

April 2026



Barometer of mobile Internet connections in South Africa

04/01/2025 - 03/31/2026



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1. Introducing nPerf



An independent authority in network performance

nPerf is an independent French Internet performance measurement platform, powered by real user experience. By turning millions of individual measurements into connectivity insights, nPerf helps operators enhance their networks and contributes to building a faster, more reliable Internet for everyone.

 **300k+** tests daily
worldwide.

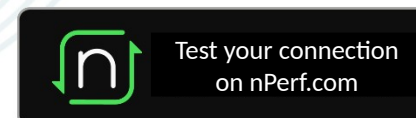
 **26Md+** coverage
scans in total.

 **3k+** servers all
around the world.

A comprehensive suite of tools to measure real-world connectivity

nPerf provides a complete ecosystem of complete measurement tools designed to capture the true quality of fixed, mobile, and Wi-Fi connections with precision, reaching speeds of up to 10 Gbps.

Users test. Operators learn. Everyone benefits.



2. Executive Summary



The subscribers of Cell C and MTN enjoyed the best Mobile Internet performances in 2026 in South Africa.

Mobile Internet performance in South Africa

	Cell C	MTN	Telkom	Vodacom
▼ Download bitrates (Mb/s)	24.83	41.26	10.15	38.99
▲ Upload bitrates (Mb/s)	9.94	11.19	3.79	8.12
◀▶ Latency (ms)	44.32	67.67	67.03	84.21
🌐 Web browsing (%)	39.49	39.36	35.31	39.38
📺 Youtube streaming (%)	69.92	67.12	56.35	68.20
📶 nPerf Score (nPoints)	48 016	48 153	27 627	45 488

Source : nPerf.com



Best Mobile Internet performance in 2026



Source : nPerf.com

nPerf Podium



Source : nPerf.com

The subscribers of Cell C enjoyed the best 4G Internet in 2026 in South Africa.

Mobile Internet performance in South Africa

	Cell C	MTN	Telkom	Vodacom
 Download bitrates (Mb/s)	25.53	31.65	10.27	21.35
 Upload bitrates (Mb/s)	10.31	9.56	3.92	6.72
 Latency (ms)	44.22	74.45	67.32	94.66
 Web browsing (%)	40.11	38.20	35.63	38.27
 Youtube streaming (%)	70.52	66.65	56.87	67.40
 nPerf Score (nPoints)	48 975	43 987	28 052	38 298

Source : nPerf.com

The best mobile Internet performance in South Africa for the period April 2025 – March 2026 reveals a highly competitive landscape, with MTN and Cell C sharing the top spot overall while each operator carves out its own strengths across key network performance indicators. This edition of the nPerf barometer highlights a sector in motion, where leadership is contested metric by metric and meaningful progress is visible across the board – particularly on download speeds.

MTN: A landmark first-place finish overall

For the first time, MTN reaches the summit of the nPerf overall ranking, sharing co-leadership with Cell C in South Africa's mobile barometer. This milestone is backed by standout figures: MTN records the highest Download speed (Mb/s) overall at 41.26 Mb/s and leads Upload speed (Mb/s) at 11.19 Mb/s – both category firsts for the operator. MTN also tops Web Browsing (%) overall for the first time, confirming that its network improvements are translating into real-world user experience gains. In the 4G segment specifically, MTN claims the best Download speed (Mb/s) at 31.65 Mb/s, again a first, underlining the depth of its network investment cycle.

Cell C: Consistent quality, year after year

Cell C shares co-leadership overall with MTN this year, a position reinforced by its dominance in the metrics that matter most to everyday users. The operator leads overall on Latency (ms) – its best in five consecutive years – as well as Web Browsing (%) and Youtube streaming (%), both held for five years running. In the 4G segment, Cell C retains first place for the fifth straight year, topping Upload speed (Mb/s), Latency (ms), Web Browsing (%) and Youtube streaming (%). A particularly notable development this year is a strong improvement in Upload speed (Mb/s) overall, up 15% versus the previous period, a sign that Cell C's network is maturing across multiple dimensions. Its overall score has also followed a steady upward trend across all five years of available data, reflecting long-term structural progress.

Vodacom: Breakthrough in user experience metrics

Vodacom enters the rankings with a renewed focus on user-facing performance. The operator claims first place overall in Web Browsing (%) and Youtube streaming (%) – both category wins achieved for the first time. These results signal that Vodacom's network, while trailing on raw speed metrics overall, is delivering a quality browsing and streaming experience that rivals the sector leaders. With an overall score of 45,488, Vodacom holds third place, ahead of Telkom, and demonstrates meaningful competitive presence in the 4G segment as well.

Telkom: Room to grow in a demanding sector

Telkom finishes fourth in the overall ranking with a score of 27,627, posting the lowest figures across Download speed (Mb/s), Upload speed (Mb/s), Web Browsing (%) and Youtube streaming (%), both overall and in the 4G segment. While the operator maintains a competitive Latency (ms) profile – ranking second overall – the gap to the top three remains significant across most indicators.

What to watch in the year ahead

The South African mobile sector is entering a new phase of competition. For MTN, the priority will be to consolidate its newly won leadership across all metrics – particularly on Latency (ms) and Youtube streaming (%), where rivals still hold an edge. Cell C must focus on sustaining its five-year dominance in the 4G segment while continuing to close the gap on Download speed (Mb/s), where MTN and Vodacom remain stronger. Vodacom has made clear progress on experience metrics, but improving its Upload speed (Mb/s) and reducing Latency (ms) – currently the highest among the top three at 84.21 ms overall – will be essential to mount a genuine challenge at the top. Telkom, meanwhile, faces the steepest climb: closing the performance gap on speed and usage metrics will be critical if the operator is to remain relevant in an increasingly demanding competitive environment.

4. Methodology



nPerf provides a free application to assess Internet connection quality via its website and mobile apps (Android, iOS). Daily, thousands of people rely on nPerf for speed tests in their country, contributing to a comprehensive crowdsourced database covering all operators.

The study employs a strong filtering method to reflect real customer experiences on a specific network (mobile or fixed line). Measures are taken to prevent probes and measurement robots from affecting the results.

We assess:

▼ Download bitrate

Indicates the amount of data your connection can receive in one second from the nPerf server. The highest the measured value, the best is the bitrate of your connection.

▲ Upload bitrate

Indicates the amount of data your connection can send in one second to the nPerf server. The highest the measured value, the best is the bitrate of your connection.

◄► Latency (ping)

It indicated the delay a small packet of data requires to make a round-trip from your computer to the nPerf server. The shorter the delay, the most reactive your connection is. The mean is the minimum value.

🌐 Browsing performance

The browsing test assesses the load time of the fully loaded pages, including images, javascript, CSS, and fonts, for the five most popular sites. This indicator reflects the perceived quality by the user.

