Moscow Metro to Create 4G Network

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Moscow metro will hold a competition to create a unified mobile network throughout the city's sprawling underground transport system, a source familiar with the metro's plans told Itar-Tass on Monday.

The planned competition was confirmed by two mobile operators, and a source close to the Moscow Department of Information Technology said that the winning company would be required to produce a network that provides 100 percent coverage on all three networks — 2G, 3G and 4G — by leveraging existing infrastructure to created a unified service that will be expanded to attain complete coverage on the metro.

The source said that estimates for the required infrastructure investment range up to 5 billion rubles ($142 million), with a period of return on investment ranging from 15 to 20 years. The competition will be held this summer.

The company that wins the contract will be tasked with building a mobile network offering 2G, 3G and 4G services in all stations and tunnels on the metro.

The metro began to roll out free Wi–Fi services aboard its trains in a bid to increase passenger connectivity in 2012 but mobile service is currently only available in 10 percent of the metro tunnels and 80 percent of the stations.

The Beijing metro offers mobile coverage in all of its stations and in 90 percent of its tunnels, while the Paris metro — often cited as a model for Moscow's metro expansion — has achieved 95 percent coverage in its stations and 90 percent in its tunnels.

The Moscow metro has undertaken an ambitious program of expansion recently, pledging to construct almost 80 new stations by 2020, for a total of 250 stations. City Hall has budgeted more than 130 billion rubles ($3.7 billion) on metro projects in 2014 alone. The construction of new metro lines is the most expensive item in the city construction budget, which for this year stands at 330 billion rubles.

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