

Cheaper phone calls to other EU countries

- Better access to telephone and internet networks
- A step closer to 5G
- Lower intra-EU fees for fixed and mobile calls
- Governments obliged to put in place an alert system for emergencies (“reverse 112”)
- New measures to protect against hacking

Long-distance intra-EU calls should cost the same as calling within the same country, according to a draft law approved on Monday.

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) voted on Monday evening on an [update of EU rules on telecoms](#). The objective is to improve access to networks across the EU, including making 5G connections available to all citizens. The bill, still to be agreed with EU Ministers, also provides for measures to protect consumers.

Cost of long-distance calls

EU communications companies should justify when they charge additional fees to users calling from mobiles or landlines to another EU member state, committee MEPs agreed. The Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC) would set out guidelines on how service providers could recover the costs they incur in other ways.

Reverse 112 to alert in the event of a terrorist attack

A “reverse 112 system” was also introduced by committee MEPs, enabling national authorities to alert citizens in the event of imminent major emergencies and disasters, such as a terrorist attack or a natural catastrophe, using geo-localisation tools. This system aims to reduce casualties by instructing people on what to do if they are in danger.

Protection from hacking

MEPs also want the use of end-to-end encryption to be mandatory to protect the confidentiality of communications. Users should be informed of risks resulting from a security incident and possible protective measures or solutions that they can take.

New rules for businesses

The reform of EU telecoms markets aims to:

- stimulate competition and reduce differences in practices among national antitrust bodies
- encourage bigger and longer-term investments in network infrastructures
- provide consumers with faster connections, including 5G

In addition, MEPs want licences for the radio spectrum for telecoms companies to last 25 years to incentivise investments. They should be subject to a review after at least 10 years, to ensure they are being used efficiently. MEPs also want reserve prices (i.e. price set for a bid) and licensing fees to reflect real market conditions.

Finally, companies providing electronic communications services in more than one member state will benefit from a home market regime, i.e. the same conditions as local companies.

Setting up of BEREC

The committee finally voted on a separate draft legislation, still part of the same package of proposals, [for the establishment of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications \(BEREC\)](#), with the objective of implementing electronic communications legislation consistently across the Union.

Next steps

Informal negotiations with EU Ministers are expected to start promptly, once plenary has approved the negotiating mandate.

Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure, first reading (vote on mandate for trilogues)

Further information

[Procedure file - Telecom code](#)

[Profile of the rapporteur \(Telecom code\) Pilar del CASTILLO VERA](#)

[EP Briefing - Telecom code](#)

[Profile of the rapporteur \(BEREC\) - Evžen TOŠENOVSKÝ \(ECR, CZ\)](#)

[Procedure file - BEREC](#)

[EP Briefing - BEREC](#)

[ITRE meeting documents](#)

"Connectivity is the backbone of the Electronic Communications Code. We need increased connectivity and high capacity fixed and mobile networks. These challenges require a regulation that ensures predictability, rewards risk-taking and long-term investment. Investment, competition and regulation shape a virtuous circle that will foster the rollout of ubiquitous, very high-capacity networks and 5G broadband infrastructure". "

Rapporteur for the reform of EU telecom rules Pilar del Castillo Vera (EPP, ES)

"I am convinced that with BEREC's upgraded status and the rules on the BEREC Office aligned with the inter-institutional approach on EU decentralised agencies, both bodies will be more efficient and better fit for their purpose. In the upcoming negotiations however, the new set of tasks assigned to BEREC by the recast Telecom Code should be reflected in adequate staffing and budgeting for the BEREC Office." "

Rapporteur for the setting up of BEREC Evzen Tosenovsky (ECR, CZ)

Further information

[Procedure file - Telecom code](#)
[EP Briefing - Telecom code](#)
[Procedure file - BEREC](#)
[EP Briefing - BEREC](#)
[ITRE meeting documents](#)

[Video extracts from the vote and statements by rapporteurs Pilar del CASTILLO VERA \(EPP, ES\) and Dita CHARANZOVA \(ALDE, CZ\)](#)

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