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Mobile users to be charged for incoming calls

EU proposal could radically rehaul system

by Katie Scott published on 16 June 2008

It may be battling to cut down roaming charges, but the EU may find itself pretty unpopular if proposals to charge mobile phone users for receiving calls, even when in their home country, are pushed through.

The proposal has been put forward by EU telecoms commissioner, Viviane Reding, who told the Financial Times that she was open to the concept in exchange for lower termination rates (or charges between networks).

This is far closer to the American mobile model.

In the interview, she said: "The whole market is developing, so we should not stay on the rules that have been in place 10 years".

Reding has been pushing a campaign to bring phone charges down in the EU, notably roaming charges, which could be as much as 50p a minute for an outgoing call.

The EU has already puts caps of these charges, but sceptics argue that any benefits to customers were short lived because the phone companies just found other ways of making their money - like hiking up the price of texting or using the internet on handsets.

The Commission will present its recommendation before the end of the month.

