

## New Numbering Plan Approved

The Communications Regulatory Authority, chaired by Corrado Calabrò, has approved the new national numbering Plan in the telecommunication sector, which allows to have a better control over the regulatory conformity of consumer protection and more effective interventions intended to counteract the continuous illegal activities that occurred during this last period.

The new numbering Plan represents the completion of a series of intervention strategies- which started long time ago- that provides the blockage of all numberings that are overpriced starting from next June 30<sup>th</sup>. The blockage can be deactivated only under the specific request of users. For consumers who intend to activate anyhow overpriced services, Agcom's Plan establishes a further protection with the introduction of maximum price thresholds of one or two euros for flat tariff services (phone voting, donations, etc.). This type of price trough sole connection set up cost has recently been the motive of a series of frauds, and object of investigation by the judicial court. Many consumers, in fact, have been charged up to 15 euros only for the connection to the service, apart from the duration of connection. Such illicit conducts will not be permitted with the new numbering Plan.

Another important aspect of the Plan is the rationalization of overpriced numbering services, for which the sole use of codes is now envisaged such as "89X", which guarantee users better tariff transparency. The other numberings used before for overpriced services (144, 166, 163, 164 etc.) will be gradually closed.

The new transparency measures are also extended to those overpriced services that are accessible through mobile phone via SMS (logos, ringing tones, value added services). For such services price thresholds are now envisaged and the possibility for users to block the use, in the same way the Authority envisaged for fixed telephony.

Among the other features introduced by the Plan, it has to be also highlighted the update of mobile service numbering provisions, which will enable better competitive conditions for virtual operators, the implementation of the European regulation on harmonised services of social value (phone numbers 116XXX) and the complete free charge of "*customer care*" services offered by telecommunication operators.

The new numbering Plan, approved in the last few days, which will become effective starting from next June, demonstrates the constant, deep and punctual commitment taken by Agcom on consumer protection.

Rome, May 19th 2008