Press Release

First prototype 5G smartphone connects to the TIM network in Italy

Rome, 28 November 2018

TIM, together with Ericsson and Qualcomm Technologies, Inc., has successfully completed the first 5G connection in Italy on TIM's live network using the country's first 5G prototype smartphone.

At the TIM laboratories based in Turin, the first OTA (Over the Air) connection trials compliant with the 3GPP 5G NR (New Radio) Release 15 specifications featuring Ericsson’s technology, using the Massive MIMO solution, were completed. The test uses for the first time in Italy a smartphone based on the Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ X50 5G chipset, that will be in some of the first 5G smartphones available on the market in 2019.

For the implementation of these latest 5G transmission trials, TIM used a portion of the 3.4-3.8 GHz spectrum range, which was assigned to the operator following the recent auction of spectrum conducted by the Ministry for Economic Development in Italy, connecting the prototype 5G device to the TIM network. This demonstration is a fundamental step towards the implementation of 5G in Italy to benefit TIM customers.

"With this significant milestone of connecting the first 5G test smartphone to our network, TIM confirms its leading role in Italy and its determination to create a mobile network to support the evolutions offered by 5G. Today’s demonstration shows us already providing the connectivity of the future, along with our partners in Turin, plus trials in many other cities such as Bari, Matera and the Republic of San Marino where we have already started the implementation of Smart City solutions in preparation for the next commercial launch. This work confirms the technological leadership of TIM and its commitment to innovation in order to offer cutting-edge services and the best digital experience to our customers today and for a 5G future", says Elisabetta Romano, TIM's Chief Technology Officer.

“We are pleased to work with TIM and Ericsson on this significant milestone toward enabling 5G in Italy and we congratulate TIM on achieving this goal. This is an important step in bringing commercial 5G networks and services to Italian consumers; and our 5G mobile test device, powered by the Snapdragon X50 5G chipset, is the key element of this accomplishment. Our 5G mobile test device is the first 5G NR smartphone form factor device available for such trials and we are working with key leaders in the mobile ecosystem to make 5G to a commercial reality in 2019," says Enrico Salvatori, senior vice president and president, Qualcomm Europe/Middle East and Africa, Qualcomm Europe, Inc.

Ericsson, as a strategic partner, is proud to support TIM in every step towards 5G commercial launch. The result achieved today, thanks to our cutting-edge technology and to the teamwork of an entire ecosystem, confirms Italy’s leading role in the mobile communications scenario. Having successfully completed the first 5G connection in Italy on a live network, using the first smartphone prototype, also confirms the key role of Ericsson in the process of digitizing our country, where we are present and investing for 100 years”, says Federico Rigoni, Country Manager of Ericsson in Italy.

TIM once again consolidates its leadership in the mobile communications industry in Italy, also through the recent acquisition of new bands (frequency) that represent a fundamental asset for the future development of 5G services, which will revolutionize the lives of citizens, consumers and businesses. 5G will usher in an era where everything will be smarter and more connected: from public safety to transport, from environmental monitoring to health, tourism and culture, to applications in the fields of media, education and virtual reality.