



**BIPT**

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**BELGIAN INSTITUTE FOR POSTAL SERVICES AND  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

*PRESS RELEASE*

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**BIPT suggests notifying consumers by means of SMS when the monthly fixed sum or ceilings above the fixed sum are exceeded**

**Brussels, 4 October 2012 – BIPT publishes two documents on its website in which it suggests obliging operators to alert mobile telephony and mobile Internet consumers by means of SMS when their costs exceed the monthly fixed sum by 0 EUR, 50 EUR, 75 EUR or 100 EUR.**

The New Electronic Communications Act aims at protecting consumers and to enable clients to control their costs by sending alert messages without having to block said services.

To achieve this goal, BIPT was asked to list a number of ceilings (a ceiling being a threshold the exceeding of which means that the consumption pattern has to be considered as abnormal or excessive) among which the operators' clients may choose. Furthermore the facilities for alerting the consumers when they reach the ceiling have to be laid down in a royal decree. BIPT has published two documents regarding these matters on its website.

In its draft decision BIPT suggests the following ceilings for the mobile telephony services (barring the prepaid services) and for the mobile Internet services: 0 EUR, 50 EUR, 75 EUR, 100 EUR (VAT included). These financial ceilings constitute thresholds for alerting the client in case the latter exceeds the monthly fixed sum. In case there is no monthly fixed sum, these financial ceilings apply to the entire invoice. In case there is no ceiling selected by the consumer, BIPT suggests fixing a standard ceiling at 50 EUR.

As for the details regarding the free-of-charge alert messages to be sent to the consumer, BIPT suggests in a document submitted for consultation, to use SMS as a facility to inform the consumer that he has reached the ceiling. This alert message should allow the consumer to fully comprehend the financial consequences should he choose to continue to consume. Consumers should have the right to ask the operator to stop sending the alert messages and to reactivate this service, free of charge. Clients should also have the right to change the ceiling free of charge. When choosing a ceiling or subscribing to an offer without choosing a ceiling (default setting), the client should be made aware that the service will not be stopped in case the ceiling is exceeded.

These suggestions are published for consultation on BIPT's website for two weeks.

Luc Hindryckx, BIPT Chairman:

*"Mobile telephony and mobile Internet consumers are all too often taken unpleasantly by surprise when they receive their invoice. To remedy this, an efficient alert system has to be introduced that is easy to understand and can be rapidly implemented."*

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