

Communications Market Review

January to June 2012

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1. Reporting parameters

This report is drawn up by the Malta Communications Authority ("MCA") and is the latest in a series of MCA Communications Market Review ("MCA CMR")¹ publications, presenting key quarterly performance indicators for electronic communications and post in Malta.

This report is mainly drawn on data submitted by local operators and highlights on the period starting from Q1 2009 and ending in Q2 2012.

The data cut-off date was the 14th of September 2012. Data updates and revisions submitted by local operators following the said date will be incorporated in the forthcoming Data Report Sheet ("DRS") publication envisaged for December 2012.

The list of operators submitting such data is presented in Figure 1, below.

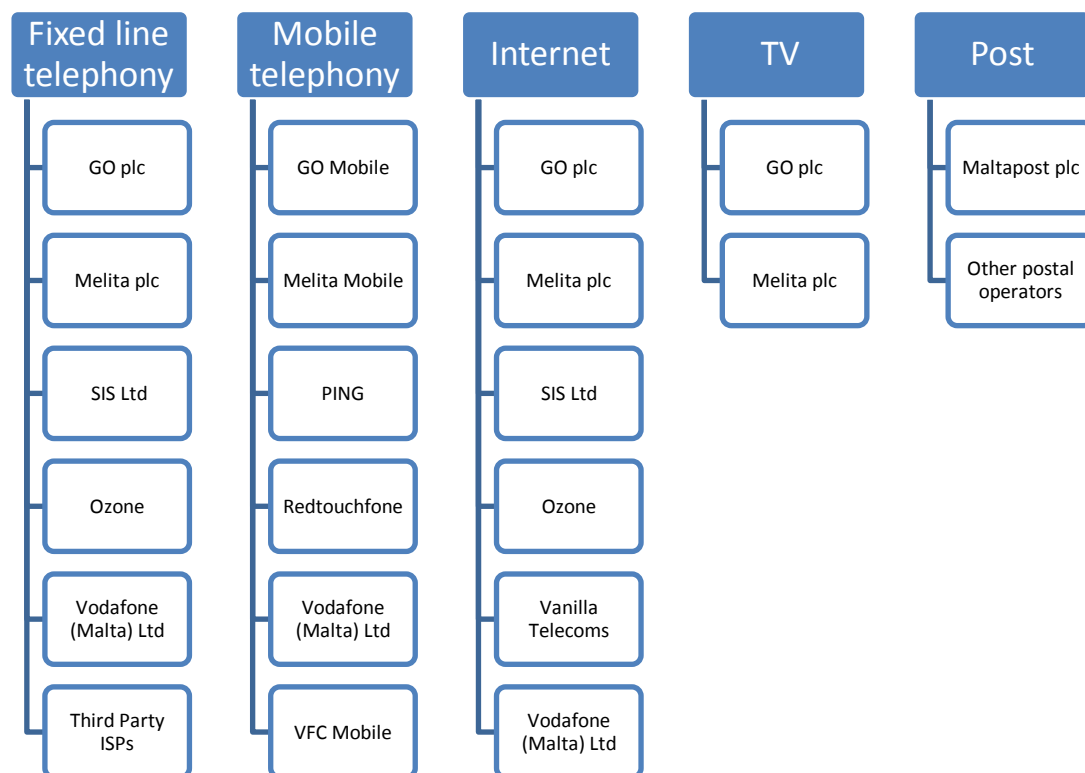


Figure 1: Operators providing quarterly data

¹ Link to the document: <http://www.mca.org.mt/article/communications-market-review-july-december-2011>

The MCA also publishes a data report sheet ('DRS') on a regular basis, the latest of which can be found on: <http://www.mca.org.mt/article/key-market-indicators-electronic-communications-and-post-q1-2009-q2-2012>

The key performance indicators available in the report are categorised under five main headings as shown in Figure 2, below.



Figure 2: Key measurements for electronic communications and post

This report also makes reference to findings extracted from publications of third parties² in the areas of interest.

² In this report there are some references to links to other websites and quotes as appropriate from third party sources. Such references and/or quotes should not be interpreted as constituting endorsement, accuracy and/or responsibility by the MCA for any of the information however so described contained therein.

2. Key market outcomes

This report focuses on the performance of electronic communications and postal sectors in Malta in the first half of 2012.

For the purposes of this report, electronic communications encompass fixed line telephony and mobile telephony, fixed broadband and mobile broadband Internet, and Pay TV services.

2.1. The performance of electronic communications at a glance

Growth in the take-up of mobile telephony, fixed broadband and Pay TV continued in the year to Q2 2012.

On the other hand, there has been a decline in the take-up of fixed-line telephony, in part explained by a consistent shift towards mobile voice usage over fixed voice usage, as the average rate per minute of mobile communications went down further.

Another notable development relates to the take-up of bundled offers, as more consumers opted to purchase such offers rather than stand alone plans. This trend looks set to continue in the coming months.

It is also relevant to note that the average broadband download speeds increased significantly in the year to Q2 2012, with service providers launching new offers on the market and upgrading existing customers.

A broader overview of key market developments for fixed and mobile telephony, fixed broadband, and Pay TV is provided below:

i. Fixed line telephony

- The number of fixed line subscriptions totalled 233,160 as at the end of Q2 2012, down by 4.0% since the end of the corresponding period in 2011.
- The number of post-paid subscriptions totalled 189,892 (81.4% of the total) and the number of pre-paid subscriptions totalled 40,452 (17.4% of the total). Other subscriptions, or enhanced subscriptions, totalled 2,816 (the remaining 1.2% of the total).
- As at the end of the reporting period, 46.6% of all post-paid fixed line subscriptions were bundled with some other electronic communications service, up by 6.9 percentage points since the end of Q2 2011.
- The number of fixed line inward portings recorded in the first half of 2012 totalled 1,800 compared to 1,469 inward portings in the first half of 2011.
- Fixed line traffic volumes continue to decline. Traffic levels in the first half of 2012 were lower than reported in the corresponding period a year earlier. The number of outgoing voice calls was down by 2.6% and the number of outgoing voice traffic minutes was down by 2.4%.
- Fixed ARPU in Q1 and Q2 2012 stood at €43.02 and €42.99 respectively. Both figures are up when compared to those recorded in Q1 and Q2 2011, but this is likely to be a result of a one-time statistical adjustment of subscribers on a pre-paid contract on the part of GO.
- The average rate per minute of fixed line communications in Q2 2012 stood at €0.011 for on-net fixed-to-fixed (hereafter, the term fixed-to-fixed is referred to as "FTF") calls, €0.013 for off-net FTF calls, €0.090 for fixed-to-international (hereafter, the term international is referred to as "FTI") calls and €0.181 for fixed-to-mobile (hereafter, the term mobile is referred to as "FTM") calls.

ii. Mobile Telephony

- Since the end of Q2 2011, the number of mobile subscriptions went up by 10.2% to reach 541,575 as at the end of Q2 2012.
- The number of mobile post-paid subscriptions as at the end of the current reporting period totalled 107,972 (19.9% of the total), up by 8.4% since the end of Q2 2011, and the number of pre-paid subscriptions totalled 433,603 (80.1% of the total), up by 10.7%.
- As at the end of Q2 2012, 9.1% of all mobile subscriptions were bundled with some other electronic communications service.
- The number of mobile inward portings totalled 22,851 in the first half of 2012, 20.5% less than in the first half of 2011.
- The mobile penetration rate, measured on the basis of the number of active SIM cards as a proportion of Malta's population, increased from 118.1% as at the end of Q2 2011 to 130.2% as at the end of the current reporting period.
- Mobile traffic volumes in the first half of 2012 were significantly higher than traffic volumes recorded in the first half of 2011. The number of outgoing voice calls increased by 9.1% and the number of outgoing voice traffic minutes increased by 21.3%.
- The number of outgoing SMSs also increased, from 272.2 million in the first half of 2011 to 300.2 million in the first half of 2012.
- MMS traffic in the first half of 2012 was up by 21.7% compared to the corresponding period a year earlier.
- The average rate per minute of mobile communications in Q2 2012 stood at €0.122 for a domestic (or local) call, down from €0.136 in Q2 2011. The average rate for an international call also went down from €0.358 in Q2 2011 to €0.201 in Q2 2012.
- The average rate per domestic SMS went down slightly during the same period, from €0.026 to €0.023.
- Mobile ARPU in Q1 and Q2 2012 stood at €43.49 and €45.28 respectively. Both figures are down when compared to those recorded in Q1 and Q2 of the previous year, at €46.85 and €48.51 respectively.

iii. Fixed broadband

- The number of fixed broadband subscriptions increased by 6.3% in the twelve months to the end of Q2 2012, to reach 134,007.
- The digital subscriber line (“DSL”) platform remains the most popular platform, with 50.2% of the total number of fixed broadband subscriptions having a DSL connection as at the end of the current reporting period.
- DSL accounted for 67,253 subscriptions, over 4,500 more subscriptions than cable. Fixed wireless accounted for 4,173 subscriptions.
- The cable and fixed wireless platforms accounted for 46.7% and 3.1% of all fixed broadband subscriptions respectively.
- As at the end of Q2 2012, 52.5% of all fixed broadband subscriptions were bundled with some other electronic communications service.
- The fixed broadband penetration rate, measured on the basis of the number of active connections as a proportion of Malta’s population, increased by 1.9 percentage points in the year to Q2 2012 to reach 32.2%.
- As at the end of the current reporting period, 36.3% of all fixed broadband subscriptions had a connection speed of less than 5Mbps. 12.6% had a connection speed of 5Mbps but less than 10Mbps; 37.9% had a connection speed of 10Mbps but less than 20Mbps; 11.5% had a connection speed of 20Mbps but less than 30Mbps; 0.9% had a connection speed of 30Mbps but less than 100Mbps; and 0.6% had a connection speed of 100Mbps.
- Fixed broadband ARPU in Q1 and Q2 of 2012 stood at €43.15 and €44.05 respectively, higher than the corresponding figures recorded in Q1 and Q2 of 2011.
- In the year to Q2 2012, the average rate per unit of download speed (“Mbps”) fell, mainly because, in most instances, service providers offered higher download speeds to their customers, in most instances at no additional charge.

Overall, the average rate per unit of download speed has in fact declined from around €3.75 per Mbps in Q2 2011 to around €2 in Q2 2012.

iv. Pay TV

- The number of Pay TV subscriptions increased by 748, or 0.5%, since the end of Q2 2011, to reach 148,470 as at the end of Q2 2012.
- Analogue cable subscriptions and digital terrestrial TV ('DTTV') subscriptions were down by 2,451 (or 20.9%) and 1,153 (or 1.8%) respectively. On the other hand, digital cable subscriptions and Internet Protocol TV ("IPTV") subscriptions were up by 1,977 (or 2.7%) and 2,375 respectively.
- The digital cable platform accounted for the largest segment of Pay TV subscriptions as at the end of the current review period, at 49.9%, followed by the DTTV platform at 42.3%. The analogue cable platform accounted for 6.2% of the local subscriber base, down by 1.7 percentage points since the end of Q2 2011. The IPTV platform, which is a relatively new service, accounted for the remaining share at 1.6% of the local Pay TV subscriber base.
- As at the end of the reporting period, 49.9% of all digital Pay TV and IPTV subscriptions were bundled with some other electronic communications service, up by 5.6 percentage points since the end of Q2 2011.
- Pay TV ARPU in Q1 and Q2 of 2012 stood at €42.89 and €42.92 respectively, slightly higher than Pay TV ARPU in Q1 and Q2 of 2011.
- MCA workings show that there has been a general increase, between Q2 2011 and Q2 2012, in the average advertised rates, as identified in this document.

2.2. The performance of the postal sector at a glance

In terms of activity, the overall performance of the postal sector in the first half 2012 was weaker than that registered in the first half of 2011.

Key market outcomes for the postal sector are provided below:

- Postal activity in both the universal service area and the competitive area was weaker in the first half of 2012 than in the corresponding period a year earlier.
- Postal activity in the competitive area was down by 6.3%, with mail volumes falling by 16,419 items.
- Lower activity in the competitive area is attributable to less domestic postal mail and inbound cross border mail volumes, down by 8.4% and 9.1% respectively.
- Postal activity in the universal service area was down by nearly five percent, with mail volumes falling by nearly 1.1 million items.
- Lower activity in the universal service area is mainly attributed to a fall in domestic postal mail volumes and a fall of inbound cross border mail volumes, down by 6.6% and 2.1% respectively.
- During the first half of 2012, postal mail volumes in the universal service area accounted for 98.8% of all postal mail volumes for the period.
- During the reporting period, Maltapost met all Quality of Service (“QoS”) delivery targets set by the MCA for the delivery of postal mail items.
- Malta’s nominal stamp prices for domestic standard letters and letter mail within Europe remain the lowest in the EU.

