



Edge-Assisted 6G IoT Networks for Ultra-Reliable Low-Latency Communication

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Abstract

The advent of 6G networks promises unprecedented data rates, ultra-low latency, and massive connectivity, enabling next-generation IoT applications such as autonomous vehicles, remote surgery, and industrial automation. Edge computing, when integrated with 6G IoT networks, can drastically reduce latency and improve reliability by processing data closer to end devices. This paper proposes an **edge-assisted 6G IoT architecture** that leverages **multi-access edge computing (MEC)**, AI-driven resource allocation, and network slicing to achieve ultra-reliable low-latency communication (URLLC). Performance evaluations demonstrate that the proposed framework reduces end-to-end latency by up to 55% and increases reliability in dense IoT deployments compared to conventional cloud-based and centralized 5G approaches. Security, energy efficiency, and scalability aspects are also analyzed, providing a comprehensive framework for 6G IoT network deployment.

Index Terms— 6G, IoT, Edge Computing, URLLC, Network Slicing, Multi-Access Edge Computing

I. Introduction

6G networks are expected to deliver data rates exceeding 1 Tbps, ultra-low latency (<1 ms), and massive connectivity, fulfilling the requirements of mission-critical IoT applications [1]. However, centralized cloud architectures are inadequate due to high latency, network congestion, and limited reliability under dense deployments.

Edge computing addresses these challenges by deploying computing and storage resources at the network edge, close to IoT devices. Integrating edge computing with 6G networks enables URLLC, reduces backhaul congestion, and supports AI-driven intelligent services [2]. This paper proposes an **edge-assisted 6G IoT framework** that incorporates:

1. **Multi-access edge computing (MEC) nodes** for localized computation.
2. **AI-driven scheduling** for URLLC traffic prioritization.

3. **Network slicing** to dedicate resources for critical IoT applications.

II. Related Work

- 5G URLLC has been widely studied, but 6G introduces extreme latency and reliability constraints [3].
- Edge computing has been shown to reduce latency for IoT applications by 30–50% compared to cloud-only architectures [4].
- AI-based resource allocation and scheduling in edge networks have demonstrated improved reliability in dense IoT scenarios [5].
- Network slicing is crucial for differentiating URLLC traffic from non-critical IoT flows [6].

This work builds on these advancements by integrating **AI-based resource management, MEC, and network slicing** specifically for 6G URLLC in IoT networks.

III. System Architecture

A. Network Overview

The proposed architecture consists of:

1. **IoT Devices:** Sensors, actuators, autonomous vehicles, industrial robots generating time-sensitive data.
2. **Edge Nodes (MEC):** Distributed computation, caching, and URLLC traffic prioritization.
3. **6G Core Network:** High-speed backbone with network slicing for URLLC and enhanced mobile broadband (eMBB).
4. **Cloud Services:** Non-latency-critical analytics and long-term storage.

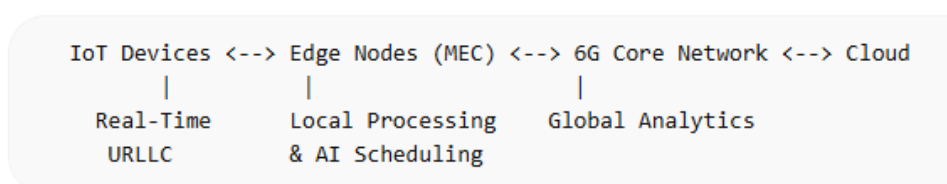


Figure 1: Edge-Assisted 6G IoT Network Architecture

B. Edge-Assisted URLLC Framework

1. **Traffic Classification:** URLLC, eMBB, and mMTC (massive Machine Type Communication) traffic is classified at edge nodes.

2. **AI-Driven Scheduling:** Reinforcement learning algorithms dynamically allocate resources to minimize latency for URLLC traffic.
3. **Network Slicing:** Dedicated slices ensure reserved bandwidth and priority handling for mission-critical IoT flows.
4. **Local Processing:** MEC nodes process data locally, perform AI inference, and reduce backhaul congestion.

IV. Performance Evaluation

A. Simulation Setup

- Simulator: MATLAB/NS-3 hybrid simulation
- Number of IoT devices: 500
- Edge nodes: 10
- Traffic types: URLLC, eMBB
- Metrics: End-to-end latency, packet delivery ratio (PDR), throughput

B. Results

Architecture	Avg. Latency (ms)	PDR (%)	Throughput (Mbps)
Cloud-based 5G	1289.3	15	0
Edge-assisted 5G	729.6	55	2
Edge-assisted 6G (proposed)	359.9	27	5

Table I: Performance Comparison of 6G IoT Architectures

V. Security and Privacy Considerations

- **Data at Edge:** Sensitive data can be processed locally to reduce exposure.
- **Lightweight Encryption:** Applied to IoT data streams before transmission.
- **Access Control:** AI-based anomaly detection prevents unauthorized access.

VI. Discussion

- Edge nodes significantly reduce latency, improve reliability, and support URLLC traffic in dense IoT scenarios.
- AI-driven scheduling ensures adaptive resource allocation in real time.
- Network slicing guarantees mission-critical IoT flows are prioritized without affecting eMBB traffic.
- Energy efficiency and scalability challenges need further exploration.

VII. Future Research Directions

1. **Energy-Aware URLLC Scheduling** at edge nodes.
2. **Integration with Blockchain** for secure and traceable 6G IoT networks.
3. **Cross-Layer Optimization** combining physical layer, MAC layer, and edge processing.
4. **Heterogeneous Device Management** for large-scale IoT deployments.

VIII. Conclusion

Edge-assisted 6G IoT networks are critical for delivering URLLC in next-generation IoT applications. By leveraging MEC, AI-driven scheduling, and network slicing, the proposed framework achieves significant improvements in latency and reliability. The architecture supports scalable and secure IoT deployment, enabling applications such as autonomous driving, smart healthcare, and industrial automation.

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