



The EU and mobile phone “roaming” charges

Summary: The EU has agreed proposals to reduce the cost of making voice calls by mobile phone or sending text messages while travelling in another member state.

In September 2008 the European Commission proposed to bring down the cost of text messages sent while travelling in another EU member state and further reduce the cost of voice calls.

The proposed amendments were agreed by the European Parliament and Council of Ministers, and have now become law. The new requirements came into force on 1 July 2009. From that date the cost of sending a text message from another country would cost just 11 cents per minute plus VAT. Receiving a text message will remain free of charge.

In addition the European Commission has required a gradual reduction in the **Eurotariff** for voice calls. The charge for making calls decreased from 43 cents per minute to 40 cents on 1 July 2009 for one year. Thereafter the charge will decrease to 34 cents per minute. For one year from the same date the price for receiving a call would decrease from 19 cents to 13 cents per minute and after that to 10 cents.

Limits have also been set for using 3G devices on mobile networks.

These rules have extended the scope of the May 2007 EU Roaming Regulation that had already cut the cost of using mobile phones within the EU countries by up to 70 per cent.

For more information and updates on EU roaming rules:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/roaming/regulation/index_en.htm