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## **EURO 2012 WARNING: ENGLAND FOOTBALL FANS FACE £5K MOBILE PENALTY FROM UKRAINE**

- **Football fans risk running up a £35 a day mobile phone bill just for calls, voicemail retrieval and texts<sup>[1]</sup> while in Ukraine**
- **£35-a-day bill could be racked up just by making and receiving two five-minute phone calls, listening to a two-minute voicemail message and sending five text messages and one photo message<sup>[1]</sup>**
- **Just 1MB of mobile internet data in Ukraine costs an average of just over £6 across the five main mobile networks<sup>[1]</sup>**
- **Daily data bills could hit £228 if mobile users don't use free local Wi-Fi and keep their phone's data roaming switched off<sup>[2]</sup>**
- **If England reach the final, fans could be hit with a staggering bill of over £5,500<sup>[4]</sup>, more than 11 times the cost of the best tickets to the final<sup>[5]</sup>.**

England fans heading to the Euro 2012 Championships in Ukraine at the start of next month could be stung with eye-watering mobile phone bills of more than £5,500<sup>[4]</sup>, according to new research from independent price comparison and switching service, [uSwitch.com](http://uSwitch.com). This shockingly high bill could be run up simply because Ukraine is outside of the EU.

Mobile phone networks have been forced to cap roaming charges within Eurozone countries at 35p per minute to make calls, 11p per minute to receive calls and 11p to send a standard text message<sup>[6]</sup>, as well as a €50 cap on data, with these caps set to fall further from 1<sup>st</sup> July<sup>[7]</sup>. But this is not the case for destinations outside the EU. As a result, footie fans heading from the UK to Ukraine to watch England this summer will be vulnerable to high charges.

And with data-hungry smartphones more popular than ever, the collective cost of using apps, streaming videos, surfing the web and making and receiving calls could leave England fans facing a four-digit bill when they return. Based on average costs across the five major networks, using a mobile phone in Ukraine to make and receive just two five-minute phone calls per day, listen to a two-minute voicemail message and send five text messages and one photo message would run up an average bill of £35 per day<sup>[1]</sup>.

But it's the cost of data that could see football fans scoring an own goal, especially with 1MB of mobile internet data in Ukraine costing an average of £6.10 across the five major networks<sup>[1]</sup>. A smartphone user who doesn't make use of free local Wi-Fi or switch off their phone's data roaming, could easily amass a daily data bill of £228<sup>[2]</sup> just based on a modest amount of video streaming, emailing, browsing websites and using VoIP services like Skype to keep in touch. Altogether, that means fans face a total daily phone bill of £262 for calls, texts and data usage<sup>[2]</sup>.

This means those fans visiting Ukraine for the nine days between 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June when England play their pool matches could have to fork out an extra £2,362<sup>[3]</sup> on top of their usual monthly phone bills when they get home. But things are even worse for die-hard fans planning on sticking around until the bitter end. Those who stay in Ukraine from the first pool match on 11<sup>th</sup> June until the final on 1<sup>st</sup> July face a staggering total bill of more than £5,500<sup>[4]</sup>, more than 11 times the cost of a ticket to the final in the best seats, which will set fans back €600 (£482)<sup>[5]</sup>.

While the networks offer money-saving bundles that will slash smartphone costs in the EU, there are limited options for Ukraine. Vodafone's Data Traveller package offers England fans in Ukraine 25MB of data for £5, which customers must opt into, and Orange offers calls and texts at a 30% discount for £5.10. Orange customers can also buy a 10MB data bundle for £15.32 per month or 50MB for £61.27 for use in Ukraine. With limited roaming bundles available, footie fans will have to curb their mobile usage and take other steps such as buying a local SIM and using free Wi-Fi to avoid coming home to a huge bill.

**Ernest Doku, technology expert at [uSwitch.com](http://uSwitch.com), says:** "Watching England might be priceless, but using your mobile phone abroad isn't. Footie fans have to think ahead as using their phones while following England could add more than £5k to what is likely to be an already expensive trip.

"The first thing England fans going to Ukraine – or indeed anyone taking a holiday outside the EU – should do is talk their network. They may be able to advise a bundle, or at least let you know the costs involved with using your phone abroad. Those using their phone can help to limit the damage by keeping data roaming switched off as much as possible.

