

PRESS RELEASE / 16 JULY 2026

MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS QUALITY OF SERVICE: AN INDEPENDENT BENCHMARK

Overview

The Malta Communications Authority (MCA) concluded its second independent benchmark on the Quality of Service (QoS) of mobile communications. The benchmark assessed the quality of voice and data services by mobile service providers in and across Malta and Gozo against internationally recognised standards.

Building on the first benchmark, it provides an updated snapshot on the quality of mobile services, including whether this has improved since the previous benchmark.

Mobile Communications: An Evolving Landscape

Mobile networks have evolved from primarily supporting voice calls to enabling data-intensive services such as real-time communications, social media, video streaming and cloud-based applications. As users increasingly depend on these services while on the move, independent benchmarking is essential to assess network performance and encourage continued improvement.

The Benchmarking Exercise

Following a public tender in 2024, the MCA commissioned Systemics-PAB, an international specialised company in mobile QoS benchmarking to conduct this exercise. This assessment serves two primary objectives:

1. To provide users with a snapshot of the best-available mobile quality of service at a given point in time.
2. To support the MCA in evaluating whether future regulatory measures relating to QoS may be warranted.

Measurements were conducted in December 2025 without operators being informed of the specific testing period, helping to ensure objective results. Testing involved drive tests throughout Malta and Gozo, together with walk tests in less accessible areas, where an expert carried specialised testing equipment in a backpack. In total, approximately 1,500 kilometres were covered.

The measurements followed established ETSI standards, consistent with the previous benchmark to ensure comparability. However, while the previous benchmark focused only on traditional voice calls, this exercise tested voice calls using the most advanced technology available (VoLTE), while still allowing calls to fall back to traditional networks where necessary.

Testing used the highest available consumer postpaid plans to assess maximum network performance; results may therefore not necessarily reflect a typical mobile user experience.

Benchmarking Results: Performance Highlights

Epic emerged as the top overall performer, with GO a close second and Melita ranking third. The results also confirmed notable overall improvement since the previous benchmark, particularly in regional performance and voice-related measures.

- **Voice services:** Epic led in voice call experience followed by GO. Compared with the previous benchmark, the results show better voice performance across all regions and operators, with reduced call set-up time and improved voice quality. All operators delivered comparable results in key voice indicators, with Epic recording the strongest overall outcome.
- **Data throughput:** Epic led in data throughput, followed by GO. The highest download throughput was recorded in the Northern Harbour region, with lower speeds in the other regions.
- **Browsing, Streaming and eGaming:** GO ranked first for browsing, video streaming and online gaming, followed by Epic.
- **OTT and data transfer performance:** Epic led in data transfer and internet-based calling through WhatsApp, followed by GO.
- **Geographical Consistency:** Epic recorded the most consistent scores across the different regions, followed by GO. Gozo and Western regions showed marked improvement since the previous benchmark, although they continued to show the lowest levels of 5G deployment. All operators provided robust nationwide 4G coverage.

Concluding Remarks

Overall, the benchmarking results show that Epic continued to rank highest, with GO following closely. They also demonstrate a general improvement in mobile QoS performance when compared with the previous benchmark, particularly in voice performance, call set-up time and regional performance.

The benchmarking results offer important insight into the performance of Malta's mobile network operators. Besides helping consumers making informed choices, independent benchmarking encourages operators to continue improving their services.

The MCA will carry out a third mobile Quality of Service benchmarking exercise to assess further QoS improvements during the fourth quarter of 2026, reaffirming its commitment to monitoring progress and supporting the ongoing improvement of mobile services across Malta and Gozo.