📺 Streaming performance

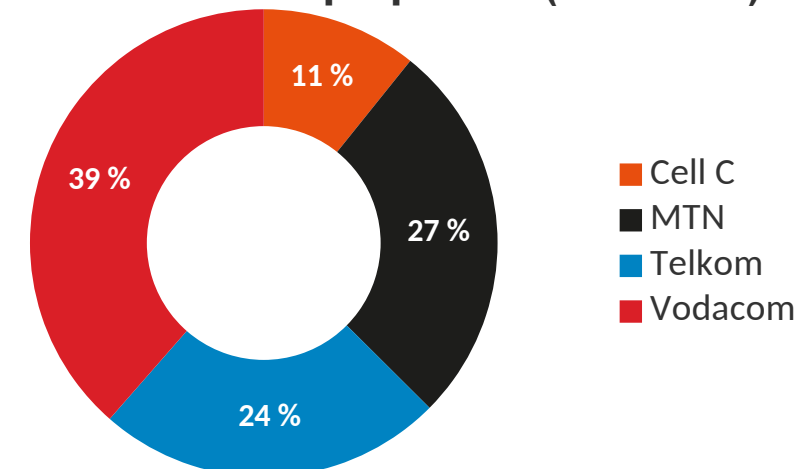
The video streaming test gauges the load time of a fully loaded video in three resolutions on YouTube, considering stalls during playback. This indicator reflects the perceived quality by the user.

Statistical precision is crucial in accurately determining winners. At nPerf, we prioritize test quality, precise reporting, and transparency. Analyzing a large volume of tests in this study, we've achieved 1.5% precision for absolute values and 1% point for percentage-based results, highlighting the reliability and accuracy of our data.

For a more comprehensive understanding of the user experience, our report takes into account test results during both Busy Hours (6 PM to 11 PM) and Idle Hours (the rest of the day). Busy Hours, marked by network strain, can impact user experience through congestion. This approach helps in understanding how network performance fluctuates throughout the day.

We only include national Internet service providers with test share above 5% share. The chart below shows the overall test distribution for each service provider.

Overall distribution of the tests per provider (ISPs Share)



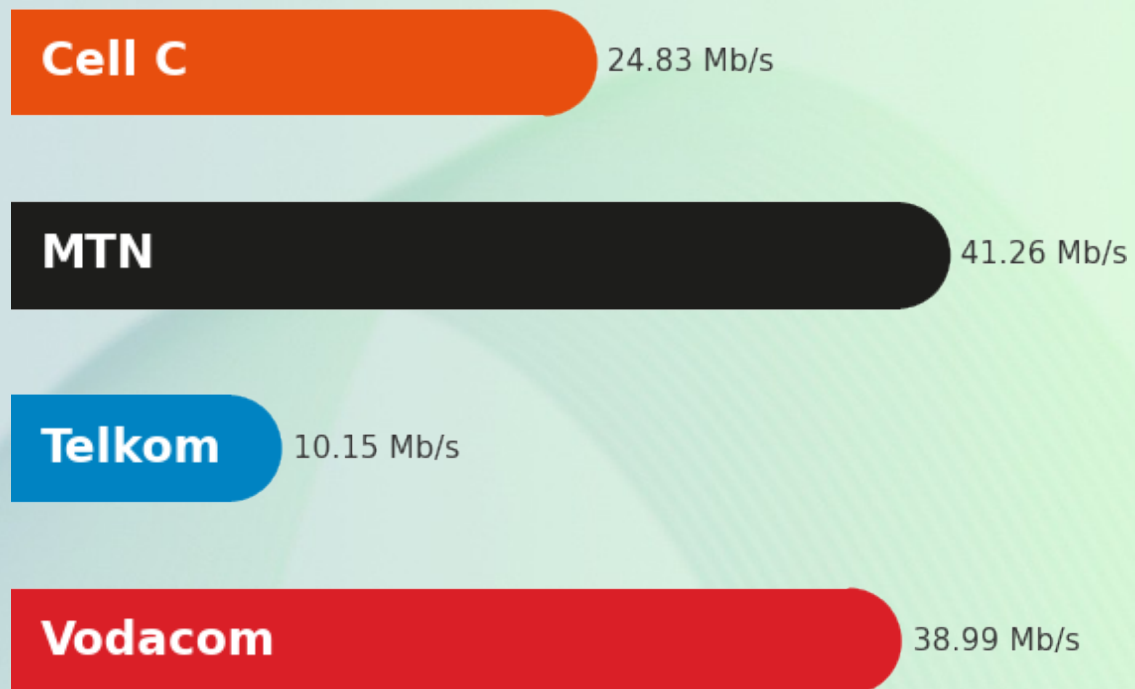
Source : nPerf.com



Download Speed



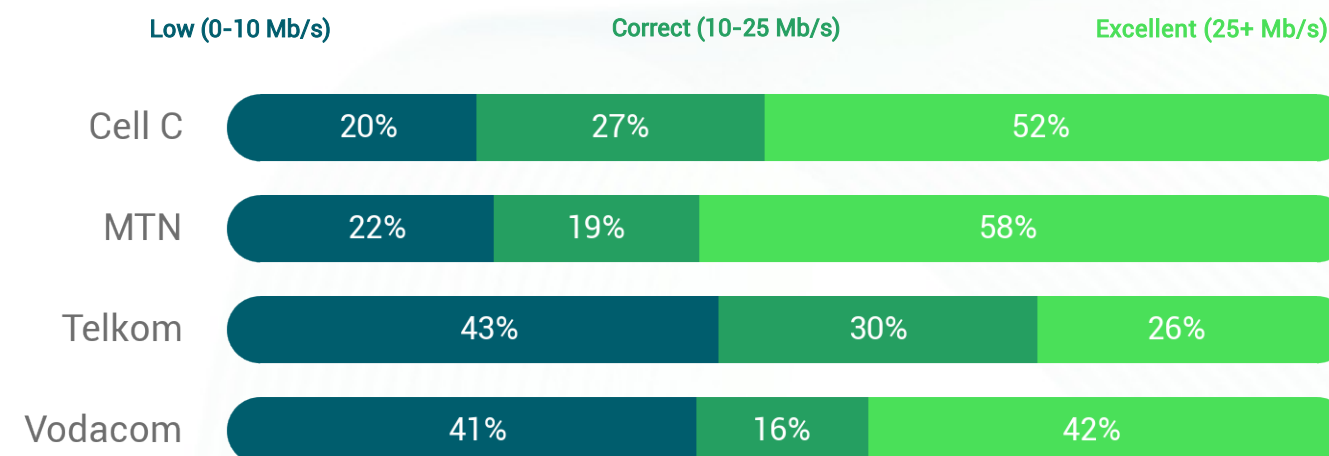
Download Speed (average)



Source : nPerf.com

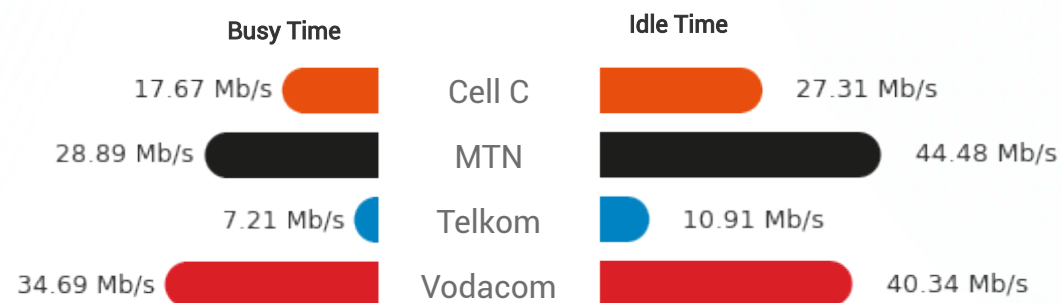
The subscribers of MTN enjoyed the best Mobile Internet Download Speed in 2026.

