



30 March 2015

THE GREAT TRAVEL HEIST: SHOCKING NUMBER OF BRITISH TRAVELLERS UNPREPARED FOR MOBILE FRAUD RISK ABROAD

- An estimated 1.8 million* Brits will travel over the Easter break but over half admit they do not know the proper steps to keep their phones safe despite the sensitive personal data they store on them
- 46% of us do not even use a password lock on our handsets and 79% do not have valid phone insurance - opening ourselves up to the risk of unwarranted charges and data fraud if our handsets are stolen
- Holiday-makers are two and a half times more likely to have their phones stolen in Spain than any other European country**

Our mobile phones have become an essential travel companion. However, as Britons prepare for the Easter break and around 1.8 million*** of us plan to travel abroad for the long weekend, new research from Vodafone has found that despite the constant threat from pickpockets preying on innocent Britons enjoying their time in the sun, we are still not taking simple precautions to help protect against the effects of stolen phones.

Worryingly, over half of the respondents surveyed admitted that they would not know what to do if their phone was stolen abroad, despite saying they store laptop passwords, personal photos, bank card details and access to their business and personal email accounts on their phones. The data also showed that almost 60% of us will carry our phones at all times when out and about in a new country, underlining the need to protect it against pickpockets and thieves.

TOP TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR PHONE SAFE ABROAD: **1.** Protect your phone with a good secure SIM pin or device passcode. If you have a finger print or pattern lock, use that as well. **2.** Back up your phone regularly. **3.** Download a 'find my phone' type app from your phone's app store. **4.** Register your phone on immobilise.com. **5.** If you're going abroad, write down all the relevant Vodafone contact numbers (03333040191 from a landline or, if someone else lends you their Vodafone mobile, 191. If you're abroad it's +447836191191) **6.** Write down your phone's IMEI. You can find the IMEI by typing in *#06# into the phone.

Furthermore, 46% of respondents admitted to keeping their phones in their pockets while travelling and over a third said they would keep their handsets in a handbag on the floor – giving thieves a prime opportunity to steal them. 79% would travel without valid insurance and over 81% say they would travel without knowing their IMEI number or their

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operator's emergency helpline - essential information to have to help protect against the effects of a lost or stolen phone.

Mark Bond, Customer Operations Director, Vodafone UK, says: "Our phones are so important to us, especially as we use them to share more and more of our experiences while on holiday. We are always trying to make sure our customers have the best possible experience and believe our new fraud cap will improve their experience at what can be an upsetting time. However, because it is very easy for criminals to rapidly build up high charges using stolen phones, we encourage customers to report phones missing as soon as they can. So if you're planning a trip this Easter please make sure you've put in place some simple security measures such as: protecting your handset with a password and SIM lock; making sure you take out insurance; and keeping your IMEI number and Vodafone's emergency contact number safe. The bottom line is if your phone is lost or stolen and you call us immediately to report it, we can close your account straightaway which will save you from any hassle on your return home."

Our research also found that the tourist hotspot in which visitors are most likely to have their phone stolen is Spain – a favourite for both visiting and expat Brits – which has led to a number of well-known frauds such as the "Barcelona scam". Over 30% of all phone thefts abroad reported to Vodafone over a seven month period**** took place there. Even though more of us visit France****, only 12% of phone thefts took place across the Channel.

For further advice and tips on how to protect your phone from being lost or stolen, visit our blog and watch these handy videos: <http://blog.vodafone.co.uk/2014/11/25/lost-or-stolen-phone/>

Or visit: <http://www.vodafone.co.uk/about-this-site/our-privacy-policy/protecting-our-customers/index.htm>

Going abroad? Make sure you're taking advantage of our price plans

We know staying in touch with friends and family while abroad is vital, which is why Vodafone customers are able to use ultrafast 4G services and devices in more countries than any other UK mobile provider. UK customers can now take advantage of ultrafast 4G roaming in 50 destinations in time for Easter. Armenia, Australia, China, Denmark, Finland, Indonesia, Oman, Poland, South Africa and Sweden are visited by 4 million UK visitors each year and have now joined the existing 40 destinations announced last year.

Pay monthly Vodafone 4G customers travelling to any 4G destination in Vodafone's Europe Zone can take their UK minutes, texts and data bundle with them for just £3 a day with Vodafone EuroTraveller. Customers travelling to a 4G destination within Vodafone's WorldTraveller Zone can take their UK minutes, texts and data bundle with them for just £5 a day.

All Vodafone Red price plans come with UK unlimited calls and texts, so customers using Vodafone EuroTraveller or Vodafone WorldTraveller are able to call or text home, without worrying about unexpected bills. There's no charge for receiving calls or texts on both services and customers will only pay for the days they use their mobile abroad.

Before you travel, use our handy calculator to check the costs of roaming: <http://www.vodafone.co.uk/shop/pay-monthly/travelling-abroad/>

For further information visit www.vodafone.co.uk/4g-abroad

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Data based on a survey of 1845 respondents taking place over the period 16.02.2015 – 06.03

Notes to editors:

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*Statistic according to 2014 data from the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)

**Statistic based on internal Vodafone data between the period 1 July 2014 and 12 January 2015

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*****Based on Foreign Office estimates

Country	Percentage of thefts
Spain	30.3%
France	12.6%
Germany	4.8%
Netherlands	4.2%
Ireland	4.2%
USA	4.2%
Belgium	3.4%
Italy	3.2%
Greece	2.9%
Portugal	2.9%

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