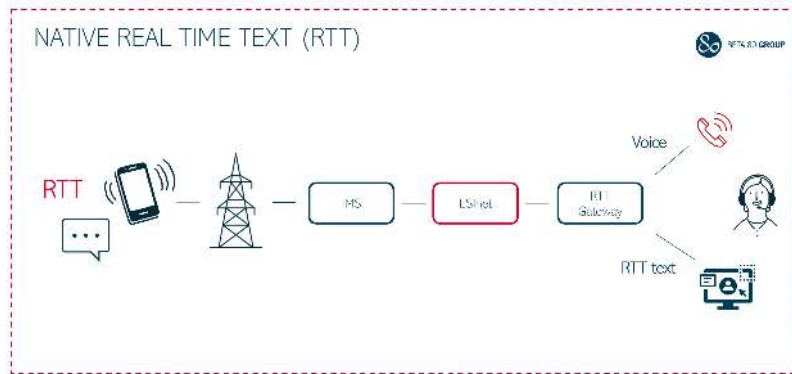


Figure 3. Native Real-Time Text (RTT) in mobile networks. Source: Beta 80 Group.

For hard of hearing users, TRS can support two configurations of communication. In both cases, the hearing and speaking user's speech is provided back to the hard of hearing user as text. The difference is how the hard of hearing user communicates in the other direction.

1. Text relay: the hard of hearing user types their message, using text or RTT, and the Communication Assistant conveys it in speech:

Hard of hearing user → text / Real-Time Text → Communication Assistant → speech → hearing and speaking user

Hearing and speaking user → speech → Communication Assistant → text / Real-Time Text → hard of hearing user

2. Voice Carry Over (VCO): the hard of hearing user speaks directly using their own voice, while the hearing and speaking user's speech is provided back as text by the Communication Assistant:

Hard of hearing user → speech → hearing and speaking user

Hearing and speaking user → speech → Communication Assistant → text / Real-Time Text → hard of hearing user

The common feature is therefore the incoming side of the conversation: in both configurations, the hearing and speaking user's speech is conveyed to the hard of hearing user as text. With text relay, the hard of hearing user types their side of the conversation; with VCO, they speak directly.

Hearing Carry Over (HCO) is another configuration, in which the user types their message but listens directly to the hearing and speaking user's speech rather than receiving it as text.

These configurations are important because TRS users do not necessarily communicate exclusively through text. The communication mode can differ in each direction depending on the user's hearing and communication preferences.

At European level, [ETSI ES 202 975 V3.1.1 \(2026\)](#), *Human Factors (HF); Requirements for relay services* sets technical and service requirements for relay services. For the basic TRS function, it specifies communication between Real-Time Text (RTT) and speech: text entered by one user is converted into speech for the other user, while the other user's speech is converted back into RTT. This does not mean that all TRS users communicate only by text, as configurations such as Voice Carry Over and Hearing Carry Over may use different communication modes in each direction. This complements the ITU-T F.930 definition used in this report: ITU defines the relay function and the role of the Communication Assistant, while ETSI specifies RTT as the text mode used in the current European TRS framework.

Related communication modes should also be distinguished:

- **Total Conversation (TC)** combines Real-Time Text, voice and video in the same bidirectional real-time communication. It is defined in [ETSI ES 204 009 V1.1.1 \(2025\)](#), *Human Factors (HF); Requirements for interoperable total conversation services*. A TRS may support or interwork with Total Conversation, but the two are not interchangeable.
- **Captioned telephony** allows the user to speak directly while the other person's speech is provided as real-time text. The text may be produced by a Communication Assistant, by automated speech recognition with human oversight, or through another supported relay configuration. ITU-T F.930 treats captioned telephony as a distinct relay-service type.

Speech Relay Service (SRS)

Speech Relay Service is used in this report as the shorter label for Speech-to-Speech Relay Service (STS), the terminology used in international standards. ITU-T Recommendation F.930 describes STS as a telecommunications relay service that enables people with speech disabilities to communicate with other telephone users through a trained Communication Assistant who understands the user's speech patterns and repeats or clarifies the spoken message. The person with the speech disability continues to communicate through speech; the Communication Assistant facilitates understanding rather than converting the communication into a text-based service. The mapping treats SRS as distinct from speech-to-text interpreting, automatic speech recognition, VRS and other remote interpreting services.

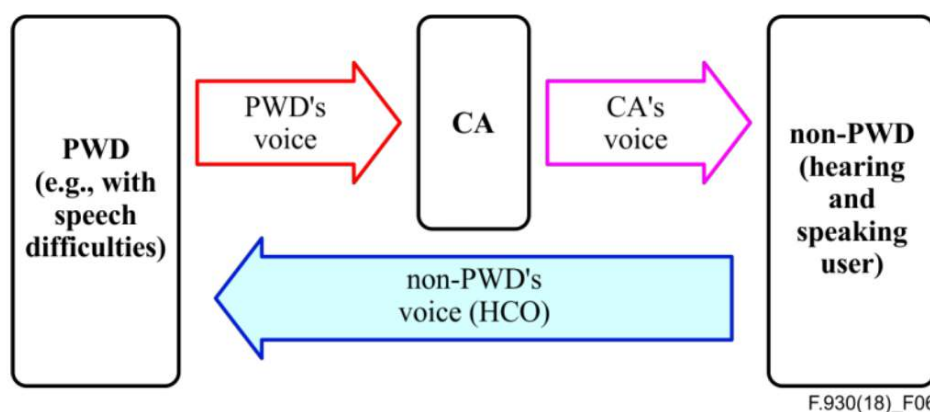


Figure 4. Speech-to-speech relay service. Source: ITU-T Recommendation F.930 (2018), Figure 6.

3. State of play: provision of relay services in Europe

Provision of Video Relay Services (VRS) and Text Relay Services (TRS) across the 30 countries mapped.

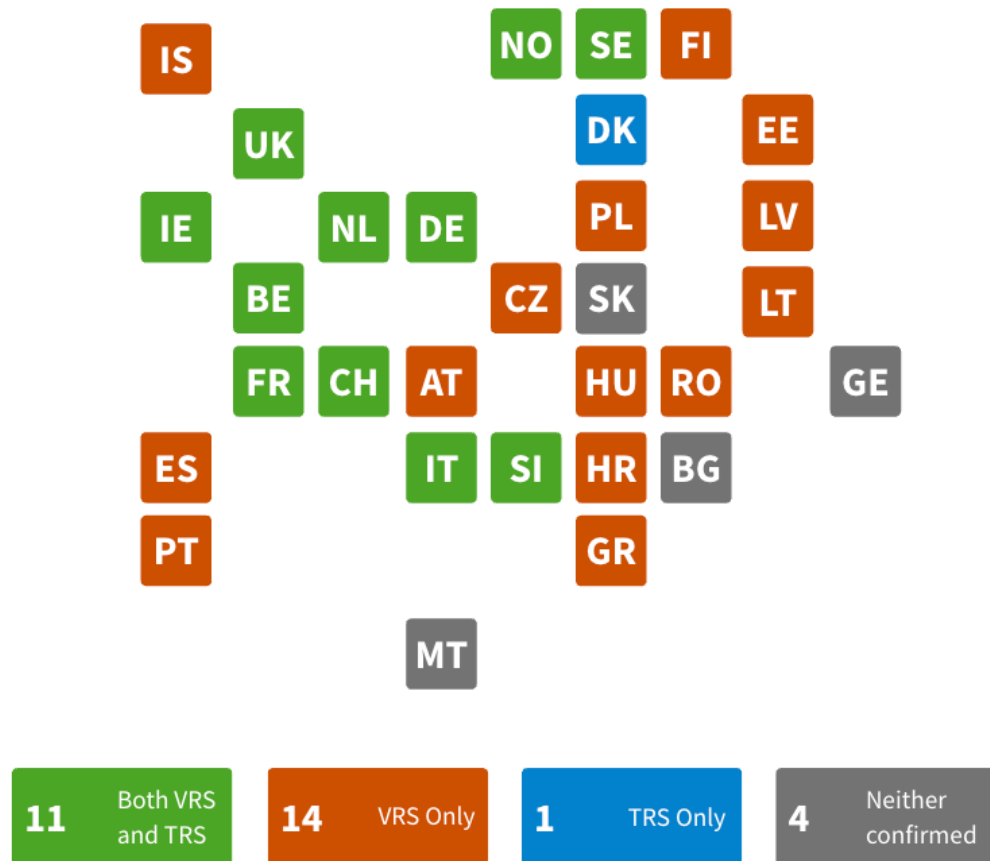


Figure 5. Provision of Video Relay Services (VRS) and Text Relay Services (TRS) across the 30 countries mapped. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

4. Research results on Video Relay Services (VRS)

4.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the provision and operation of Video Relay Services (VRS) across Europe. It draws on 51 survey entries, submitted by National Associations of the Deaf, relay service providers, and national telecommunications regulatory authorities. Of those entries, 40 confirmed the existence of a video relay service in their country, covering 25 countries in total, and these form the evidence base for the findings that follow.

The validated country-level classification confirms an operating video relay service in 25 countries: Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Two countries require separate mention. In Poland the service is confined to matters relating to the Office of Electronic Communications, and in Portugal to communication with health services, so neither functions as a general-purpose video relay service, although both are retained in the country count. Belgium is covered for Flanders only, as no response was received from the French Community.

Although the survey set out the definitions, Real-Time Text and Total Conversation are not understood in the same way across Europe. Awareness of what distinguishes these modes from a chat function or from a video call with a text option remains limited, including among those who provide or oversee the services. As it stands, live video is the basis of provision, reported in 23 of the 25 countries, and in 11 it is the only mode available. Live video is what a deaf sign language user needs, but on its own it does not serve everyone: a deafblind user who reads text cannot use a video-only service, and even for a fluent signer some details, such as an address or a medicine name, pass more safely in writing. This is why European legislation and standardisation treat Total Conversation as part of an accessible service, alongside video rather than instead of it. From the survey's responses, Real-Time Text and Total Conversation are each reported in 7 countries and live captioning in 9, with all 4 modes available in only 3. These figures should be read as the upper limit rather than a confirmed picture, since every clarification obtained during the research reduced what had originally been reported, most often because a chat function had been recorded as Real-Time Text or a video call with a text option as Total Conversation.

The findings should be read together with the limitations set out in [chapter 8 of this report](#).

4.2. Key findings

The main findings of this chapter are summarised below, and set out in full in the sections that follow.

- Continuous availability is the exception: 8 countries provide the service around the clock, 4 provide it every day within limited hours, while 13 close it for at least 2 days a week, so for most deaf sign language users the ability to make a telephone call ends when the working day does.
- Most areas of everyday life are covered, but the hotlines for victims of violence against women and for missing children are the least often named, by 13 countries.

- Emergency calls are handled through the service at any hour in 8 countries, subject to a booking or a separate number in 3, only within opening hours in 5, and excluded altogether in 6. The United Kingdom is the only country where emergency provision in sign language is backed by an enforceable regulatory standard.
- Obligations fall on users rather than services. 10 countries cap the length of a call, from 15 to 30 minutes, while few set any requirement on how quickly a deaf person must be connected. Waiting queues are common in 16 countries, and in France 15% to 20% of calls in French Sign Language are abandoned each month.
- The service is free of charge in 20 countries, though in 4 it is free only up to a fixed allowance of hours or depends on which provider is used.
- Every service connects one national sign language to a spoken national language, and International Sign is reported in only 3 countries. In at least 8 countries deaf people who move abroad cannot use the service of the country they came from.
- Funding is predominantly public, and 19 countries operate a single national relay centre. Where funding rests on projects or civil society, continuity depends on arrangements that are renewed rather than established.

Each of these findings is set out in full in the sections that follow, question by question, together with the qualifications that apply to it.

4.3. Availability and opening hours

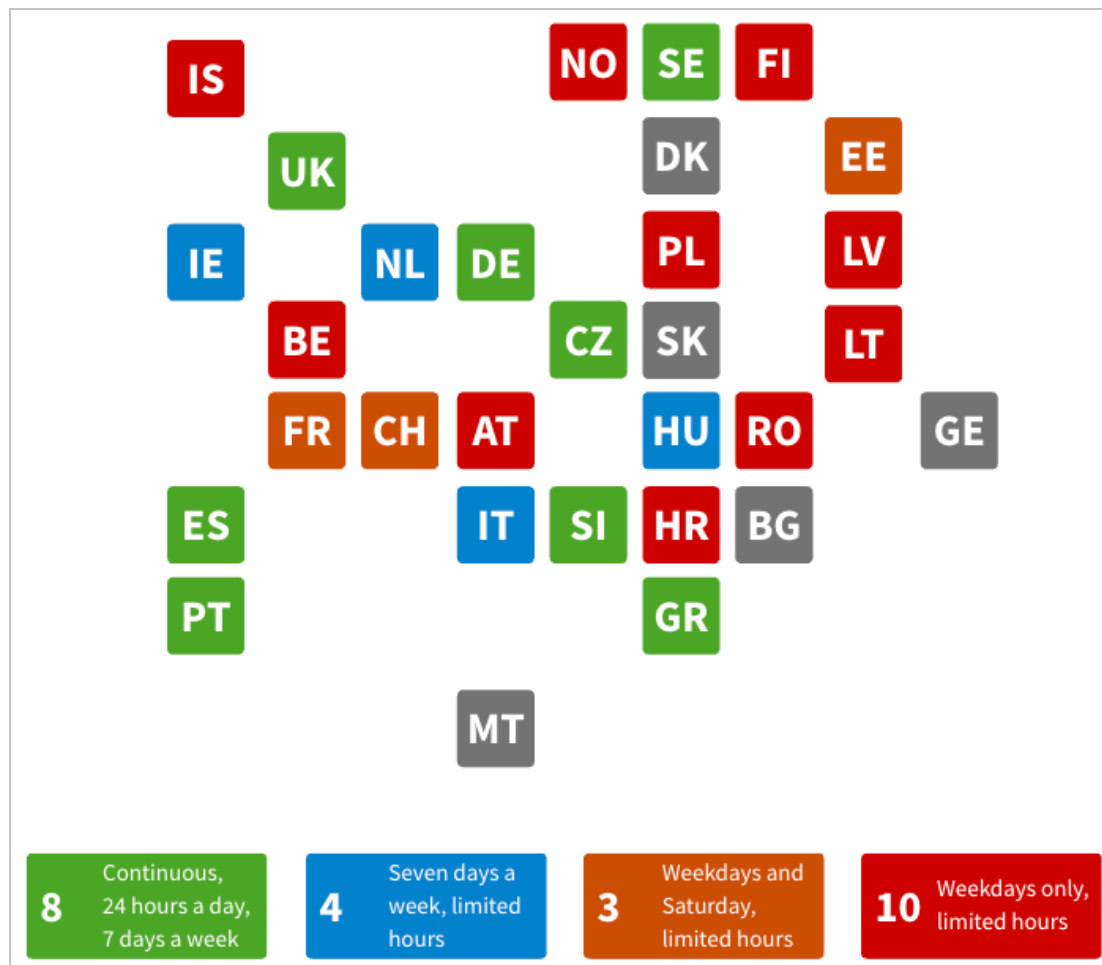


Figure 6. Availability and opening hours of video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Across the 25 countries, 8 provide Video Relay Services continuously, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. 4 out of 25 countries provide VRS 7 days a week within limited hours, 3 provide VRS on weekdays and Saturday within limited hours, and 10 provide during weekdays only. In Hungary, out-of-hours provision is limited to emergency calls. In Croatia and Ireland, pre-booking is required to access video relay services. In France, the service will become continuously available from 1 October 2026, with the monthly limit per user rising from 3 to 5 hours. In Switzerland, the availability varies by linguistic community. Continuous availability is therefore the exception rather than the rule, reported by just under a third of countries, and even that figure should be treated as the upper limit: Germany's continuous provision applies to private use only with professional use available during working hours on weekdays. At the other end, 10 countries close the service at the end of the working week and 13 close it for at least two days a week. For most deaf sign language users in Europe, the ability to make a telephone call ends when the working day does, which is precisely when people contact family, deal with matters at home, or need help.

