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For immediate release

## **ComReg Media Release**

### **Consumers to benefit from reduced roaming prices from 1 July 2013**

From 1 July 2013, a number of changes to European Mobile Roaming prices will come into force, following a revision of the Regulation by the European institutions. These changes include:-

- reductions in the price of roaming voice calls and text messages (SMS).
- a reduction in the retail price cap for data roaming.

Transparency measures in place when using your mobile phone within the European Union (EU) and outside of the EU will continue to apply.

The **maximum charges**<sup>1</sup> that apply to consumers when roaming in the EU from 1 July 2013 are:-

- Voice calls made – maximum charge of 29.52 cent per minute<sup>2</sup> (reduced from 35.67 cent).
- Voice calls received – maximum charge of 8.61 cent per minute<sup>2</sup> (reduced from 9.84 cent).
- SMS – maximum charge of 9.84 cent per SMS sent (reduced from 11.07 cent).  
To receive an SMS is free.
- A new Data price cap – a maximum charge 55.35 cent per megabyte(MB) of data (Reduced from 86.10 cent)<sup>3</sup>
- No charge to receive a voicemail message<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These rates apply to consumers who do not choose an alternative roaming plan/package. All charges include VAT at 23%.

<sup>2</sup> Roaming voice calls are billed per second but operators may apply a minimum charge of 30 seconds.

<sup>3</sup> Data usage is charged on a per kilobyte basis but operators can charge for MMS messages on a unit basis

<sup>4</sup> It is free to receive a voice message, however, you may be charged to listen to the voice message

A number of **transparency** measures also continue to apply:

- **Transparency SMS** - When a consumer travels in the EU they must receive an SMS from their mobile operator advising them of the costs of roaming in the EU. This includes the cost of calls made and received, the cost of sending an SMS/MMS and the cost per megabyte of data. The message will also provide a freephone number to contact the operator when roaming and details of the European emergency number 112.
- **Data Usage Alert** - A consumer who data roams is automatically opted into a data cap/alert of €61.50 (including VAT) unless they have requested not to receive the usage alert. A consumer will be advised when they reach 80% of the data usage cap and at 100 % of the data usage cap. When they reach the cap, the consumer must consent in order to continue to be allowed to data roam. The alert is provided to ensure that consumers do not inadvertently incur unexpectedly high data roaming charges while travelling.
- **Roaming outside the EU** - Consumers who travel outside the EU should now also receive the data usage alert while travelling. If the operator is unable to send the alert due to limitations by the network in the country visited, the operator should send an advisory SMS that they cannot apply the data usage alert in that country.

ComReg is the statutory body required to monitor compliance by Irish operators with the Regulation and to monitor developments in charges.

Consumers considering choosing an alternative roaming price plan/package or who have previously opted for an alternative roaming price plan/package offered by their service provider should check if the standard EU maximum rates would be more cost effective based on planned usage.

More information and advice are available at [www.askcomreg.ie/roaming](http://www.askcomreg.ie/roaming). In addition a roaming calculator and top tips for consumers on mobile roaming is provided on ComReg's website [www.callcosts.ie/roaming\\_calculator](http://www.callcosts.ie/roaming_calculator)

## Note to Editors

The Roaming Regulation first came into effect on 29 June 2007 to combat high charges associated with roaming. The Regulation placed a retail and wholesale price cap known as the "Eurotariff" on calls made and received while roaming in the European Union. It also put in place a number of transparency measures helping to ensure that consumers are well informed in relation to roaming in the EU. In 2009, the Roaming Regulation was amended in scope and duration following a review. The amended Regulation included further reductions to the wholesale and retail "Eurotariff" for voice calls, the introduction of a wholesale and retail Euro SMS price cap, a wholesale data price cap and a number of new measures in relation to pricing transparency. Following a further review of the Regulation the new rules became effective from 1 July 2012 and further changes become effective 1 July 2013. Rates will further reduce in July 2014.

In 2012 ComReg took action in relation to non compliance with relevant provisions of the Roaming Regulations (Regulation EC No 544/2009). For full details of the case please see ComReg 12/07 [http://www.comreg.ie/\\_fileupload/publications/ComReg1207.pdf](http://www.comreg.ie/_fileupload/publications/ComReg1207.pdf)

**ENDS**

**Issued By**

**Tom Butler  
Public Affairs Manager, ComReg**

**Ph: 01 8049639**

**Mobile: 087 2536358**

**tom.butler@comreg.ie**