

**Question for written answer E-003007/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Davor Ivo Stier (PPE)

Subject: Strengthening the roaming initiative for the Western Balkan countries

The agreement between 38 telecommunication operators from the EU and the Western Balkans to lower data roaming prices, effective as of 1 October 2023, is a commendable step towards enhancing regional connectivity. Supported by the Commission and the Regional Cooperation Council, this voluntary initiative is making roaming more affordable for citizens and businesses. There are plans for further price reductions in the future.

However, the voluntary nature of the agreement might limit its reach, as participation is the choice of individual operators. This may result in uneven benefits for consumers and businesses across the EU and the Western Balkans.

1. What are the conclusions and results of the first regular review that was planned for October 2024, as stated in the EU-Western Balkans Roaming Declaration?
2. Does the Commission plan to introduce a proposal to make the roaming initiative in the Western Balkan countries mandatory in the future? A proposal for a mandatory roaming initiative would guarantee universal participation, accelerate progress towards the alignment of roaming and domestic prices, and provide greater benefits to both citizens and businesses.

Submitted: 18.12.2024