4.4. Languages



Figure 7. Languages supported by video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

National sign language is supported in every country surveyed. The spoken national language is reported in all but four, though conversion between sign language and speech is what defines a video relay service, so it can be presumed that all 25 services provide it and that those four responses simply did not record it. Written national language is reported in 15 countries, and this is the figure to treat with caution. The survey asked which languages the service supports, not by what means, and it is therefore not clear whether written language refers to a chat function, to Real-Time Text within the call, or to live captioning. Therefore, there is real uncertainty about how written language can actually be used within the video relay service. International Sign is reported in only three countries, and each in a different form: Spain reports it as available, Austria as possible where staff trained in it are on duty, and Ireland for a past period between October 2023 and March 2025. This matters because International Sign is the one language that could serve deaf people travelling or living outside their own country, and the survey shows almost no provision for it.

4.5. Context and areas of use

"In which context is the video relay service intended to be used?"



Figure 8. Context in which video relay services are intended to be used. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

22 countries describe a service for general use, of which 12 record that emergency calls are included and 10 that they are excluded. Three other countries describe something narrower: Poland restricts use to matters relating to the services of the Office of Electronic Communications; Portugal clarified that the SNS24 accessibility service should not be understood as a general-purpose video relay service and is only restricted to health-related matters; and in the United Kingdom the responses describe different services, one a general video relay service excluding emergency calls, the other a service for emergency calls only.

"In which areas can the video relay service be used?"

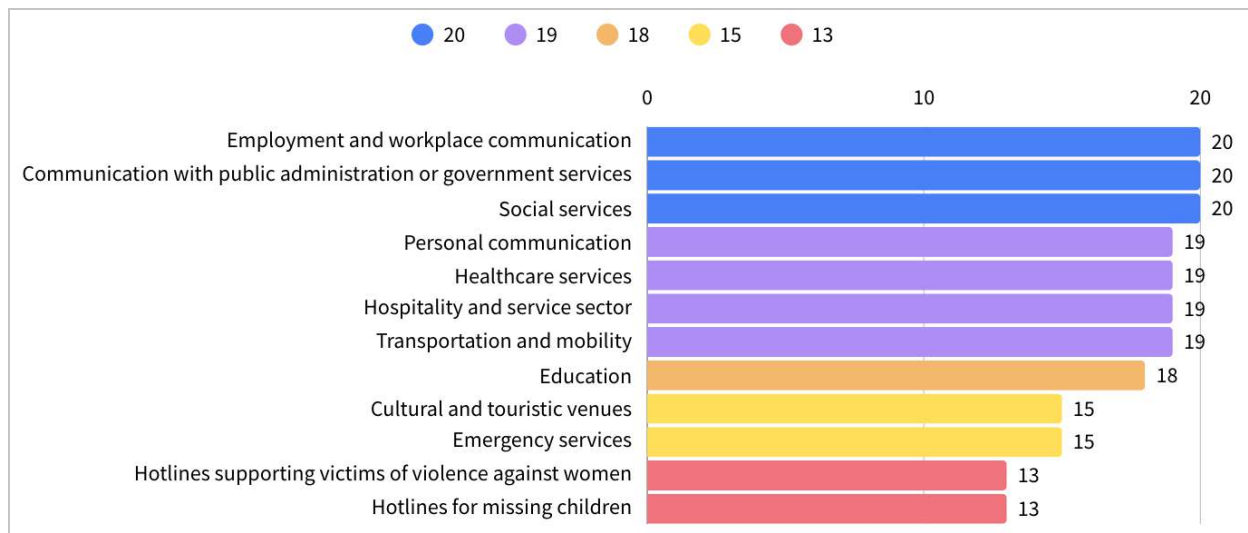


Figure 9. Areas in which video relay services can be used (number of countries). Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

The survey then asked in which areas the video relay service can be used. 21 of the 25 countries reported that it may be used in any area depending on the request of the caller, and 3 of those named no individual areas at all, so their coverage does not appear in the figures below. The chart therefore shows which areas respondents chose to name, and should not be read as a measure of what deaf users cannot reach.

Most areas of everyday life are well covered. Employment, public administration, social services, personal calls, healthcare, hospitality, transport and education are each named by around 20 of the 22 countries. The picture changes at the bottom of the list. Cultural and tourist venues and emergency services are named by 15 countries, and the 2 helplines by only 13. This last point matters since the hotlines for victims of violence against women and for missing children are the least often named, yet they exist for people in immediate danger. Deaf users are therefore left uncertain whether these helplines can be reached through the relay service at all. Someone in danger should not have to find out whether the service covers the call they need to make.

4.6. Emergency call handling

“How are emergency calls handled (opening hours, availability, methods of communication, response times, escalation process,..)?”

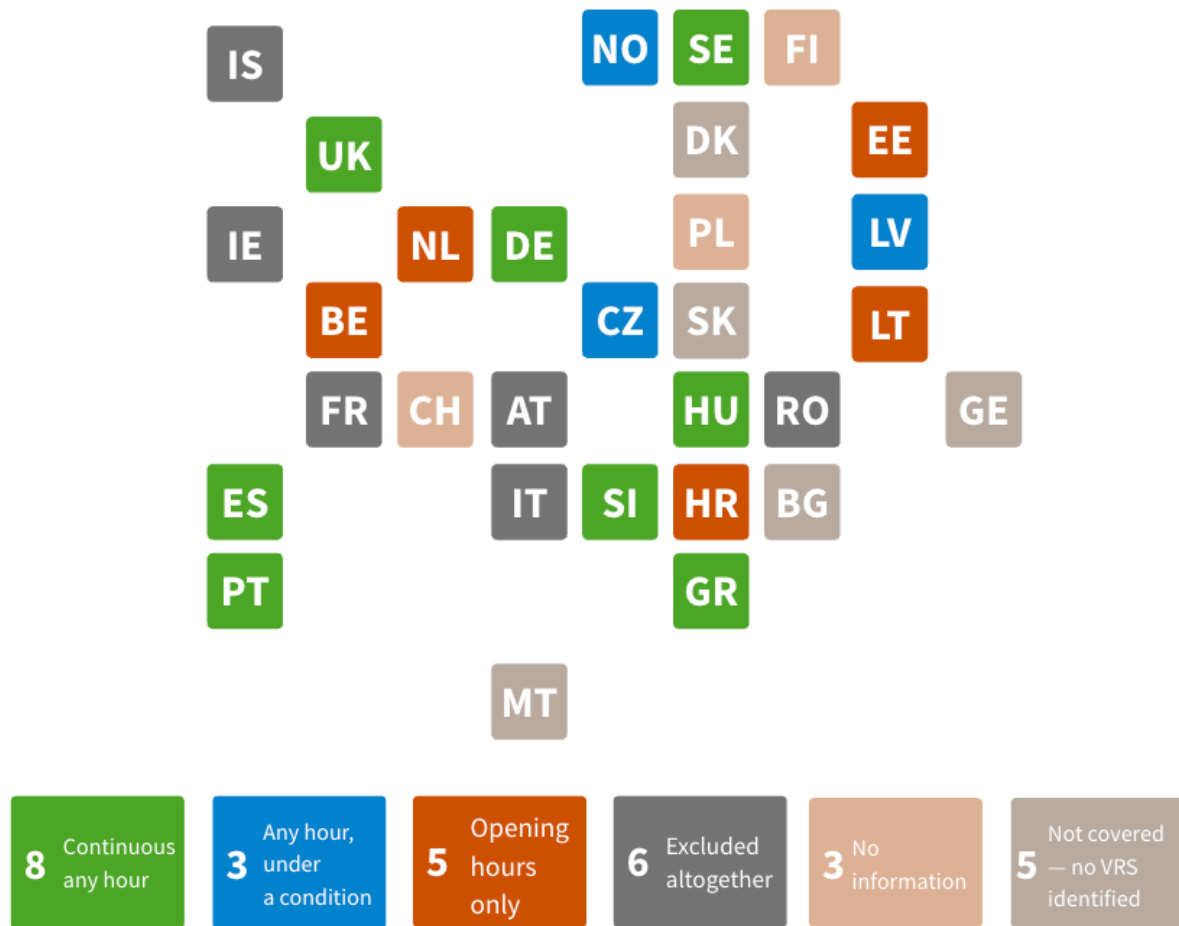


Figure 10. Handling of emergency calls through video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Before assessing the results, it is worth noting that a limitation applies in the responses to this question: the survey asked how the relay service handles emergency calls, so other ways of reaching the emergency services appear only where respondents chose to mention them.

In 8 countries emergency calls are handled through the video relay service at any hour of the day, although in Portugal this applies only to health-related communication, and most of these countries describe arrangements designed for that purpose. Germany sets out a full escalation sequence, in which the interpreter answers, establishes which emergency service is needed and where the caller is, then connects directly to the emergency control centre. Spain operates a dedicated channel staffed by interpreters assigned only to emergency calls, who must answer within 7 to 8 seconds. Sweden routes emergency calls through a dedicated address and gives them the highest priority in the system. Slovenia reports immediate prioritisation and escalation to the appropriate emergency service. Hungary reports a response time of 20 to 30 seconds, while noting that the escalation procedure is still being developed, and Greece describes the service in general terms without addressing emergency handling. The United Kingdom stands apart, since its emergency video relay service in British Sign Language is required by the national regulator to be free, continuous and available without prior registration, and is the only arrangement in the survey backed by an enforceable quality standard.

In 3 countries emergency calls can be made at any hour, but only under an additional condition. In Czechia the user must book an interpreting session in advance, which is difficult to reconcile with the nature of an emergency. In Latvia and Norway calls outside working hours must be made to a separate number, which in Norway changes according to the time of day, so the user has to know which number applies at which hour.

In 5 further countries, namely Belgium (Flanders), Croatia, Estonia, Lithuania and the Netherlands, emergency calls can only be made within the opening hours of the service, so access to emergency assistance ends with the working day.

In 6 countries, Austria, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy and Romania, emergency calls are excluded from the video relay service altogether. Another arrangement is likely to exist in those countries, but it lies outside the scope of this survey, which cannot establish whether it can be used in sign language. In Finland, Poland and Switzerland no information was provided, so nothing can be said in either direction.

4.7. Cost to users

"Is the video relay service free of charge for users?"



Figure 11. Cost of video relay services to users. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Most countries provide the video relay service at no cost to users. 20 of the 25 report it as free of charge, with no conditions mentioned in their answers. However, in 2 countries (France and Latvia), the service is free only until a fixed allowance of hours runs out, and after that a deaf person pays to make a telephone call. In Finland and the United Kingdom, the cost depends on which provider is used, so a call may be free with one provider and paid for with another. In 1 country the position could not be established at all. This matters because free of charge is not the same as unlimited. Other end-users are not given a quota of calls, and they do not need to know which provider they are using before knowing whether a call will cost them anything.

4.8. Waiting queues, response time and maximum call time

"Are waiting queues common when users try to access the video relay service?"

