



VODAFONE LAUNCHES UMTS WITH THE CONNECT CARD

Colao "3G is from today a reality for our 20.6m customers"

Italy launches alongside Germany, Spain, the UK, Portugal, Sweden and Holland

Milan, February 12, 2004 - Vodafone Italia today announced the commercial launch of its 3G services, with the Vodafone Connect Card for corporate customers and consumers.

Following the success of the Business Trial, started last December and which saw Vodafone Italia open up its UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunication System) network to over 200 companies and organisations including the Municipality of Turin, Nestlé, RAS and Unicredito Italiano, all Vodafone's customers will be able to access 3G services from the end of February.

Vodafone Italia is now able to offer 3G coverage in 41 cities, which will become 125 by the end of April 2004, representing 30% of the population.

"3G is from today a reality for our 20 million customers and for those in Germany, Spain, the UK, Portugal, Sweden and the Netherlands," commented Vittorio Colao, Vodafone Italia CEO. "We have invested heavily in the infrastructure needed to launch 3G, at the same time as fulfilling our obligations under the licence agreement ahead of time. Moreover, customers who already use our GPRS roaming service will shortly be able to communicate whilst on the move throughout Europe using Vodafone's 3G networks."

Vodafone is continuing its UMTS trials with handsets with a view to launching by the end of the year, to coincide with the arrival on the market of products capable of providing the usual performance quality.

Vodafone's 3G Mobile Connect Card is the first product that integrates 3G and GPRS functions, enabling transmission at speeds of up to 384 Kbps where 3G coverage exists, and automatically hooking up to the GSM-GPRS network where it does not. Thanks to its dual-mode radio capability, Vodafone's 3G Mobile Connect Card operates over the UMTS network where 3G coverage exists, but automatically hooks up to the GSM-GPRS network where UMTS is still not available. In this case, transmission speed is reduced to a maximum of 40 Kbps (equivalent to a dial-up connection), but the switch between 2.5G and 3G takes place without the customer having to worry about a thing.

For the first 3 months, Vodafone is offering its corporate customers a package that includes the 3G Connect Card and a data SIM for €35 a month, including 300MB of UMTS traffic. The Connect Card will also be on sale at Vodafone One stores from the end of February at a cost of €499 including a rechargeable data SIM. This will be accompanied by a promotion offering customers unlimited GPRS navigation and up to 200MB of UMTS data traffic at a cost of €20 a month.