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**THE RISE OF 5G IN CENTRAL ASIA:  
LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES ABOUT  
THE NEXT GENERATION NETWORK**

AUGUST 2020

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## CENTRAL ASIA TECH LAW

Central Asia Tech Law or CAT Law is a branch of jurisprudence which seeks to analyze and contextualize the growing impact of technology such as AI, 5G, Cloud Computing, Big Data, Medical Technologies, Privacy and Digitization on the national laws of the Central Asian countries, especially in relation to the technology ethics, regulations, and policy.

In 2019, Ammar Younas (a legal futurist, medical doctor and lawyer by training) coined the term “Central Asia Tech Law (CAT Law)” and started advocating the idea of a “Generalized AI Policy for Central Asia”. Central Asia Tech Law is also a Consulting and Research Center by “Ai Mo Innovation Consultants (SMC-Private) Limited.”<sup>1</sup>

The subject matter of “Central Asia Tech Law” includes Technology Law and related fields such as Internet Law, IT Law, Digital Law, LegalTech, FinTech in all five countries of the region – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

This branch of law strives to promote glocalized legal mechanism to treat technology as per the demands of the region and in line with the international standardization.

The Central Asia Tech Law aims at reinforcing the legal principles and rule of law in the countries of Central Asia in accordance with applicable international

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<sup>1</sup> Central Asia Tech Law (CAT Law), What is Central Asia Tech Law?, <https://centralasiatechlaw.com/catlaw>

standards of technology regulations and by correlating with existing laws without compromising the legal sovereignty of Central Asian Law.

Central Asia Tech Law has following goals:

- 1: Facilitating the creation of a common techno- legal space between Central Asian states and increasing the understanding of technology regulations and ethics.
- 2: Promoting Tech Law as a reputable field of Legal Sciences in Central Asia
- 3: Promote efficient digitization of state institutions and public administration services
- 4: Techno- Legal Capacity building of all the stakeholders.

# THE RISE OF 5G IN CENTRAL ASIA: LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION NETWORK

**Ammar Younas<sup>1</sup>**

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5G in the next generation network but it took some time before it went mainstream in Central Asia. Although it has morphed into a security and political issues in some countries of Central Asia but demand for the fastest network has continued growing. Many people had reservation on the import of 5G technologies and surveillance systems from China but the overall picture of 5G scenario shows that the governments as well as private telecom companies are in a rush to introduce the 5G. All the Central Asian countries have introduced Smart City or Safe City projects and readily accepting the new innovation technologies including Automation, AI, Cloud Computing and Big Data under the umbrella of Digitalization. Here are some of the latest news and trends in 5G Technology adoption in Central Asia to understand where Central Asia stands in the global race of the fastest internet.

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## KAZAKHSTAN

In 2018, Kazakhstan took 21st [place](#) in the world ranking by the number of mobile subscribers. In Kazakhstan, the number of Internet users in 2018 amounted to 81.3% and Kazakhstan took 45th place in the world ranking.

In May 2019, during the Astana Economic Forum (AEF), Askar Mamin, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, connected to the 5G network in real time.

During the forum, Kazakhtelecom, together with Nokia, has [demonstrated](#) the capabilities of 5G technology. Before the forum, Kazakhtelecom which is the largest telecommunication company in Kazakhstan together with the Ministry of Digital Development, Defense and Aerospace Industry, developed and approved a 5G roadmap for testing in Kazakhstan. In November 2018, the company began research into the development of this network, which resulted in an [agreement](#) with Nokia on joint testing of 5G in Kazakhstan.

At the Government session that took place Oct. 1, 2019, the republican budget for 2019 was specified, the issues of providing broadband Internet access in the countryside and the development of 5G were also [considered](#). In this Government session, the issue of providing broadband Internet access in rural areas and the development of 5G was considered. Askar Mamin was informed that today in the country broadband access services are available in 117 cities and 3,324 rural settlements.

In order to further provide broadband Internet access to rural settlements in 2018-2021, it is planned to build fiber-optic lines and LTE (4G) networks. At the same time, a new generation of 5G communications is being developed to provide wireless broadband access, the Internet of things and the organization of high-speed technologies. Currently, 5G test tests are conducted in the cities of Nur-Sultan and Almaty, in October this year. They are planned to be held in Shymkent. By the end of 2022, 97% of rural settlements should be provided with Internet access. Prime Minister also said that the project of 5G internet will be [implemented](#) in capital by the year 2021.

