

## Mobile Broadband Congestion to Worsen?

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ITU warns network bottlenecks will be increasingly unavoidable if governments don't support mobile broadband growth-- by accelerating fibre roll-out and allow greater spectrum availability.

Smartphone users consume an average of 5x more data capacity than non-smartphone mobile users, with the W.W. number of smartphones predicted to rise from today's 500m handsets to over 2bn by 2015. Operators are already trying to keep up with demand via multi-pronged strategies-- but not all are succeeding, especially in high-usage cities like London. This results in chronic network unavailability problems.

ITU also estimates W.W. mobile broadband subscriptions will reach 1bn by Q1 2011's end, as mobile signals cover 90% of the globe.

Currently 98 countries have National Broadband Plans-- a number set to increase over this year. Meanwhile European operators are already campaigning for the increase in spectrum for mobile communications, alongside harmonised spectrum allocations for latest-gen technologies. One suggestion is to allow access to unused broadcast spectrum-- a.k.a. "white-spaces"-- to help alleviate the spectrum squeeze.

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