



The EU and China signed a key partnership on 5G, our tomorrow's communication networks

Brussels, 28 September 2015

The EU and China have signed a [milestone agreement](#) in the global race to develop 5G networks, during today's EU-China High Level Economic and Trade Dialogue in Beijing. In the future, everybody and everything will use 5G, the next generation of communication networks. By 2020 there will be more than 30 times as much mobile Internet traffic as there was in 2010. 5G won't just be faster, it will also be the backbone of our digital future and the foundation of a trillion euro EU market in the [Internet of Things](#), i.e. new functionalities and applications ranging from connected cars to smart homes. The joint declaration was signed by **Günther Oettinger**, European Commissioner in charge of the Digital Economy and Society, and **Miao Wei**, Chinese Minister of Industry and Information Technology.

Commissioner Günther Oettinger said: *"5G will be the backbone of our digital economies and societies worldwide. This is why we strongly support and seek a global consensus and cooperation on 5G. With today's signature with China, the EU has now teamed up with the most important Asian partners in a global race to make 5G a reality by 2020. It's a crucial step in making 5G a success."*

Under this Declaration, the EU and China will strengthen cooperation to:

- reach a **global understanding**, by the end of 2015, on the concept, basic functionalities, key technologies and time plan for 5G
- explore possibilities in cooperating and implementing **joint research actions** in the area of 5G and to facilitate bilateral participation of enterprises in 5G research projects in China and the EU
- jointly promote **global standardisation** for 5G, in support of ongoing standardisation work in relevant organisations such as the 3rd Generation Partnership Project (3GPP) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- cooperate in facilitating the identification of the most promising radio frequency bands to meet the new **spectrum requirements** for 5G
- explore jointly the possibilities for cooperative research on the services and applications for 5G, especially in the area of the **Internet of Things** (IoT).

Both parties are committed to reciprocity and openness in terms of access to 5G networks research funding, market access as well as in membership of Chinese and EU 5G associations.

This joint declaration builds on similar agreements with [South Korea](#) and [Japan](#) signed with the Commission in recent months.

The European Commission is investing €700 million through the [Horizon 2020 Programme](#) to support research and innovation in 5G.

Through its [Digital Single Market Strategy](#) announced in May, the Commission is committed to improving spectrum coordination in the EU, particularly in view of future 5G needs.

China: a key 5G market for European companies

Today's agreement is significant because China is likely to be a major player in the development of 5G and also potentially the world's largest market for 5G technologies, products and services. The country will also have a substantial role in establishing a 5G global standard. Under this agreement, EU companies, particularly the EU telecoms and ICT industry are likely to have easier access to the Chinese market. In particular, European companies will be able to access and participate in China's publicly funded 5G research, development and innovation initiatives on the same terms as Chinese companies currently participate in the EU's 5G activities. The respective industrial associations, the EU's [5G PPP Association](#) and China's [IMT-2020](#) (5G) Promotion Association have prepared, and are ready to sign, an industrial agreement as soon as the EU-China joint agreement on 5G is in place.

The agreement is very timely as the 5G standardisation race will start already in 2016 together with discussions on spectrum requirements for 5G that should culminate during the World Radio Conference 2019. 5G is expected to be commercially available from 2020.

Background

In December 2013, the European Commission launched a [Public-Private Partnership on 5G](#) ([press release](#) - [Factsheet](#)). The EU is investing €700 million by 2020 in this partnership through the [Horizon 2020](#) research and innovation programme. EU industry is set to match this investment by up to 5 times, to more than €3 billion euros.

[China's IMT-2020 \(5G\) promotion group](#) was jointly established by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) in February 2013 to promote 5G technology research in China and to facilitate international communication and cooperation. The members include the main operators, vendors, universities and research institutes in China. The industrial agreement between the 5G PPP Association of Europe and the IMT-2020 (5G) Promotion Association ready to be signed after the signing of the Joint Declaration is as well crucial for the success of the 5G cooperation

At the 2015 Mobile World Congress (MWC), [the European Commission and Europe's tech industry presented the EU's vision of 5G technologies and infrastructure](#). This ambitious strategy gives the EU a strong voice in the next phase of 5G discussions at the global level that should lead to international agreements, including on standards. (see also the [speech](#) of Commissioner Oettinger at the event) Commissioner Oettinger will host a global workshop on 5G standards and spectrum with representatives from the US, South Korea, Japan and China [during the ICT-2015 conference in Lisbon](#) on 20 October 2015.

Through its [Digital Single Market Strategy](#), the Commission is committed to improving spectrum coordination in the EU, particularly in view of future 5G needs. The Commission has just launched a [review of the EU's telecoms framework](#) and present legislative proposals for an ambitious overhaul of EU telecoms rules in 2016. This includes more effective spectrum coordination, and common EU-wide criteria for spectrum assignment at national level.

More information

[About 5G](#)

[Webpage on the Digital Single Market](#) ([#DigitalSingleMarket](#))

[Webpage of Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus Ansip](#) ([@Ansip_EU](#))

[Webpage of Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Günther H. Oettinger](#) ([@GOettingerEU](#))

IP/15/5715

Press contacts:

[Nathalie VANDYSTADT](#) (+32 2 296 70 83)

[Marie FRENAY](#) (+32 2 29 64532)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

Related documents

[joint declaration 5G EU-CHINA.pdf](#)