Download Speed results distribution (average)



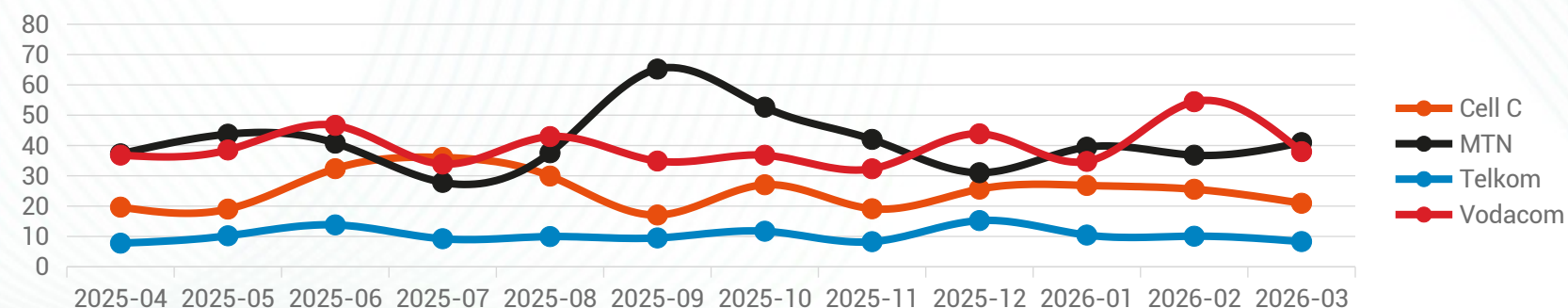
Source : nPerf.com

Download Speed (average)



Source : nPerf.com

Download Speed evolution over the year (average)



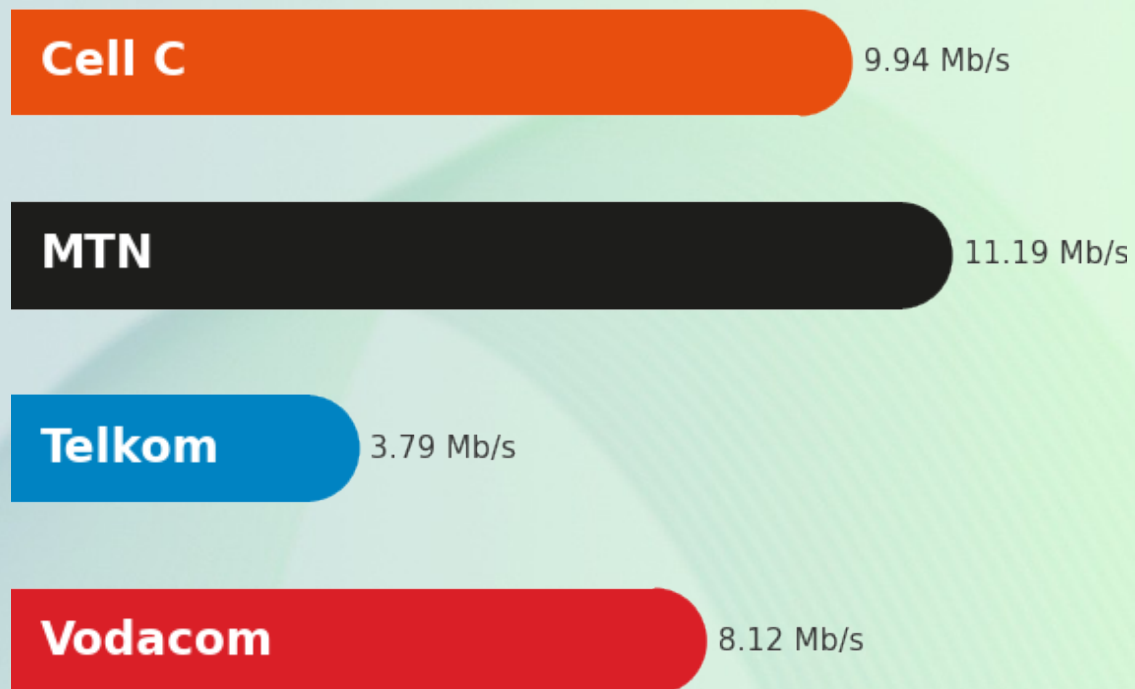
Source : nPerf.com



Upload Speed



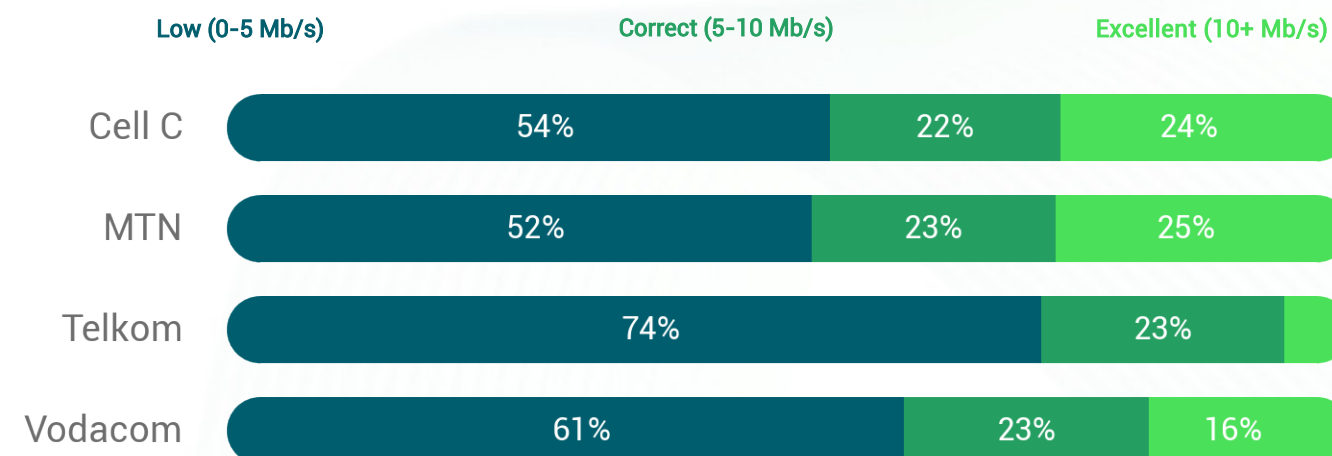
Upload Speed (average)



Source : nPerf.com

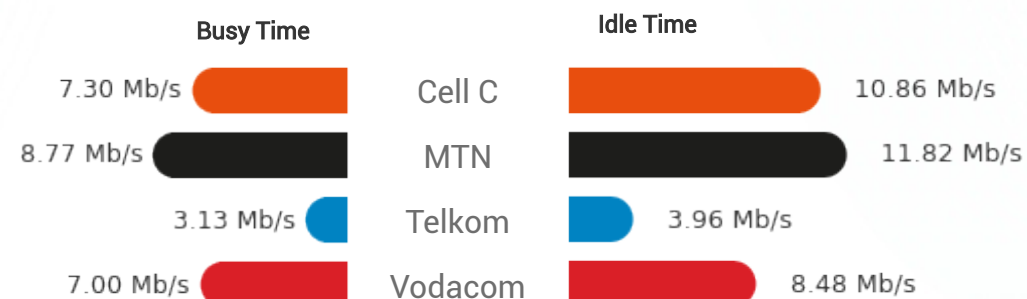
The subscribers of MTN enjoyed the best Mobile Internet Upload Speed in 2026.

