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Information Society

Post and Telecommunications: Q3/2008

As at the end of September 2008, subscriptions to all forms of communication technology increased. Postal traffic totalled 10.8 million items.

Telecommunications

In the quarter under review, the absolute number of mobile telephone subscriptions reached 381,955. Contract-based mobile telephone subscriptions were recorded at 48,507, while card-plan subscriptions reached 333,448.

The fixed-telephone subscription index increased by 4.4 per cent from 112.4 in 2007 Q3 to 117.3 in the comparable quarter this year. Minutes used from fixed-line telephony amounted to around 124 million, while international fixed-telephony traffic comprised 457,813 calls, equivalent to around 1.5 million minutes.

VOIP minutes were estimated at around 10.2 million in the quarter under review. These cover all internet based telephony systems.

Internet, Cable and Digital Subscriptions

The internet subscription index rose by 8.0 per cent from 318.2 as at the end of September 2007 to 343.5 as at the end of the equivalent quarter in 2008. The rate of Internet subscriptions per 100 persons of the population reached 26.2.

Table 5 shows a shift in internet subscriptions. Whilst, the number of narrow band subscriptions decreased by 31.9 per cent over the previous year same quarter, the number of broad band users increased by 37.2 per cent when compared to the third quarter of 2007.

The cable and digital subscriptions index also increased by 8.0 per cent. Cable and digital television subscriptions were recorded at 30.9 per cent of the population as at the end of September 2008.

Post and Couriers

Total postal traffic for the third quarter of 2008 amounted to around 10.8 million items, of which the absolute bulk represented letters and other printed items. Table 7 focuses on different types of national postal traffic.

In the same reference period, courier traffic totalled 64,891 items, of which 51.2 per cent were letters or documents, and the rest parcels ■

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Table 1. Information society subscriptions indices

	Q3							Annual % change 2008/2007
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Internet subscriptions	223.6	256.1	271.1	282.6	301.6	318.2	343.5	8.0
Fixed telephony subscriptions	103.1	102.8	104.0	103.9	104.1	112.4	117.3	4.4
Mobile telephony subscriptions	375.1	397.4	471.8	443.7	471.1	504.8	521.8	3.4
Cable and Digital television subscriptions	119.9	124.2	127.5	127.8	137.2	146.7	158.4	8.0

Table 2. Information society indicators per 100 population

	Q3							Annual % change 2008/2007
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Internet subscriptions	15.6	18.3	21.3	21.8	23.3	24.5	26.2	6.9
Fixed telephony subscriptions	52.3	52.2	51.4	51.6	51.6	55.6	57.3	3.1
Mobile telephony subscriptions	64.0	70.4	75.8	80.6	84.8	90.7	92.7	2.2
Cable and Digital television subscriptions	23.9	24.8	25.1	25.7	27.1	28.9	30.9	6.9

Table 3. Mobile telephony

	as at end of September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
Number of subscriptions (total)	369,513	381,955	12,442	3.4
Contract-based subscriptions	34,819	48,507	13,688	39.3
Card-plan subscriptions	334,694	333,448	-1,246	-0.4
	July-September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
Minutes consumed to local mobile networks	52,036,084	65,111,252	13,075,168	25.1
Minutes consumed to local fixed networks	5,448,230	6,036,315	588,085	10.8
Number of SMSs	136,448,992	126,598,880	-9,850,112	-7.2
Number of MMSs	141,426	100,963	-40,463	-28.6
Pager subscriptions	4,752	4,762	10	0.2

Table 4. Fixed telephony

	as at end of September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
Number of subscriptions	226,429	236,130	9,701	4.3
	July - September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
Minutes consumed from local fixed lines	182,600,137	123,760,340	-58,839,797	-32.2
Minutes consumed for international fixed telephone lines	1,600,804	1,547,662	-53,142	-3.3
Number of calls consumed for international fixed telephone lines	509,713	457,813	-51,900	-10.2

Table 5. Internet

	as at end of September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
Internet Subscriptions	99,947	107,844	7,897	7.9
Narrow Band	42,396	28,869	-13,527	-31.9
Broad Band	57,551	78,975	21,424	37.2
	July-September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
VOIP (minutes consumed)	4,832,134	10,181,039	5,348,905	110.7

Table 6. Cable and digital TV

	as at end of September		Absolute change	% yearly change
	2007	2008		
Cable and Digital terrestrial Subscriptions	117,761	127,182	9,421	8.0
Cable Analogue Subscriptions	69,912	51,395	-18,517	-26.5
Digital (cable and terrestrial) Subscriptions	47,849	75,787	27,938	58.4

Table 7. National post: items received and dispatched

	as at end of Quarter		Absolute change	% quarterly change
	2008 Q2	2008 Q3		
Total Traffic	10,974,203	10,790,944	-183,259	-1.7
Domestic Service	8,941,207	8,921,278	-19,929	-0.2
Outbound Service	1,072,805	990,838	-81,967	-7.6
Inbound Service	960,191	878,828	-81,363	-8.5
Parcels and other Items	17,793	16,131	-1,662	-9.3
Domestic Service	0	0	0	0.0
Outbound Service	4,900	5,197	297	6.1
Inbound Service	12,893	10,934	-1,959	-15.2

Source: Malta Communications Authority

Table 8. Courier Service: items received and dispatched

	as at end of Quarter		Absolute change	% quarterly change
	2008 Q2	2008 Q3		
Total Traffic	63,925	64,891	966	1.5
Letters/documents	32,793	33,252	459	1.4
Parcels	31,132	31,639	507	1.6

Methodological Notes

1. The data in this release are based on a quarterly census among fixed and mobile telephone, cable television and internet , Voice Over Internet Protocol, postal and courier service providers. The data for fixed and mobile telephone, cable television and national post providers is collected by MCA (Malta Communications Authority).
2. On the basis of the information provided indices have been calculated for major groups showing the level of specified variable (for example internet subscriptions), relative to the average level throughout the base year 2000.
3. These statistics are as at the end of each quarter.
4. The statistics in this release should be considered as current and are therefore subject to revision. Each release may include revisions of past quarterly data. Revisions may be carried out in respect of a rolling two-year period.
5. Mobile telephone subscriptions are reported as active subscriptions within the last month for contract-based subscriptions and within the last three months for card-plan subscriptions.
6. VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) minutes consumed are inclusive of both services provided by ISP and fixed telephony providers from Quarter 3 2005.
7. From 2005, cable subscription indices are inclusive of digital television.