



Deputy Chief Minister

PRESS RELEASE

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No Deal Brexit – Mobile Roaming

In November, the European Union and the United Kingdom concluded the terms of an agreement for the orderly departure of the UK from the European Union. Gibraltar was part of that agreement. The Withdrawal Agreement includes a transitional phase until the end of 2020, which also covers Gibraltar.

This agreement is subject to ratification by the UK Parliament and by the European Parliament.

In the meantime, planning continues for the eventuality that the UK and Gibraltar leave the European Union without this agreement.

Before 29 March 2019

You can travel in the EU with guaranteed surcharge-free roaming. This means you can use your mobile devices to make calls, send texts and use mobile data services for no more than you would be charged when in the Gibraltar.

In addition, the EU Roaming regulation requires mobile operators to apply a default financial limit for mobile data usage of €50. Operators are also required to send an alert once your device reaches 80% and then 100% of the agreed data roaming limit. These requirements apply regardless of where you are in the world, not only within the EU.

Surcharge-free roaming in the EU, known as Roam Like at Home, is underpinned by the EU Roaming Regulation - (EU) No 531/2012 - and its subsequent amendments - (EU) No 2015/2120 and (EU) No 2017/920. This Regulation also regulates what mobile operators can charge each other for providing roaming services and extends to the wider European Economic Area (EEA), which includes Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

After March 2019 if there is a deal



If the UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement is approved, then surcharge-free roaming would continue to be guaranteed during the Implementation Period. Following the Implementation Period the arrangements for roaming, including surcharges, would depend on the outcome of the negotiations on the Future Economic Partnership.

After March 2019 if there is no deal

In the event that we leave the EU without a deal, the costs that EU mobile operators would be able to charge our operators for providing roaming services would no longer be regulated after March 2019. This would mean that surcharge-free roaming when you travel to the EU could no longer be guaranteed.

Leaving without a deal would not prevent Gibraltar mobile operators making and honouring commercial arrangements with mobile operators in the EU - and beyond the EU - to deliver the services their customers expect, including roaming arrangements. The availability and pricing of mobile roaming in the EU would be a commercial question for the mobile operators. As a consequence, surcharge-free mobile roaming in the EU may not continue to be standard across every mobile phone package from that point. Roaming may also be offered with different terms and conditions. This might affect the amount of calls that you can make, texts you can send and data you can consume, including applying limits that are less than the amount available in your bundle when you are in Gibraltar.

However, we should be clear that surcharge-free roaming for Gibraltar customers may continue across the EU as now, based on operators' commercial arrangements.

In the event that we leave the EU without a deal, our advice to consumers is to:

- check the roaming policies of your mobile operator before you go abroad
- consider what your operator is saying about surcharge-free roaming post-EU exit
- check your operator's terms and conditions in detail - particularly if you are a heavy user of mobile services in the EU
- be aware of your rights to change mobile operator ("switching")
- know how to turn off your mobile data roaming on your mobile device if you're worried about being charged for data usage in the EU
- ensure you understand the alternatives to using mobile networks when abroad. Wi-Fi is widely available, which would allow you to make calls, send texts and use data for free or with little charge
- understand which services might be expensive to use and which are likely to be cheap. For example, streaming live television or sending large video clips (MMS) could be expensive as they use large amounts of data

More information

This notice is meant for guidance only. You should consider whether you need separate professional advice before making specific preparations.

It is part of the government's ongoing programme of planning for all possible outcomes.