

Decrease in roaming charges in the EU

Regulation (EU) No. 531/2012 of the European Parliament and of the European Council on roaming on public mobile communications networks within the Union was amended on 30 April 2016 by Regulation (EU) No. 2120/2015, resulting in advantages for end-users.

Service providers may charge surcharge for roaming, i.e. mobile services used abroad, on top of domestic charges applied. The amendment aims to regulate the rate of the surcharge that service providers may charge.

The regulation sets forth the maximum surcharges that shall not be exceeded for regulated roaming calls initiated, regulated roaming SMS messages sent, and regulated data roaming services (€0.05 per minute for phone calls; €0.02 per SMS for each SMS message sent; €0.05 per MB for data); in addition, the sum of the domestic retail price and any surcharge applied for regulated roaming calls made, regulated roaming SMS messages sent or regulated data roaming services shall not exceed €0.19 per minute, €0.06 per SMS message and €0.20 per MB used, respectively. Furthermore, the amendment also regulates the maximum wholesale mobile termination rates set across the union, which shall not exceed weighted average of the maximum wholesale mobile termination rates set across the union. However, it is important to highlight that the international rates set forth are net amounts and thus will be increased by the VAT amount.

It is expected that by 15 June 2017, the surcharges for voice-, SMS-, and data roaming services will be terminated throughout the whole area of the EU.