

Girona joins the ‘5G Area’ project to boost the competitiveness of its key sectors via 5G

- The regional development project is promoted by the Ministry of the Vice Presidency and for Digital Policy and Territory of the Regional Government of Catalonia in collaboration with Mobile World Capital Barcelona, i2CAT Foundation, Girona Chamber of Commerce, Girona City Council, Girona Provincial Council, and AENTEG
- The geographic scope of the Girona 5G Area includes the districts of El Ripollès, La Garrotxa, L’Alt Empordà, El Baix Empordà, El Pla de l’Estany, La Selva, El Gironès and La Cerdanya
- The purpose of the 5G areas, which are to be established throughout Catalonia, is to promote this technology in the region through training and dissemination activities, workshops, concept trials, and laboratories.

Barcelona, 18 June 2021- A new extension to the 5G Area project was presented in Girona this morning. This project is promoted by the Regional Government of Catalonia, through the Ministry of the Vice Presidency and for Digital Policy and Territory, as part of the 5G Strategy of Catalonia. The Girona 5G Area involves the support and collaboration of [Mobile World Capital Barcelona](#), i2CAT Foundation, Girona Chamber of Commerce, Girona City Council, Girona Provincial Council, and the Association of New Technology Companies of Girona (AENTEG).

The 5G Areas are intended to enhance the Catalan 5G ecosystem and to turn Catalonia into an international benchmark for 5G technology. This means, in short, innovating from within the territory, for the territory. They seek to improve existing technological services throughout Catalonia, to promote commercial use of the 5G network and to encourage its deployment by promoting use cases and concept trials in real environments and stimulating a digital economy beyond the cities. The aim is to boost the local economy while bringing agents into contact with the ecosystem and promoting participation.

Along these lines, Daniel Marco, director general for Innovation and Digital Economy at the Regional Government of Catalonia, indicates that “the Vice Presidency of the Government is entering a new stage with the renewed, strengthened commitment to ensure a connected territory that offers equal opportunities for all citizens of Catalonia, wherever they may live. It is precisely the digital and technology sector and 5G that are creating most jobs, and we would like these new jobs to be created throughout Catalonia”.

Girona 5G Area Project

The Girona 5G Area has been established to improve citizen well-being and business competitiveness in the region. Companies will be able to transform their management and business models through dissemination meetings, workshops and pilot projects, making them more efficient and yielding new revenues.

This 5G will also help the region become a testing ground for future innovation projects. In fact, the project also seeks to monitor competitive funding opportunities relating to the challenges and capacities of the regions and institutions in the different Areas.

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The areas of knowledge in which the creation of use cases of 5G is focused are related to the driving forces behind the region's economy: tourism, culture and sports, industry 4.0 and food, and the mobility sector, with the Girona Area ATM or the future Mediterranean 5G Corridor. The mobility sector and water management will also play a key role. To pave the way, the institutions heading the project have contacted the key players in each of the aforementioned areas initially considered. Furthermore, anyone wishing to join or to learn more about the initiative may contact the Girona Chamber of Commerce, which is to coordinate the project locally.

Significant players in the selected areas are already interested in taking part in the initiative, such as the University of Girona, through the Polytechnic Board of Trustees and the Sectoral Campuses, as well as the Tourist Board Costa Brava Girona, ASETRANS, Girona Area ATM, the Blockchain Centre of Catalonia, and the Catalan Water Partnership.

"Girona Provincial Council has strongly supported fostering access to new technologies for some time now, because we believe it to be a priority area. Our goal is for all municipalities in the districts of Girona to be connected to the fibre-optic network in two years time, by 2023. The Girona 5G Area will help us ensure the province becomes a true technological region that benefits the general public, the authorities, and the business and associative network all on the same level", said Miquel Noguer, President of Girona Provincial Council.

According to Eduard Martín, CIO and 5G director of Mobile World Capital Barcelona, "Girona 5G Area will improve the most relevant economic sectors in the area through 5G technology. The initiatives being promoted through this project will have an extremely significant socioeconomic impact. They will also enable us to identify the 5G applications that will help make the region's business network more competitive, involving its players directly and helping them detect the benefits of this technology".

Rosa Paradell, Innovation Business Development director for the public sector of the i2CAT Foundation, added that "apart from being a key technology in itself, 5G is also encouraging many Advanced Digital Technologies (ADTs). The different pilots and projects being developed within the 5G Areas will therefore also help progress in the application and deployment of other technologies, such as artificial intelligence, drones, and IoT".

David Martí, president of the AENTEG, stated that "the Girona 5G Area is a good chance for the technological network in Girona to be able to test and improve its products and services, and to develop new ones, ensuring the growth of participating companies and attracting and recruiting new talent in the region. Our region has a large ITC network, second to Barcelona, with many different natural and professional attractions, and establishing this area will enable us to strengthen this leadership and grow, as well as attracting new talent to enhance the importance of the ITC network in our districts".

This project will join the Terres de l'Ebre, Ponent, Camp de Tarragona, Penedès, and Central Catalonia 5G Areas, which were announced in recent months and seek to boost and digitize areas that include the rural, livestock, agrifood, public health, commercial, logistics, tourism and energy sectors.

A collaborative project

The Girona 5G Area would not be possible without the combined work of the different institutions and players in the region, providing their skills and knowledge to boost the impact of 5G technology in the region.

To this end, Marta Madrenas, mayor of Girona, indicated that “in Girona, we are well aware of the fact that access to new technologies is essential in encouraging the promotion of the social and productive network as a whole, and tools such as 5G are infrastructures that ensure equal opportunities among regions, as they are our gateway to the entire world and provide possibilities for growth. Girona City Council has established different activities along these lines in order to promote new technologies, leading to us becoming the headquarters for the Blockchain Centre of Catalonia, and making us a benchmark city in this sector”

Jaume Fàbrega, president of the Girona Chamber of Commerce, stated that the Chamber of Commerce of Girona and all the institutions involved in the initiative seek to “include the largest number of players, with the corresponding needs and potential, to make the most of the possibilities that this technology will provide in all areas of society”. Fàbrega encouraged corporations, small enterprises and the self-employed alike to rethink their future projects with the advantages of this new technology in mind.

The 5G Areas are expected to become both long-lasting structures throughout Catalonia with a model of public and private co-investment and also benchmarks for disseminating and providing training in the potential offered by this technology, its facilitating and integrating nature and its capacity to generate new business models. It is also a tool in fighting the depopulation of these areas, encouraging digital talent to settle to respond to the region’s digital transformation.

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With the support of the public and private sector, MWCcapital focuses on four areas: the acceleration of innovation through digital entrepreneurship, the transformation of industries through digital technology, the rise of digital talent among new generations and professionals, and the reflection on the impact of technology in our society. Collectively, our programmes are positively transforming the economy, education and society.

MWCcapital hosts MWC in Barcelona and founded 4 Years From Now (4YFN), the startup business platform, present at MWC events around the world.

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