

Minister Says 4G to Be Well Established by 2019

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Another project to improve telephony penetration involves free GSM public phones, funded by advertisements. **Vladimir Filonov**

The Communications and Press Ministry expects the entire Russian population to have access to 4G communications by 2018, Communications and Press Minister Nikolai Nikiforov said Wednesday. This is a goal contained in the ministry's "Goals of the Russian Communications and Press Ministry for 2012-2018."

"The task of the ministry is to create all the conditions necessary for 20 million people to gain the possibility of access to 4G Internet each year," a statement from the ministry said, Interfax reported.

A tender held in July for frequencies necessary to build the 4G network was won by MobileTeleSystems, Rostelecom, MegaFon and VimpelCom. The terms for the tender stipulate that 4G communications service is to be available in 2019 in all populated areas

in Russia with more than 50,000 residents.

In addition to providing high-speed mobile broadband access, one of the goals of the 4G rollout is to extend the availability of access to broader segments of the territory and the populace.

Meanwhile, the minister said venture capital investment in Russia's information technology sector will amount to around 40 billion rubles by 2018 versus 8 billion rubles in 2011.

Nikiforov said there is one complication: many such deals are done outside Russian jurisdiction. The ministry will have to work to get companies to remain within the country's jurisdiction, he added.

Among the goals for the development of this sector is doubling the number of IT specialists in Russia, the minister said. There are around 400,000 specialists now working directly for Russian IT companies, he said. Another roughly 800,000 are employed in related sectors. Increasing the average pace of IT-sector growth by 2018 is another goal, Nikiforov said, and it should be outstripping the rate of GDP growth three-fold by that time.

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