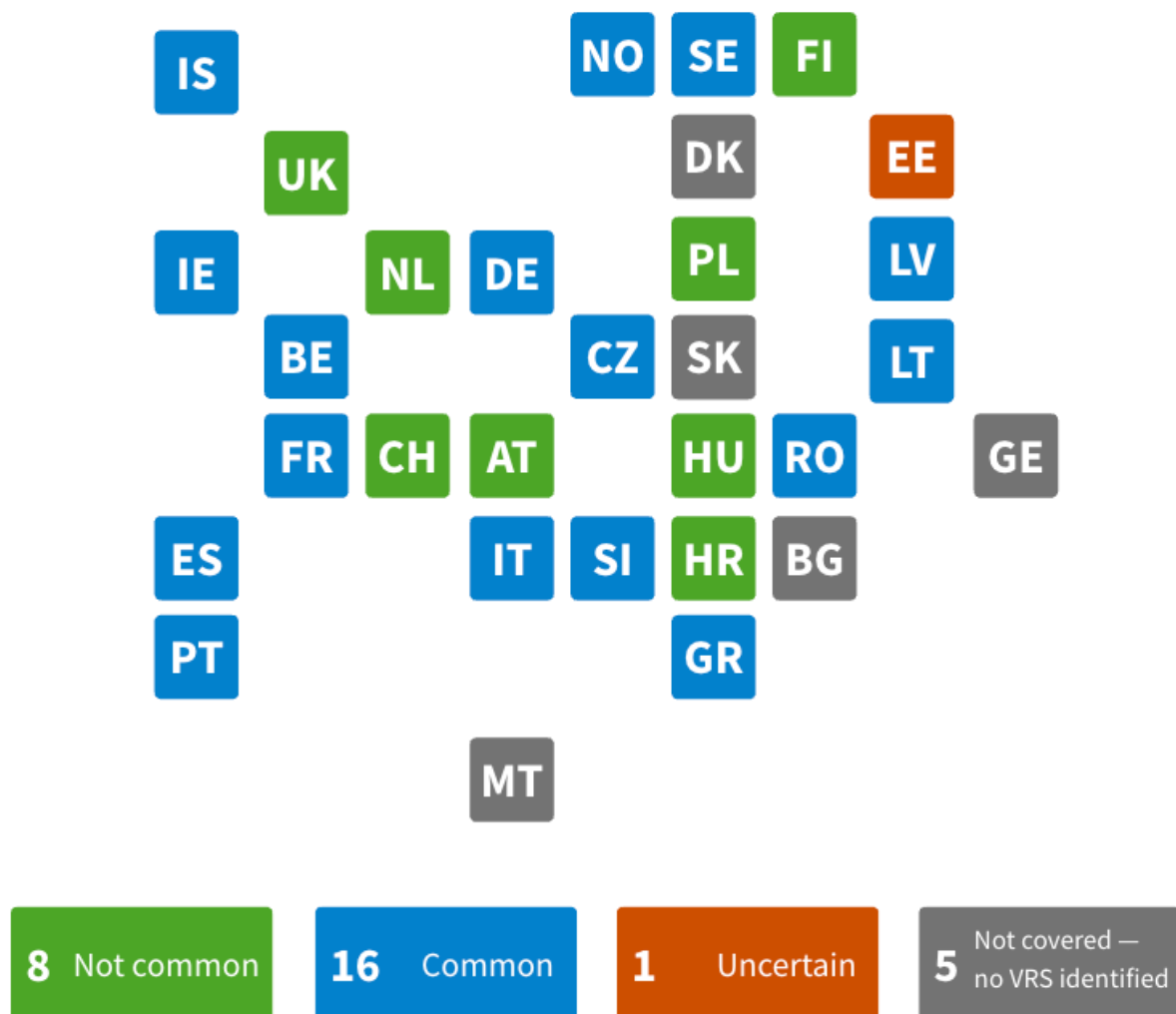


Figure 12. Waiting queues in video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Waiting queues are a current feature of European video relay provision, reported as common in 16 of the 25 countries. Only 9 countries could give figures, and these cannot be compared or presented as a single graph, because respondents measured different things: some gave an average, others a range, others an estimate for peak hours only. What the figures do show is the scale of the disparity, from 10 to 20 seconds in Czechia and around 30 seconds in Norway, to an

average of 15 minutes in Latvia and anything between 1 and 30 minutes in Italy. Where a pattern is described, weekday mornings and early afternoons are consistently the busiest.

The most revealing figures concern calls that failed rather than calls that waited. In France, 15% to 20% of calls in French Sign Language are abandoned each month. In Ireland, the booking system records no trace of the demand it cannot meet, so when a deaf person cannot obtain an appointment, that demand disappears from the data. Elsewhere the silence is telling in itself, since several respondents reported having no statistics or referred the question to another organisation. This matters because other end-users do not wait for an interpreter to become free before making a call, and a call abandoned before it connects is a call that never took place at all.

"Is there a required response time for connecting users to the video relay service?"



Figure 13. Required response time for connecting users to video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Where a response time is set, it varies considerably. In the Netherlands, video calls must be answered within 60 seconds for at least 85% of calls between 07:00 and 22:00. In France, the requirement is 3 minutes for 70% of calls, and Switzerland reports 200 seconds. In most countries, no rule applies at all to how quickly a deaf person must be connected to an interpreter. Sweden shows how such a requirement can be set effectively. Rather than a single figure, it sets targets: at least 70% of calls answered within 30 seconds and at least 90% within 60 seconds, measured

monthly, and the response time runs from the moment the call reaches the service until an interpreter answers and is ready to begin the assignment, and a call waiting in a queue is expressly not counted as answered. Emergency calls are treated separately wherever they are addressed, with faster response time and priority over other calls, as section 4.6 describes. Outside emergency calls, however, standards of this kind remain the exception in Europe. In most countries nothing governs how long a deaf person waits before an interpreter answers.

"Is there a maximum time allowed for a call?"

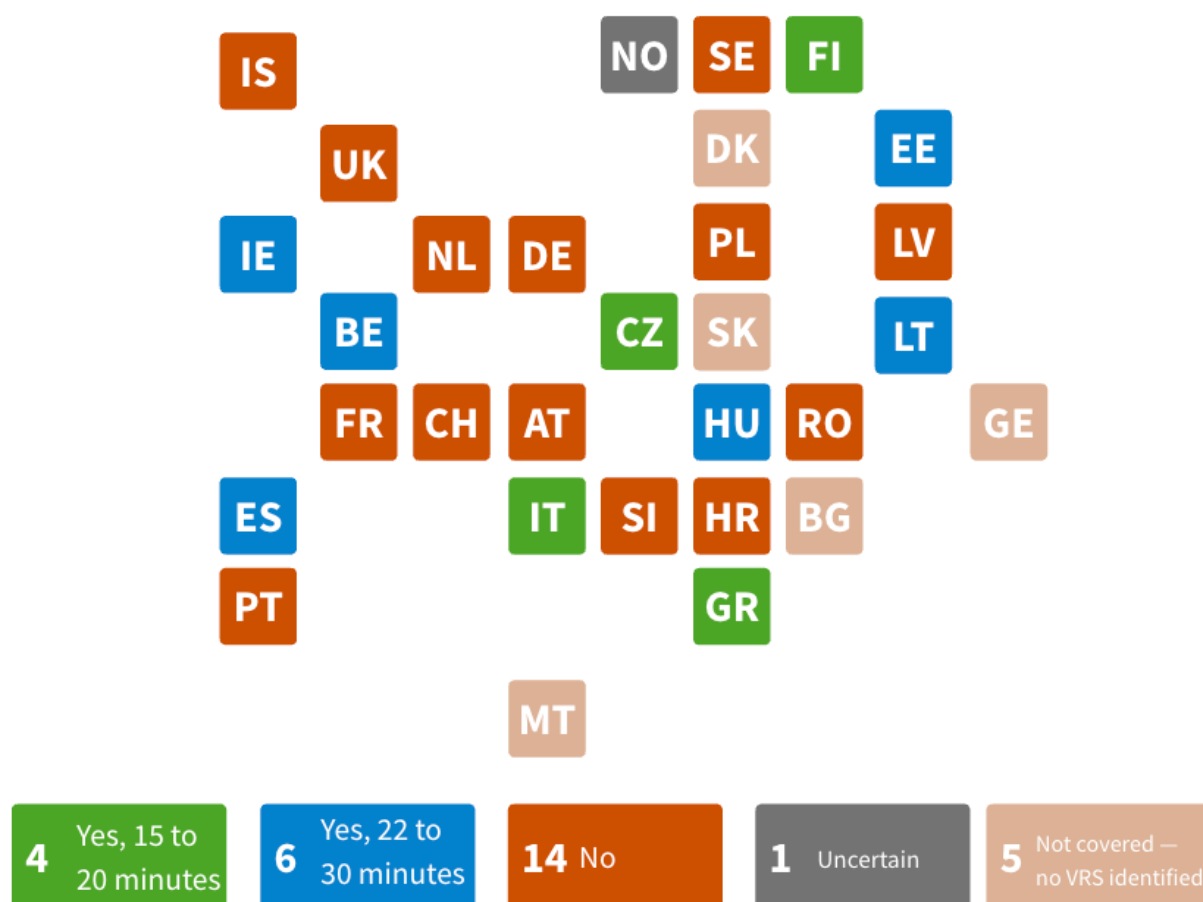


Figure 14. Maximum time allowed for a video relay call. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

10 countries limit how long a call may last, and the limits are short, from 15 minutes in Finland at the lowest to 30 minutes in Belgium (Flanders), Estonia, Hungary and Lithuania at the highest, with Czechia, Greece, and Italy at 20 minutes, and Ireland and Spain between 22 and 25 minutes. This is the mirror image of the previous finding: obligations are placed on the user rather than on the service. Three qualifications apply. Emergency calls are generally exempt, so where a limit exists it applies to everyday calls. Pre-planned bookings are treated differently from spontaneous calls, and in Norway a spontaneous call is capped at 30 minutes while a pre-booked assignment may last several hours. And a limit may fall on the service instead of the user: in Sweden relayed calls are of unlimited duration for the user, while the interpreter must be replaced after at most 30 minutes of active interpreting. The same 30 minutes therefore functions in one country as a

staffing rule and in others as a rule the deaf caller must observe. For the deaf caller this means ending a conversation whether or not the matter is settled, then placing a new call if necessary.

4.9. Accessibility for users abroad.

“Is the video relay service in your country accessible to users living abroad?”

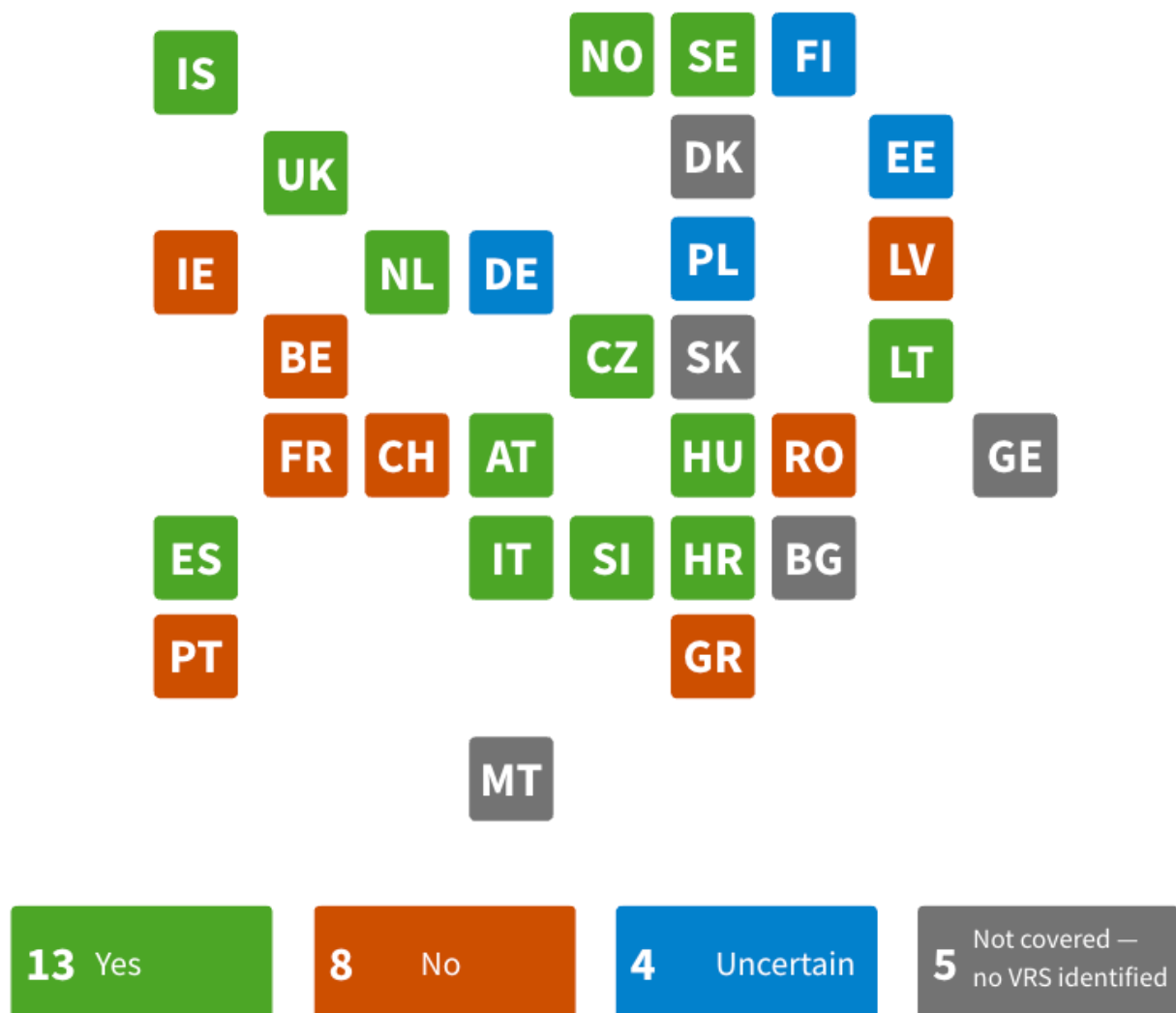


Figure 15. Accessibility of video relay services for users living abroad. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Just over half the countries report that their service can be used from abroad, but most answers are unexplained, since the question was closed. Two responses give some insight. France reports that the service cannot be used by anyone who is not subscribed to a French operator, which follows from its particular model, where each operator provides the relay service to its own subscribers. Sweden's procurement requirements state that the service handles calls within Sweden and to and from other countries, while voice calls made to the service from abroad are not free of charge. The two cases point to distinct barriers, one structural and one financial, and elsewhere it is not known which conditions apply, whether a subscription, a residence requirement or an entitlement decision. In at least 8 countries deaf people who move abroad to work, study, travel or settle cannot use the service of the country they came from.

4.10. Funding sources

Which organisations or entities fund the video relay service?



Figure 16. Funding sources of video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Public funding is the dominant model, and in most cases the responsible ministry or agency is named: the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection in Austria, which provides partial funding alongside project partners, the Ministry of the Interior in Hungary, the Ministry of Culture, Innovation and Higher Education in Iceland, the Citizens Information Board in Ireland, the Ministry of Welfare in Latvia under contract, the Flemish government agencies for employment and for persons with disabilities in Belgium (Flanders), and the national health service in Portugal.