## KYRGYZSTAN

In December 2019, Kyrgyzstan's State Committee for IT & Communications announced on its website that the State Commission on Radio Frequencies has decided to [allocate](#) frequencies in test mode for 5G mobile network operations while approving proposed measures for assisting the development of the Internet of Things (IoT), in accordance with the country's 2019-2023 Digital Transformation policy roadmap. The temporary licenses will permit usage of spectrum within the 3300MHz-5000MHz range.

In May 2020, the press service of the State Committee for Information Technologies and Communications of the country [reported](#) that 5G technology has not been introduced in Kyrgyzstan to date. It proceeded by saying, "To date, 5G technology has not been introduced in the Kyrgyz Republic. Telecommunications operators do not have the right to install and operate the equipment of 5G networks without the permission of the State Communications Agency of the Kyrgyz Republic, which to date has not given any permission."

MegaCom (the largest mobile carrier operating in Kyrgyz Republic covering over 99% of the population) has won a contract to partner with fixed line operator Kyrgyztelecom's KT Mobile subsidiary in developing nationwide cellular services. The deal will essentially enable KT Mobile to launch as an MVNO over MegaCom's network. Moderate growth is predicted over the next five years to 2024. Mobile broadband continues to grow strongly in Kyrgyzstan. The mobile broadband subscriber penetration has grown strongly over the past five years. 4G

networks now cover over 50% of the nation as the major mobile operators gain momentum in their rollouts. Strong growth is [predicted](#) over the next five years to 2024. The mobile broadband market will be driven by increasingly faster speeds offered by the mobile operators as they roll out 4G and eventually 5G networks and improving tariffs due to strong competition.

## TAJIKISTAN

From February 2020, a single zone in the central area of the Tajikistan capital Dushanbe now has [live](#) 5G, courtesy of MegaFon Tajikistan. But the service's availability depends on whether customers have compatible devices allowing them to access 5G mobile broadband data speeds.

Tajikistan's mobile sector has been on a strong growth path for over a decade. Previously, of all the former Soviet republics, Tajikistan's telecommunications infrastructure was arguably the [least](#) developed. With a telecom network that was near total collapse, the government had the daunting task of bringing it up to modern standards. Despite the launch of 4G/LTE services, the overall the telecom sector has continued to struggle. Tajikistan still has one of the lowest fixed-line penetrations in the Asian region and one of the lowest broadband levels of broadband penetration.

BuddeComm [reports](#), 'Tajikistan has seen a strong increase in mobile broadband penetration over the past four years, though the market is still at an early stage of development and penetration remains relatively low compared to other Asian nations'. It states that the outbreak of the Coronavirus in 2020 is having a significant impact on progress towards 5G, and slowed down the progress.

## TURKMENISTAN

In April 2019, South Korea [announced](#) that it will share its know-how in 5G network technology with Turkmenistan and contribute to the central Asian country's commercial satellite development plan, as part of its broader effort to make inroads into Central Asia. The move to expand cooperation comes as Science and ICT Minister Yoo Young-min and Durhanov Tahyrberdi, Ashgabat's minister of industry and communication, inked a memorandum of understanding.

Neytralny Turkmenistan newspaper [reported](#) that Turkmenistan plans to launch 5G communications in the near future. "In the communications and telecommunications sectors, modernization is planned with the use of 3G, 4G, and subsequently 5G — the fifth generation of mobile communications, high-speed Internet and other services. With the implementation of the project, communication coverage in the country will be 100 percent", — the newspaper said. The exact dates for the implementation of 5G networks are not indicated. Currently, Turkmenistan operates networks in CDMA, 2G, 3G and 4G LTE standards.

## UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan is very enthusiastic about 5G technology and the 5G promotion projects have been appreciated a lot by the government in recent years. During Belt and Road Forum in China in April 2019, President of Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev visited Huawei's Innovation Center and he supported the introduction of 5G into [Uzbekistan](#). All three state-operated Uzbek cell phone companies deepened 5G cooperation with Huawei. Two of the companies, [Uzmobile](#) and [Ucell](#) tested the 5G networks in 2019 to roll out the service commercially in 2020. The third cell phone company, UMS, [agreed](#) with Huawei to invest in new technology. In 2019, Huawei [announced](#) that its technology enables the communication of more than half of the population of Uzbekistan and celebrated its 19th year in Uzbekistan's

Last year, The Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications of the Republic of Uzbekistan [invited](#) operators, providers and suppliers of telecommunication equipment of Uzbekistan to submit proposals for the deployment of 5G networks in the country.

Earlier this year, the President of Uzbekistan issued a [Decree](#) 'On Measures for the Wide Implementation of Digital Technologies in the City of Tashkent' in order to promote the process of integration of 5G. This decree also proposes an infrastructure development to provide hospitals, clinics, kindergartens, schools with high-speed Internet, and to launch 5G.

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