

Mobile (cell) roaming explained

When travelling abroad, whether it's for leisure or business, most people will go to great lengths to find the best deal for villas, hotels, flights, train journeys, transfers, car parking and car hire.

But how many have thought to check out the benefits of using an alternative mobile/cell network when they travel abroad?

This article has been provided to help you to see easily what charges you would expect to pay using your UK mobile network, and how much you could save by using an aether mobile global roaming mobile SIM card.

What is mobile/cell roaming?

When you travel abroad i.e. travel outside your home country, and use a mobile/cell phone on your existing network, this is classed as mobile roaming, cell roaming, global roaming or GSM roaming. Generally your existing network will charge high rates to use their network, when travelling outside your home country. This is known as roaming, as you would be roaming on local networks other than your existing network to make and receive calls and SMS. For the privilege of this service, you are generally charged pretty high rates from your existing provider.

European travellers have seen their rates for making and receiving calls and SMS/text messages reduced for roaming abroad since the EU commission capped the mobile roaming charges applied by the major mobile networks in European Union member states. However that doesn't affect non EU destinations – you'll still expect to pay extortionate roaming bills when visiting anywhere outside the EU.

The EU Commission have enabled people travelling in Europe to make calls and send SMS messages at lower rates now, but you are still charged a rate per minute to receive a call, which is around 19p per minute. The rate to make a call, although lower than previously charged, is still high at around 38p per minute. To ensure you don't have to pay these rates, it would be more cost effective to use the aether mobile global roaming card. As long as you have an unlocked handset, you can insert the SIM card into your current phone and when travelling in the EU, will expect to pay around 25p per minute to make a call, and receive all your incoming calls for free, also known as free roaming. To send an SMS (text message) from the EU to anywhere in the world is around 10p per SMS.

Outside of the EU though, the EU Commission have no control over the rates networks charge, and this is taken full advantage of by the network operators. Let's take a trip around the world to really see how much you'd expect to pay for making and receiving calls with the major networks, compared to the aether mobile service.

UK travellers heading out the USA would be charged astronomical rates for the privilege of calling back home. For example, you would expect to be charged from between £1.25p - £1.49 per minute to make a call and between 70p – 99p to receive a call with any of the major network operators in the UK. Aether mobile has recently reduced its rates to give even further savings to its customers. Savvy customers of aether mobile pay just 60p per minute and to receive a call 40p.

US customers travelling to Europe can call their loved ones at home for \$1.04 per minute, that's up to 75% cheaper than USA major networks. Aether mobile would also enable customers in Europe to receive free incoming calls (free roaming) but would be charged by their network at home.

Our Australian customers can also benefit from the low global roaming rates offered compared to networks in Australia for roaming. For example, calling Australia from France is just \$0.54AUD compared to \$2.20 from one of the main network operators in Australia, that's a staggering 75% saving on making the calls. When you then start looking at the cost of receiving calls, the global roaming service from aether mobile offers a 100% saving in Europe as there are no charges to receive calls.

Other options include local (or can be referred to as foreign) SIMs but these are generally only practical if you plan to stay in one country, and will mean that local calls would be very cost effective, but calling internationally using the local service could prove to be expensive.

So it's true to say that it certainly does make sense to research your options before jetting off on your leisure or business trip for a more cost effective option.

Before you travel, go online and research the different services available to see what solution is best for you. Check out each service's [rates](#) for incoming calls, making calls and sending SMS. Also check out the [coverage maps](#) to see where each service is available, and see what [free roaming](#) countries are offered with each service. Also check out the terms and

conditions of sale to ensure that you don't have to pay service charges, connection charges, daily service fees and if you might be subject to penalties charges for non use of the service.