

Europeans to see roaming charges cut abroad

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Tourists, in the past, have complained of falling victim to high [roaming charges](#).

Under the deal, European [mobile operators](#) will reduce the cost of using a mobile abroad from a maximum of 35 cents (plus tax) a minute to a maximum of 29 cents a minute.

Rates will further be reduced in 2013 and 2014 when the maximum price of a call will be set at 19 cents a minute.

In addition, consumers will soon be able to buy special short-term phone packages when travelling abroad, allowing them to use their own phones and their own numbers.

The deal allows for ratification by the [European Parliament](#) in May and by individual states in June.

European commissioner for new technologies, Neelie Kroes, welcomed the deal, saying "consumers are fed up with being ripped off by high roaming charges."

"The new roaming deal gives us a long-term structural solution, with lower prices, more choice and a new smart approach for data and internet browsing. The benefits will be felt in time for the summer break -- and by summer 2014, people can shop around for the best deal," the commissioner added.

Euro MP Angelika Niebler, who oversaw the talks, also welcomed the deal.

"This agreement increases transparency and [consumer protection](#) to prevent bill shocks, so that EU consumers no longer need to worry about accidentally running up huge bills when using their mobile devices both within and outside the EU," she said.

Under the deal, [Europeans](#) travelling outside the European Union must be informed what roaming costs they will be charged.

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