Three arrangements stand apart. France is funded entirely by telecommunications operators, with the respondent stating that this covers the full cost and that no public funding is involved. Poland is the only country where the service is funded by the telecommunications regulator itself. In 3 countries the service rests on civil society, through foundation funding in Spain, non-profit funding in Croatia alongside a national funding programme, and in Romania a combination of non-profit funding and membership or subscription fees. Czechia and Lithuania report European Union

funding as part of the arrangement, and in the United Kingdom funding includes private companies, subscription fees paid by users and the Access to Work scheme.

The video relay service is therefore treated in most countries as a public service funded from general or welfare budgets, and only in a small number as a telecommunications obligation funded by the sector that provides voice telephony. Where funding comes from projects or from civil society, its continuity depends on arrangements that are renewed rather than established.

4.11. Organisational model

"What organisational model is used to provide the video relay services in the country?"

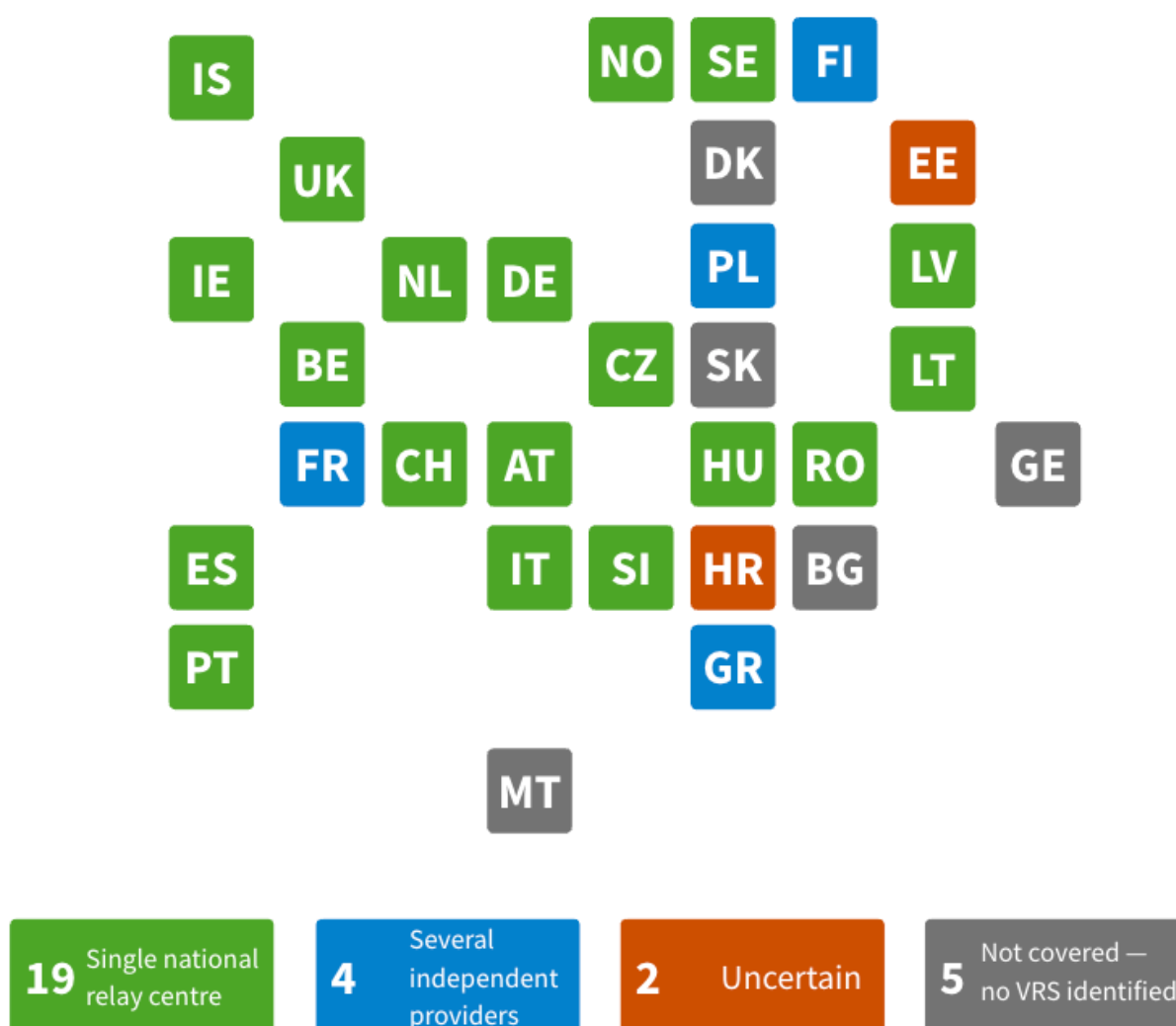


Figure 17. Organisational model of video relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

The single national relay centre is the dominant model, reported by 19 countries. Four countries report several independent providers operating without a centralised system. This may in some cases refer to interpreters engaged as independent contractors rather than to the way the service itself is organised. No country selected the option describing multiple service providers operating

within a national system. Two answers give further detail: Spain describes one main technology provider working with the professional resources of federations and organisations of deaf people, with Catalonia organised separately, since the technology provider is the same while professional staff and material resources are managed locally. Portugal notes that alongside the national service, video interpreting is also provided by public administration services, by a private provider and by deaf organisations. In 2 countries the model could not be established.

5. Research results on Text Relay Service (TRS)

Introduction

This chapter examines the provision and operation of Text Relay Services across Europe. Only 12 of the 30 countries mapped had a confirmed operating Text Relay Service at the survey cut-off. It draws on 51 survey entries covering 30 European countries, submitted by national associations of the Deaf, organisations of hard of hearing people, relay-service providers and national telecommunications regulatory authorities.

Survey responses were reviewed against the functional characteristics of Text Relay Services and, where necessary, supplemented by national information to resolve incomplete or inconsistent descriptions. The country classification in this chapter follows ITU-T Recommendation F.930. A service was classified as TRS where a Communication Assistant provides the relay between text and speech. Depending on the communication mode, the user may type or speak directly, while the Communication Assistant relays text and speech where needed. RTT or SMS communication between users without a Communication Assistant is therefore not classified as TRS. Captioning-only tools, sector-specific text contact and broader interpreting services were recorded where relevant but were not counted as national TRS.

The findings should be read together with the general limitations in chapter 8. The absence of a confirmed TRS means that no service meeting the report's TRS definition was evidenced through this mapping; it does not mean that no local, sector-specific or other options exist.

ETSI ES 202 975 V3.1.1 is used as a reference benchmark throughout this chapter where the survey data allow comparison. The standard states that a relay service should provide 24-hour operation; sets an answering-time benchmark of at least 70% of communications answered within 30 seconds and at least 90% within 60 seconds, measured monthly; requires priority handling of emergency communications; and states that there should be no restriction on the length or number of communications except in exceptional circumstances.

The validated country-level classification confirms an operating TRS in 12 countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

RTT, SMS and other dedicated communication channels are mentioned as part of broader overview and co-existence with text relay services where relevant. In Portugal, the reported service provides web-based text access to healthcare services for non-emergency matters and cannot be used as a general-purpose TRS. In Romania, 113 SMS provides direct text access to emergency services and network-based RTT enables direct real-time text communication; neither involves a Communication Assistant relaying between text and speech. In Spain, text functions are available within broader or pre-booked communication-support services, but the mapping did not identify a dedicated nationwide Text Relay Service.

Finland represents a distinct case because it previously had a national Text Relay Service. The service had operated since the 1980s and was funded through a grant arrangement. Its use had declined over time, and the 2023 working-group process also considered the existing service

model technologically outdated and examined alternative accessible ways of handling telephone communication. The service nevertheless continued through 2024 and ended on 31 December 2024 when sufficient funding and a sustainable continuation arrangement were not secured. Finland is therefore classified as a former TRS. The case illustrates a continuity risk where a long-running relay service does not have a durable legal or organisational mechanism securing its continuation or replacement.

At the survey cut-off, no confirmed TRS was identified in 14 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and Slovakia. Poland is retained in this survey-period category for the headline figures, but the new nationwide Centrum Komunikacji became operational in 2026 and provides remote communication support, including real-time speech-to-text transcription. This post-survey development is noted separately; whether the service meets the ITU-T F.930 definition of TRS requires confirmation of the full text-speech relay configuration before the validated country count is changed.

Communication modes require separate interpretation from the TRS country count. RTT is confirmed within or alongside TRS in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. The Netherlands provides the clearest reported example of a TRS supporting RTT together with Total Conversation.

Sweden provides a useful example of combined communication modes for hard of hearing users. Texttelefoni.se includes the Tala direkt function, through which a user can speak directly while the other person's speech is provided as text through the relay service. Sweden also supports RTT and communication with Total Conversation equipment. This should not be read as meaning that every Texttelefoni.se call is a full Total Conversation session; the report therefore records where RTT and Total Conversation are supported without presenting them as substitutes for TRS.

“Availability of confirmed Text Relay Services across the 30 countries mapped.”

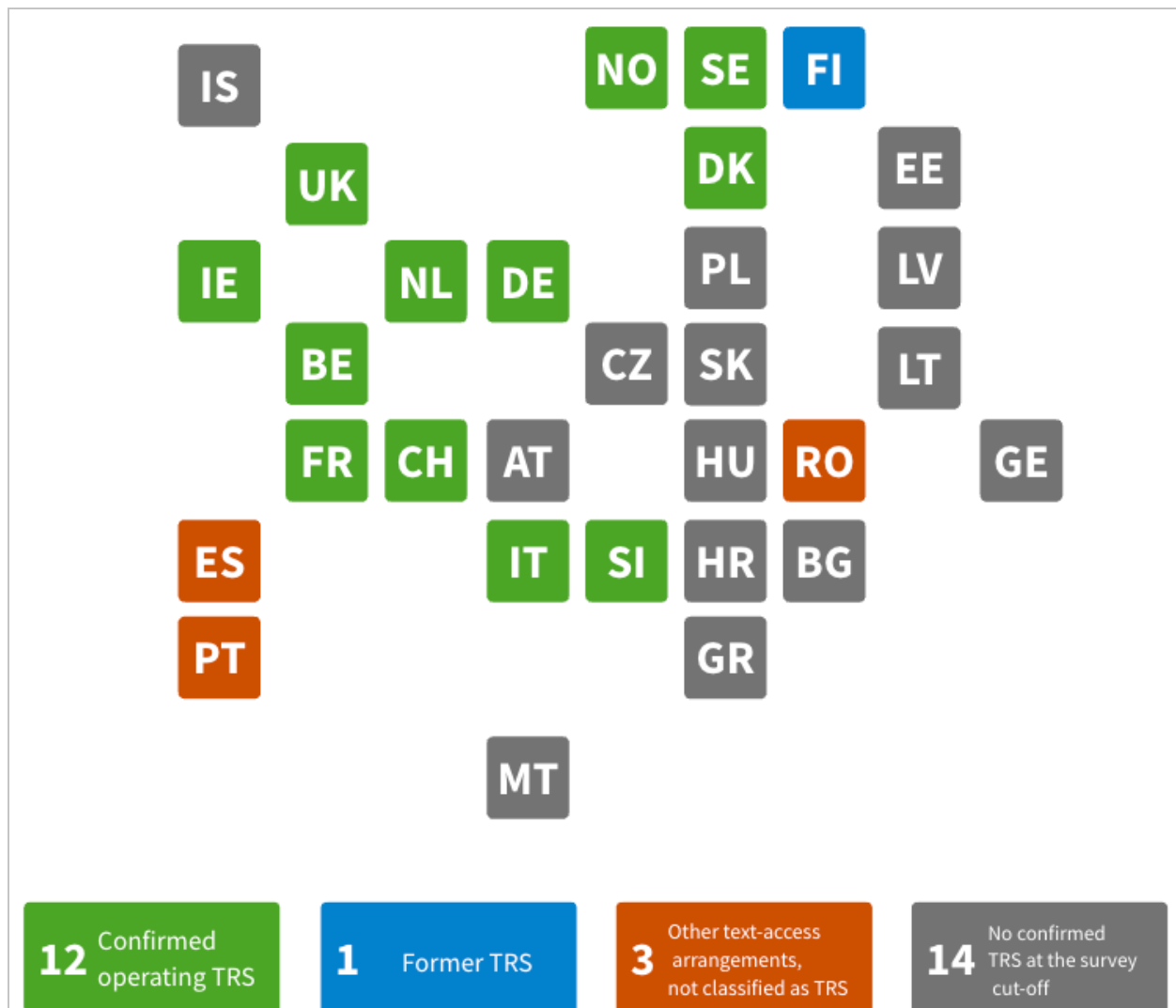


Figure 18. Availability of confirmed Text Relay Services across the 30 countries mapped. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Key findings

The main findings of this chapter are summarised below, and set out in full in the sections that follow.

- Access to Text Relay Services is still far from universal across Europe.** Twelve of the 30 countries in the survey-period classification have an operating TRS: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Finland is classified as a former TRS, while Portugal, Romania and Spain provide other text-access arrangements that do not meet the report's TRS definition.
- 24/7 access to Text Relay Service is limited for ordinary calls.** For Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK, TRS is available 24/7 for ordinary calls. In the remaining countries, availability is more restricted: Belgium operates on weekdays with some extended evening hours; Ireland provides access every

day but within defined hours; Italy operates daily but not overnight; Germany provides 24/7 access for private use while professional use is limited to weekday hours; and France operated on weekdays and Saturday morning during the survey period, with 24/7 provision required from 1 October 2026.

