



Joint Statement by EU
and Ukrainian operators
on connectivity in
support of Ukraine



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The Russian war against Ukraine has disrupted the lives of millions of Ukrainians. An estimated 4,9 million refugees have been registered across the European Union since 24 February 2022. In the face of this humanitarian crisis, EU and Ukrainian operators share the conviction that Ukrainian refugees should continue to have affordable access to connectivity to stay in touch with family and friends and to access the Internet and reliable sources of information.

The signatories of this Joint Statement have taken, as of the first days of this crisis, many different actions to help ensure connectivity across the board. EU operators have distributed millions of SIM cards free of charge to allow Ukrainians to stay connected in the EU. Furthermore, EU operators have offered **free or heavily discounted international calls** and SMS to Ukraine, have enabled free outbound roaming for EU customers in Ukraine, have provided connectivity and charging at central points where refugees gather, have offered donation of essential equipment to Ukrainian operators and maintained essential international connection nodes. In parallel, Ukrainian operators continue to keep the connectivity within Ukraine functioning, despite military aggressions. From the early days of this crisis, Ukrainian operators also ensured **resilience of their networks within the country** and offered **surcharge-free roaming** to Ukrainian people that fled the war.

In light of this devastating war, the signatories of this Joint Statement from the EU side stand in full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Recognising the importance of connectivity, in particular in times of crisis and under these exceptional circumstances, EU and Ukrainian operators stand ready to continue making these unprecedented voluntary efforts **to alleviate the consequences of the humanitarian crisis** by providing connectivity support on a collaborative basis to those fleeing their home to safety in the European Union. At the same time, the Ukrainian signatories of this Joint Statement will **continue passing on the full benefits of the voluntary measures applied by their EU counterparts to Ukrainian end users.**

In this context, the signatories underline that, for EU operators free or heavily discounted international calls to Ukraine can be very costly, and so can free international calls for Ukrainian operators to EU countries, due to high unregulated international fees charged at wholesale level. At the same time, the Ukrainian operators, operating under war conditions have limited other revenue sources to maintain their networks and services, and are exposed to wholesale roaming out-payments for their subscribers now displaced to the EU.

The signatories of this Joint Statement seek to ensure that parties work to continue the **coordinated approach involving efforts on both sides**, facilitated by BEREC and the Ukrainian National Regulatory Authority NCEC. Operators in EU and Ukraine, including those providing fixed services and transit where relevant, will pursue their efforts to voluntarily and bilaterally (i) lower the wholesale charges for international calls between EU/EEA and Ukraine through commercial agreements on a reciprocal basis and (ii) to lower wholesale roaming charges, to continue enabling the sustained provision of affordable connectivity to refugees from Ukraine. That coordinated approach minimises additional costs for both EU and Ukrainian operators, while enabling each to cover their respective costs, in order to facilitate as best possible communication for those fleeing the horrors of war. In this respect, it is important that operators on both sides of the border do their utmost to ensure that charges for Ukrainian consumers are kept at the minimum.



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For this coordinated approach to be efficient, as many EU and Ukrainian mobile and fixed operators as possible and their international carriers, should be part of this joint initiative. This Joint Statement remains open for all operators willing to sign at any time in solidarity with Ukraine.

Facing the emergency situation and consequences caused by the war in Ukraine and with the common aim of solidarity to ensure that Ukrainians seeking refuge can communicate freely