"At the moment, O2 and Vodafone are the only networks that places an automatic cap on data usage worldwide for pay monthly customers and O2, Orange and Vodafone all send text alerts so customers can keep track of their data spend. T-Mobile has told us it plans to introduce a new system to prevent customers from running up unexpected data bills abroad and hopefully this will be in place before Euro 2012 kicks off.

“When it comes to calls and text messages, the best way to keep costs down to an absolute minimum is to buy a local SIM card, put it in your phone and top it up. Those mobile users wanting to go online should be on the ball and use free Wi-Fi to help keep a lid on costs. The important thing is for fans to ‘know before they go’ so they can blow the whistle on sky-high costs.”

For more information visit [www.uswitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com) or call 0800 093 0607

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#### Notes to Editors

1. Averages across all 5 providers worked out as per the pay monthly roaming charges below. Information taken from the networks' websites:

Network	Cost per minute to make a call	Cost per minute to receive a call	Cost to send a text message	Cost to send photo message	Cost to retrieve a voicemail	Cost for mobile internet
O2	£1.20 to UK and £1.79 to rest of world	85p	40p	26p	Same rate as a call to the UK, so £1.20 per minute	£6 per MB (A maximum charge of £40 a month will be applied and they will also send the customer text alerts at £20).
Vodafone	£1.65	£1.30	35p plus standard plan charge for sending UK text message	37p	Not specified – taken as £1.65 (same as cost of making a call)	£3 per MB for the first 5MB. £15 for every 5MB after that. (In MB increments per day, UK time)
T-Mobile	£1.50	£1.50	40p to UK, 50p to non-UK	20p	£1.50	£7.50 per MB
Orange	£1.30	70p	40p	60p up to 49.9kb or 75p over 50kb	£1.30	£8 per MB
Three	£3.00	£1.25	35p	25p to UK numbers & 35p to non-UK numbers	Not specified – taken as £3 (same as cost of making a call)	£6 per MB
<b>Average across 5 providers</b>	<b>£1.79</b>	<b>£1.12</b>	<b>39p</b>	<b>36p</b>	<b>£1.73</b>	<b>£6.10</b>

#### Pay monthly

Average daily spend of £34.87 is based on making and receiving two five-minute phone calls per day, listening to a two-minute voicemail message, sending five text messages and one photo message

Calculation is:  $(1.79 \times 5) \times 2 + (1.12 \times 5) \times 2 + 1.73 \times 2 + 0.39 \times 5 + 0.36 = \mathbf{£34.87}$

2. <http://www.vodafone.com.au/personal/wireless-internet/mobile-broadband/data-calculator/index.htm?mid=p424>

**Figure based on the following usage per week:**

30 mins spent streaming video + 50 text only emails sent/received + 10 emails with attachments + 20 websites browsed + 5 HD photos uploaded + 10 mins VoIP calling (Skype etc)

Estimated monthly data usage according to Vodafone calculator = 1.12GB

Divide by 30 days to get daily usage = **37.3MB** x £6.10 (average cost of data per MB across all 5 providers) = **£227.53**

3. £262.40 (possible daily bill in Ukraine including calls and texts) x 9 (days when England's pool matches are on) = **£2361.60**
4. £262.40 (possible daily bill in Ukraine including calls and texts) x 21 (number of days from England's first pool match to final) = **£5510.40**
5. [http://www.uswitch.com/mobiles/guides/mobile\\_roaming\\_charges/](http://www.uswitch.com/mobiles/guides/mobile_roaming_charges/)
6. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/2011/oct/07/euro-2012-tickets>
7. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/money/2012/may/10/mobile-phone-roaming-charges-cut?newsfeed=true>

#### **About uSwitch.com**

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uSwitch.com is the first comparison website to achieve the Plain English Campaign's Internet Crystal Mark, which is recognised as a standard that a website has clear language, is accessible and easy to use, and has been tested on a sample of its users.

uSwitch.com is dedicated to helping consumers save money whether they have internet access or not. It offers a dedicated call centre, manned by uSwitch customer service representatives, as well as a freepost 'Send us your bill' service, whereby customers can post their latest energy bills with their telephone number to FREEPOST USWITCH, to get a free call back from a dedicated customer services representative. The service is also available via fax, email and post. Consumers should fax 0203 214 8417, email [CustomerServices@uswitch.com](mailto:CustomerServices@uswitch.com) or write to Customer Services, uSwitch.com, Centro 3, 19 Mandela Street, London, NW1 0DU with their postcode and usage details.

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