- **24/7 emergency access through relay is not consistently available.** Emergency access through TRS is available in 9 of the 12 countries with a TRS: Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Belgium provides emergency relay only during TRS opening hours, while Ireland and Italy rely on separate emergency arrangements that are not classified as TRS.
- **Waiting times and response requirements vary considerably between countries.** Denmark has a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) requiring an average waiting time of no more than 30 seconds, while Sweden requires at least 70% of calls to be answered within 30 seconds and 90% within 60 seconds. Germany reports queues when all Communication Assistants are engaged, while Italy reports the widest waiting range, from approximately one to 30 minutes.
- **Free use of the relay function is common, but not universal.** In Germany, users receive 40 cost-free minutes of TRS per month in 2026, following 30 minutes in 2025; the allowance is scheduled to increase to 50 minutes in 2027 and 60 minutes in 2028, with use beyond the monthly allowance charged. Charges for the relay function should be distinguished from ordinary telephone, data, roaming or international charges associated with making the underlying call. Time-based relay allowances remain important because relay-assisted calls typically take longer than direct calls.
- **Interoperability and cross-border access remain weak in most countries.** Some users can access their home-country TRS while abroad, but this does not mean that national relay services interoperate. Language is also central: a traveller may need the home-country TRS precisely because it supports a language they can use, while the host-country service may not.
- **Comparable service-quality monitoring remains limited.** Six of the 12 countries with a confirmed TRS report a measurable answering-time target, requirement or recommendation: Denmark, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. Comparable information on abandoned calls, outages, transcription accuracy, complaints and service interruptions is frequently unavailable.

5.1. Availability and opening hours

Availability varies considerably among the 12 confirmed TRS. ETSI ES 202 975 states that a relay service should provide 24-hour operation. Only seven of the 12 confirmed TRS provide 24/7 access for ordinary calls: Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. The other five — Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland and Italy — have restricted or differentiated opening hours.

Availability is more restricted in almost half of the reported countries. Belgium's TRS operates from 08:30 to 17:30 on weekdays, with extended opening until early evening on 3 weekdays. Ireland's ITRS operates from 08:30 to 18:30 Monday to Thursday, from 09:00 to 21:00 on Friday

and Saturday, and limited hours on Sundays and public holidays. Italy's Comunic@ENS relay service operates daily during daytime and early evening rather than 24/7. Germany distinguishes between private and professional use: private access is available 24/7, while professional access is limited to weekday hours. In France, the TRS for ordinary calls operated from 08:30 to 21:00 Monday to Friday and limited hours on Saturday, excluding public holidays, during the survey period. From 1 October 2026, the service is required to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Overall, 24/7 availability for ordinary TRS calls is not yet consistent across the countries with confirmed services. This means that users in countries with restricted opening hours cannot rely on TRS at all times in the same way that mainstream voice users can rely on voice communications services.

"When is the Text Relay Service available for ordinary calls?"

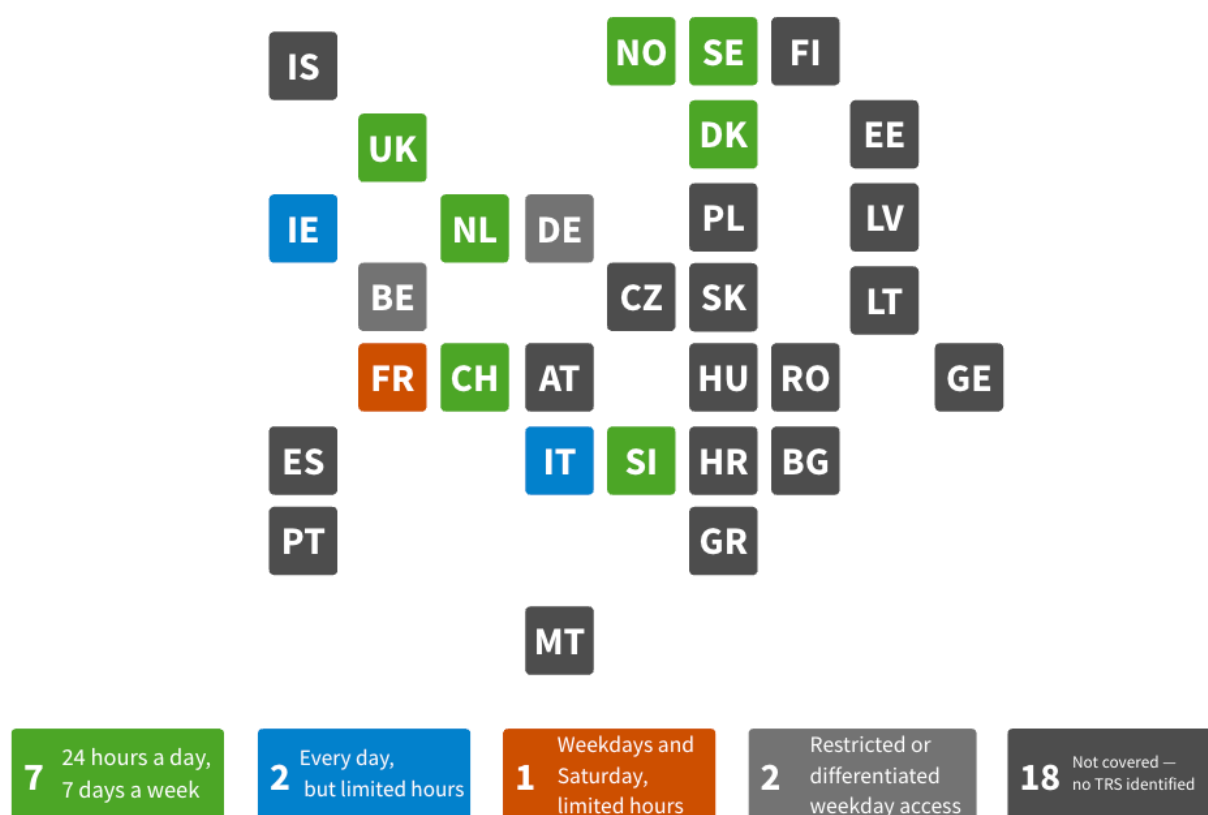


Figure 19. Availability of Text Relay Services for ordinary calls. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

5.2. Languages

Language coverage is particularly relevant in countries with more than one national or widely used language. Switzerland reports TRS in German, French and Italian, with English available in some circumstances. Belgium's mapped provision is in Flanders and is reported in Dutch; this does not establish equivalent TRS availability across all Belgian language communities. Elsewhere, services generally operate in the main national spoken language: Danish in Denmark,

French in France, German in Germany, English in Ireland and the United Kingdom, Italian in Italy, Dutch in the Netherlands, Slovene in Slovenia and Swedish in Sweden.

The findings show that TRS remains predominantly organised around national languages. This is sufficient for many domestic calls but becomes a barrier to cross-border use: technical access to a TRS does not provide effective access if the user cannot communicate in one of the languages supported by that service. Continued access to a user's home-country TRS is therefore particularly relevant when travelling or living abroad.

5.3. Context and areas of use

Most confirmed TRS can be used across a broad range of everyday communication contexts, including personal calls and contact with employers, public authorities, healthcare providers, education services, transport operators, social services and commercial services. The national services in countries such as the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK illustrate this general-purpose model.

Some countries provide text-based communication without providing a TRS that can be used across everyday calling contexts. In Portugal, the service identified in the survey is limited to healthcare-related communication and cannot be used for calls to employers, public authorities, transport providers or commercial services. Romania provides direct emergency text through 113 SMS and network RTT, without a text-speech relay function. Spain provides text functions within broader or pre-booked communication-support services, but no dedicated nationwide TRS was evidenced.

These examples explain the classification used in this report. Under ITU-T Recommendation F.930, a Text Relay Service involves a Communication Assistant who relays between text and speech. Direct text communication without this relay function is therefore not classified as TRS. A sector-specific text contact route is also not counted as a national TRS where it does not provide a general relay service for telephone communication.

“In which context is the Text Relay Service intended to be used?”



Figure 20. Context in which Text Relay Services are intended to be used. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

5.4. Emergency calls handling

Emergency-call handling differs between countries and takes several forms. Nine of the 12 countries with a confirmed TRS provide 24/7 emergency access through relay: Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Seven use their general TRS with emergency calls prioritised. Norway and France provide 24/7 emergency relay through dedicated routes separate from the ordinary TRS: Norway uses 149 for ordinary text-relay calls and 1412 for emergency text relay, while France provides the dedicated *Urgence 114* emergency relay service.

Other countries rely on different arrangements. Belgium allows emergency calls through the TRS only during its opening hours, so emergency relay is not available continuously. Ireland and Italy provide direct accessible emergency communication rather than emergency access through their ordinary TRS. The Irish Text Relay Service does not handle emergency calls; users can instead contact 112/999 through Real-Time Text or Emergency SMS. In Italy, 112Sordi provides a

separate 24/7 direct text-based emergency service using real-time chat and does not form part of Comunic@ENS. Romania, where no TRS is available, provides direct emergency text access through 113 SMS and RTT. These direct communication routes are not classified as relay services.

The survey asked specifically about emergency communication through relay. ITU-T F.930 recognises that emergency communication may be provided through dedicated relay services rather than through the same route used for ordinary calls. Emergency communication through relay should be routed rapidly to the appropriate emergency service, receive priority where necessary, transmit the same relevant caller and location information available for mainstream emergency calls, and support accurate communication.⁵

“How is emergency access through Text Relay Services provided?”

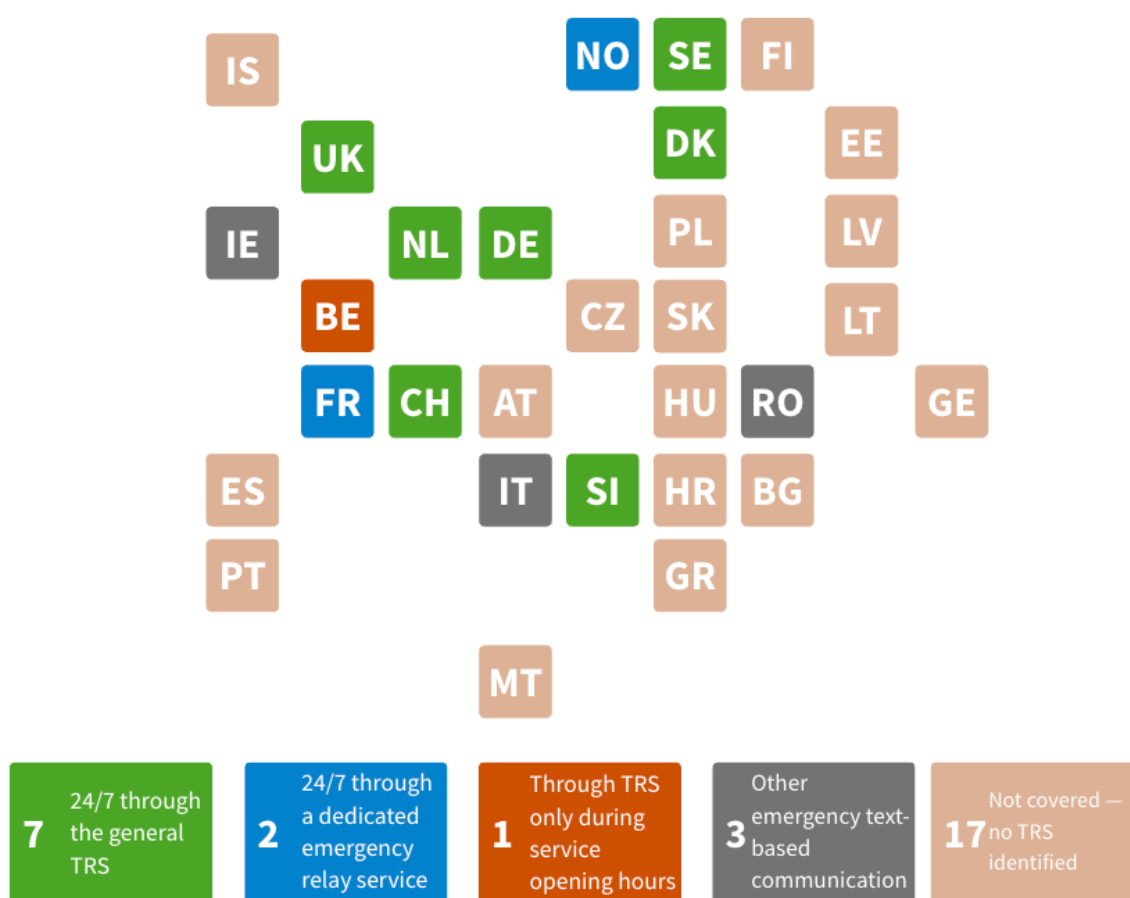


Figure 21. Emergency access through Text Relay Services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

United Kingdom: emergency calls through Relay UK are made by dialling 18000, or by using the 999 function in the Relay UK app, which connects the caller to 999.

⁵ This principle is reflected in Article 109 of the European Electronic Communications Code and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/444, which requires functionally equivalent emergency communication for end-users with disabilities, including two-way interactive communication, appropriate answering and handling, free-of-charge access, caller location and effective access across the Union.

5.5. Costs to the users

Free use of the relay function is common, but conditions differ. Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK report that the relay function is free to the user. Germany provides a monthly allocation of cost-free relay minutes and charges beyond that allowance, while France is reported as partially free or entitlement-limited. Danish Webtekst information states that eligible users receive free registration, subscription and use of Webtekst and free relay to Danish fixed-line numbers, while mobile, international and special-number calls may be charged at ordinary rates. ITRS is funded by participating Irish telecommunications operators and is accessed through Freephone service numbers; ordinary connectivity or international charges may still arise in particular circumstances.

The central distinction is between the relay function and the underlying telecommunications service. The Communication Assistant or relay conversion may be free while the user still pays the normal telephone, mobile-data, roaming or international charge that would also arise from using the communications network. Those ordinary charges should not be treated as a charge for TRS itself. The relevant concern is an additional relay-specific fee, quota or other cost imposed because the user needs relay to communicate.

The funding source does not by itself determine whether the relay function is free to the user. Government-funded services in the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland are reported as free at the point of use, while telecommunications-sector funding produces different arrangements. Relay UK is free to the user, whereas in Germany users receive a monthly allowance of cost-free TRS minutes — 40 minutes per month in 2026 — after which use of the relay service becomes chargeable. The allowance was 30 minutes in 2025 and is scheduled to increase to 50 minutes in 2027 and 60 minutes in 2028.

“Is the Text Relay Service free of charge for users?”