Upload Speed results distribution (average)



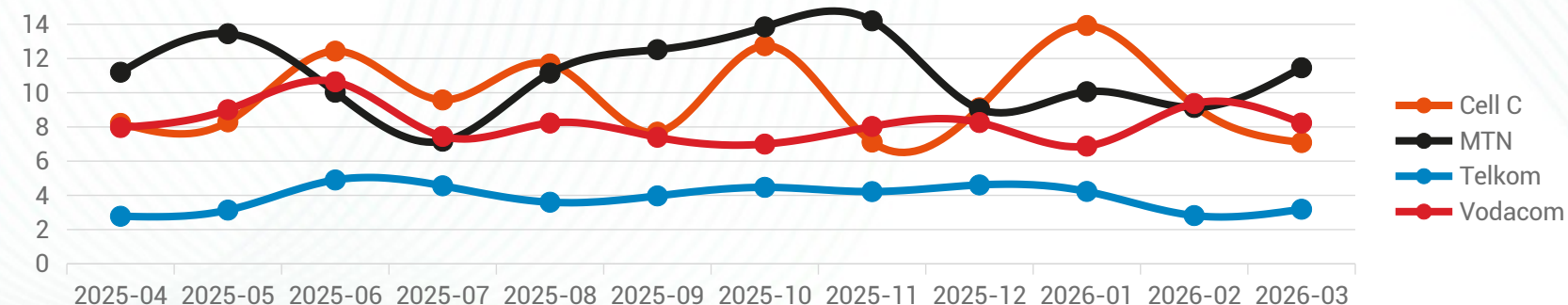
Source : nPerf.com

Upload Speed (average)



Source : nPerf.com

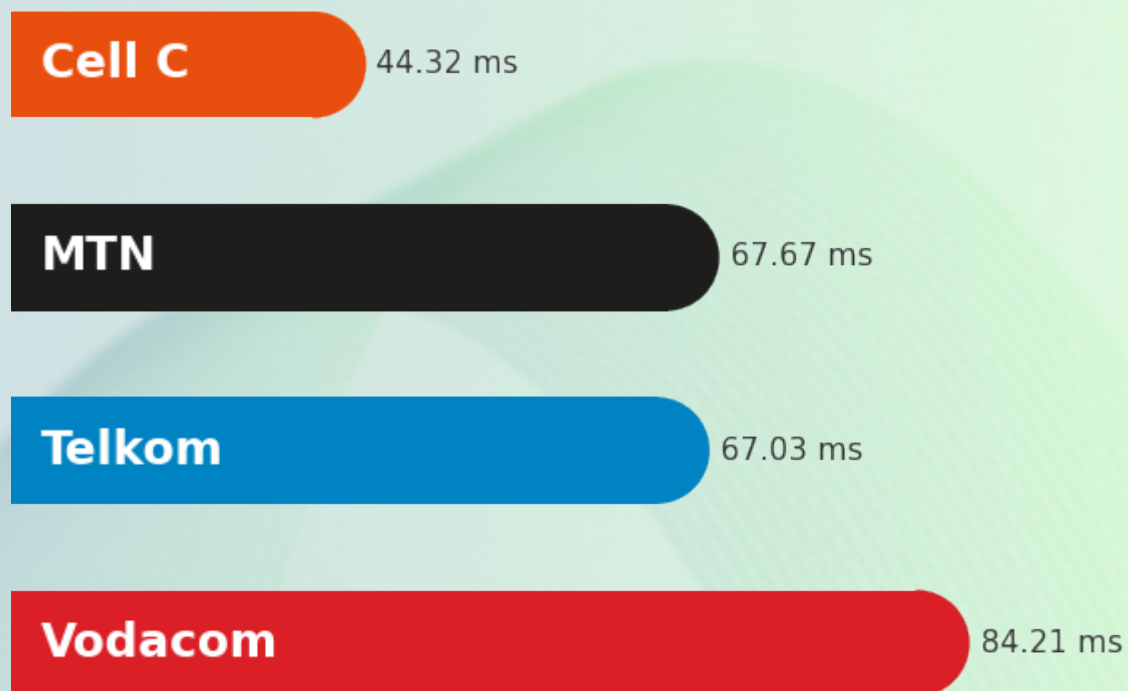
Upload Speed evolution over the year (average)



Source : nPerf.com



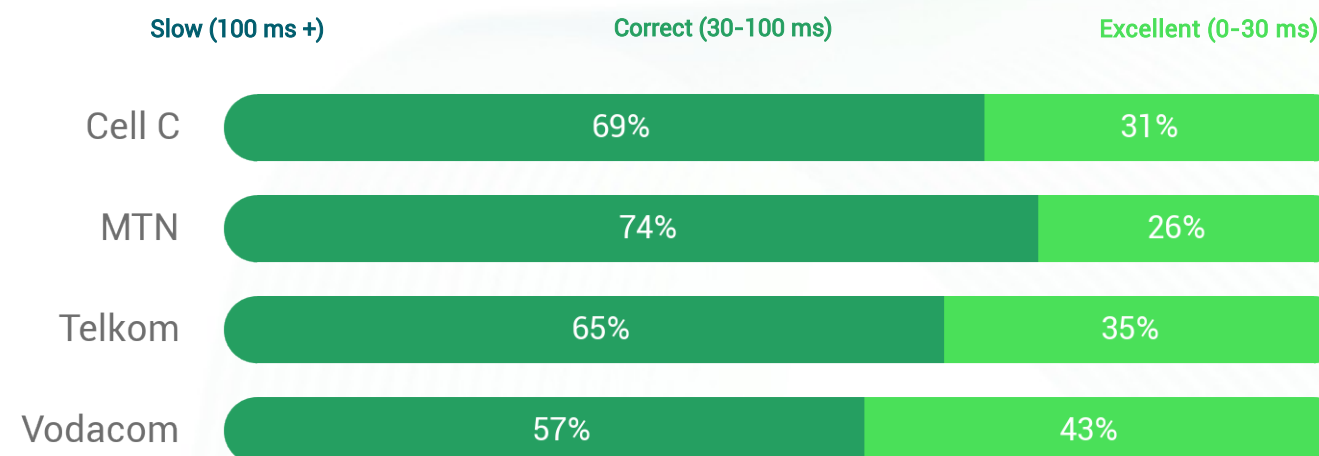
Latency (average)