3. Market shares of the local subscriber base

i. Fixed line telephony

As at the end of Q2 2012, GO accounted for 72.3% of the local fixed telephony subscriber base, which is down by 3.7 percentage points from the end of Q2 2011.

During the same period, Melita's market share gained 3.7 percentage points. Ozone and SIS also reported slight gains. On the contrary, Vodafone's market share shrank.

Market shares	GO	Melita	SIS	Ozone	Vodafone
End of Q2 2012	72.32%	26.98%	0.09%	0.40%	0.21%
End of Q2 2011	76.01%	23.26%	0.08%	0.38%	0.27%
End of Q2 2010	76.71%	22.55%	0.06%	0.44%	0.24%

Figure 3: Market shares in terms of fixed line telephony subscriptions as at end of period

ii. Mobile telephony

As at the end of Q2 2012, Vodafone (Malta) held a market share exceeding the 50 per cent mark of the local mobile subscriber base, followed by GO Mobile with a share of 35.5%.

Figure 4 shows that, year-on-year, GO Mobile's market share slid by 6.7 percentage points.

Market shares	GO Mobile	VFC Mobile	Melita Mobile	Ping	Redtouch fone	Vodafone
End of Q2 2012	35.54%	0.04%	11.29%	0.12%	1.92%	51.08%
End of Q2 2011	42.21%	0.05%	9.47%	0.18%	1.92%	47.18%
End of Q2 2010	42.79%		6.73%		1.93%	48.55%

Figure 4: Market shares in terms of mobile telephony subscriptions as at end of period

On the other hand, Melita reported a stronger representation of the local subscriber base, up from 9.5% as at the end of Q2 2011 to 11.3% as at the end of the current reporting period.

Redtouchfone did not report any change in its market share in the period under review.

Meanwhile, Ping and VFC Mobile reported a loss in their already small market shares.

iii. Fixed broadband

GO and Melita held the two largest market shares of the local subscriber base for fixed broadband as at the end of Q2 2012.

GO’s share of total fixed broadband subscriptions stood at 49.9%, down 1.9 percentage points from the end of Q2 2011. Melita’s share stood at 46.7%, which in contrast to GO’s decline, went up by 2.6 percentage points since Q2 2011.

Other operators, referred to in Figure 5, together accounted for the remaining share of 3.4% of the subscriber base. All these operators lost market share in the twelve months ending Q2 2012.

Market shares	GO	Melita	SIS	Ozone	Vanilla Telecoms	Vodafone	ISPs
End of Q2 2012	49.93%	46.70%	0.02%	0.28%	0.12%	2.75%	0.19%
End of Q2 2011	51.86%	44.09%	0.08%	0.30%	0.17%	3.34%	0.22%
End of Q2 2010	48.47%	46.31%	0.09%	0.25%	0.18%	3.06%	1.65%

Figure 5: Market shares in terms of fixed broadband subscriptions as at end of period

iv. Pay TV

GO broadcasts TV services over the DTTV and IPTV platforms, and Melita broadcasts TV services over the analogue and digital cable platforms.

As at the end of Q2 2012, Melita held an overall market share of 56.1% of all Pay TV subscriptions³, down from 56.7% a year earlier.

During the same period, GO improved its overall market share, up from 43.3% to 43.9%⁴.

Market shares	GO	Melita
End of Q2 2012	43.92%	56.08%
End of Q2 2011	43.31%	56.69%
End of Q2 2010	36.66%	63.34%

Figure 6: Market shares in terms of Pay TV subscriptions as at end of period

³ Melita’s digital and analogue cable platforms accounted for 49.9% and 6.2% of the local Pay TV subscriber base respectively.

⁴ As at the end of Q2 2012, GO’s DTTV and IPTV platforms accounted for 42.3% and 1.6% of the local Pay TV subscriber base respectively.

4. Fixed line telephony

Fixed line telephone access is available nationwide in Malta, with the latest E-Communications Household Survey⁵ carried out by TNS Opinion & Social at the request of Directorate-General Information Society and media reporting that 96% of all Maltese households have access to at least one fixed telephone line.

This high level of fixed line penetration is indicative of the fact that consumers still value the availability of a fixed line connection at their home or premises.

Nevertheless, years of rapid growth in the mobile sector have significantly altered the major market forces driving the performance of the fixed line sector.

Inevitably, developments for the fixed line sector have been rather subdued, with annual growth running at zero or even declining.

In the year to Q2 2012, the number of subscriptions declined and traffic volumes fell. During the said period, fixed line subscriptions went down by 4% and the number of outgoing calls and minutes went down by 2.6% and 2.4% respectively.

Correspondingly, the trend of consumers purchasing access to a fixed line bundled with some other electronic communications service, and less on a 'stand-alone' basis, has been consolidated. In fact, the number of post-paid fixed line subscriptions in a bundle offer increased by 13,776 or 18.4%.

On a positive note, MCA workings show that, in terms of pricing, there has been an overall decline in the average rate per minute of fixed line communications in the year to Q2 2012.

⁵ Link to relevant document: http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/docs/pillar/studies/eb_ecomm/final_reports/reporteb751sp362infoecommunications_en_final.pdf

4.1. Trends in fixed line subscriptions

The number of fixed line telephony subscriptions as at the end of Q2 2011 totalled 233,160. This figure is four per cent down over that reported as at the end of Q2 2011.

This decline is attributed to a fall in the number of subscriptions under pre-paid contracts and subscriptions under 'enhanced'⁶ contracts, which outweighed the increase reported in terms of subscriptions under post-paid contracts.

In the year to Q2 2012, the number of pre-paid fixed line subscriptions went down by 21.5%, from 51,548 as at the end of Q2 2011 to 40,452. Most of this decline is however attributed to GO implementing an exercise to clean the data from inactive users on pre-paid contracts.

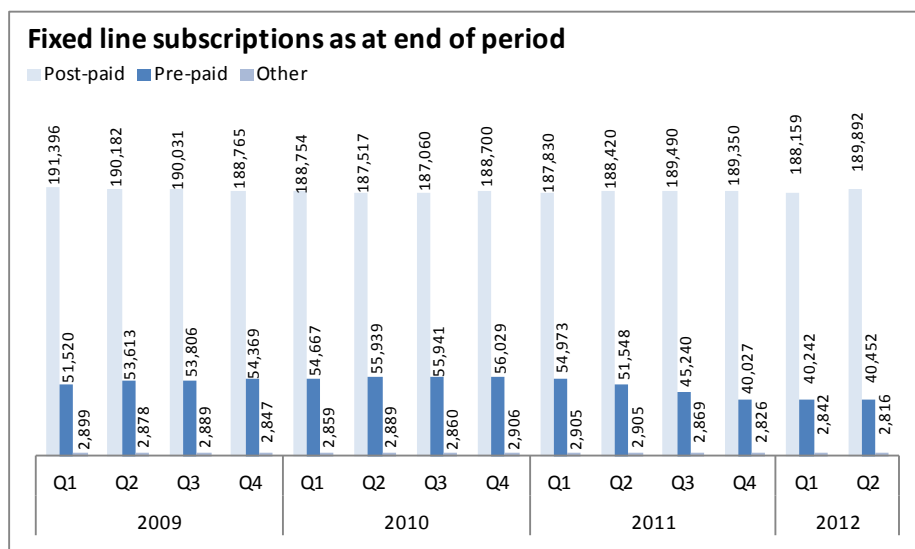


Figure 7: Fixed line telephony subscriptions as at end of period

The number of enhanced fixed line subscriptions also went down by 3.1% during the same period, from 2,905 to 2,816.

On the other hand, the number of post-paid fixed line subscriptions went up by 0.8%, to reach 189,892 as at the end of the current reporting period.

⁶ Standard fixed line subscriptions refer to subscriptions offering a single fixed line telephony connection.

Enhanced fixed line subscriptions encompass those subscriptions offering multiple channel (dual or more) fixed telephony connections.

As from Q2 2009, all operators submitted figures for pre-paid and post-paid subscriptions in a standard format. As from the said period, Melita started providing subscription figures disaggregated by type of subscriptions, namely post-paid and pre-paid subscriptions. Previously all Melita connections were reported under the post-paid category.

4.2. Fixed line subscriptions on a bundled offer

The number of consumers that now buy their post-paid fixed-line telephone service as part of bundle continued to increase in the year to Q2 2012.

Fixed post-paid subscriptions on a bundled offer	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Two-play bundled offers	11,327	8,062	8,360	6,952	28,951	31,537	34,028	35,497	30,101	30,995
Fixed post-paid + Mobile	-	-	-	-	4,681	7,022	8,914	10,917	11,971	9,561
Fixed post-paid + Fixed broadband	861	641	865	1,046	7,319	7,013	7,239	8,035	2,815	10,960
Fixed post-paid + Pay TV	10,466	7,421	7,495	5,906	16,951	17,502	17,875	16,545	15,315	10,474
Triple-play bundled offers	4,757	4,723	5,083	5,934	7,589	6,798	5,872	7,136	12,697	18,443
Fixed post-paid + Mobile + Fixed broadband	4,355	4,444	4,955	5,889	484	433	368	304	304	437
Fixed post-paid + Pay TV + Mobile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fixed post-paid + Pay TV + Fixed broadband	402	279	128	45	7,105	6,365	5,504	6,832	12,393	18,006
Quadruple-play bundled offers	37,812	43,044	49,657	57,135	35,361	36,346	37,422	37,734	38,335	39,019
Total post-paid subscriptions on a bundled offer	53,896	55,829	63,100	70,021	71,901	74,681	77,322	80,367	81,133	88,457
Number of post-paid fixed line subscriptions	188,754	187,517	187,060	188,700	187,830	188,420	189,490	189,350	188,159	189,892
as a percentage of postpaid fixed line subscriptions	28.55%	29.77%	33.73%	37.11%	38.28%	39.64%	40.81%	42.44%	43.12%	46.58%

Table 1: Fixed line post-paid subscriptions on a bundled offer

As at the end of Q2 2012, the number of post-paid fixed line subscriptions on a bundled offer⁷ increased by 17.8% since the end of Q2 2011 to reach 88,457. This means that as at the end of the current reporting period, 46.6% of all post-paid subscriptions were on a bundle.

⁷ During the period under review, only fixed line post-paid plans could be bundled with some other electronic communications service.

Data in Table 1 is provisional and subject to change.

4.3. Fixed line inward portings

The number of fixed line telephone number inward portings⁸ reported in the first half of 2012 amounted to 1,800. This figure is 22.5% higher than that reported in the first half of 2011.

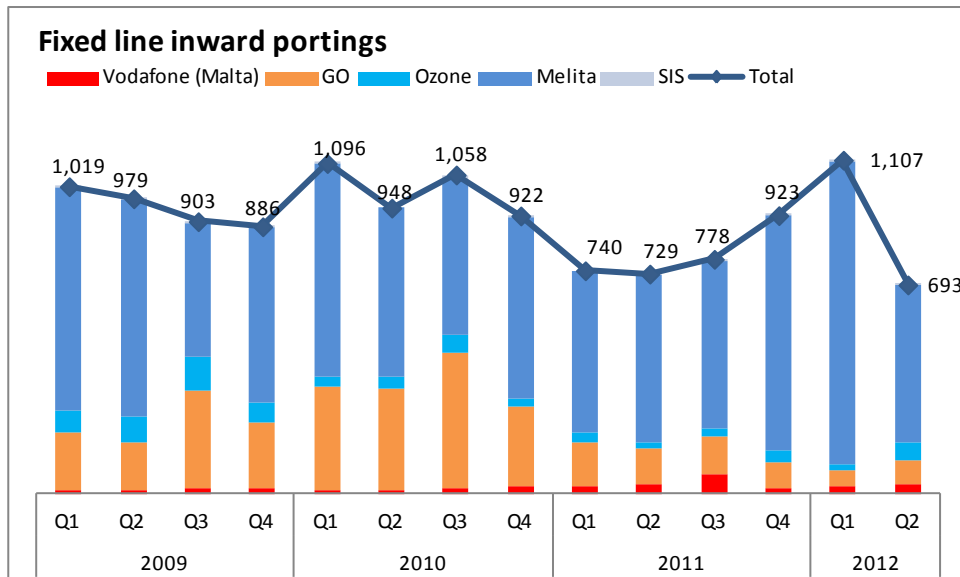


Figure 8: Fixed line number portability - number of inward portings

Melita accounted for nearly 85.1% of all fixed line inward portings reported in the period under review, followed by GO at 7%.

