

Fastweb and Samsung Bring First 5G Fixed Wireless Access Trial to Italy

The initial test results demonstrated download speeds of 1 Gbps indicating the capability of 5G FWA networks to serve as an alternative to FTTH for domestic ultrabroadband connectivity

The next phase, which began this February, will run for a five-month period in Milan to put the network to test

SEOUL, Korea / MILAN, Italy – February 22, 2019 – Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd., and Fastweb today announced an agreement to conduct Italy's first 5G Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) trial on commercial spectrum. Companies are trialing to demonstrate how 5G FWA networks could serve as a compelling alternative to FTTH (Fiber-to-the-Home) to deliver ultra broadband connectivity and gigabit experience to end users.

Following the recently signed agreement by the companies, the trial – which has already started the first week of February – will last for five months across multiple residences and offices in Milan, the second largest city in Italy.

In the first week of the trial - held on 26GHz of spectrum recently acquired by Fastweb during Italy's 5G frequencies auction in October 2018 - download speeds reached 1 Gbps. The next steps of the trial will verify the effectiveness of 5G FWA networks concerning the cost and time for its deployment compared to conventional FTTH roll-out as well as potential operational challenges in the provision of the service to the end customers.

Samsung supplies Fastweb with an end-to-end 5G FWA solution that includes core, 5G Radio Access Units that leverages millimeter wave (mmWave) spectrum to provide high-density coverage and ultra-high-bandwidth connectivity to 5G home routers (Indoor Customer Premise Equipment), installed in nearby homes or offices.

Samsung's compact 5G Access Units are easy to rapidly deploy, while the CPE is self-installing. This gives 5G Fixed Wireless considerable advantages over comparable FTTH or FTTB (Fiber-to-the-Building) deployments in terms of service rollout times and costs to both the service provider and the subscriber. At the same time, the service is robust – able to deliver gigabit broadband speeds to neighbourhoods – and can very easily be extended to support new services in the future.

“We are excited to deliver the first 5G FWA end-to-end connectivity in Italy with Fastweb to bring the next generation speed to users,” said Paul Kyungwhoon Cheun, Executive Vice President and Head of Networks Business at Samsung Electronics. “Samsung will work with Fastweb to turn the vast potentials of 5G FWA using 26GHz into true benefits for both customers and enterprises.”

“This trial has already confirmed the outstanding performances of 5G FWA and the capability of this technology to provide a “fiber-like” ultrabroadband service to families and business in areas not reached by FTTH. To accomplish our mission of addressing the market needs and enhancing user experience, we will leverage 5G FWA to expand the coverage of our proprietary ultra-broadband infrastructure,” said Alberto Calcagno, CEO Fastweb.

“We are confident that with this trial with Samsung, we can demonstrate both the technical and commercial feasibility of mmWave FWA in Italy.”



Fastweb is moving forward with these tests because Italy offers the ideal conditions for 5G FWA technology to power domestic broadband, thanks to fiber being widely available at cabinet level, making it easier to deploy antennas for 5G FWA at ideal distance from the buildings. Furthermore, TV antennas are pre-installed on 99 percent of the roofs, facilitating easy installation of additional equipment. After the tests are successful, Fastweb will usher in a new generation of connectivity to Italy.

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About Samsung Electronics

Samsung inspires the world and shapes the future with transformative ideas and technologies. The company is redefining the worlds of TVs, smartphones, wearable devices, tablets, digital appliances, network systems, and memory, system LSI, foundry and LED solutions. For the latest news, please visit the Samsung Newsroom at <http://news.samsung.com>.

About Fastweb

With 2.5 million wireline customers and 1.5 million mobile customers, Fastweb is a major Italian telecom operator, providing a wide range of voice and data services, on wireline and wireless networks, to families and businesses. Since its creation in 1999, the company has focused on innovation and infrastructures to provide high quality ultra-broadband connectivity. Thanks to the continuous expansion of its ultrabroadband network, Fastweb today reaches 22 million households, of which 8 with a proprietary infrastructure, with connection speeds of up to 1 Gigabit.