Source : nPerf.com

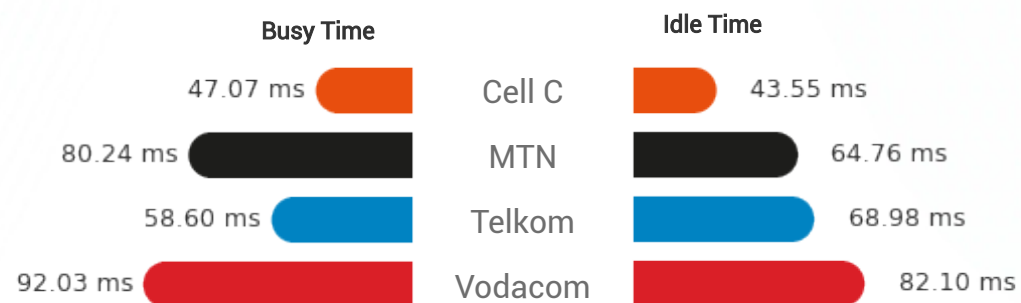
The subscribers of Cell C enjoyed the best Mobile Internet Latency in 2026.

Latency results distribution (average)



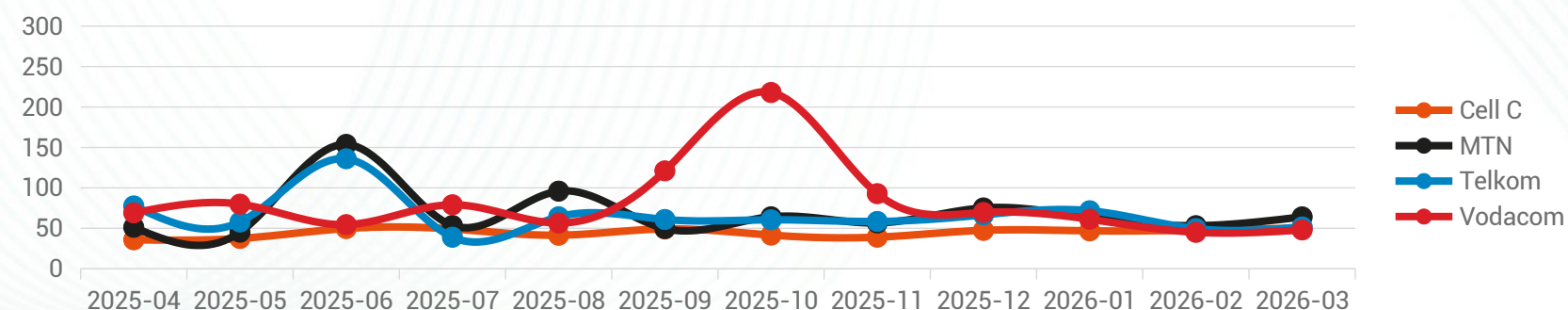
Source : nPerf.com

Latency (average)



Source : nPerf.com

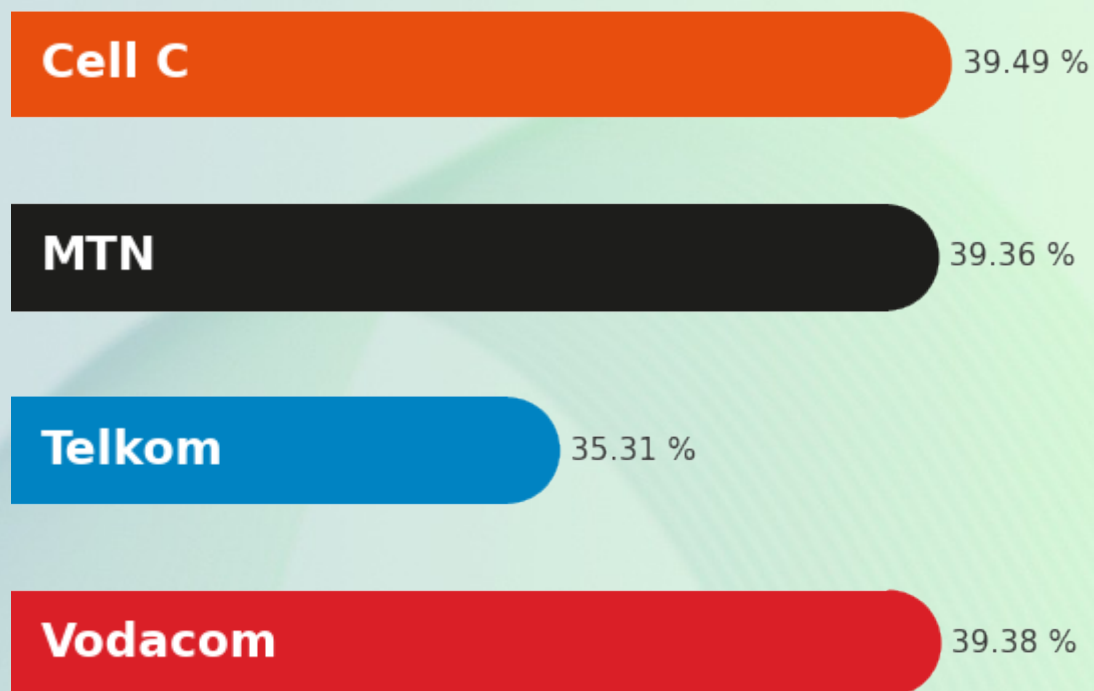
Latency evolution over the year (average)



Source : nPerf.com



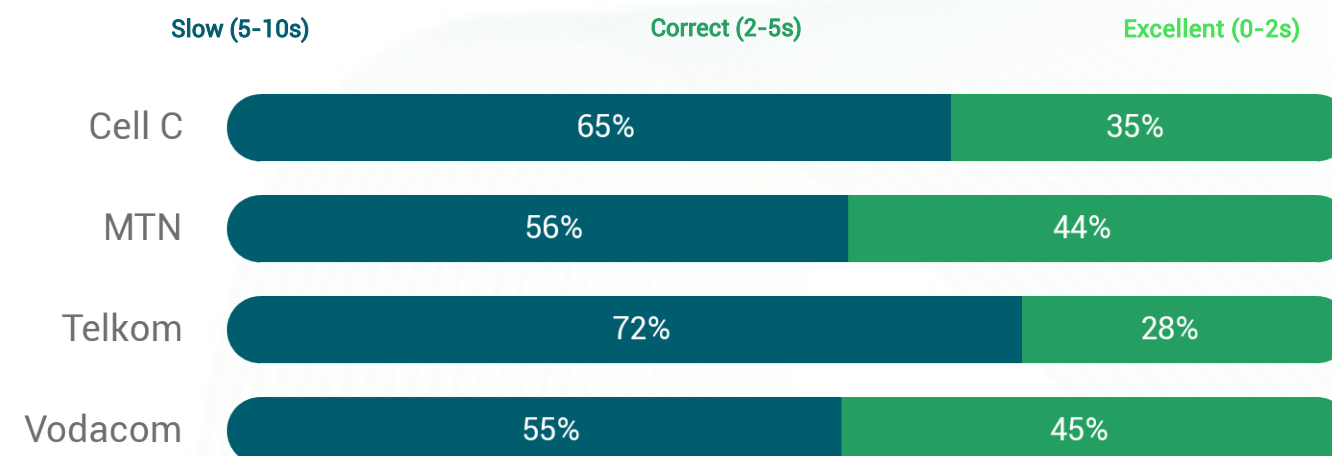
Browsing Performance (average)



