The shock of unexpectedly high mobile phone bills when your employees return from wandering around Europe may (in 2014) become one of those footnotes in the history of adaptation to the digital economy.

INTUG

The new roaming regulation, which aims at enhancing competition in the EU roaming market, introduces an obligation for mobile operators to allow their customers to purchase roaming as a separate service, increasing consumer’s choice and awareness of roaming rates, as of 1 July 2014.

INTUG, the International Telecommunications Users Group, has long campaigned against the extortionate costs levied on businesses and has now joined with regulators from all EU Member States to prepare the business market requirements for these new roaming regulations.

To ensure consistent and simultaneous introduction of the new regulation across the EU, the European Commission has established a forum whose job is to make sure there is timely implementation of decoupling obligations. In a world where mobile operators are in daily dialogue with their national regulators it is vital that the voice of business users is heard loud and clear.

INTUG Chairman Danielle Jacobs participated in last week’s kick-off meeting, where the participants agreed on the structure and working methods of the forum and decided on the next steps to be taken. Representatives of the mobile operators presented a draft requirement for end users that was not very favorable to business users. Therefore, it was agreed that INTUG drafts the business market requirements for the new roaming regulation.

Whilst the move towards decoupling represents a valuable step towards introducing competition, INTUG believes this is only the next stage in the process of eliminating roaming charges completely. 4G/LTE roll-out offers an opportunity to require operators to share access reciprocally, without charge, thus ensuring that all customers can obtain the best available signal wherever they are, and that overall efficiency of the infrastructure is optimised.
The views and needs of UK business are channeled through the Communications Management Association. CMA members in aggregate spend around £13bn per annum on networked products and services and contribute disproportionately to service operators’ profits.

This editorial first appeared in Bdaily - the UK-based business news forum.

The CMA is a part of the British Computer Society (BCS) - the UK's chartered institute for ICT professionals.

See also report of BBC World Service [interview](#) with Nick White.