

EC Withdraws 5-Day-Old Roaming Fair-use Proposal

Written by Roger Douglas
12. September 2016

For more than a decade, the European Commission has been working to reduce the huge surcharges telecoms operators imposed on their customers each time they crossed a border for business or holiday.

"After a long battle, these huge bills belong to the past. We have progressively dismantled them," announced the EC on 9th September in a statement by Andrus Ansip, Commission Vice-President in charge of the Digital Single Market, and Günther H. Oettinger, Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society.

Due for implementation on 15 June 2017, the EC aimed to abolish roaming charges for at least 90 days per year, much more than the average time that a European is roaming with their phone (12 days on average).

Only five days later--"in light of the initial feedback received"--EC President Jean-Claude Juncker has instructed the services to withdraw that text to work on a new proposal.



A reason for Juncker's decision were not given-- no one knows if the feedback came from

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consumer organizations or operators.

[Photo left : EC President Jean-Claude Juncker]

But Spanish and Portuguese operators made their thoughts known publicly: 90 days is too long. Both suggested only 30 days. And operators also made it known their quarterly results suffered big declines during European vacation season, after the EC pressure on roaming charges. (That drop, of course, would be expected if you removed the big profits from gouging charges on roaming...)

The Commission's initial proposal had been to allow mobile users to 'roam like home,' at the same price as domestic services, for a minimum 90 days a year. Consumers would also be expected to connect to their home network at least once every 30 days. In addition, operators could impose a fair-use amount on customers with unlimited plans, based on their average usage in their home market. After exceeding the fair use, mobile customers would be subject to additional charges, at the same level as the proposed wholesale roaming rates in the EU.

Now it's back to the mobile drawing board...

Go [EC's Original Announcement on Roaming Proposal](#)

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