The remaining share of 7.9% of all fixed line inward portings were accounted for by Vodafone, Ozone and SIS.

⁸ The term 'fixed line portings' refers to the total number of subscribers that switch from a fixed line operator to another whilst keeping the same number. Figures presented above only take into account inward portings.

4.4. Voice activity levels for fixed line telephony

The number of outgoing fixed line voice calls totalled 97.1 million in the first half of 2012, down by 2.6% from 99.7 million reported in the first half of 2011.

The number of outgoing fixed line voice call minutes were also down, from 343.1 million million to 334.7 million.

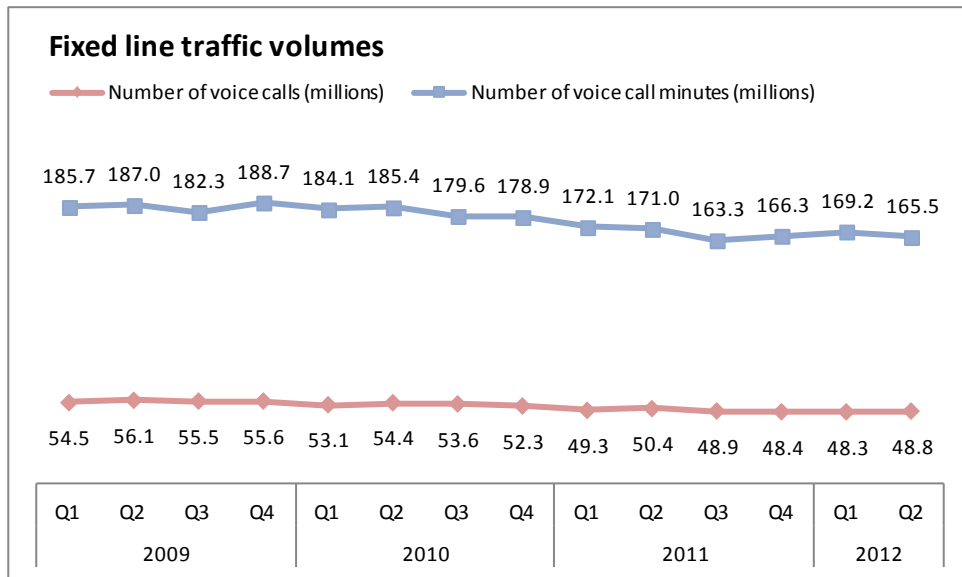


Figure 9: Voice traffic originating from local fixed line networks

Fixed voice traffic encompasses two main segments, namely the national voice segment and the international voice segment.

With respect to national voice segment, the number of outgoing fixed line calls in the first half of 2012 totalled 93.3 million, down from 95.4 million in the corresponding period in 2011.

Disaggregating the figures further would show that declines were recorded in terms of on-net FTF calls and other national calls, the latter call element comprising mainly freephone and premium calls.

The number of on-net FTF calls went down by 7.2%, from 55.9 million in the first half of 2011 to 51.9 million in the first half of this year. The number of 'other' national calls also went down by 12.4%, from 1.4 million to 1.2 million.

These declines outweighed corresponding increases reported in terms of off-net FTF calls and FTM calls.

The number of off-net FTF calls went up by 4.2%, from 18.6 million to 19.4 million.

The number of FTM calls also went up by 6.9%, from 19.4 million to 20.8 million.

In terms of national voice call minutes, declines were reported in terms of on-net FTF traffic and 'other' national traffic.

On-net FTF traffic went down by nearly 5%, down from 213.2 million in the first half of 2011 to 202.6 million in the first half of 2012, and 'other' national traffic went down by 31.6% in the same period, from 3.5 million to 2.4 million.

These declines have again outweighed increases reported in terms of off-net FTF minutes and FTM minutes.

The number of off-net FTF minutes went up by nearly 7%, from 72.4 million in the first half of 2011 to 77.4 million in the first half of 2012.

The number of FTM minutes went up by 11.6% during the same period, from 28.4 million to 31.6 million.

Year Period	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
National voice calls	50,389,173	51,874,217	51,085,651	49,960,588	47,067,277	48,288,345	46,889,393	46,516,114	46,503,733	46,757,809
Fixed-to-fixed calls	40,082,919	40,812,163	39,834,602	39,378,435	37,207,782	37,353,011	36,001,005	35,904,479	35,916,786	35,373,844
on-net	30,767,912	31,171,676	30,365,574	29,853,604	28,074,401	27,872,212	26,815,844	26,823,450	26,245,305	25,649,499
off-net	9,315,007	9,640,487	9,469,028	9,524,831	9,133,381	9,480,799	9,185,161	9,081,029	9,671,481	9,724,345
Fixed-to-mobile calls	9,704,790	10,298,084	10,534,384	9,843,862	9,179,772	10,254,237	10,307,431	9,965,030	10,014,585	10,764,657
Other voice calls	601,464	763,970	716,665	738,291	679,723	681,097	580,957	646,605	572,362	619,308
International voice calls	2,663,309	2,543,710	2,540,640	2,300,752	2,230,387	2,158,199	1,986,336	1,847,617	1,795,125	2,057,227
Total voice calls	53,052,482	54,417,927	53,626,291	52,261,340	49,297,664	50,446,544	48,875,729	48,363,731	48,298,858	48,815,036

Table 2: Outgoing fixed line traffic - number of voice calls

With respect to international voice traffic volumes, the number of FTI calls⁹ went down by 12.2%, from 4.4 million calls in the first half of 2011 to 3.9 million in the first half of 2012.

FTI call minutes were also down, this time by 19.5%, from 25.6 million minutes to 20.6 million minutes.

Year Period	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
National voice call minutes	169,597,533	171,171,859	165,400,674	165,021,530	158,939,617	158,527,431	151,887,110	155,439,196	158,909,289	155,158,413
Fixed-to-fixed minutes	153,589,008	154,167,828	148,298,760	148,974,839	143,782,450	141,827,524	135,304,080	138,996,377	142,486,370	137,548,027
on-net	118,050,365	117,415,884	112,865,508	112,604,604	107,940,665	105,277,867	100,013,280	102,994,998	103,410,847	99,181,607
off-net	35,538,644	36,751,944	35,433,252	36,370,235	35,841,785	36,549,657	35,290,800	36,001,379	39,075,522	38,366,420
Fixed-to-mobile minutes	14,158,690	14,924,617	15,177,353	14,196,207	13,421,832	14,945,602	15,238,211	14,993,162	15,356,792	16,290,102
Other call minutes	1,849,834	2,079,414	1,924,561	1,850,484	1,735,335	1,754,305	1,344,819	1,449,658	1,066,127	1,320,285
International voice call minutes	14,460,845	14,253,433	14,232,975	13,887,046	13,186,693	12,445,864	11,423,452	10,902,154	10,309,570	10,337,768
Total voice call minutes	184,058,378	185,425,292	179,633,649	178,908,576	172,126,310	170,973,296	163,310,563	166,341,350	169,218,859	165,496,181

Table 3: Outgoing fixed line traffic - number of voice call minutes

⁹ FTI figures also include GO's TEN21 and Melita's Telephony flex traffic.

4.5. Activity levels per fixed line subscription

Activity levels per subscription in the first half of 2012 were higher than in the corresponding period of 2011, mainly as a result of more off-net FTF calls and FTM calls reported per subscriber.

This increase in activity outweighed declines, mainly reported in terms of on-net FTF calls and FTI calls.

The average number of calls per active fixed line subscription¹⁰ went up from around 407 in the first half of 2011 to around 417 in the first half of 2012.

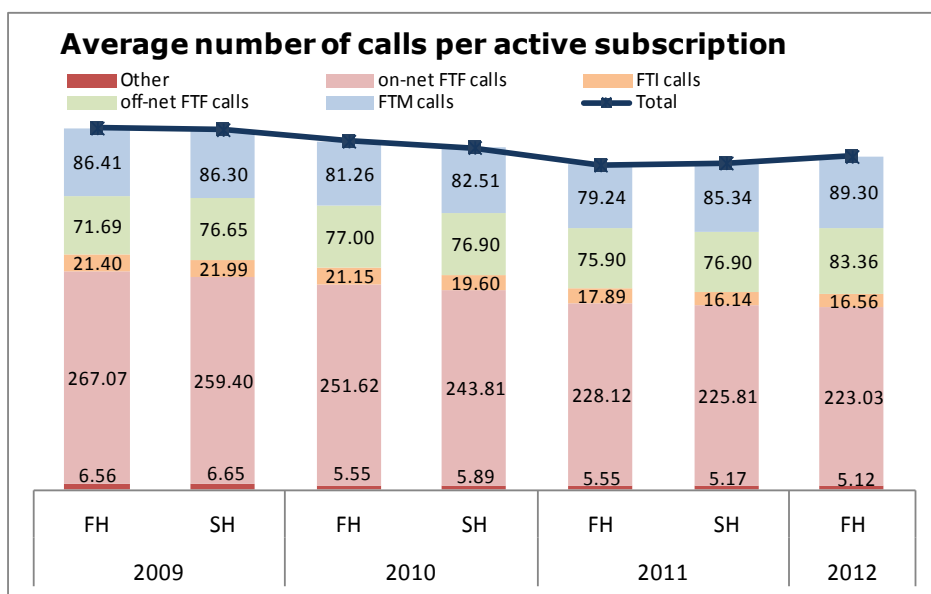


Figure 10: Average number of calls per active subscription

Disaggregating activity levels further would show that, as in previous quarters, on-net FTF call activity accounts for the largest segment of fixed line activity reported during the period.

¹⁰ Total depicted in Figure 10 includes the number of *other calls* (which encompasses premium, freephone, and Internet calls) per active subscription.

4.6. Average call duration

On-net FTF calls, off-net FTF calls and FTM calls lasted longer in the first half of 2012 than in the first half of 2011.

Figure 11 shows that an on-net FTF call on average lasted 3.9 minutes in the first half of 2012, compared to an average duration of 3.8 minutes in the first half of 2011.

An off-net FTF call lasted 4.0 minutes, up from 3.9 minutes in the first half of 2011. No change was reported in terms of FTM calls.

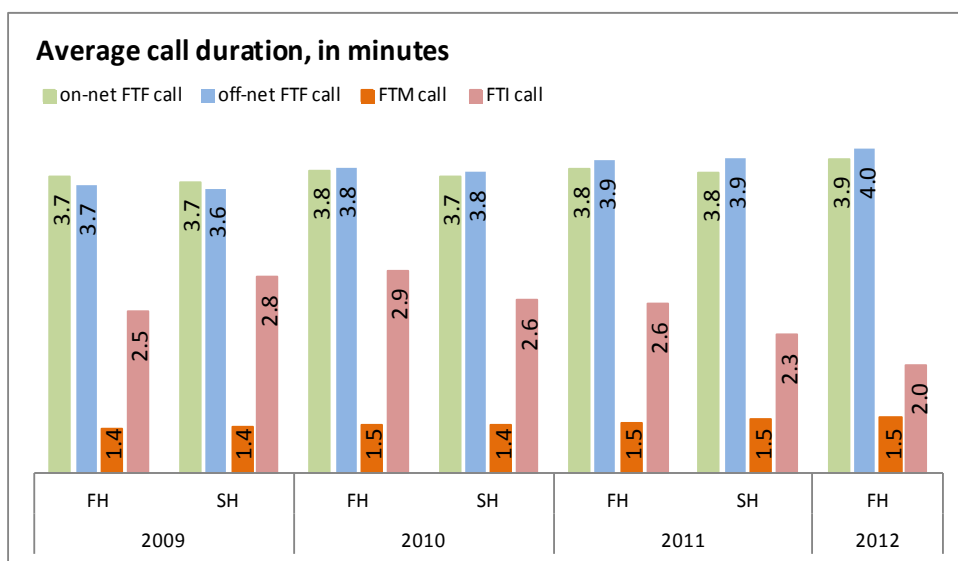


Figure 11: Average duration of an outgoing fixed line call

On the other hand, a fixed-to-international call on average lasted 2.0 minutes in the first half of 2012, down from 2.6 minutes in the first half of the previous year.

