

'Huge' opportunity as five billion to go online by 2020: Google

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Director of Google Europe, Matt Brittin (C), speaks during the opening of the start-up center Google Campus Warsaw on November 19, 2015

The world's online population will double to five billion by 2020 presenting "huge" business opportunities for tech start-ups on the cutting edge of the unprecedented expansion, the head of Google Europe said Thursday.

"The connected population is going to double in five years. Five billion online. Everyone with the entire Internet in their pockets," Google Europe president Matt Brittin said in Warsaw as he opened his company's fifth "[campus](#)" for IT start-ups.

"That's a huge opportunity," he said, adding that "this is a transformational period."

"Five years where we'll go from a minority to a majority of the people on the planet being connected. That's why the moment is now for start-ups to look up and out and think about that market of five billion people that you can connect with in the next five years."

Google chose a renovated vodka distillery in a poorer area of the Polish capital for its first "campus" for IT business start-ups in eastern Europe.

The facility is one of five tech hubs the global IT giant has created worldwide, with a sixth planned to open in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in the first half of 2016.

Google, which got its start in a garage, provides tech start-ups with low cost or free-of-charge spaces to meet and work at the campuses, along with business mentoring.

Brittin said that although Google is a search engine, it has also become "a growth engine for entrepreneurs and for the economy".

"Today we see millions of companies who are growing and exporting by accessing tools, talent, technology, sales and distribution around the world. We call them the 'micro-multinationals'. Every start-up can be global from its birth."

Poland's new Minister for Development, Mateusz Morawiecki, said he

hoped the [tech](#) hub would help stem the [brain drain](#) of young Poles to western Europe in search of better opportunities.

Over two million Poles have moved west, mostly to wealthier Britain and Germany, since their country joined the European Union in 2004.

"I see Campus Google as an opportunity for Polish and central European 'micro-multinationals' ...to curb brain drain," Morawiecki said at the facility's opening.

The US company opened its first start-up campus in London in 2012, which has created 1,800 jobs so far according to Google, followed by ones in Tel Aviv, Seoul and Madrid.

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