

## PRESS RELEASE

**Milan, 6th February 2012.** Today a collaboration agreement was signed between the Lombardy Region, Finlombarda SpA and Metroweb SpA, which is controlled by F2i – *Fondi italiani per le infrastrutture*.

The agreement will result in the development of the passive fiber optic network throughout the region using Metroweb's know-how.

Following a resolution in June 2010, the Region has been actively promoting ventures for the development of NGAN (*Next Generation Access Network*) and FTTH (*Fiber to the Home*) which will enable the widespread availability of ultra broadband connections (of at least 30 Mbit/s) in the region.

In particular, the Lombardy Region had already initiated a dialogue and verification process with the main infrastructure operators in the regional market, as well as the national TLC operators and main international producers of technological apparatus for TLC networks. On the basis of these verifications and assessments, the Lombardy Region has identified Metroweb as a partner. Metroweb owns the most extensive European metropolitan fiber optics network, with 3,270 km of infrastructure and more than 7,200 km of cables, mainly in the Municipality of Milan (and partially in the rest of Lombardy), from which it is able to reach almost all residential buildings and business sites.

Metroweb was acquired by F2i in June 2011 and represents an important example for broadband which could be replicated in the context of a nationwide TLC development project: from the Milan area, towards other cities of the Lombardy Region and then on to other cities in the centre and south of the country.

Following an initial assessment period the agreement entails the development of a business plan for the creation, in the short term, of a Public-Private Partnership for extending broadband connectivity within Lombardy. To this end, a working group will be set up which must define within 6 months a preliminary industrial plan relating to the technical, economic-financial and governance aspects.

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