4.7. Fixed ARPU

Fixed ARPU figures are derived by dividing the total revenues of service providers by the average number of active subscribers, during a given period.

The 'total revenues' heading includes a number of retail revenue elements, namely:

1. revenues from access;
2. revenues from all local and international voice call activity, including revenues from freephone calls and premium calls; and
3. revenues from 'other' activity as specified by the operator.

The average number of active subscribers during a given period is derived by adding the number of active subscriptions at the start of the period plus the number of subscriptions at the end of the said period, divided by two.

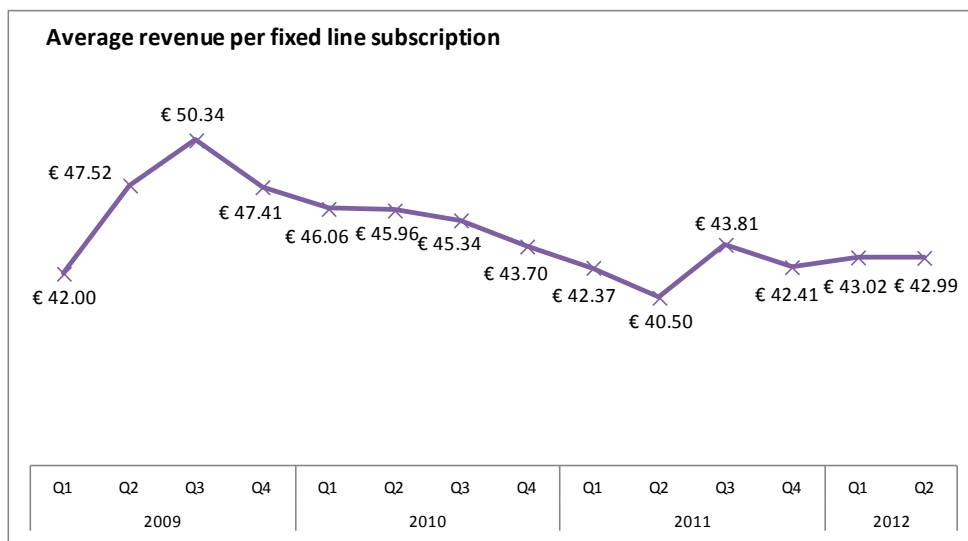


Figure 12: Average revenue per fixed line user

Total ARPU in Q1 and Q2 2011 stood at €43.02 and €42.99 respectively. In both instances, the figure is higher than that recorded in the same period a year earlier.

4.8. Average rate per minute of fixed line communications

Revenue-based¹¹ figures for fixed line telephony show that, in the first half of 2012, the average rate per minute of fixed line communications was lower than in the corresponding period a year earlier.

The average rate per minute of an on-net FTF call was calculated at €0.011 in both Q1 2012 and Q2 2012 respectively, down from €0.012 in both Q1 and Q2 of 2011.

The average rate per minute of a FTM call was calculated at €0.183 in Q1 2012, down from €0.209 in Q1 2011, and €0.181 in Q2 2012, down from €0.200 in Q2 2011.

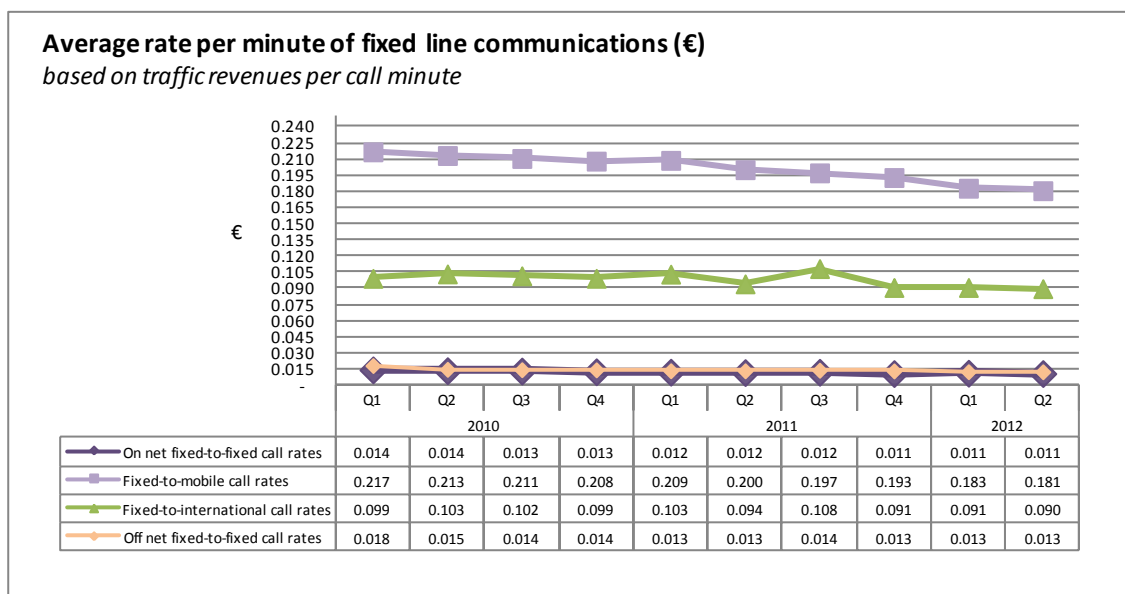


Figure 13: Average cost of a fixed line call derived from revenue-based workings

The cost of a minute of FTI communication was also lower in Q1 and Q2 of 2011 than in Q1 and Q2 of the previous year, as shown in Figure 12, above.

No change has been reported in terms of the average rate per minute of communication for off-net FTF calls.

¹¹ The average rate per minute of fixed line communications is derived by subdividing voice traffic revenues, but excluding revenues from access fees, VAT and excise tax, by the number of minutes reported under each respective heading. Figures are to be interpreted with caution, as these are not the actual rates quoted on the market for the different plans and schemes launched by local operators.

It must also be noted that local fixed line operators may offer free calls or discounted call rates, such as free on-net calls with bundled offers and cheaper call rates on weekends. This would affect the final outcome for the average rate per minute of fixed line communications.

5. Mobile telephony

The mobile communications sector continues to enjoy significant growth, with the number of subscriptions increasing by 50,071 in the year to Q2 2012, with the mobile penetration rate¹² reaching 130.2%.

The strong subscriber growth was reported under both the 2G and 3G segments, with the former segment drawing 28,130 new subscriptions and the latter drawing 21,941 new subscriptions. The 3G segment accounted for 31.5% of all active mobile subscribers as at the end of the current reporting period.

The incidence of having a 3G-enabled mobile device is more likely amongst post-paid subscribers. In fact, nearly 50% of subscribers on post-paid contracts have a handset that is 3G-enabled, compared to 26.9% of subscribers having a pre-paid subscription.

The mobile sector also experienced further growth in terms of traffic volumes. The number of mobile voice calls and voice call minutes in the first half of 2012 were up by 9.1% and 21.3% respectively, when compared to traffic volumes reported in the first half of 2011. SMS traffic volumes were also up by 10.3%.

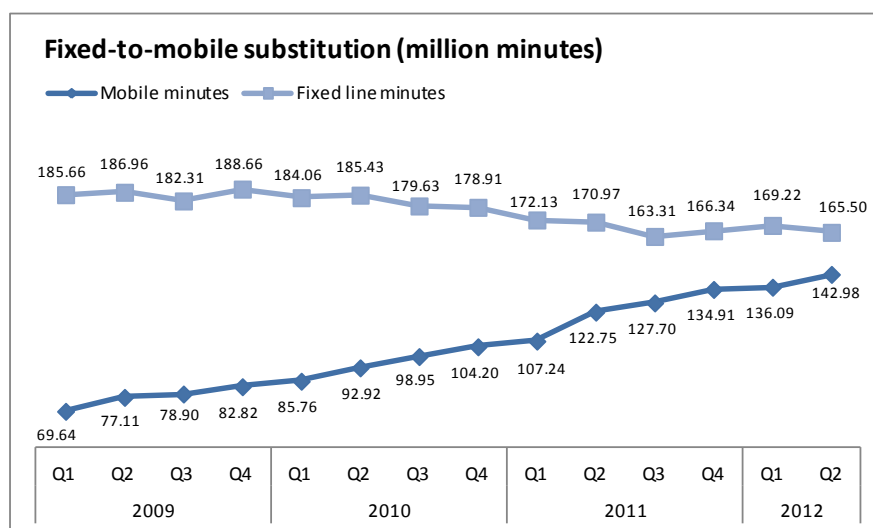


Figure 14: Fixed-to-mobile substitution

Figure 14 depicts developments in the volume of voice call minutes carried over mobile networks, compared with the volume carried over fixed networks. The trend above shows that fixed-to-mobile substitution has accelerated over the last few years, with mobile traffic volumes increasing and fixed line traffic volumes falling. Nevertheless, it is worth to point out that fixed line penetration remains very high amongst Maltese households.

¹² The mobile penetration rate is measured on the basis of the number of active SIM cards as a proportion of Malta's population.

In the first half of 2009, 29.2% of all voice traffic generated in Malta was originated on mobile networks. This proportion has increased to 46.4% in the first half of 2012.

Of particular relevance in this regard is the decline in the average rate per minute of mobile communications, which is considered to have had a positive impact on mobile traffic volumes.

The rate per minute of mobile communication has gone down from €0.136 in Q2 2011 to €0.122 in Q2 2012 for domestic mobile voice calls and from €0.358 to €0.252 for international mobile voice calls.

5.1. Trends in mobile subscriptions

In the 12 months to Q2 2012, the number of active mobile subscriptions¹³ went up by 50,071 (or 10.2%) to reach 541,575. This is a result of pre-paid mobile subscriptions increasing by 41,747 (or 10.7%) and post-paid mobile subscriptions increasing by 8,324 (or 8.4%).

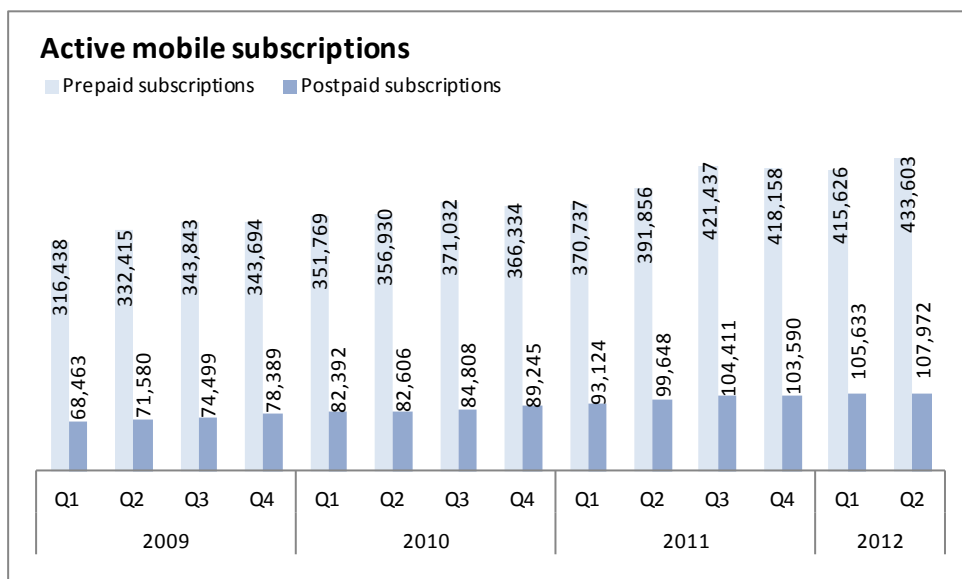


Figure 15: Mobile telephony subscriptions as at end of period

As at the end of the current reporting period, the number of post-paid mobile subscriptions accounted for 19.9% of total mobile subscriptions, whilst pre-paid mobile subscriptions accounted for 80.1%.

Mobile subscriber statistics are also segmented according to whether activity takes place over the 2G or 3G network.

