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## Roaming costs in EU to drop from July 1

This July 1 sees the latest EU cuts to the cost of voice and SMS roaming enter into force, alongside a first ever cap on data prices. This marks a significant victory for Europe's consumers.

Though the first EU roaming regulation emerged in 2007, sky high prices when abroad have been a headache for Europeans for years. Over charging has been rife and in 2011, 72% of travellers said they limit their roaming calls as a result and only 19% believed data roaming prices to be fair<sup>1</sup>.

New regulatory measures agreed between the European Commission, Council and Parliament include:

- A first ever retail price limit on data downloading (70 cents per MB from July 1, falling to 20 cents July 2014).
- Extending the message alert system as consumers approach €50 in data use outside Europe<sup>2</sup>.

Details of the retail price caps, including for voice calls and text messages, can be seen in the table below.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation commented:

"We have been fighting the corner for fairer roaming costs for years. This is the latest battle won, but there is a way to go yet on pricing, encouraging networks not to cluster costs around the caps and prompting competition within Europe's stunted telecoms market. Internet use while roaming remains much too expensive – even after these new limits downloading 1 gigabyte while across a border can cost a staggering €700.

"We are still not seeing fair choice and pricing in the EU telecoms market due to its persistent lack of competition. We hope that in the near future we will see an end to roaming charges as they contradict the essence of the Single Market.

"Consumers have been paying through their noses for services they receive so easily at home. With the huge rise in mobile technology, smartphones and low cost travel, fairer pricing is increasingly vital."

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Note to editors:

*Current and new retail price caps (excluding VAT)*

|  | Current  | 1 July 2012 | 1 July 2013 | 1 July 2014 |
|--|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Data</b> (per MB)                     | None     | 70 cents    | 45 cents    | 20 cents    |
| <b>Voice-calls made</b> (per minute)     | 35 cents | 29 cents    | 24 cents    | 19 cents    |
| <b>Voice-calls received</b> (per minute) | 11 cents | 8 cents     | 7 cents     | 5 cents     |
| <b>SMS</b> (per SMS)                     | 11 cents | 9 cents     | 8 cents     | 6 cents     |

<sup>1</sup> [Eurobarometer](#), published 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Such a system was introduced *within* EU Member States as of July 1, 2011.