



IPSE 2000 AND OMNITEL VODAFONE SIGN ROAMING AND INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT

Italy's first agreement regarding UMTS. Celli: "Ipse ready for market launch" Colao: "Omnitel has always favoured opening up of the market"

Rome, September 10, 2001 - The first agreement has been signed between Italian operators in relation to UMTS, the new 3G mobile phone technology. Ipse 2000 and Omnitel Vodafone quickly reached an accord with regard to roaming and interconnection of second generation networks, which include GPRS technology. The agreement will enable the new operator, the winner of one of Italy's five UMTS licenses, to effect a rapid entry into the market.

This is the first time that a roaming agreement has included GPRS technology, allowing the newcomer to present its multimedia services to the market, in preparation for the introduction of 3G technology and well ahead of the availability of UMTS.

The roaming agreement regards Omnitel Vodafone's GSM network which, since last December, has made use of GPRS transmission technology nation-wide, with the relevant services for the consumer market launched some weeks ago.

Pier Luigi Celli, Executive Chairman of Ipse 2000, which is jointly owned by major shareholders such as Telefonica, Atlanet (a joint venture between Acea, Fiat-Ifil and Telefonica Data), Sonera, Banca di Roma, Goldenegg, Falck, Edison, Xera and others, declared that: *"The early launch of our new GPRS services, made possible in part by the agreement with Omnitel, will ready us for the start-up of third generation mobile telephony, where Ipse will be a leading player, thanks to its highly innovative, personalised and customer-oriented services."*

"We have found Ipse to be a straightforward and reliable negotiator," commented Vittorio Colao, Omnitel Vodafone's Chief Executive. *"The agreement shows that Omnitel has never attempted to hold up the development of competition and the market, but is focused solely on the interests of customers. We are the first to reach a full agreement with one of the new entrants into the sector, just as we were the first to enter into agreements with other operators, permitting them to make a rapid entry into the market. Naturally, we intend to continue along this path with all players who adopt a correct approach to market competition."*