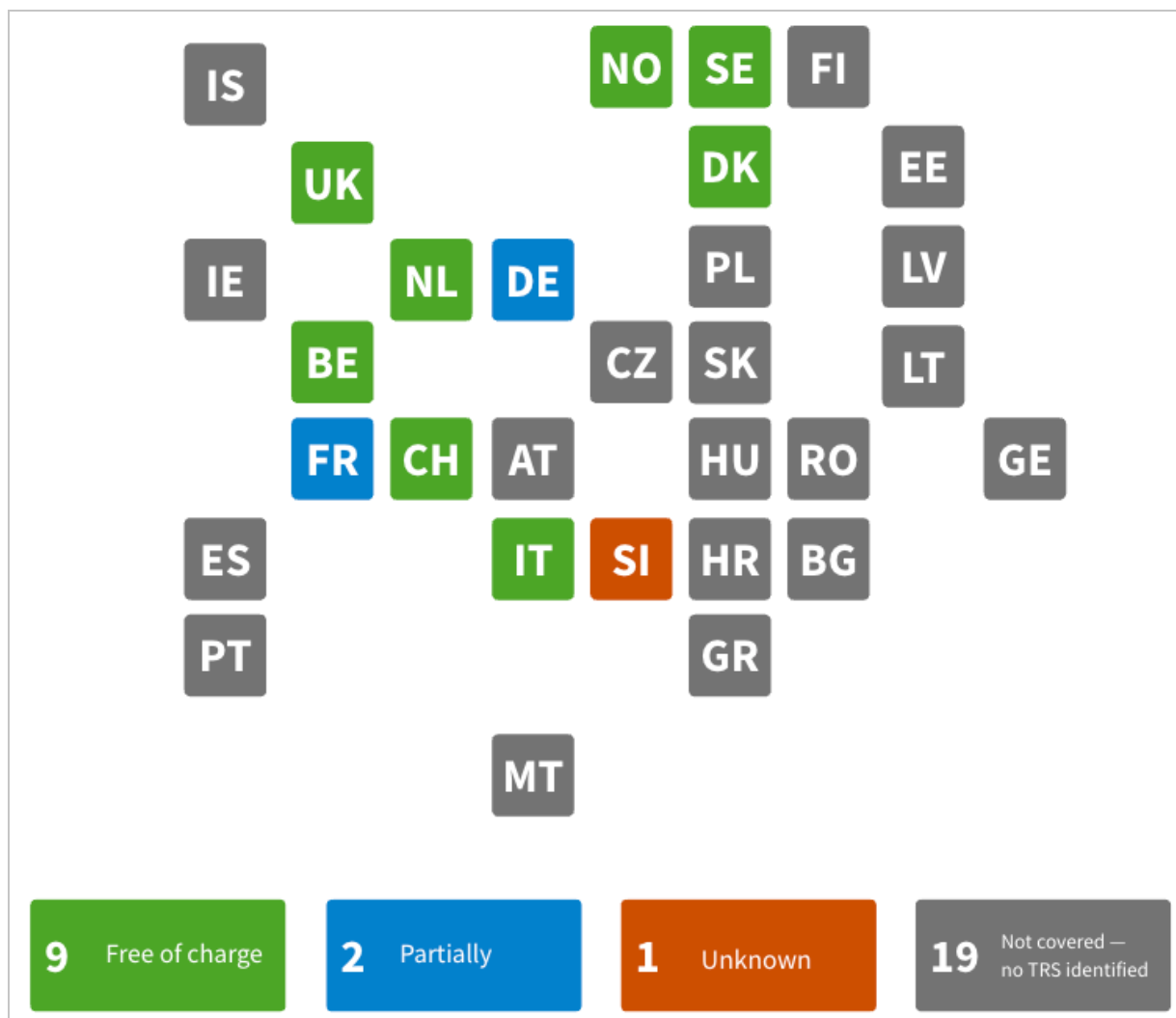


Figure 22. Cost of Text Relay Services to users. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

The categories refer to the cost of the relay service itself. Ordinary telephone, data, roaming or international charges are not treated as relay-specific charges.

5.6. Key Performance Indicators on response time and unlimited calls

ETSI ES 202 975 V3.1.1 (2026) provides a common reference point for answering time: at least 70% of communications should be answered by a Communication Assistant within 30 seconds and at least 90% within 60 seconds, calculated monthly. National requirements are not always expressed using the same metric, so comparisons need to distinguish percentages, averages and recommendations. Six of the 12 countries with a confirmed TRS report a measurable answering-time target, requirement or recommendation: Denmark, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Three countries — Belgium, Germany and Italy — report maximum call-duration limits.

Against that reference point, the UK reports 90% of standard relay calls answered within 15 seconds and 95% of emergency calls within 5 seconds. The Netherlands reports 85% within 20 seconds between 08:00 and 22:00 and 90% within 40 seconds outside those hours. Denmark has a Key Performance Indicator requiring an average waiting time of no more than 30 seconds. Sweden requires at least 70% within 30 seconds and 90% within 60 seconds. Ireland recommends 80% within 20 seconds, while France reports 70% of calls connected within three minutes.

Reported waiting experience also varies. Germany reports queues when all Communication Assistants are occupied, and Italy reports waits ranging from approximately one to 30 minutes. France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK report no routine waiting queue.

“Are waiting queues common when users try to access the Text Relay Service?”

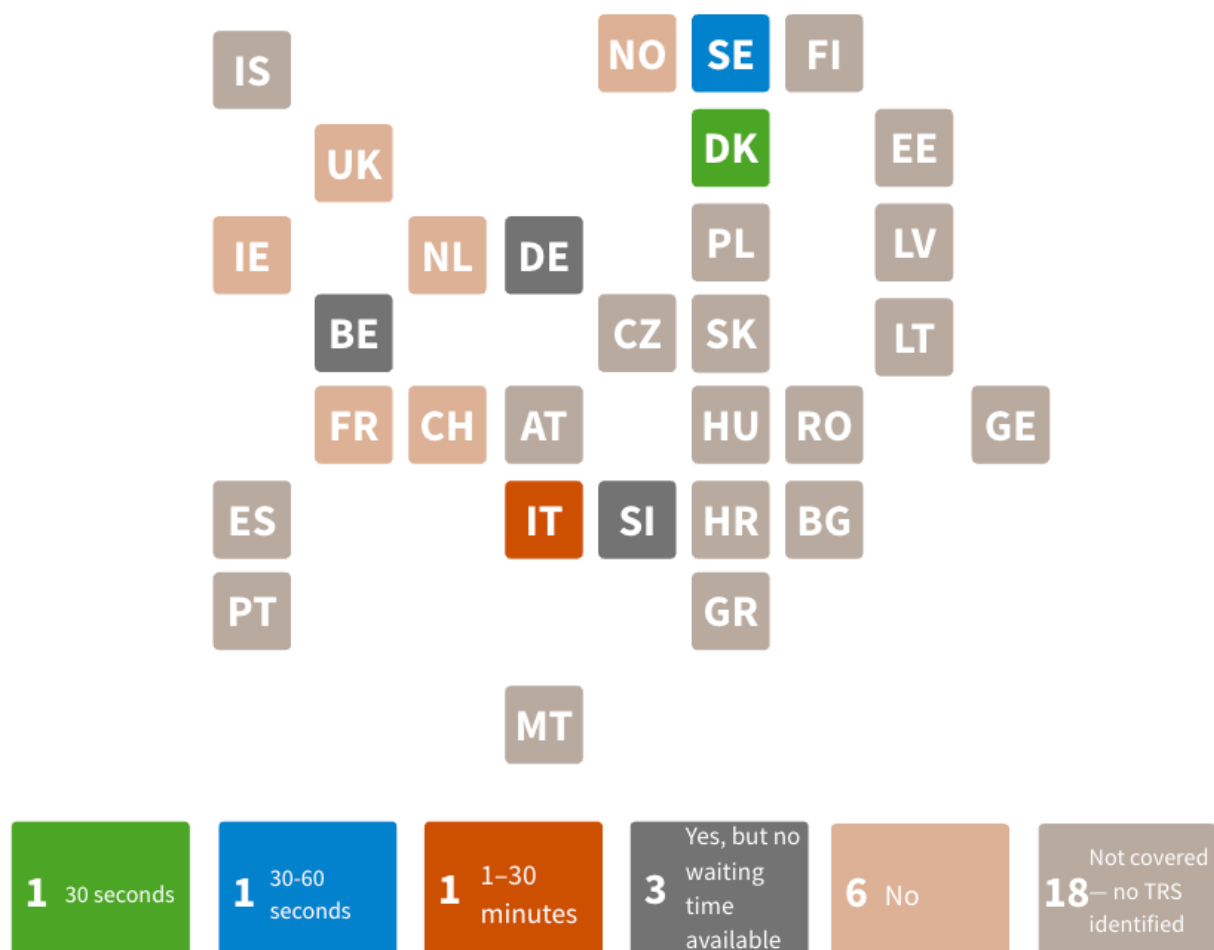


Figure 23. Waiting queues in Text Relay Services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

ETSI ES 202 975 states that there should be no restriction on the length or number of relay communications except in exceptional circumstances. Against this benchmark, Belgium reports a 30-minute call limit and Italy a 20-minute limit. Germany also applies a 30-minute limit, but a new call can be started immediately afterwards, so the restriction applies to each call rather than

to total use of the service. The call-duration clock starts when the Communication Assistant answers; time spent waiting in a queue does not count towards the call limit.

Maximum call-duration limits can create an additional barrier for TRS users because relay-assisted communication may take longer than a comparable mainstream voice call. A user should not have to end a call before the purpose of the communication has been completed simply because they require relay. The more equivalent approach is therefore to avoid relay-specific maximum call limits and to ensure that waiting time does not reduce the time available for the actual conversation.

“Is there a maximum time allowed for a Text Relay Service call?”



Figure 24. Maximum time allowed for a Text Relay Service call. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Comparable information on the quality of TRS for everyday calls is limited. Most respondents describe quality as sufficient, without common data on latency, transcription accuracy, outages, interruptions, abandoned calls or complaints. The UK reports monitoring of several specific quality

indicators, including transcription speed and accuracy, compliance with operating procedures, complaints and abandoned calls. In Sweden, service requirements are set contractually and include answering-time targets of at least 70% of calls answered within 30 seconds and 90% within 60 seconds, calculated monthly; however, the survey does not provide comparable quantitative data on transcription accuracy, latency, outages or abandoned calls.

These quality indicators are also relevant where speech-to-text conversion is automated rather than provided entirely by a Communication Assistant. Where Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) is used, accuracy, latency, reliability and continuity remain important measures of whether the relay service provides effective communication. The [2019 WFD–EFHOH Joint Statement on Automatic Speech Recognition in Telephone Relay Services and in Captioning Services](#) recognises the potential of ASR while stressing the need for demonstrated reliability and sufficient quality, with particular importance in emergency communication, as well as meaningful involvement of deaf and hard of hearing users.

“Is there a measurable answering-time target, requirement or recommendation for the Text Relay Service?”

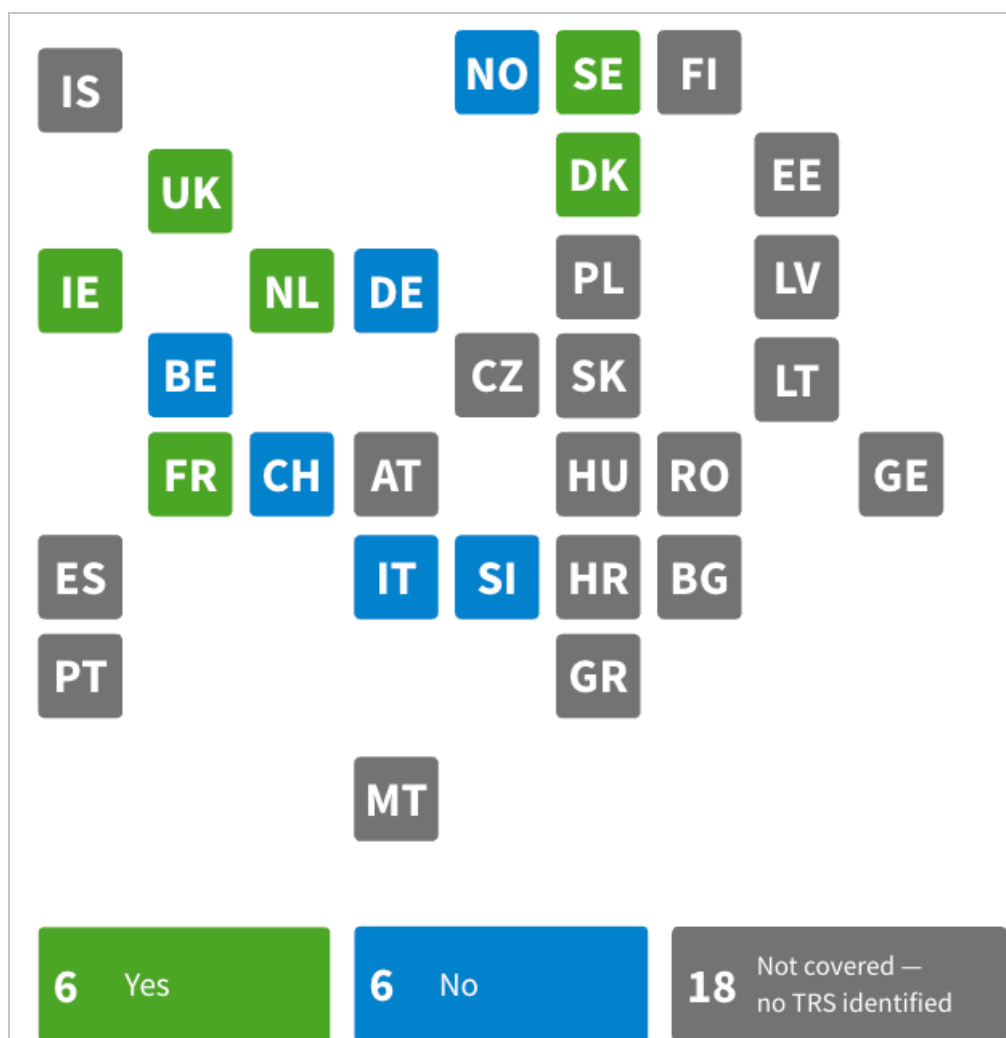


Figure 25. Measurable answering-time target, requirement or recommendation for Text Relay Services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Taken together, the findings show that equivalent TRS access requires more than the existence of a service. Users need to reach a Communication Assistant within a reasonable and measurable time, remain connected for as long as the communication requires, and receive communication of reliable quality. Relay-specific call-duration limits are particularly problematic because relay communication can take longer than an equivalent mainstream voice call. Users should not receive less usable communication time simply because text and speech must be relayed. TRS users should be connected promptly, be able to continue a call for as long as needed, and receive a reliable service without restrictions that mainstream voice callers do not face. Clear and measurable requirements, together with transparent reporting of actual service performance, are therefore needed to show whether TRS provides equivalent access in practice.

