

## **GSM passes 100 million users worldwide**

**Ericsson announces that GSM is passing the 100 million user mark. This confirms GSM, Global System for Mobile communications, as the world's most widely deployed and fastest-growing mobile communications offering.**

"Passing this mark means GSM is clearly meeting user and operator needs for wireless services. With GSM as a cornerstone for third-generation networks the technology's also future-proof to handle the emerging wireless datacom services, opening up an incredible range of possibilities in the New Telcoms World, says Sven-Christer Nilsson, President and CEO of Ericsson.

"One of the key factors in the rapid growth of GSM lies in its having been developed as an open standard. This created a global, multi-vendor market for both infrastructure and terminals, making deployment rapid and cost-effective for operators and global roaming a reality for the users," says Mats Dahlin, Executive Vice President at Ericsson Radio Systems.

"Looking ahead, with GSM as the main network architecture for third-generation networks, it will also take wireless into the new millennium to provide services such as wireless Internet, as well as range of other exciting multimedia and IP-based services," Mats Dahlin continues.

While mobile networks have so far mainly supported voice services, a whole series of developments already well under way are enhancing GSM to further improve support for voice as well datacom services.

Earlier this year, for example, Ericsson became the first company to demonstrate the new packet-switched technology GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) for further enhancing GSM networks to handle datacom services. Another new development is EDGE (Evolved Data Rates for GSM Evolution) to boost data rates even higher, enabling operators to offer third-generation type of services.

Both EDGE and WCDMA air interfaces are options to providing a common evolution path for current D-AMPS and GSM networks to handle third-generation mobile services.

The 100 million user mark is a GSM milestone that actually arrived more quickly than even some of the most optimistic industry analysts were predicting only a short time ago. The first commercial GSM systems came on line in 1992. Currently, there are more than five million new GSM users added every month, with users in more than 120 countries. There's close to 300 GSM operators worldwide and another 50 getting ready to launch services. Ericsson's latest forecast predicts more than 450 million GSM users by year-end 2003.

Nearly half the 100 million users are connected on systems delivered by Ericsson. The company has already delivered systems to more than 120 operators of GSM 900, 1800 and 1900 MHz networks, in some 65 countries.

*Ericsson's 100,000 employees are active in more than 130 countries. Their combined expertise in fixed and mobile networks, mobile phones and infocom systems makes Ericsson a world-leading supplier in telecommunications.*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT**

Mats Dahlin, Executive Vice President and General Manager,  
Ericsson Radio Systems, Mobile Telephone Systems GSM, NMT, TACS  
GSM: +46 70 592 5186; E-mail: mats.dahlin@era.ericsson.se

Mark Smith, GSM MoU Association, Companycare Communications Ltd,  
GSM: +44 850 229 724; Email: mark@companycare.com

Johan Wiklund, Press Relations Manager,  
Ericsson Business Area Mobile Systems  
GSM: +46 70 560 0134; E-mail: johan.wiklund@era.ericsson.se