¹³ The number of active mobile subscriptions refers to the number of subscribers having a MSISDN with registered inbound or outbound activity within 90 days of the period stipulated for pre-paid connections and within 30 days of the period stipulated for post-paid connections.

Figure 16 shows that, as at the end of Q2 2012, 31.5% of all active mobile subscriptions registered activity over the 3G network¹⁴, up from 30.2% as at the end of Q2 2011.

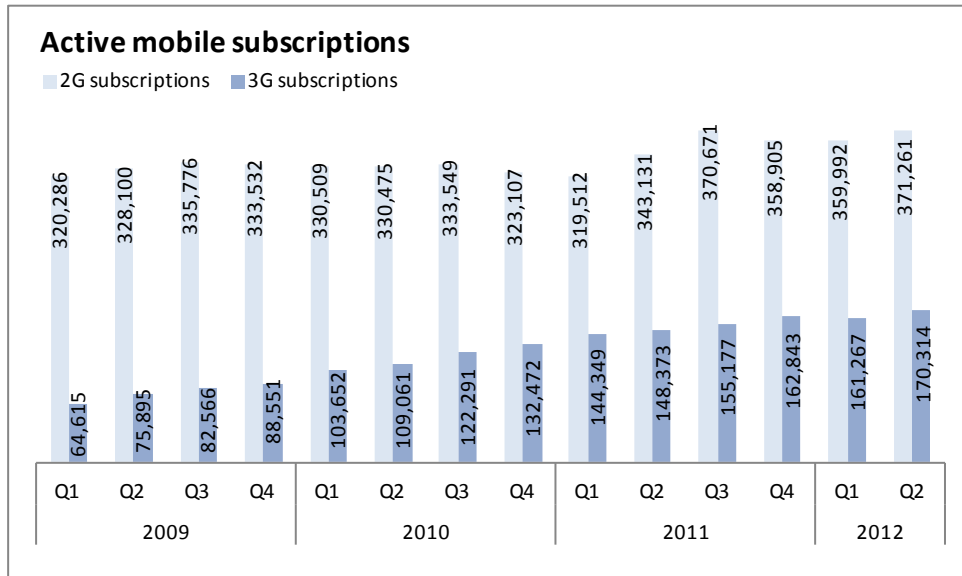


Figure 16: Mobile telephony subscriptions as at end of period, by technology

In absolute terms, the number of mobile subscriptions reporting activity over the 3G network increased by 21,941 or 14.8%, to reach 170,314 as at the end of the current review period.

Of all mobile subscriptions recording activity over the 3G network as at the end of Q2 2012, 68.4% were on a pre-paid plan and 31.6% were on a post-paid plan.

¹⁴ Activity over the 3G network refers to those subscriptions having made at least one call, SMS, MMS or data activity over the said network.

5.2. Mobile subscriptions on a bundled offer

The number of mobile subscriptions on a bundled offer increased from 43,801 as at the end of Q2 2011 to 49,017 as at the end of Q2 2012¹⁵.

Mobile subscriptions on a bundled offer	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Two-play bundled offers	3,792	3,886	4,083	4,301	4,681	7,022	8,914	10,917	11,971	9,561
Mobile + Fixed post-paid	-	-	-	-	4,681	7,022	8,914	10,917	11,971	9,561
Mobile + Fixed broadband	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mobile + Pay TV	3,792	3,886	4,083	4,301	-	-	-	-	-	-
Triple-play bundled offers	4,355	4,444	4,955	5,889	484	433	368	304	304	437
Mobile + Fixed post-paid + Fixed broadband	4,355	4,444	4,955	5,889	484	433	368	304	304	437
Mobile + Pay TV + Fixed post-paid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mobile + Pay TV + Fixed broadband	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quadruple-play bundled offers	37,812	43,044	49,657	57,135	35,361	36,346	37,422	37,734	38,335	39,019
Total mobile subscriptions on a bundled offer	45,959	51,374	58,695	67,325	40,526	43,801	46,704	48,955	50,610	49,017
Number of mobile subscriptions	434,161	439,536	455,840	455,579	463,861	491,504	525,848	521,748	521,259	541,575
as a percentage of total mobile subscriptions	10.59%	11.69%	12.88%	14.78%	8.74%	8.91%	8.88%	9.38%	9.71%	9.05%

Table 4: Fixed line post-paid subscriptions on a bundled offer

As at the end of the current reporting period, the proportion of mobile subscriptions on a bundled offer stood at 9.1%.

¹⁵ The significant change in the number of mobile subscriptions on a bundled offer between 2010 and 2011 is attributed to a reclassification of data/packages by Melita. Similar changes are also observed for fixed broadband and Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer.

Data in Table 4 is provisional and subject to change.

5.3. Mobile inward portings

The number of mobile inward portings¹⁶ (i.e. the total number of successful inward portings of mobile numbers) in the first half of 2012 totalled 22,851. This figure is nearly 20.5% lower than the number of mobile inward portings recorded in the same period of 2011.

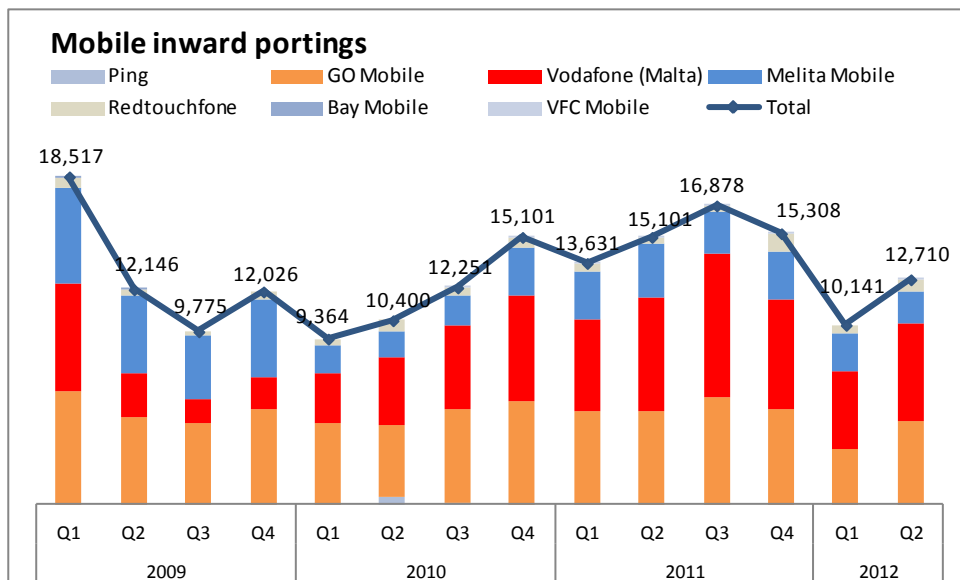


Figure 17: Mobile number portability - number of mobile portings

43.3% of all mobile inward portings reported in the first half of 2012 were accounted for by Vodafone (Malta), 34.2% were accounted for by GO Mobile and a further 17.6% were accounted for by Melita Mobile.

The remaining share, at 4.8%, was accounted for by Ping, Redtouchfone, and VFC Mobile.

¹⁶ The total number of mobile subscribers that switch their subscription from one operator to another, whilst keeping the same number. Figures presented above only take into account the number of mobile inward portings.

5.4. Malta’s mobile penetration rate

The mobile penetration rate (“MPR”)¹⁷ stood at 130.2% as at the end of Q2 2012, up from 118.1% as at the end of Q2 2011.

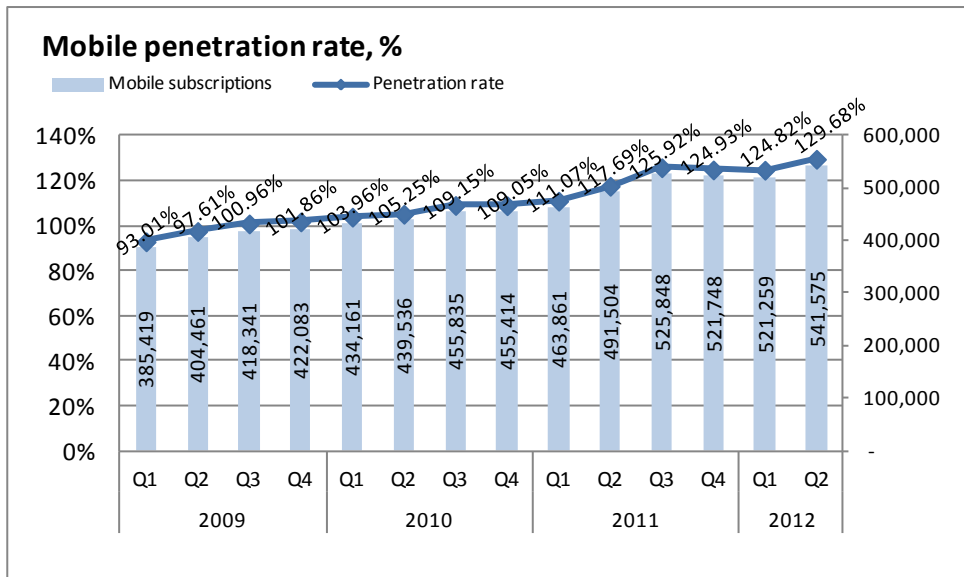


Figure 18: Mobile penetration in Malta

¹⁷ Above n 11, p 25.

5.5. Voice activity levels for mobile telephony

Mobile voice traffic volumes in the first half of 2012 were significantly stronger than those reported in the first half of 2011, with the number of voice calls up by 9.1% and the number of voice call minutes up by 21.3%.

In the first half of 2012, the number of outgoing mobile calls totalled 171.5 million, up from 157 million in the first half of 2011. 77.4% of this increase is attributable to a rise in the number of mobile-to-mobile calls (hereafter, the term mobile-to-mobile is referred to as "MTM"), 16.2% is attributable to a rise in the number of mobile-to-fixed calls (hereafter, the term mobile-to-fixed is referred to as "MTF"), and a further 6.4% is attributed to a rise in the number of mobile-to-international calls (hereafter, the term mobile-to-international is referred to as "MTI") .

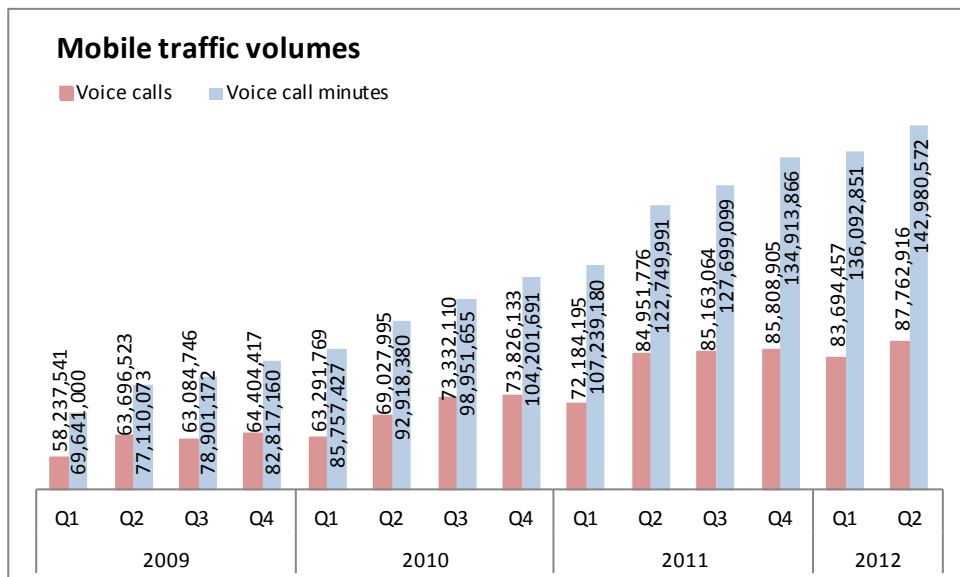


Figure 19: Voice traffic originating from mobile networks

The number of outgoing on-net and off-net MTM calls together totalled 150.0 million in the first half of 2012, up by 11.1 million, or by nearly 8.0%, from 138.9 million in the first half of 2011.

Correspondingly, the number of MTF calls totalled 18.3 million, up by nearly 2.3 million, or 14.5%, from 16.0 million.