- **the EU/EEA operators**, signatories of this Joint Statement, intend to offer to those Ukrainian operators and their international carriers who are signatories of this Joint Statement, and who comply with its terms, reduced wholesale roaming charges and termination rates:
 - To enable affordable roaming to be offered by Ukrainian operators at retail level, we commit to reductions of wholesale roaming charges towards at most a level allowing to cover the costs of providing the roaming service, taking as a benchmark the wholesale maximum rates defined in Regulation (EU) 2022/612. We, in turn, expect Ukrainian operators to transfer these full benefits to their end-users roaming in the EU.
 - To enable the continued provision of affordable international calls at retail level to Ukraine by EU/EEA operators and from Ukraine to EU/EEA by Ukrainian operators, we commit, as part of a coordinated approach, to reduce termination rates for calls originated by Ukrainian numbers towards the rates applied for calls originated by EU/EEA numbers to other EU/EEA numbers. This reduction should apply both to International calls from Ukraine to (i) EU numbers and (ii) Ukrainian SIM cards roaming on an EU network.
 - Pass on the full benefits of the reduction of termination rates by Ukrainian operators to customers calling from the EU to Ukraine.
- On their part, **Ukrainian operators**, signatories of this Joint Statement, in response to measures undertaken by EU operators, intend to:
 - Offer to those EU/EEA operators and their international carriers who are signatories of this Joint Statement, and who comply with its terms, reduced international termination rates applied to:
 - (i) calls terminated on numbers in Ukraine originated by EU/EEA end users (identified by A-numbers), and
 - (ii) calls to Ukrainian numbers originated by Ukrainian numbers roaming in the EU/EEA including e.g. so-called “cross-net” ones (calls on international level between customers of different Ukrainian operators that are signatories to this Joint Statement),towards the international termination rate levels defined in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/654, with the ultimate goal that Ukrainian operators, signatories of this Joint Statement, will reduce the termination rates to the level corresponding to termination rates applied within the EU.
 - Pass on the full benefits of the reduction of wholesale roaming charges by EU/EEA operators to mobile customers roaming in the EU.



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- Ukrainian fixed operators shall reduce international termination rates gradually in order to avoid negative impact and bearing in mind the need for Ukrainian network operators to continue offering their services on a sustainable basis.
- On their part, **International Carriers**, signatories of this Joint Statement, in response to measures undertaken by EU/EEA operators and Ukrainian operators, intend to:
 - Pass on the full benefits of the reduction of termination rates to their counterparts.
- Calls to premium rate services, toll-free services and shared-cost services are outside the scope of the commitments of this Joint Statement
- EU and Ukrainian operators and international carriers intend to operate in good faith, in line with the spirit of this Joint Statement, to prevent fraud, reciprocally providing information on possible violations and agreeing on conditions for the possibilities to limit/suspend traffic. Throughout the period of the validity of the Joint Statement, signatories will be able to take the necessary measures to combat fraud, ensure the conditions set up in the present Joint Statement only benefit signatories' traffic between and within EU and Ukraine, as well as the integrity and interoperability of their networks.
- The agreed commitments in this Joint Statement 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 from Ukraine. Similarly, it should be recognised that these significant industry-led collaborative efforts are of an exceptional nature and do not constitute a precedent. 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 Joint Statement) by the respective parties, remain unaffected.
- This Joint Statement applies for six months as from 9 January 2023. BEREC with the support of the Ukrainian national regulatory authority NCEC will monitor the implementation of this Joint Statement and will issue a report once a year. BEREC in its report shall also, if relevant data is available, tackle any potential fraud issues in connection with the implementation of this Joint Statement. Taking into account the fast-changing situation, its humanitarian objective and whether other longer-term measures by public authorities and/or industry are more adequate, the need to extend and/or amend the Joint Statement should be considered in light of the first report which will be prepared in advance of the expiry of the Joint Statement. This is without prejudice to the duration of commercial agreements based on this statement, which are generally intended for a minimum period of one month and renewable.



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UKRAINIAN OPERATORS

3Mob
Data Group
Kyivstar
Lifecell
Ukr telecom
Vega White
Vodafone Ukraine

EU OPERATORS

Altice Portugal
Bouygues
Colt
DT
Illiad
KPN
Liberty Global
Melita
Masmovil
MVNO Europe
Orange
Play
Polkomtel
Proximus
Telefonica
Telenor
Three
TIM
United Group
Vodafone

