

More than 1 billion people will have access to 5G coverage by the end of 2020

- Pace of introducing new 5G functionality has increased in 2020 in both the network and device domains, despite uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic
- 220 million global 5G subscriptions forecast by end of 2020, with China accounting for 175 million of those - or almost 80 percent
- Fixed wireless access (FWA) is now offered by nearly two-thirds of service providers globally. FWA connections are forecast to grow more than threefold, reaching more than 180 million by the end of 2026 - accounting for a quarter of all mobile network data traffic
- 3.5 billion 5G subscriptions forecast by the end of 2026 - estimated to account for more than 50 percent of mobile data traffic at that time

Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) projects that four out of every ten mobile subscriptions in 2026 will be 5G. This forecast is included in the latest edition of the Ericsson Mobility Report. Current 5G uptake in subscriptions and population coverage confirms the technology as deploying the fastest of any generation of mobile connectivity.

The [November 2020 Ericsson Mobility Report](#) estimates that by the end of this year, more than 1 billion people – 15 percent of the world's population – will live in an area that has 5G coverage rolled out. In 2026, 60 percent of the world's population will have access to 5G coverage, with 5G subscriptions forecast to reach 3.5 billion.

Ericsson has raised its year-end 2020 estimate for global 5G subscriptions to 220 million, as service providers continue to build out their networks. The increase is largely due to rapid uptake in China, reaching 11 percent of its mobile subscription base. This is driven by a national strategic focus, intense competition between service providers, as well as increasingly affordable 5G smartphones from several vendors.

North America is expected to end the year with about 4 percent of its mobile subscriptions being 5G. Commercialization is now moving at a rapid pace and by 2026, Ericsson forecasts that 80 percent of North American mobile subscriptions will be 5G, the highest level of any region in the world.

Europe will end the year with about 1 percent 5G subscriptions in the region. During the year, some countries delayed auctions of the radio spectrum needed to support 5G deployment.

PRESS RELEASE

November 30, 2020



Fredrik Jejdling, Executive Vice President and Head of Networks, Ericsson, says: "This year has seen society take a big leap towards digitalization. The pandemic has highlighted the impact connectivity has on our lives and has acted as a catalyst for rapid change, which is also clearly visible in this latest edition of the Ericsson Mobility Report.

"5G is entering the next phase, when new devices and applications make the most out of the benefits it provides, while service providers continue to build out 5G. Mobile networks are a critical infrastructure for many aspects of everyday life and 5G will be key to future economic prosperity."

The report also highlights why 5G success will not be limited to coverage or subscription numbers alone. Its value will also be determined by new use cases and applications, the first of which have already started to emerge.

Critical IoT, intended for time-critical applications that demand data delivery within a specified time duration, will be introduced in 5G networks. This will enable a wide range of time-critical services for consumers, enterprises and public institutions across various sectors, with 5G public and dedicated networks.

Cloud gaming is another emerging application category. The combined capabilities provided by 5G networks and edge compute technologies will enable game streaming services on smartphones to compete with a quality of experience (QoE) on par with PC or console counterparts, opening up for innovative, immersive games based on mobility.

5G functionality grows in both the network and device domains

The rate of introducing 5G New Radio (NR) functionality is increasing, with more than 150 5G device models launched commercially. Many devices support 5G Frequency Division Duplex (FDD) and dynamic spectrum sharing (DSS). The first 5G standalone (SA) networks have been launched in Asia and North America, as well as the first devices capable of NR carrier aggregation.

FWA offered by more service providers

With the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating digitalization as well as increasing the importance and need for fast and reliable home broadband connectivity, the number of service providers offering [fixed wireless access \(FWA\)](#) is on the rise. Almost two-thirds of service providers now have an FWA offering. FWA connections are forecast to grow more than threefold and reach more than 180 million by the end of 2026, accounting for about a quarter of total mobile network data traffic.

This edition of Ericsson Mobility Report includes four feature articles:

- 2020: the ultimate stress test for FirstNet. Co-written with AT&T
- Service providers face three alternative paths to success

PRESS RELEASE

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- Mobile cloud gaming - an evolving business opportunity
- The networked industrial enterprise

[Download the November 2020 edition of the Ericsson Mobility Report.](#)

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