Year	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
National voice calls	62,441,525	68,046,165	72,191,113	72,836,437	71,149,519	83,780,696	83,725,243	84,368,011	82,264,809	86,070,094
MTM calls	57,034,584	62,046,431	65,662,106	66,065,304	63,779,589	75,146,060	74,932,674	75,259,456	73,172,718	76,835,611
on-net	34,646,448	37,816,763	40,650,916	41,490,571	40,855,336	48,763,475	48,708,130	49,726,132	48,469,723	51,561,331
off-net	22,388,136	24,229,668	25,011,190	24,574,733	22,924,253	26,382,585	26,224,544	25,533,324	24,702,995	25,274,280
MTF calls	5,406,941	5,999,734	6,529,007	6,771,133	7,369,930	8,634,637	8,792,570	9,108,555	9,092,091	9,234,483
International voice calls	850,244	981,830	1,140,997	989,696	1,034,676	1,171,080	1,437,821	1,440,894	1,429,648	1,692,823
Total voice calls	63,291,769	69,027,995	73,332,110	73,826,133	72,184,195	84,951,776	85,163,064	85,808,905	83,694,457	87,762,916

Table 5: Outgoing mobile traffic - number of voice calls

The number of MTI calls totalled 3.1 million in the first half of 2012, an increase of 0.9 million, or 41.6%, from 2.2 million in the first half of 2011.

Meanwhile, traffic volumes in terms of mobile voice call minutes were also up, from nearly 230.0 million in the first half of 2011 to 279.1 million in the first half of 2012, thereby representing an increase of 49.1 million minutes.

This is mainly attributed to developments in MTM traffic, which saw an increase of 40.6 million minutes or 20.6%. Both on-net and off-net MTM minutes increased, with the former traffic segment increasing by 34.3 million minutes, or 24.4% and the latter segment increasing by 6.2 million, or 11.1%.

Year Period	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
National voice call minutes	83,947,493	90,879,973	96,914,106	102,060,839	104,931,902	119,742,548	123,981,457	131,224,796	132,318,261	138,622,261
Mobile-to-mobile minutes	77,155,099	82,529,340	86,999,739	91,281,792	91,376,321	105,476,754	109,094,003	115,120,886	116,045,330	121,364,065
on-net	53,703,650	56,269,316	59,592,074	63,926,878	65,258,350	75,516,347	78,824,384	84,357,240	85,781,319	89,300,033
off-net	23,451,449	26,260,024	27,407,665	27,354,914	26,117,971	29,960,406	30,269,619	30,763,647	30,264,012	32,064,032
Mobile-to-fixed minutes	6,792,394	8,350,634	9,914,367	10,779,047	13,555,581	14,265,795	14,887,454	16,103,910	16,272,931	17,258,196
International voice call minutes	1,809,934	2,038,406	2,037,549	2,140,852	2,307,279	3,007,443	3,717,642	3,689,070	3,774,590	4,358,311
Total voice call minutes	85,757,427	92,918,380	98,951,655	104,201,691	107,239,180	122,749,991	127,699,099	134,913,866	136,092,851	142,980,572

Table 6: Outgoing mobile traffic - number of voice call minutes

Concurrently, MTF voice minutes increased by 20.5%, up from 27.8 million minutes in the first half of 2011 to 33.5 million minutes in the first half of 2012.

In the first half of 2012, the number of MTI minutes increased by 2.8 million or 53% compared to traffic levels recorded in the first half of 2011.

5.6. SMS and MMS activity levels

SMS traffic volumes

SMS activity in the first half of 2012 was stronger than in the first half of 2011, with the number of outgoing text messages totalling 300.2 million, up by 10.3% from 272.2 million¹⁸.

Disaggregating SMS traffic volumes by type of SMS would show that the overall increase referred to above is attributed to more on-net and off-net SMSs and more SMSs sent from Internet portals.

In the first half of 2012 the number of on-net SMSs totalled 196.8 million, nearly 13% more than recorded for the first half of 2011, and off-net SMSs totalled 93.0 million, which is 3.3% more than recorded in the corresponding period a year earlier.

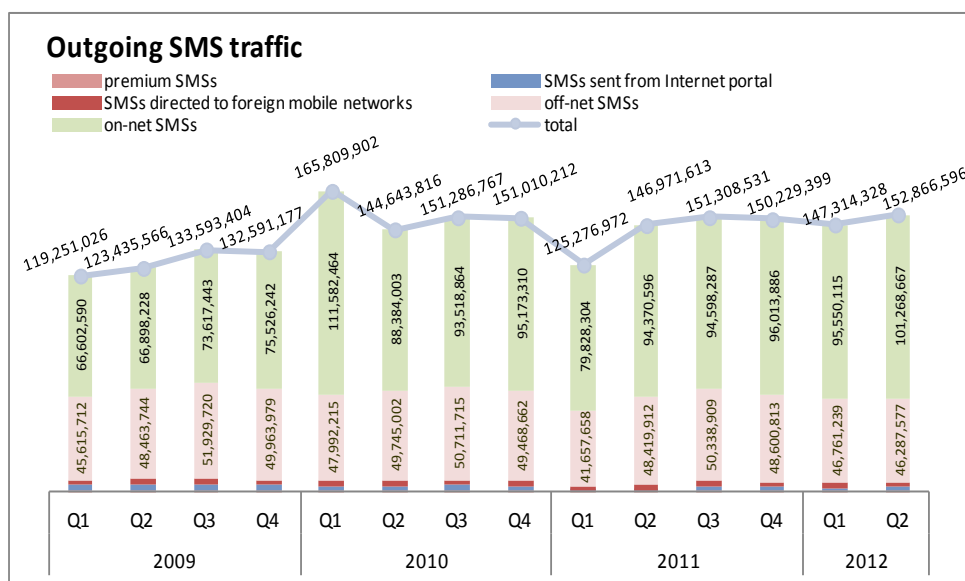


Figure 20: SMS activity - number of outgoing SMSs

Year	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Total	6,235,223	6,514,811	7,056,188	6,368,240	3,791,010	4,181,105	6,371,336	5,614,700	5,002,974	5,310,352
Premium SMSs	854,865	768,149	980,146	801,747	721,054	773,499	968,528	847,328	792,571	660,663
SMSs sent from Internet portal	2,835,249	2,867,593	2,861,077	2,660,656	676,667	622,482	2,156,657	2,099,637	1,778,805	2,505,994
SMSs directed to foreign mobile networks	2,545,109	2,879,069	3,214,965	2,905,837	2,393,289	2,785,124	3,246,151	2,667,735	2,431,598	2,143,695

Table 7: Premium SMSs, SMSs sent from Internet portal, SMSs directed to foreign mobile networks

¹⁸ Including on-net SMSs, off-net SMSs, SMSs sent to foreign mobile networks, SMSs sent from Internet Portal and premium SMSs.

On the other hand, premium SMSs, which totalled 1.5 million in the first half of 2012, were down by 2.8% and SMSs directed to foreign mobile networks, which totalled 4.6 million in the same period, were also down by 11.7%.

MMS traffic volumes

MMS activity in the first half of 2012 was significantly stronger than that reported in the corresponding period a year earlier.

The number of outgoing MMSs totalled 132,407 in the first half of 2012, up by 23,621 (or 21.7%) from the number of outgoing MMSs reported in the first half of 2011.

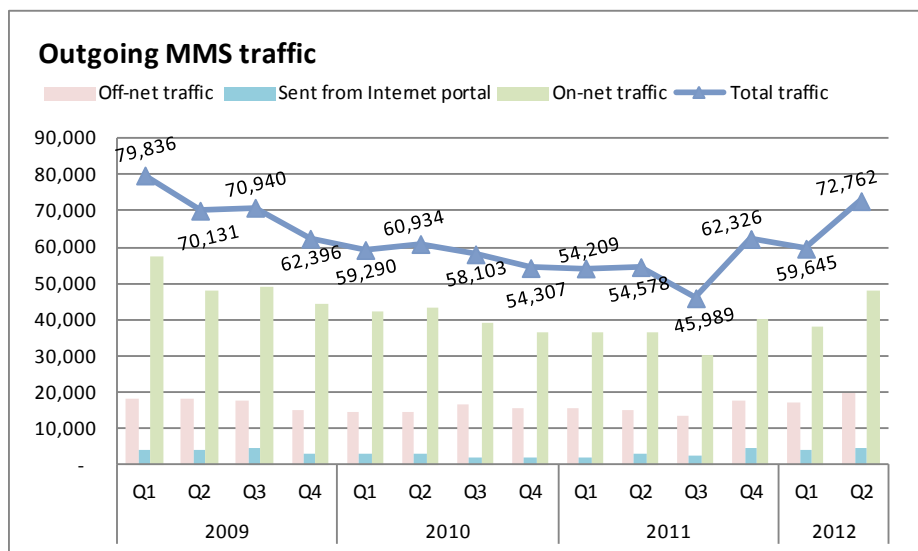


Figure 21: MMS activity - number of outgoing MMSs

During the first half of 2012, on-net MMSs accounted for 65.9% of total traffic for the period. Off-net SMSs accounted for another 28.3% of the total. The remaining share, at 5.8%, was accounted for by MMSs sent from Internet portal.

5.7. Activity levels per mobile subscription

This section provides information on the average number of voice calls, SMSs and MMSs per mobile subscription. Quarterly figures are reported on a per user basis (wherein the 'per user' term refers to an active mobile subscription).

Voice call and SMS activity per subscription in the first half of 2012 was weaker than that reported for the first half of 2011.

The average number of voice calls per active subscription went down from around 332 in the first half of 2011 to around 322 in the first half of 2012.

Meanwhile, the average number of SMSs per active subscription went down from around 575 in the first half of 2011 to around 564 in the first half of 2012.

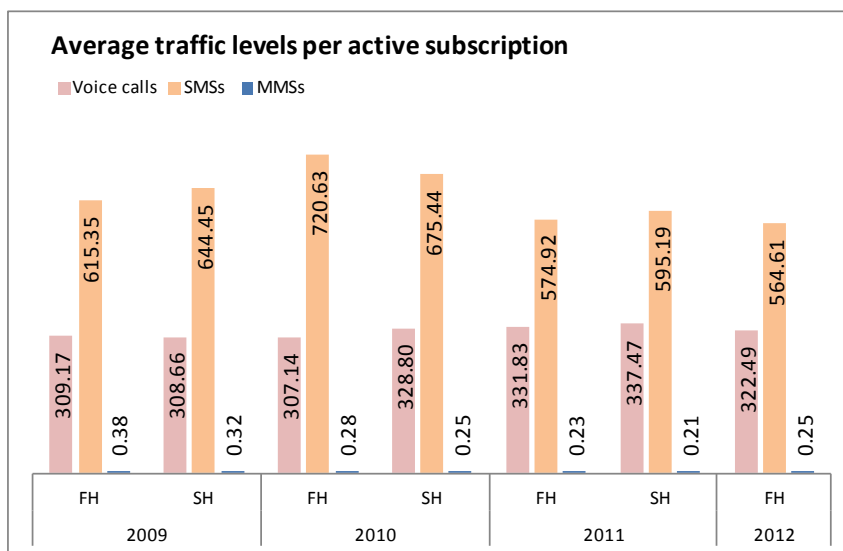


Figure 22: Subscriber activity - average traffic levels per active subscription

A very slight change was recorded during the same periods in terms of the average number of MMSs per active mobile subscription.

Voice call activity per subscription

In terms of voice call activity per subscription, on-net MTM calls represent the largest segment of voice call activity recorded by active mobile subscribers.

In this regard, the average number of on-net MTM calls per active mobile subscription was around 188 in the first half of 2012, down slightly from around 189 in the first half of 2011.

The average number of off-net MTM calls per active mobile subscription was around 94 in the first half of 2012, again down from around 104 in the first half of the previous year.

On the other hand, the average number of MTI calls and MTF calls per active mobile subscription in the first half of 2012 was above that recorded for the first half of 2011.