Source : nPerf.com

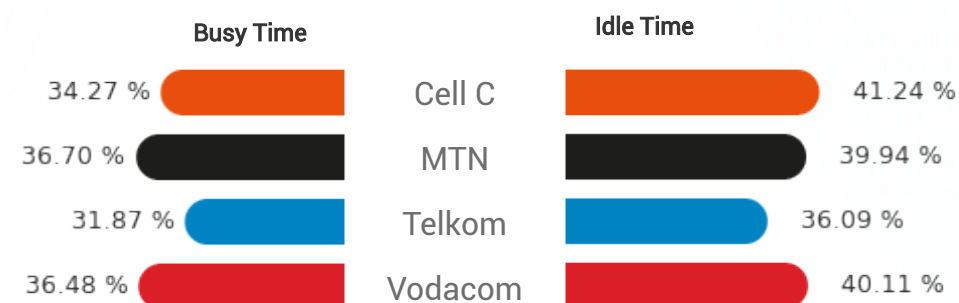
The subscribers of Cell C, MTN and Vodacom enjoyed the best Mobile Internet Browsing Performance in 2026.

Browsing Performance results distribution (average)



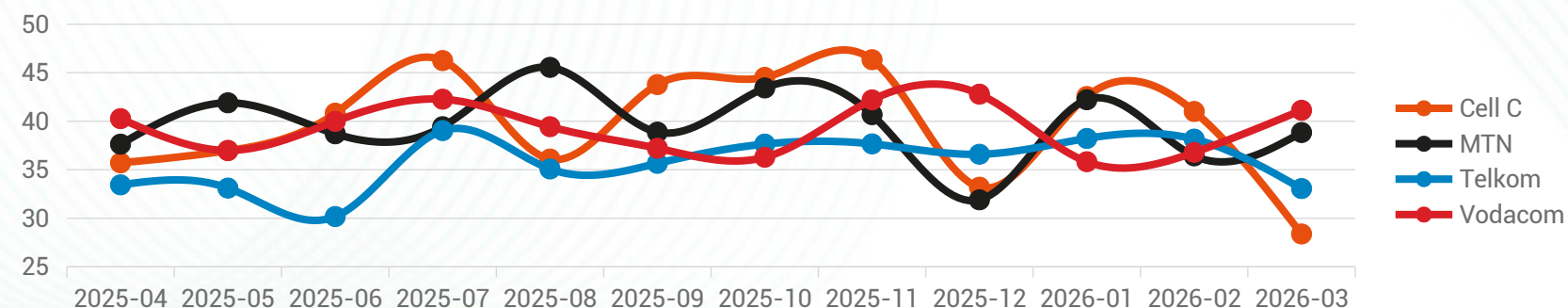
Source : nPerf.com

Browsing Performance (average)



Source : nPerf.com

Browsing Performance evolution over the year (average)



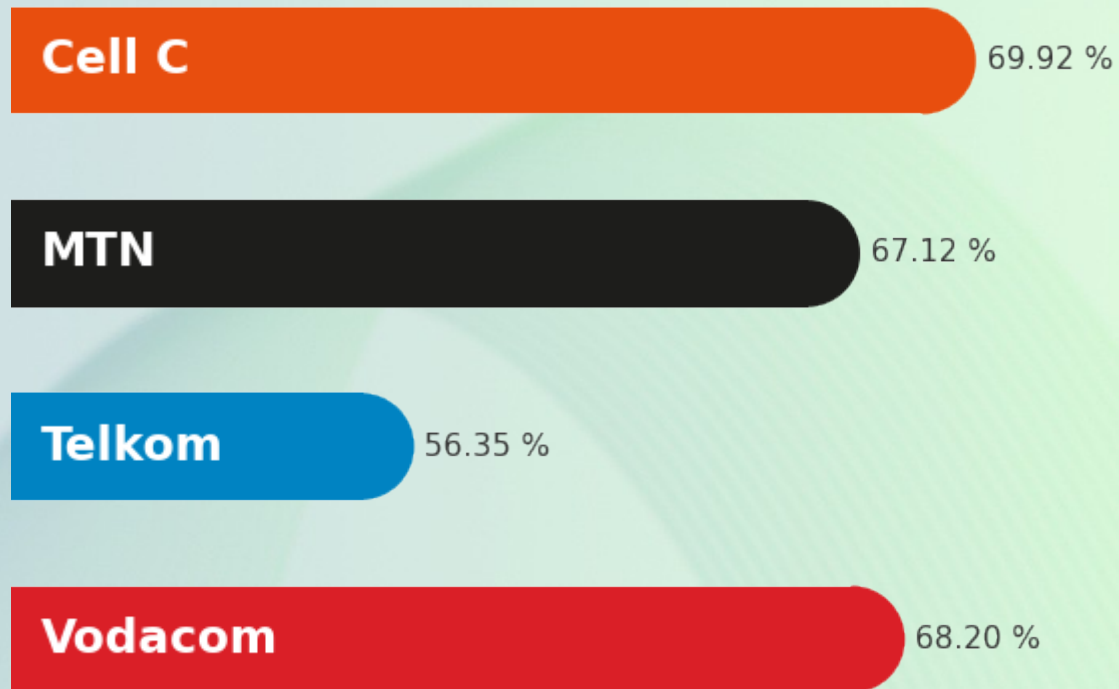
Source : nPerf.com



Streaming Performance



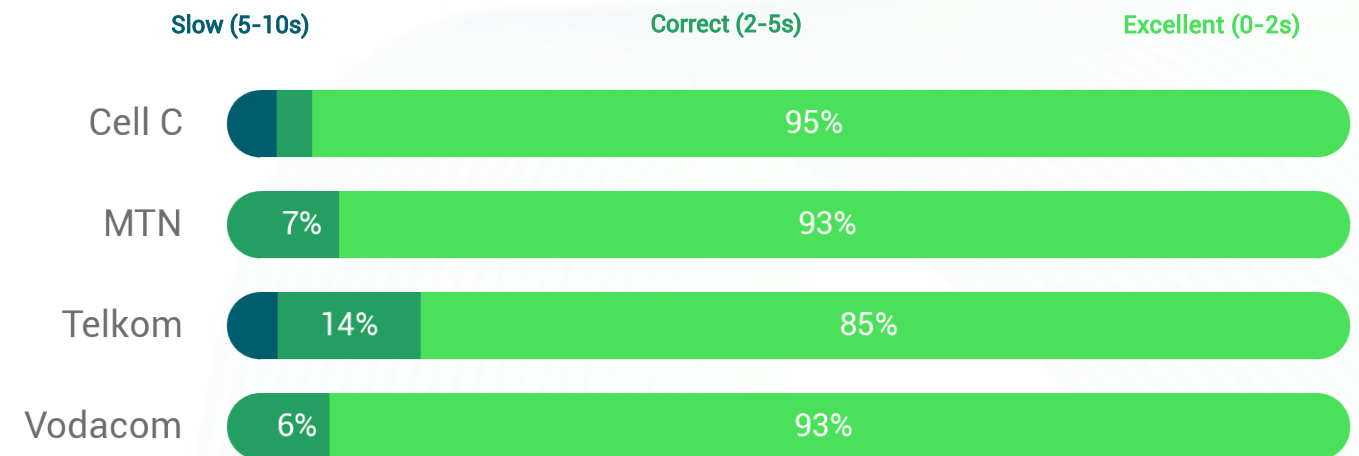
Streaming Performance (average)



