



**Joint Declaration by
EU and Moldovan operators
on lowering roaming tariffs**

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Strengthening cooperation with the Republic of Moldova is a priority of the EU, with a view to offering the citizens of the Republic of Moldova a tangible example of EU integration. The Republic of Moldova was granted EU candidate status in June 2022 and has expressed a strong interest to approximate single market rules in the telecom sector and join the EU Roam like at home area. The EU and the Republic of Moldova share a common goal to ensure a long-term roaming arrangement that will bring the Republic of Moldova into the EU roaming area. Roaming regulations leading to the implementation of Roam like at home in the EU have taken years. It has brought benefits to millions of citizens who can now stay connected when travelling in the EU and represents a fundamental element of the Single Market.

As a first step in that direction, the Moldovan national regulator has reduced the international termination rates in the Republic of Moldova for EU/EEA originated calls, to the level of the Eurorates, applicable as of 1 January 2024. In turn the EU operators will apply the Eurorates towards Moldovan operators at reciprocal basis, as of the same date according to the reciprocity foreseen in the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/654 of 18 December 2020. The application of the Eurorates facilitates the reduction of retail tariffs for voice services.

As a further step, facilitated by the European Commission and Moldovan authorities, the present voluntary Declaration will ensure lowering roaming tariffs between the EU/EEA and Moldova in the short term.

Our commitment: citizens and businesses should benefit from significantly lower roaming tariffs

The signatories of this Declaration, the telecommunication operators from the EU/EEA and the Republic of Moldova, seek to find a coordinated approach, involving efforts on both sides. In this regard the signatories commit to put forward effective and relevant offers for end users travelling between the EU/EEA and the Republic of Moldova.

The signatories of this Declaration intend to work towards lowering of roaming prices that can result in affordable offers for citizens and businesses.

The signatories of this Declaration find that, with the reciprocal reduction of the international termination rates to the level of the Eurorates as of 1 January 2024, a significant cost component of voice call roaming services is removed, paving the way to the reduction of tariffs for wholesale and, subsequently, retail voice roaming services.

The signatories of this Declaration intend to create affordable offers for citizens and businesses for roaming and gradually introduce retail tariff plans and options to reduce voice call roaming tariffs and data roaming tariffs between the EU/EEA and the Republic of Moldova, in both directions, which should benefit end users and businesses, as of 1 January 2024.

For this coordinated approach to be efficient, as many EU/EEA and Moldovan mobile operators as possible should be part of this joint voluntary initiative. This Declaration remains open for all operators willing to sign at any time to enable Moldovan and EU/EEA end users travelling to the EU/EEA and to the Republic of Moldova to stay connected at affordable prices. Only operators of the EU/EEA and of the Republic of Moldova, authorised by the National Regulatory Authority according to the applicable law of each side are eligible to participate.

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We, the telecommunications operators in the EU/EEA and in the Republic of Moldova (hereinafter referred to as “signatories”), declare the following:

- *we commit to put in place affordable retail roaming offers for end users travelling between the EU/EEA and the Republic of Moldova;*
- *an upper retail price cap will be unanimously agreed, for example in the form of a glide path, between the signatories of this voluntary Declaration in compliance with the applicable competition law regulations and will be announced by 1 October 2023 at the latest; the first reduction of data and voice roaming prices will take an effect as of 1 January 2024, with a starting price a) per gigabyte for the purchased amount of data volume and b) per voice call minute, in line with the step of reduction referred to in this paragraph;*
- *by 15 November 2023 we intend to assess unanimously, in compliance with the applicable competition law regulations, in line with the changes from the termination rates, and considering the EU wholesale roaming caps as bottom line, whether a wholesale roaming cap is needed to enable the provision of roaming services at or below the agreed retail cap; by 1 December 2023, if needed, we intend to initiate in good faith negotiations for amending our roaming agreements where required, to bring them in line with the spirit of this Declaration, in order to take into account the international termination rates reduction and to enable the provision of roaming services at or below the agreed retail cap; the negotiations should not last more than two months provided that the new termination rates have become effective;*
- *the retail offers should be made available to the widest number of end-users without impediments and/or conditions related to other domestic tariff plans/options/discounts/bundles/packages, etc.;*
- *we will strive to further improve customer experience by ensuring transparency to the widest extent possible;*
- *every signatory of this Declaration is free to decide on the models through which the reductions at the retail level are to be implemented in practice, e.g., via discounts, special options, packages, bundles, or new or updated tariff plans, etc.;*
- *to prevent fraudulent usage the tariffs will be applicable exclusively to end users who travel periodically; calls to premium rate services, toll-free services and shared-cost services are outside the scope of the commitments of this Declaration;*
- *we intend to implement the offers in good faith and according to the timeline set above; the application of the retail offers cannot be delayed by other reasons than technical feasibility; we commit to solve these technical issues at retail level in the shortest time possible; the application of the wholesale provisions should not be delayed;*
- *we intend to operate in good faith, in line with the spirit of this Declaration to prevent fraud, reciprocally providing information on possible violations and agreeing on conditions for the possibilities to limit/suspend traffic, and, if needed, to ask public authorities to take necessary measures; throughout the period of the validity of the Declaration, the signatories will be able to take the necessary measures to combat fraud, in order to ensure that the conditions set up in the present Declaration only benefit signatories’ traffic between and within EU/EEA and the Republic of Moldova, as well as the integrity and interoperability of their networks;*

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- *the agreed commitments in this Declaration are without prejudice to more favourable terms offered by individual operators or negotiated commercially between individual operators, or to further voluntary initiatives taken by operators in favour of end users; further, for the avoidance of doubt, existing individual agreements shall remain valid and, unless voluntarily amended in the framework of these joint efforts (as defined in this Declaration) by the respective parties, remain unaffected;*
- *this Declaration applies until 31 December 2025 and is renewable;*
- *this Declaration remains open for all providers of publicly available mobile electronic communications services authorised according to the Union and Moldovan legislation, respectively, willing to sign at any time; BEREC will act as an independent third party, i.e. trustee, for the implementation of this voluntary Declaration; To the extent needed, BEREC will cooperate with the Moldovan national regulator.*

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MOLDOVAN OPERATORS

MOLDCELL
MOLDTELECOM
ORANGE MOLDOVA

EU OPERATORS

DEUTSCHE TELEKOM GROUP*
ORANGE GROUP
TELEFÓNICA GROUP



* Deutsche Telekom declares that the implementation of the retail roaming voice cap for its end users travelling to Moldova is contingent on the outcomes of an internal technical feasibility assessment. This statement does not affect any other commitment of Deutsche Telekom included in the Declaration.