

The GSMA hailed 5G for gaining significant traction since launch, with the technology maturing past its development stage, as it forecast significant operator investment in the coming years.

In its latest Mobile Economy report, the GSMA predicted operators would outlay \$1.1 trillion globally in capex between 2020 and 2025, 80 per cent of which will be on 5G networks.

Mats Granryd, GSMA director general, said hype surrounding 5G had given way to reality, as "millions of consumers are already migrating" to next generation networks and "enterprises are beginning to embrace" innovations including "network slicing, edge computing and low-latency services".

The industry group predicted industries including manufacturing, utilities, professional and financial services would reap the greatest benefits from 5G, potentially adding \$2.2 trillion to the global economy at the close of 2034.

By end-January, it said commercial services had been commenced by 46 operators in 24 countries following a spate of launches in 2019. It forecast one-in-five mobile connections would be on 5G networks by end-2025.

Despite the progress of 5G, 4G remained the most popular technology at the close of 2019, accounting for 52 per cent of global connections at that point and being tipped to increase its share to 56 per cent by end-2025.

## **GDP** generator

The industry group said mobile technologies and services contributed \$4.1 trillion, or 4.7 per cent, of global GDP at end-2019. It tipped this to hit \$4.9 trillion (4.9 per cent) by end-2024, as productivity and efficiency is boosted by increased take-up of mobile services.

The mobile ecosystem supported more than 30 million jobs directly and indirectly in 2019, and made a substantial contribution to pubic sector funding with \$490 billion raised through tax.

GSMA's latest research also revealed global unique mobile subscribers stood at 5.2 billion by end-2019 (67 per cent of global population), forecasting this to grow to 5.8 billion by end-2025 (70 per cent).

Almost half of the global population (3.8 billion people) were connected to mobile internet services: this is expected to reach 61 per cent (5 billion) by end-2025.



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