Source : nPerf.com

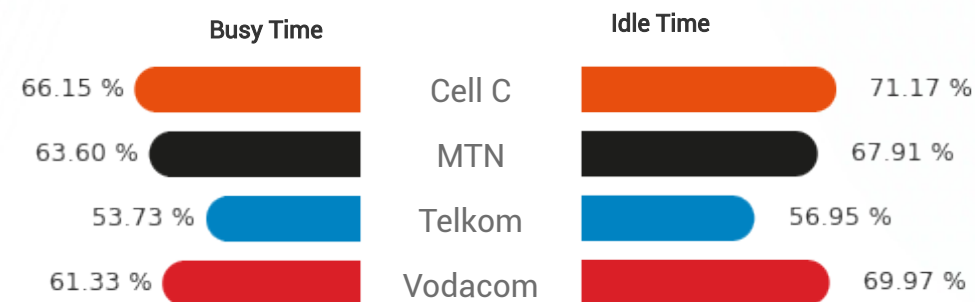
The subscribers of Cell C and Vodacom enjoyed the best Mobile Internet Streaming Performance in 2026.

Streaming Performance results distribution (average)



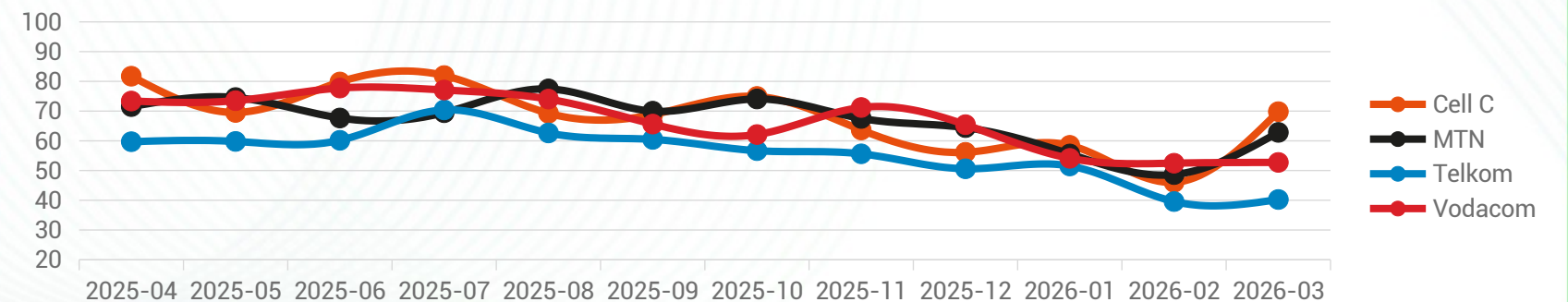
Source : nPerf.com

Streaming Performance (average)



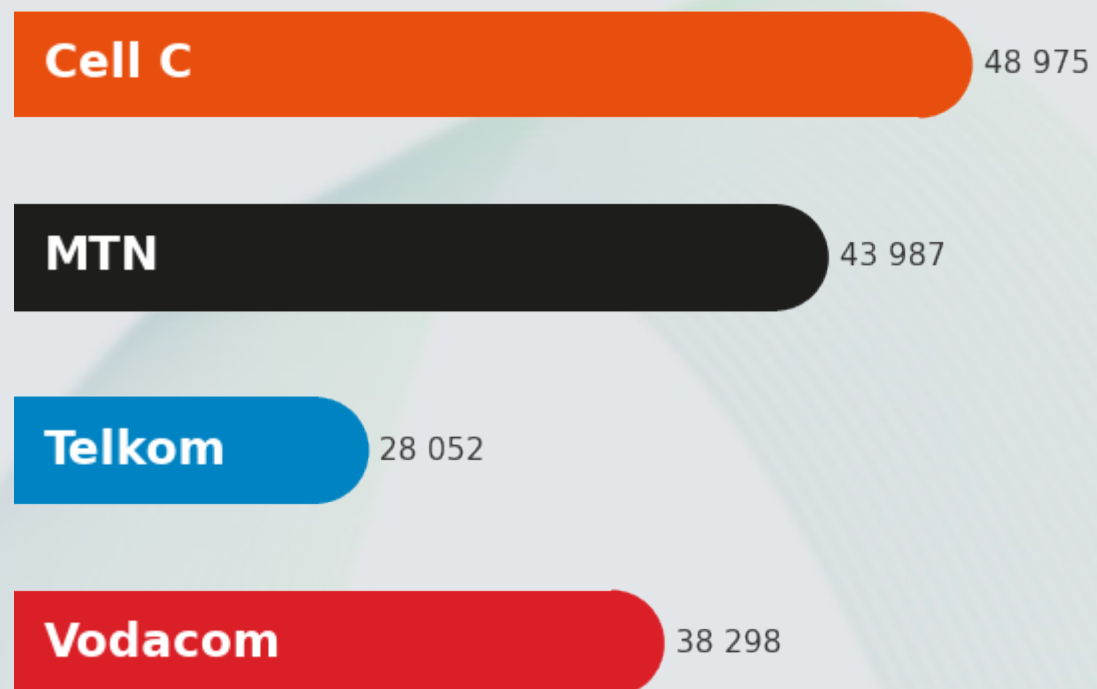
Source : nPerf.com

Streaming Performance evolution over the year (average)



Source : nPerf.com

nPerf Score (nPoints)



Source : nPerf.com

The subscribers of Cell C enjoyed the best 4G Internet in 2026.