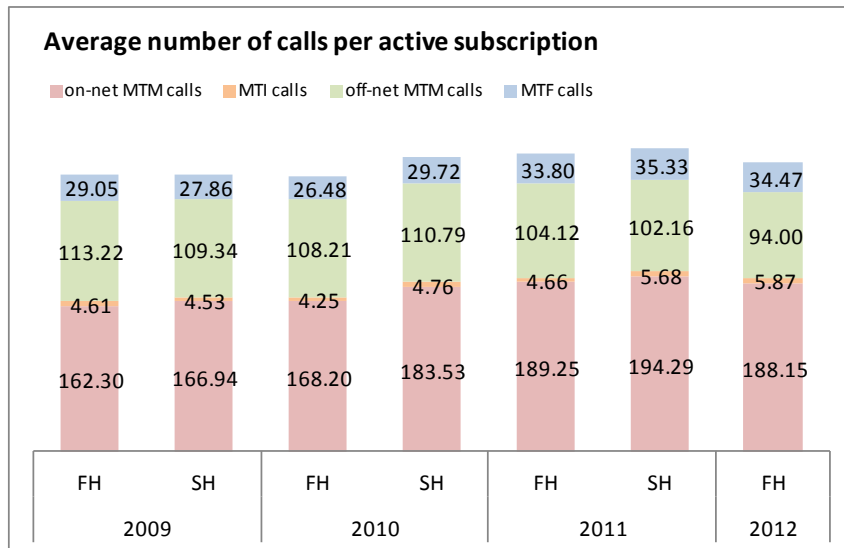


Figure 23: Subscriber activity - average number of calls per active subscription

SMS activity per mobile subscription

SMS traffic volumes in the first half of 2012 were lower than in the corresponding period a year earlier. This is because each subscriber on average made less off-net SMSs, less premium SMSs and less SMSs to foreign mobile networks during the said period.

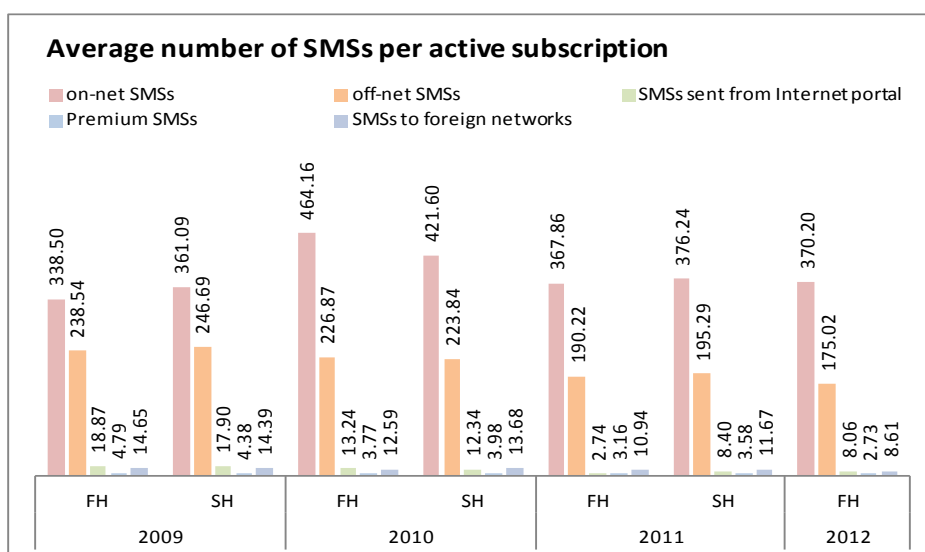


Figure 24: Subscriber activity - average number of SMSs per active subscription

The average number of off-net SMSs per active subscription declined from around 190 in the first half of 2011 to around 175 in the first half of 2012.

5.8. Average mobile call duration

On average, an on-net MTM call lasted around 1.8 minutes in the first half of 2012, up from around 1.6 minutes in the first half of 2011.

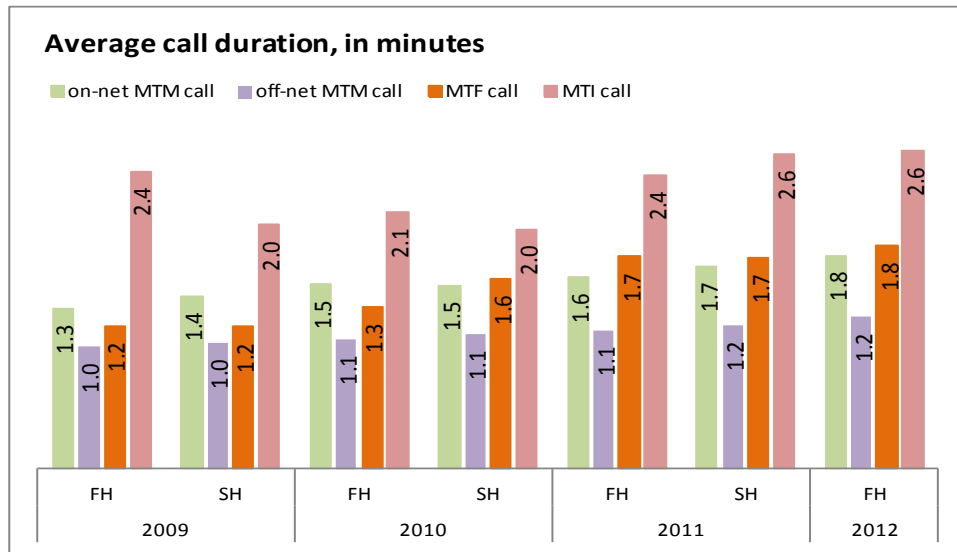


Figure 25: Average duration of an outgoing mobile call

Off-net MTM calls, MTF calls and MTI calls were also on average lengthier in the first half of 2012, when compared to the corresponding period in 2011.

5.9. International roaming activity levels¹⁹

International roaming encompasses any activity registered by mobile subscribers whilst travelling abroad. When making or receiving calls while abroad, mobile subscribers would be using voice roaming services. When sending or receiving an SMS while abroad, mobile subscribers would be using SMS roaming services. Mobile subscribers can also send or receive data while abroad. These services are referred to as data roaming services.

When reporting on international roaming activity, local operators distinguish between inbound and outbound roaming activity.

Outbound roaming activity refers to call, SMS, and data services operated on foreign mobile networks by local subscribers when roaming abroad.

Inbound roaming activity refers to call, SMS and data services operated on local mobile networks by foreign subscribers when roaming in Malta.

This document also outlines developments in voice and SMS roaming activity.

Outbound roaming activity

The number of outbound roaming calls²⁰ totalled nearly 3.5 million in the first half of 2012, up by nearly 15% from around 3.0 million calls in the first half of 2011. Traffic volumes were also stronger in terms of outbound roaming minutes. Their number increased by 13.9%, up from nearly five million minutes in the first half of 2011 to 5.7 million minutes in the first half of 2012.

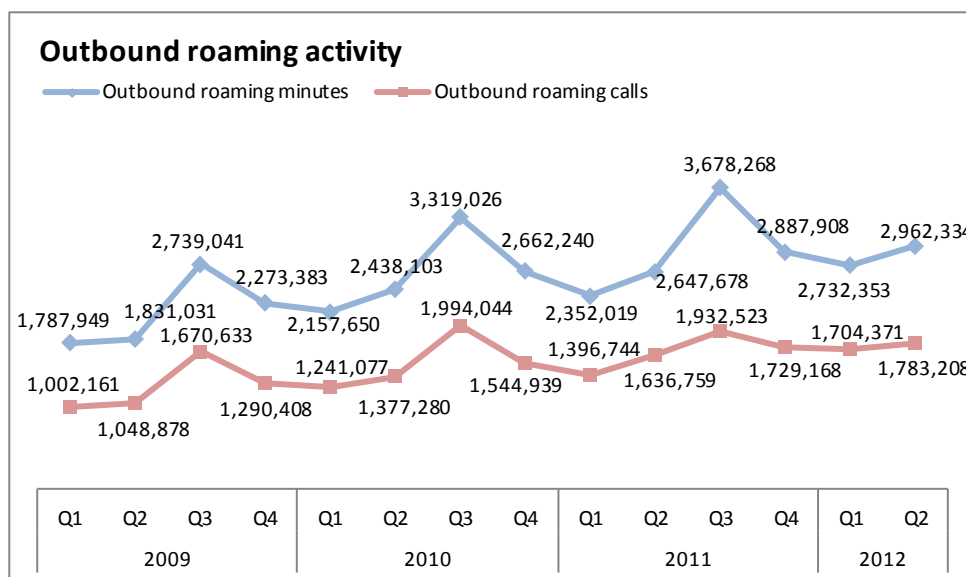


Figure 26: Outbound roaming activity

¹⁹ Data for inbound and outbound roaming calls is currently under review and should therefore be interpreted with caution.

²⁰ Figures are only estimates and are currently under review.

A more detailed look at developments in outbound roaming activity would show that, during the period under review, an increase was recorded under all sub headings of this indicator.

The number of calls made by local subscribers whilst roaming abroad went up by 15.2% whilst the number of calls received by local subscribers when roaming abroad went up by 14.7%.

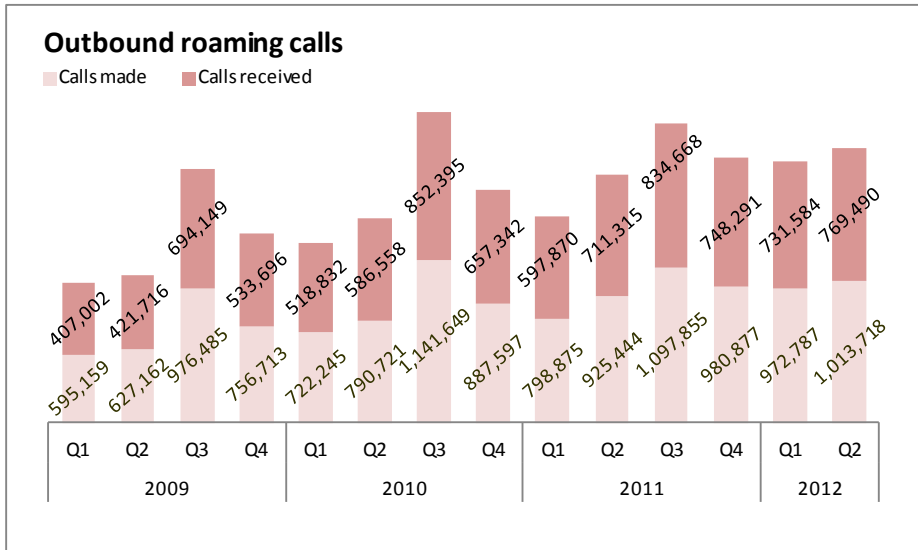


Figure 27: Outbound roaming activity - number of voice calls

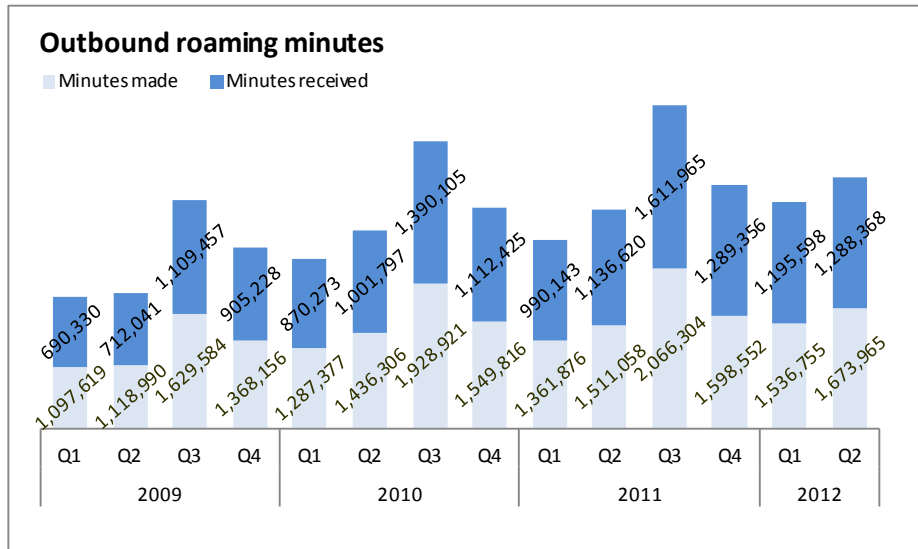


Figure 28: Outbound roaming activity - number of voice call minutes

In terms of outbound roaming minutes, the total received by local subscribers whilst roaming abroad increased by 16.8%, from 2.1 million minutes in the first half of 2011 to 2.5 million minutes in the first half of 2012. With respect to the number of minutes made by local subscribers whilst roaming abroad,

traffic increased by 11.8%, from 2.9 million minutes in the first half of 2011 to 3.2 million minutes in the first half of 2012.

