New EU rules to ensure cheaper calls and faster connections
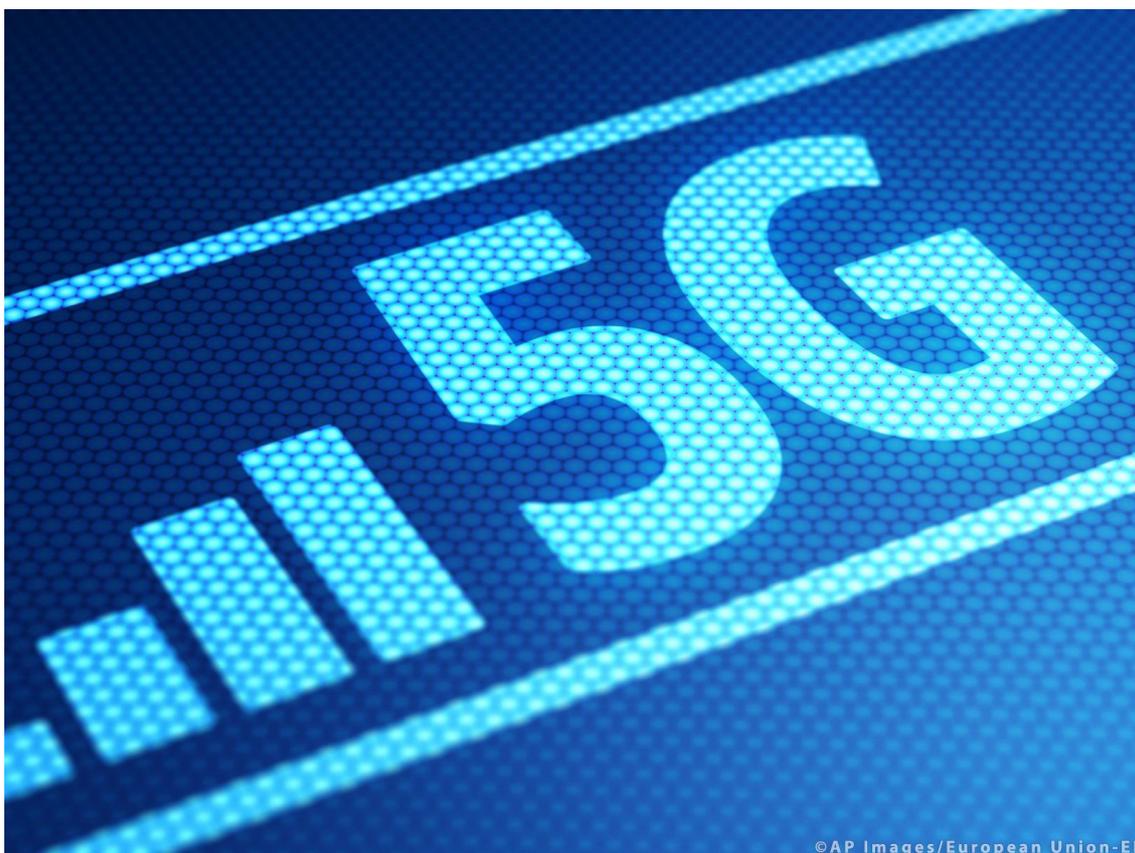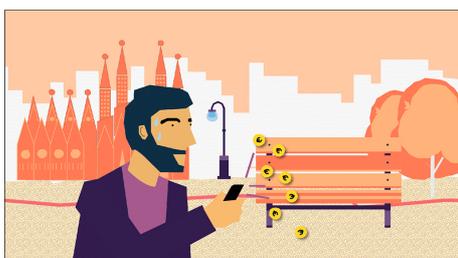

Calls to other EU countries could soon be cheaper ©AP images/European Union-EP

Calls to other EU countries will soon be cheaper, while telecom companies will benefit from clearer rules for longer-term investment in network infrastructure under new EU rules.

Cheaper and faster services

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1 I 3

On 14 November MEPs voted in favour of the telecom package, which aims to cap calls between EU countries at 19 cents per minute and text messages at six cents from 15 May 2019. The rules also aim to boost the investment needed to make 5G connectivity available in European cities by 2020, which would make telecom services much faster.

▶ **Video**
https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/keeping-in-touch-cheaper-safer-faster_N01-PUB-181109-TELE_ev

Spanish EPP member Pilar Del Castillo, the MEP in charge of steering the new rules through Parliament, said the legislation would make web-based services such as Skype and Whatsapp "more transparent and reliable for Europeans".

"Since the last review in 2009, the market for electronic communications services has dramatically changed," she said. "New players have emerged as a consequence of consumers and businesses increasingly relying on data and internet access services. With new rules we modernise the framework, by including these new players under its scope."

Better services

The rules aim to better protect users. For example, by making it easier for them to switch operators and receive compensation if there are problems. In addition, there are also measures to stimulate investment in very high capacity networks and boost mobile connectivity and 5G.

Del Castillo Vera said there was a growing demand for high-qualty, fast and secure connectivity. Examples of this include education, research and mHealth, which is health practice supported by mobile devices.

Emergency alerts on your phone

The package also includes an obligatory 112 alert system to alert people by text message in the event of imminent major emergencies and disasters, such as a terrorist attack or a natural catastrophe.

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2 I 3

For more on the telecom package, read the press release.

Find out more

Press release: MEPs cap prices of calls within EU and approve emergency alert system (14 November 2018)
After roaming: lower prices for international phone calls?
Procedure file: telecom code
Briefing: the new European electronic communications code
Procedure file: Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications
Briefing: Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications

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3 I 3