Best performances 4G: Cell C

Fastest performances (Download Speed) 4G: MTN

Fastest performances (Upload Speed) 4G: Cell C

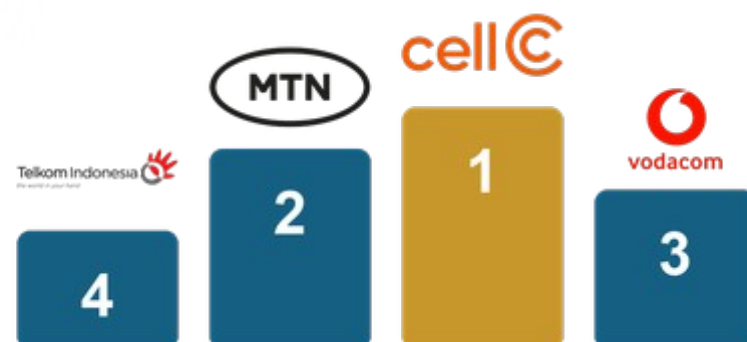
4G connections with the lowest latency: Cell C

Best web browsing performances 4G: Cell C

Best streaming performances 4G: Cell C

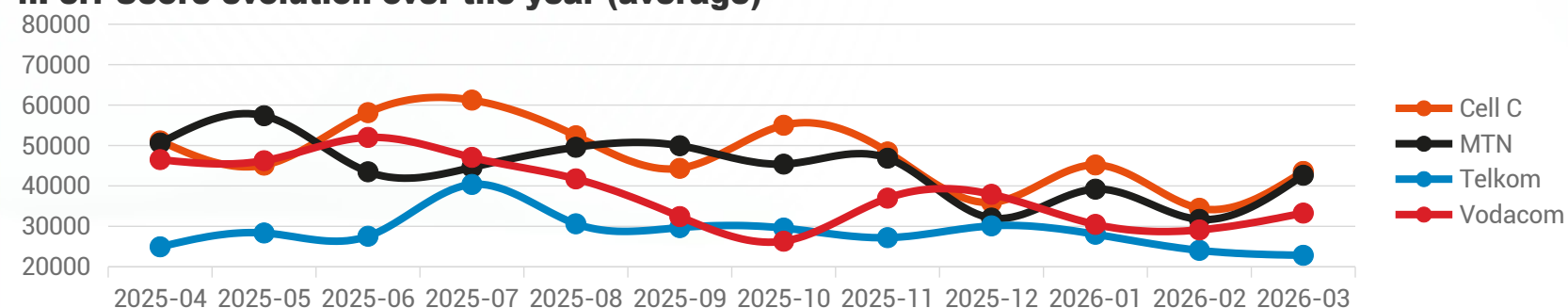
Source : nPerf.com

nPerf Podium



Source : nPerf.com

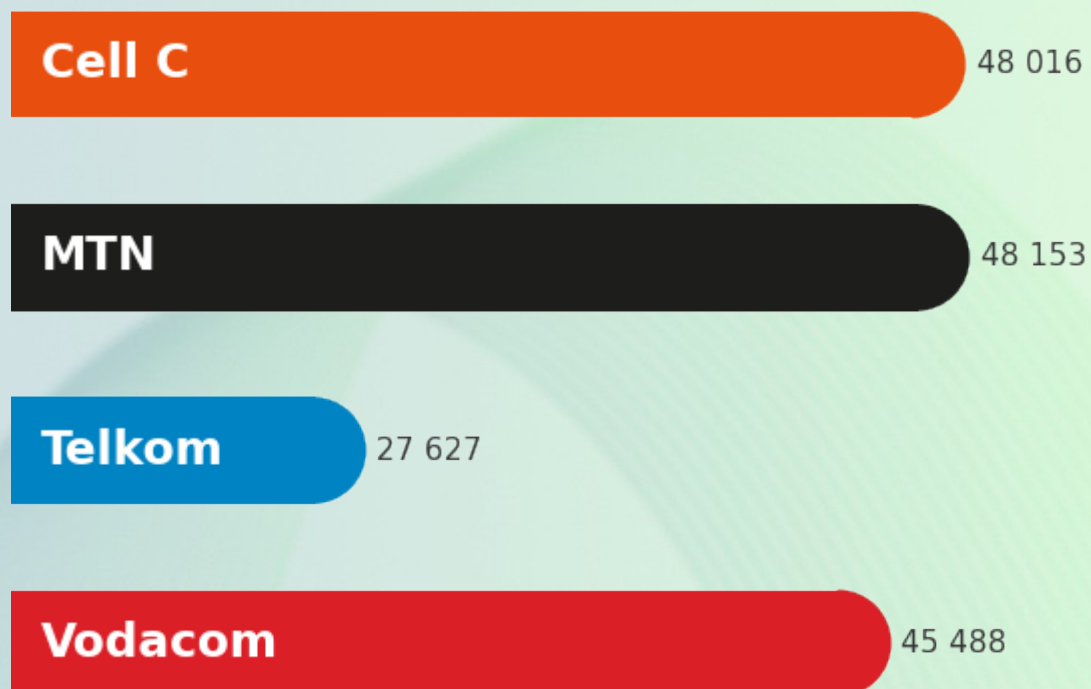
nPerf Score evolution over the year (average)



Source : nPerf.com



nPerf Score (nPoints)



Source : nPerf.com

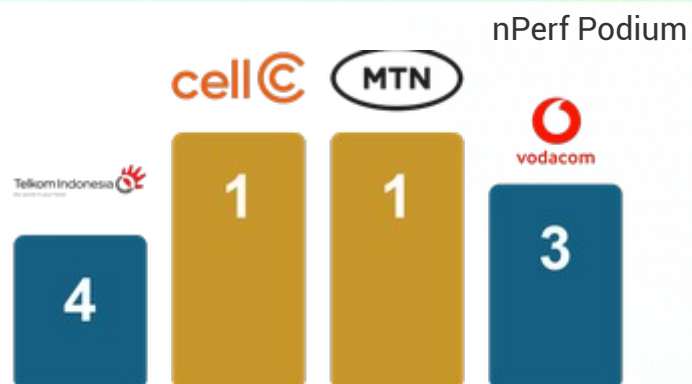
The subscribers of Cell C and MTN enjoyed the best Mobile Internet performances in 2026.

The nPerf score takes into account the measured bitrates, the latency and the QoE tests. The value of the points for the rates and the latency is calculated on a logarithmic scale, to better represent the perception of the user. Thus, this score reflects the overall quality of the connection experienced by the user.

Source : nPerf.com

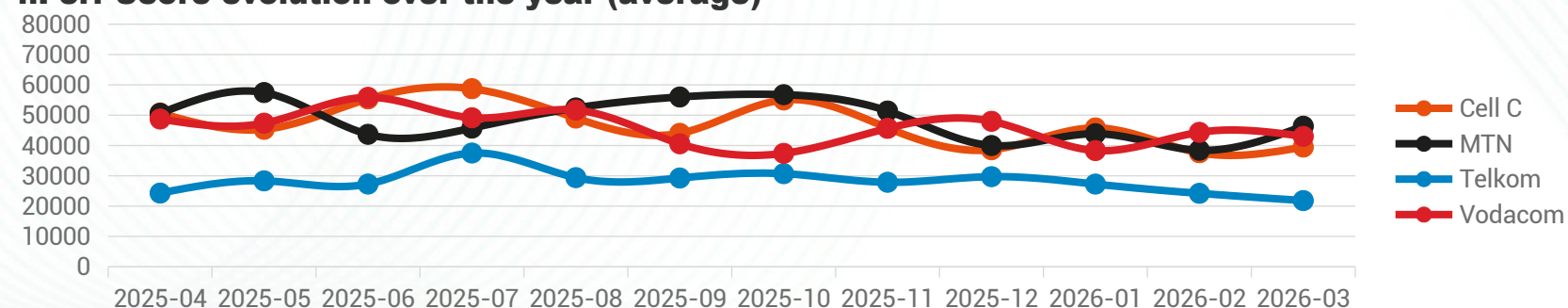


Best Mobile Internet performance in 2026



Source : nPerf.com

nPerf Score evolution over the year (average)



Source : nPerf.com