5.7. Access to TRS while abroad and interoperability: a case for situations of crisis or emergency

The survey distinguishes between using a home-country TRS while abroad and interoperability between relay services. Half of the 12 countries with an operating TRS report that existing users can access their home-country service while abroad: Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Four countries — Belgium, France, Ireland and Switzerland — report that the service is not accessible from abroad, while the position could not be established for Denmark and Norway.

“Is the Text Relay Service in your country accessible to users while they are abroad?”



Figure 26. Accessibility of Text Relay Services for users while abroad. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

Conditions to access TRS abroad differ across countries. In the UK, Relay UK can be used abroad through a specific international access number; users of the Relay UK app must already have the app set up and linked to their phone number. Sweden reports use abroad without prior registration, although ordinary international telephone charges may apply. Switzerland reports that myPROCOM is not accessible to users living abroad.

Cross-border interoperability is much more limited. The Netherlands provides the clearest positive evidence, while Sweden, Switzerland and Slovenia report partial or conditional interoperability. Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and the UK report no interoperability with other relay services or countries, and Denmark remains uncertain. In Sweden, RTT is available nationally and communication with Total Conversation equipment is supported, but cross-border functioning still depends on compatible implementation and addressing in the other country.

“Is the Text Relay Service interoperable with other relay services or communication platforms nationally or across borders?”



Figure 27. Interoperability of Text Relay Services with other relay services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

As a result, a TRS user abroad may be unable to make a call that a mainstream voice user could make immediately, for example to a bank, embassy, public authority or other essential service, because their home-country TRS cannot be accessed, the host-country service cannot be used because of language, or the two national systems cannot interoperate. Interoperability determines whether communication can function across national systems. At present, neither is consistently ensured across Europe. These restrictions can prevent a TRS user abroad from making a call as readily as a mainstream voice user, especially in situations of travel, crisis or urgent need.

5.8. Funding for TRS

TRS funding follows several models. Government funding or commissioning plays a role in seven of the confirmed TRS countries: Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. Telecommunications operators finance or co-finance services in Denmark, France, Ireland and the United Kingdom, while Germany uses a mixed model involving telecommunications-sector financing and user subscriptions or fees. These funding mechanisms should be distinguished from regulatory supervision: a regulator may commission, set or monitor service obligations without itself financing the service.

Finland provides the clearest example of the risk created where relay provision is not secured through a durable obligation. Its former national TRS depended on a grant-funded arrangement and ended in December 2024 after no sustainable continuation mechanism was established. By contrast, the country comparison indicates greater continuity where responsibility for relay

provision is anchored either directly in government commissioning and funding or through a binding Universal Service Provider or telecommunications obligation. The key lesson is therefore not simply that TRS requires funding, but that responsibility for financing and maintaining the service should be clearly defined and backed by a durable legal or regulatory obligation, rather than depending on discretionary or short-term funding decisions.

“What is the main funding or commissioning model for the Text Relay Service?”

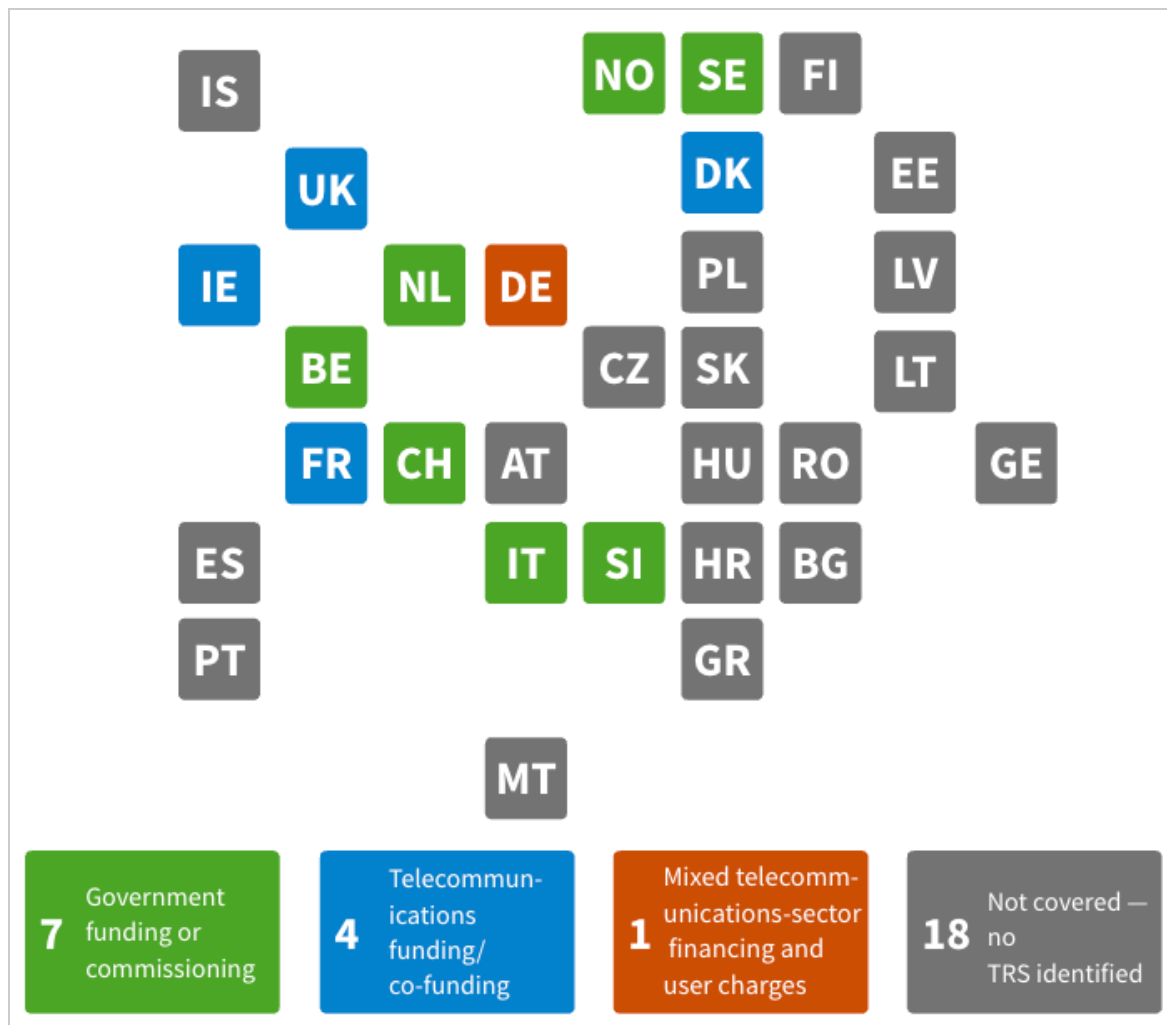


Figure 28. Funding and commissioning model of Text Relay Services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

5.9. Organisational model, coordination and service delivery

Ten of the 12 confirmed TRS use a single national relay centre: Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. France uses a multi-provider model, while Belgium has regional provision. Organisational structure should be described separately from regulatory supervision and funding, since the organisation delivering a service is not necessarily the authority that sets or monitors its obligations.

Regulatory supervision differs between countries. National regulators or other competent public authorities set or monitor service requirements in countries including the UK, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. Operational coordination, by contrast, may rest with the telecommunications operator, relay centre, regional authority or organisation delivering the service. Keeping these roles separate is important when comparing who funds, operates, commissions and supervises TRS.

Communication Assistant qualifications and performance requirements also vary. Switzerland and Sweden provide comparatively detailed competence and quality expectations, while the UK relies on measurable output requirements such as transcription speed and accuracy. Belgium reports qualified sign-language interpreters handling text calls. In Germany, the TeScript service specifies a minimum typing speed of 400 keystrokes per minute (400 Anschläge pro Minute). Denmark reports no qualification requirements in the designation conditions and Ireland reported no applicable formal requirement. Across services, confidentiality, impartiality, accuracy, privacy and faithful relay are recurring principles.

The findings do not identify one service-delivery structure as inherently superior. National single-centre, multi-provider and regional models can all support TRS, but their effectiveness depends on clearly defined responsibilities. The organisation operating the service, the body financing or commissioning it, and the authority regulating or supervising it should therefore be distinguished. Clear accountability, together with appropriate Communication Assistant competence, confidentiality and measurable service requirements, is more important than the organisational model itself.

“What organisational model is used to provide the Text Relay Service?”



Figure 29. Organisational model of Text Relay Services. Source: EUD–EFHOH survey on relay services, 2026.

6. Research results on SRS

Across the 30 countries represented in the mapping, only one dedicated national Speech-to-Speech Relay Service was confirmed through the validation process: Sweden's Teletal. Several affirmative survey responses referred instead to another form of interpreting, speech-to-text support or a spoken-language function embedded in a broader service. Spain provides a speech capability within the broader SVisual service and Norway reports adjacent remote interpreting support, but neither was validated as a separate national SRS. The available evidence therefore supports a descriptive account of Sweden rather than cross-country comparison or statistical analysis.

6.1. Sweden: Teletal

Sweden's Teletal service illustrates several useful features of dedicated speech relay. It is a national, publicly funded telephone service delivered through trained Communication Assistants. The user speaks directly, and the assistant can repeat or clarify speech that is difficult to understand, ask the other party to rephrase information, and help the user maintain the purpose and structure of the call. The service can also provide cognitive and memory support, for example

helping a user navigate automated menus, obtain clearer explanations or retain continuity across an ongoing contact. These functions show that SRS is not simply speech recognition or transcription; its value lies in personalised facilitation while preserving the user's own intention and control of the conversation.

Teletal is free of charge and can be used across areas such as personal communication, employment, public administration, social services, education, transport, healthcare and commercial services. It is accessed through ordinary number-based telephony and does not require a specialist app or device. The Swedish arrangement also includes qualification requirements and public supervision, demonstrating that speech relay can be treated as part of inclusive electronic communications rather than only as a health or social-care service.

As the only confirmed dedicated national SRS identified in the mapping, Teletal provides an important example of how speech relay can be organised and delivered nationally. The service is available from 07:30 to 20:00 on weekdays, with shorter opening hours on weekends and public holidays. Service targets require at least 80% of calls to be answered within 120 seconds and at least 98% within 240 seconds, while emergency calls can be prioritised during service hours. The Swedish example therefore provides a useful reference for future European monitoring of SRS, including availability, response times and emergency access.

The scarcity of confirmed SRS provision is itself a finding of the mapping. The survey identified only one dedicated national SRS that could be validated, so the report does not draw cross-country comparisons from this dataset.

7. Methodology

The research was developed jointly by the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) to map the provision and operating conditions of relay services across Europe. The survey questionnaire was open from 8 April to 22 May 2026 and was addressed to National Associations of the Deaf, organisations of hard of hearing people, relay-service providers and national telecommunications regulatory authorities.

The questionnaire was organised by relay-service type, with separate sections on Video Relay Services (VRS), Text Relay Services (TRS) and Speech-to-Speech Relay Services (SRS/STS). It contained approximately 35 questions for each relay-service type, covering service setup, availability and access, languages and communication modes, emergency communication, cost, waiting and response times, technical quality, user experience, interoperability, cross-border access, funding, organisation, governance and resources.

A total of 51 survey entries were received, covering 30 European countries. Several countries were represented by more than one respondent, so the analysis is conducted principally at country level rather than by respondent. Multiple responses from the same country were reconciled rather than averaged. Free-text explanations and answers to related questions were used to understand how a service operates in practice. For formal operating conditions, such as opening hours, charges for the relay function, emergency procedures or response-time requirements, clarification from the service provider, competent authority or other respondent with direct operational knowledge was given particular weight where available. Information from national associations and user organisations was retained to capture how services are

experienced in practice. Follow-up questions were used to clarify incomplete, contradictory or technically ambiguous responses, especially where the same label was used for services with different functions. This validation step explains why some figures in the detailed report may differ from the preliminary findings presented in June 2026 at the [external workshop on accessibility of electronic communications services](#) held by the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC).

Where necessary, survey responses were also checked against publicly available information from relay-service providers, competent authorities and other national sources, particularly where clarification was needed on service status, operating conditions or developments occurring after the survey. Such information was used to validate or contextualise the survey findings rather than to replace country responses. The country classifications reflect the position at the survey cut-off, while sufficiently documented subsequent developments are identified separately in the relevant sections.

The three relay-service types were analysed separately because they perform different communication functions and because the amount and nature of the available evidence differ. Within the VRS and TRS sections, results are presented by topic and follow the same broad structure wherever the evidence allows comparison. Rather than separating descriptive results from cross-variable or thematic analysis, the report presents country-level evidence together with the main analytical implications under each topic. Relationships between availability, cost, funding, regulatory arrangements, organisational model and other variables are described where visible in the data, but are treated as observable patterns rather than statistical findings.

The SRS results do not support cross-country comparison because only one dedicated national Speech-to-Speech Relay Service could be confirmed through the validation process. The available evidence is therefore presented descriptively, with Sweden as the only confirmed national example, rather than being used to identify comparative patterns across countries.

8. Limitations

The survey does not provide a complete inventory of every relay or communication-access service in Europe. Thirty European countries are represented, while some countries are not covered. Within participating countries, respondents answered on the basis of their own role and knowledge, and services may be missing where provision is local, sector-specific, delivered by individual public bodies or companies, or operated by an organisation that did not participate. The report should therefore be read as documenting what could be evidenced through the mapping rather than everything that may exist.

