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The universal service rules ensure that every user can access basic communications services at a reasonable quality and an affordable price, even if the market would not provide it.

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The [Universal Service Directive](#) [1] covers the following areas:

- Basic communication services such as making a phone call from a fixed location at an affordable price or receiving national and international calls over a fixed connection;
- Making emergency calls such as to the '112' European emergency number in any EU country free of charge from any telephone, including public payphones;
- Every EU country must make available to customers a comprehensive telephone directory of all subscribers;
- Access to the publicly available telephone services to all, including people with special needs or low income, who may receive direct support public authorities.
- A sufficient number of payphones are available in public areas.

Compliance is ensured in two ways:

- [National regulatory authorities \(NRAs\)](#) [2] monitor the evolution of services and of retail prices and may take measures when deemed necessary.
- The European Commission can take legal action against a Member State that infringes any EU law, including [the Universal Service Directive](#) [1].

The Commission regularly consults with EU Member States, the European Parliament, the [Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications \(BEREC\)](#) [3] and other stakeholders. As part of its regular review of the the scope of the EU universal service rules (see [2005](#) [4]/[2006](#) [5] and [2008](#) [6] reviews), the European Commission [concluded](#) [7] in 2011 (see the [public consultation](#) [8]) that there was no need to change the basic principles or scope of the rules or to include mobile telecommunications services or broadband connections at EU level.

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