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MEPs to tackle Europe's telecoms market

Telecommunications networks and services in Europe will be overhauled in a crunch vote at the European Parliament tomorrow. Last minute negotiations are taking place on how Europe regulates Internet Neutrality and a timeline for the banning of mobile phone and data roaming charges.

Europe must set Net Neutrality standard

Commenting, Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation said:

"We have an internet which has always been based on horizontal, open, interchange of data. Strong and ambitious Net Neutrality rules would prevent an unacceptable shift towards consumers paying a premium to access specific services such as online video. This two-tiered approach would detrimentally alter the internet as we know it today, but Europe's main telecoms companies are pushing for variants of it. This is where MEPs can stand their ground and an EU Net Neutrality provision can set a global standard.

"There's an ensuing war of legal words over 'specialised services'. This matters because if we allow activities like digital telephony or TV to unduly impact consumers' internet access, then operators will have the power to discriminate online content in their own commercial interest. Specialised should mean exactly that and MEPs have the opportunity to vote for clear safeguards."

Roaming runs out of credit

"The spectre of roaming has hung over Europeans for too long. Operators have been shooting themselves in the feet with prohibitive pricing for ordinary mobile services when roaming. Half still do not use data abroad because of unjustifiable costs. So the European Parliament calling for roaming to be abolished by 2015, while overdue, is a pivotal moment. The end of roaming costs will prompt greater usage, creating a win-win for all."

BEUC [Net Neutrality Factsheet](#)

BEUC [Telecoms Key Issues](#) paper

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