A related limitation concerns the different perspectives of respondents. Organisations representing deaf and hard of hearing people may report how a service is experienced by users, while service providers and regulators may report formal operating conditions, contractual requirements or technical characteristics. Responses from different contributors within the same country did not always align. Where this occurred, follow-up clarification and reconciliation at country level were required before the information was used in the comparative analysis.

The findings are a snapshot of provision in 2026. Several services were changing or were expected to change during the research period, including planned extensions of opening hours

and the introduction or modification of Real-Time Text, Total Conversation or other technical features. Where such developments were reported and sufficiently documented, they are noted next to the relevant result.

A recurring limitation concerns terminology and awareness of different communication modes and relay-service types. Respondents were not equally familiar with concepts such as Video Relay Service, Text Relay Service, Speech-to-Speech Relay Service, Total Conversation, Real-Time Text (RTT), live captioning and captioned telephony. The same term was sometimes used for services operating in different ways, while chat, SMS, RTT and Total Conversation were not always distinguished consistently. Where clarification was possible, the analysis gives greater weight to the description of how the communication actually works than to the label selected in the questionnaire.

The survey asked specifically how relay services handle emergency calls. It therefore maps access to 112 and other emergency numbers through relay services rather than providing a complete inventory of every accessible way of reaching emergency services. RTT, SMS, sign-language emergency services and dedicated emergency applications are mentioned only where relevant to explain the national context, but are not counted as relay services unless they include a relay function between the two parties. Their absence from a country's result should not be interpreted as evidence that no alternative emergency route exists.

The amount and type of evidence also differ substantially between relay-service types. VRS and TRS are documented across a sufficient number of countries to allow country-level comparison and identification of recurring patterns. By contrast, only one dedicated national Speech-to-Speech Relay Service could be confirmed through the validation process. The SRS findings therefore do not support cross-country comparison and are presented descriptively rather than used to identify comparative European patterns. Several initial affirmative SRS responses required further validation because they referred to speech-to-text support, interpreting or another communication function rather than a dedicated Speech-to-Speech Relay Service.

Finally, the quality and comparability of the data vary considerably by topic. Information was incomplete or differently measured for waiting times, response times, technical quality, call volumes, budgets, interoperability and use from abroad. Call statistics may refer to calls received, calls answered, tickets, bookings or automated transactions; budget figures may relate to one relay type or to a wider combined service; and statements that a service can be used from abroad do not necessarily demonstrate interoperability with another country's service. These differences limit direct numerical comparison and aggregation across countries.

9. Recommendations on relay services in Europe

Recommendations to the European Union

1. Recognise, regulate and monitor in its legislation both video and text relay services as a way of delivering equivalent access, and not only as part of universal service.
2. Require Member States to ensure that video and text relay services are available continuously, 24 hours a day and on any calendar day, free and not subject to user limitations.

3. Require Member States to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing people can reach the emergency services through relay services free of charge at any hour, without prior registration or booking, with highest priority in the queue and a clear escalation procedure, and extend the accessibility obligation so that the harmonised 116 helplines, including those for missing children and for victims of violence against women, are reachable through relay services at all times.
4. Work actively towards interoperability between relay services, across providers and, over time, across Member States, ensure that services remain available without additional charge to users travelling temporarily to other Member States, and require capacity in the languages needed for cross-border use, meaning International Sign and English for video relay services and English for text relay services.
5. Require Member States to recognise regulated relay services as a trusted third party when used by users, under GDPR rules.
6. Given the limited evidence on Speech-to-Speech Relay Services, improve monitoring of SRS provision and involve people who use speech relay.

Recommendations to the Member States, including ministries, public authorities and national regulatory authorities

1. Legislate strong national obligations for relay services, with responsibility assigned clearly to an identified public authority and a coordination mechanism that ensures consultation with representative organisations of deaf and hard of hearing people.
2. Ensure the relay services are available continuously, without interruption, 24 hours a day and on any calendar day, equally in all the sign languages and official languages of the country, and that deaf and hard of hearing users can reach the emergency services through them at all times, free of charge and without prior registration or avoidable procedural barriers, with emergency communications prioritised and routed without delay.
3. Set binding and measurable requirements for answering times, waiting queues and service quality, drawing on the measurable parameters in ETSI ES 202 975, rather than leaving these to provider discretion, monitor, publish and oversee performance against them.
4. Establish in national regulation quality benchmarks that prohibit maximum call times, requiring providers to manage working time limits through handovers during the call, and remove limits placed on deaf and hard of hearing users, whether a maximum call length or an allowance of hours.
5. Ensure the services remain available, at no additional cost, when a deaf or hard of hearing user travels to another Member State, with the terms of use from abroad clearly stated and published, and require relay services to build capacity in the languages needed for cross-border use, meaning International Sign and English for video relay services and English for text relay services.

Recommendations to the telecom operators

- 1.** Comply with the requirements on equivalent access set by the national regulatory authority, and treat relay services as an integral part of the telecommunications service provided.
- 2.** Provide the relay services as number-based interpersonal communications services, and not only as number-independent ones, so that deaf and hard of hearing users can place calls to, and be reached on, standard telephone numbers.
- 3.** Deploy Real-Time Text natively within devices and networks rather than through a separate application, and where video is offered alongside voice, move towards Total Conversation, ensuring that the equipment supplied and the network capacity support video, text and voice within a single call.
- 4.** Ensure the quality delivered is sufficient for the relay services to be used reliably, including on mobile networks, and do not apply data caps or tariff conditions that penalise deaf and hard of hearing users who communicate by video or by text rather than by voice.
- 5.** Ensure the services interoperate with the equipment and platforms used at the other end of the call, and comply with the European harmonised standards that apply to relay services, namely EN 301 549 and draft EN 18340, applying the requirements set out in ETSI ES 202 975 V3.1.1 (2026).
- 6.** Do not charge users for the relay service itself, and charge no more for a call made through it than for an equivalent ordinary call, including when the user is travelling in another Member State.

Recommendations to the relay service providers

- 1.** For video relay services, sign language interpretation should be provided by professional human sign language interpreters, and automated sign language translation should not be used in place of them. For text relay services, trained human Communication Assistants should remain responsible for the relay communication, especially in emergency communications.
- 2.** For text relay services, provide Real-Time Text in accordance with applicable standards, regardless of whether the text is produced by manual typing or automated speech recognition. Where automated speech recognition is used, set clear requirements for accuracy, latency, availability, and uninterrupted service, and ensure that users are informed when automation is being used.
- 3.** For video relay services, adding Real-Time Text alongside live video and voice is encouraged, as together they meet the requirements for Total Conversation.
- 4.** Comply with the quality benchmarks established in national regulation, and keep waiting times as short as possible by staffing the relay services to match demand.
- 5.** Give emergency calls priority in the queue, so that a caller in an emergency is answered ahead of other calls and routed without delay.

6. Record and publish calls received alongside calls answered, together with abandoned calls, and provide relay-specific training before staff take calls, including for emergency situations.

Conclusion

This report set out to establish what relay services in Europe actually deliver. The answer is that they deliver very different things in very different places. Video relay services were identified in 25 of the 30 countries mapped and text relay services in 12, while a single dedicated speech-to-speech relay service could be confirmed. Continuous availability remains the exception rather than the rule. Emergency access through relay is available at any hour in some countries, restricted to opening hours in others and absent in several. Limits on the length or number of calls are imposed on users, waiting queues are widespread, most services stop at the border, and in only a handful of countries can anyone say how quickly a call is answered or how many are abandoned. Where a service depends on a project, a grant or a renewable arrangement, it can also simply end, as the closure of the Finnish text relay service at the end of 2024 has shown.

These differences stem from how European law is written. The European Electronic Communications Code requires equivalent access for end-users with disabilities and names relay services among the measures that make it possible, and the European Accessibility Act and the Delegated Regulation on access to 112 build on that principle. None of them require a Member State to provide a relay service in a defined form, to a defined standard, at defined hours. The content of equivalent access is left to each Member State to determine, with the result that an obligation which cannot be measured cannot be enforced, and a single European right produces as many answers as there are countries. The gaps in the evidence encountered throughout this mapping are part of the same failure: what is not defined is not monitored, and what is not monitored cannot be improved.

A deaf or hard of hearing person who cannot call an employer in the evening, who is cut off after fifteen minutes, who cannot reach 112 in sign language at three in the morning, or who loses access to their own relay service the moment they cross a border, is not exercising the same rights as other users of the same networks. Equivalent access can only be achieved when a call can be made and received.

The revision of the European electronic communications framework and the proposal for a Digital Networks Act constitute an unprecedented momentum to redress these inequities by recognising relay services as a means of delivering equivalent access rather than as an optional element of universal service. Relay services should be available at all hours, including for emergency communication and for users travelling in another Member State; their quality should be measurable against parameters that regulators monitor and publish; responsibility for funding, continuity and oversight should be clearly assigned; and interoperability should be pursued across providers and, in time, across borders. Deaf and hard of hearing people, through their representative organisations, should be full participants in each of these decisions.

Deaf and hard of hearing people should be able to make and receive a telephone call with the same freedom, reliability and independence as anyone else. Whether they can should not depend on the country they live in, the hour of the day or the language in which they communicate.

Annex I: Video Relay Services per country (as reported)

Country	Video Relay Service	Service	Classification note
Austria	Yes	ÖGS Relay-Service	National video relay service
Belgium (Flanders)	Yes	Afstandstolkendienst	Regional video relay service
Bulgaria	No		
Croatia	Yes	Slavica web RTC	National video relay service
Czechia	Yes	Tichá linka	National video relay service
Denmark	Not reported		
Estonia	Yes	Kaugtölge	National video relay service
Finland	Yes	Kela, Chabla	VRS by several providers
France	Yes	Relais téléphonique, RogerVoice, Elioz, Deafi, Tadeo/Acceo, Sourdline	Several independent providers operating without a centralised system
Georgia	Not reported		
Germany	Yes	Tess Relay	National video relay service
Greece	Yes	Greek Sign Language Remote Interpreting	National video relay service
Hungary	Yes	KONTAKT	National video relay service
Iceland	Yes	Myndsímatúlkun SHH	National video relay service
Ireland	Yes	IRIS, the Irish Remote Interpreting Service	National video relay service
Italy	Yes	Communic@ENS	National video relay service
Latvia	Yes	Relay service of the LNS Rehabilitācijas centrs	National video relay service

Lithuania	Yes	LGK Vertimai	National video relay service
Malta	Not reported		
Netherlands	Yes	KPN Teletolk	National video relay service
Norway	Yes	NAV Bildetolktjenesten / Skjermtolk; NAV akuttvakt-tolk	National video relay service
Poland	Yes	Wideotłumacz PJM	Not general video relay service, confined to matters relating to the Office of Electronic Communications
Portugal	Yes	SNS24 Contacto acessível para cidadão surdo	Not general video relay service, confined to National Health Service
Romania	Yes	Voci pentru mâini (Voices for Hands)	National video relay service
Slovakia	Not reported		
Slovenia	Yes	Call Centre for People with Hearing Impairments	National video relay service
Spain	Yes	SVisual	National video relay service
Sweden	Yes	Bildtelefoni.net	National and regional video relay service
Switzerland	Yes	PROCOM Video-Relay Service	National video relay service
United Kingdom	Yes	SignWow, 999BSL	Several independent providers operating without a centralised system; national video relay service only for emergency communications

Annex II: Text Relay Services per country (as reported)

Country	Text relay service	Service	Classification note
Austria	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Belgium	Yes	Afstandstolk / Teletolk	Regional text-relay provision; text use is reported as low and opening hours are restricted.
Bulgaria	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Croatia	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Czechia	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Denmark	Yes	TDC Webtekst	National web-based Text Relay Service.
Estonia	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Finland	Former TRS	Former national text telephone service	National TRS ended in December 2024; current remote interpreting options are not classified as a replacement TRS.
France	Yes	Telecom relay applications and provider services	TRS for ordinary calls is separate from the 24/7 Urgence 114 emergency service.
Georgia	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Germany	Yes	Tess TeScript / myMMXtc	National text relay; conditions differ between private and professional use.
Greece	Not confirmed	—	The affirmative raw entry explicitly stated that no text relay service exists.
Hungary	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Iceland	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.

Ireland	Yes	Irish Text Relay Service (ITRS)	National TRS for ordinary calls; emergency communication is handled through separate accessible routes.
Italy	Yes	Comunic@ENS	Comunic@ENS is the relay service; 112Sordi is a separate direct text-based emergency service and is not counted as TRS.
Latvia	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Lithuania	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Malta	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Netherlands	Yes	KPN Teletolk / Tolkcontact	National relay supporting RTT and Total Conversation.
Norway	Yes	149 Teksttelefonen / Call-IT	National text relay through 149; Call-IT relays between text users and voice users. Emergency text relay uses 1412.
Poland	Not confirmed at survey cut-off	Centrum Komunikacji (post-survey development)	New nationwide communication support launched in 2026, including real-time speech-to-text transcription; TRS classification requires confirmation against ITU-T F.930 before changing the headline count.
Portugal	Not TRS	Healthcare text access	Text-based access is limited to healthcare; it is not a general-purpose Text Relay Service.

Romania	Not TRS	113 SMS; network RTT	113 SMS is direct emergency text access and RTT is direct real-time text communication; neither provides text-speech relay through a Communication Assistant.
Slovakia	Not confirmed	—	No operating TRS evidenced.
Slovenia	Yes	Relay service for deaf and hard of hearing people	National service reported with RTT and several access channels.
Spain	Not confirmed	Text capability within SVisual; pre-booked communication support	Text functions are available within broader or pre-booked communication support, but no dedicated nationwide TRS was evidenced.
Sweden	Yes	Texttelefoni.se	National 24/7 text relay; RTT is supported and Tala direkt allows the user to speak directly while receiving the other party's speech as text.
Switzerland	Yes	myPROCOM text relay	National multilingual text relay. The service provider reports that the service is not accessible to users living abroad.
United Kingdom	Yes	Relay UK	National 24/7 Text Relay Service. Relay UK emergency calls are handled through the relay service;

			EmergencySMS and 999 BSL are separate services and are not counted as TRS.
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