Inbound roaming activity

The number of inbound roaming calls totalled 10.8 million in the first half of 2012, representing a 23.1% increase in traffic over the corresponding period in 2011.

On the other hand, inbound roaming minutes increased by 8.6%, from 16.4 million minutes recorded in the first half of 2011 to 17.8 million minutes in the first half of 2012.

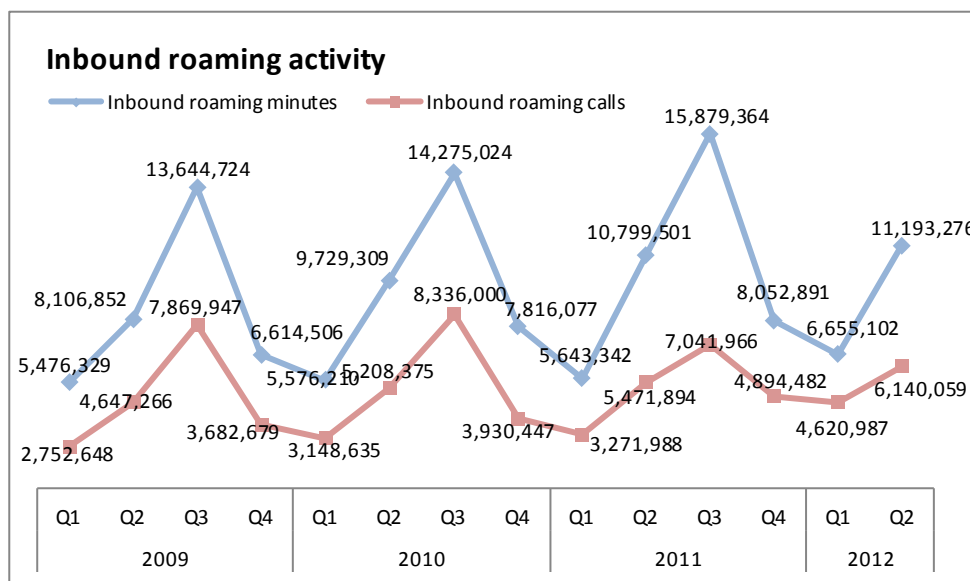


Figure 29: Inbound roaming activity

Disaggregating inbound roaming call figures would show that the number of calls received by foreign mobile subscribers whilst roaming in Malta went up by 16.2%, from 2.2 million in the first half of 2011 to nearly 2.6 million in the first half of 2012.

The number of calls made by foreign mobile subscribers whilst roaming in Malta also increased by 25.4%, from 6.5 million in the first half of 2011 to 8.2 million in the first half of 2012.

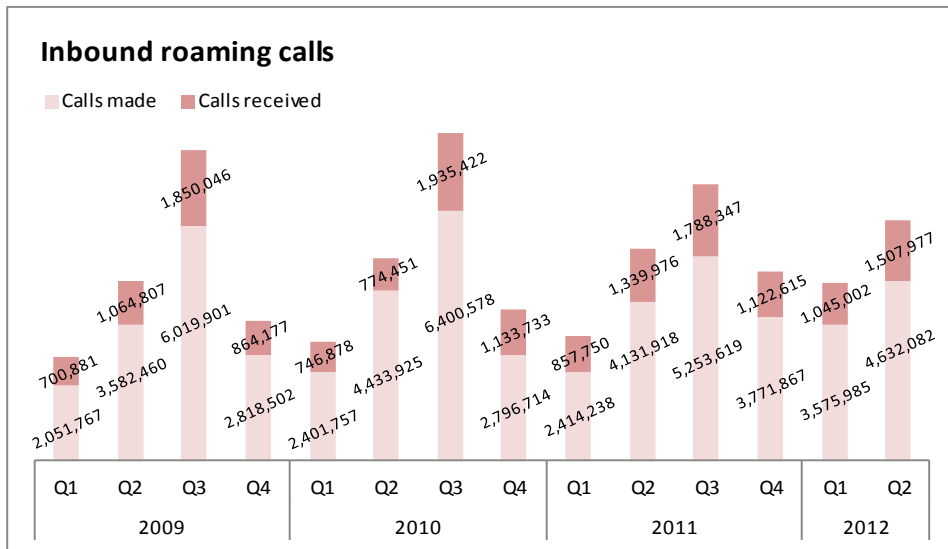


Figure 30: Inbound roaming activity - number of voice calls

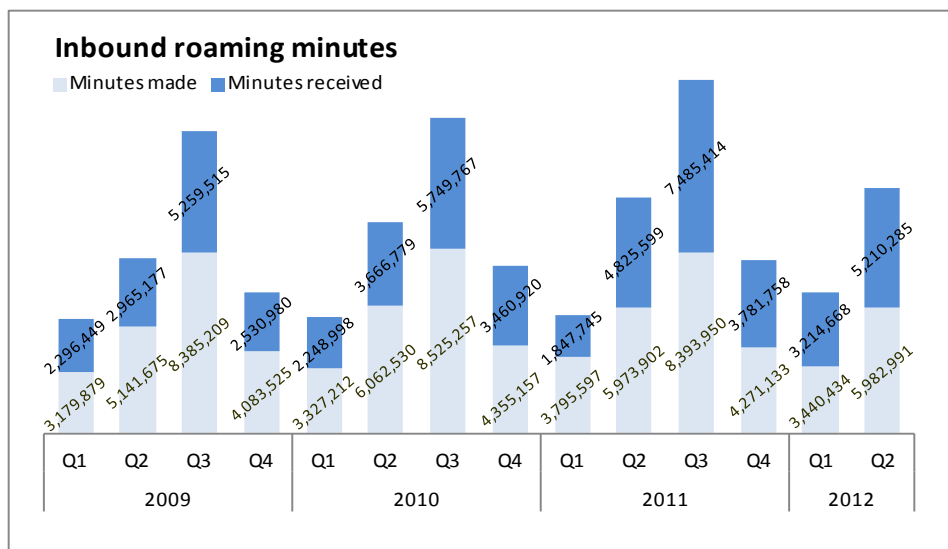


Figure 31: Inbound roaming activity - number of voice call minutes

In terms of inbound roaming minutes, minutes made by foreign mobile subscribers whilst roaming in Malta declined by 3.5%, from 9.8 million minutes in the first half of 2011 to 9.4 million in the first half of 2012.

On the other hand, traffic in terms of the number of minutes received by foreign mobile subscribers whilst roaming in Malta increased by 26.2%, from a total of 6.7 million minutes in the first half of 2011 to 8.4 million minutes in the first half of 2012.

5.10. Mobile ARPU

Mobile ARPU figures are derived by dividing total revenues of the operator by the average number of active subscriptions during the period.

Total revenues include revenues from access, revenues from all local and international voice call activity (excluding interconnection revenues) registered by all active subscribers, total roaming revenues but excluding inbound roaming revenues, total revenues from data services, and total revenues from MMS activity and SMS activity.

The average number of active subscriptions during the respective period is arrived at by adding the number of subscribers at the start of the period plus the number of subscribers at the end of the period, divided by two.

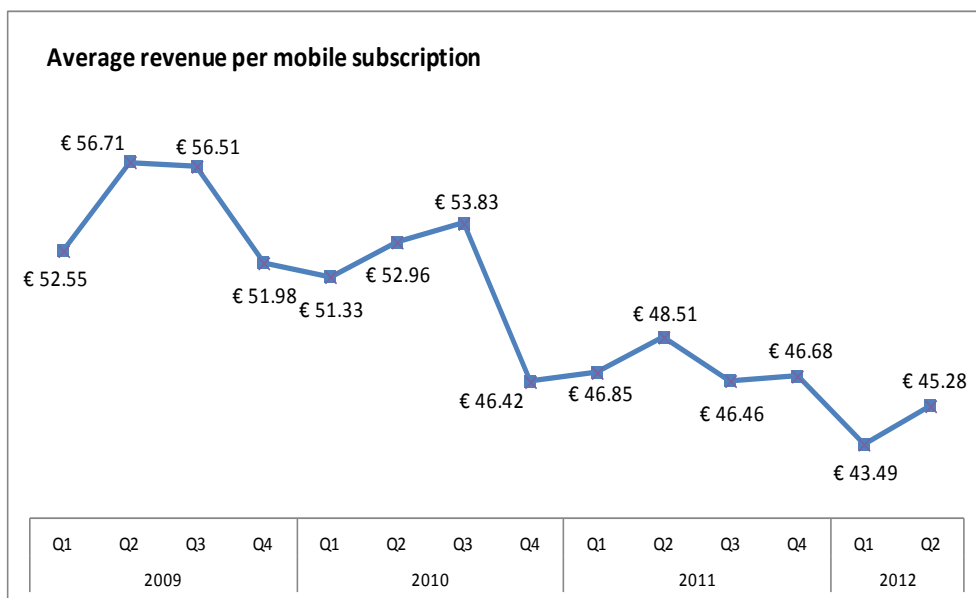


Figure 32: Average revenue per mobile user

Mobile ARPU in Q1 and Q2 of 2012 stood at €43.49 and €45.28 respectively. In both instances, the figure is lower than that recorded in the same period a year earlier.

5.11. Average rates per minute of mobile communications and SMS

Revenue-based market indicators²¹ show that, as at Q2 2012, the average rate per minute of mobile communications for a domestic call over the mobile network stood at €0.122, down from €0.136 in Q2 2011.

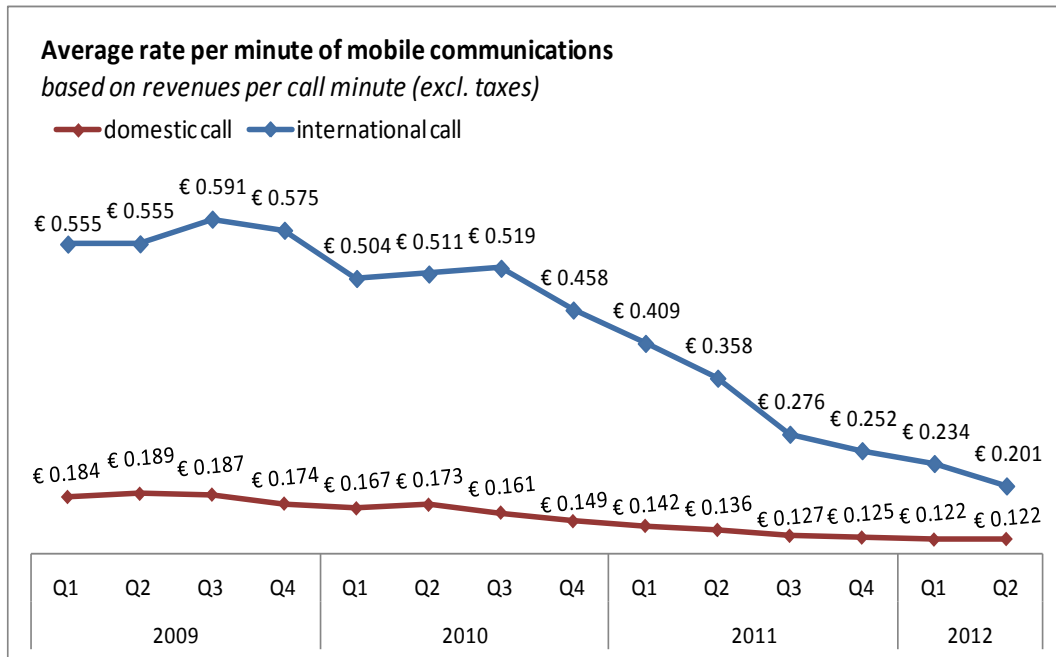


Figure 33: Average rate per minute of mobile communications

The average rate per minute of mobile communications for an international call stood at €0.201 as at Q2 2012, which is again lower than €0.358 as at Q2 2011.

²¹ The average rate per minute of mobile communications is derived by dividing domestic and international mobile voice traffic revenues (including access revenues but excluding roaming revenues), by the number of minutes reported under each respective heading. Revenues from VAT, excise tax, and retail roamings services are excluded from the workings. Figures are to be interpreted with caution, as these are not the actual rates quoted on the market.

It must also be noted that local mobile operators may offer free calls or discounted call rates, such as on weekends and evenings, and also in the case of particular schemes for closed user groups and bundled products. This would affect the final outcome for the average rate per minute of mobile communications.

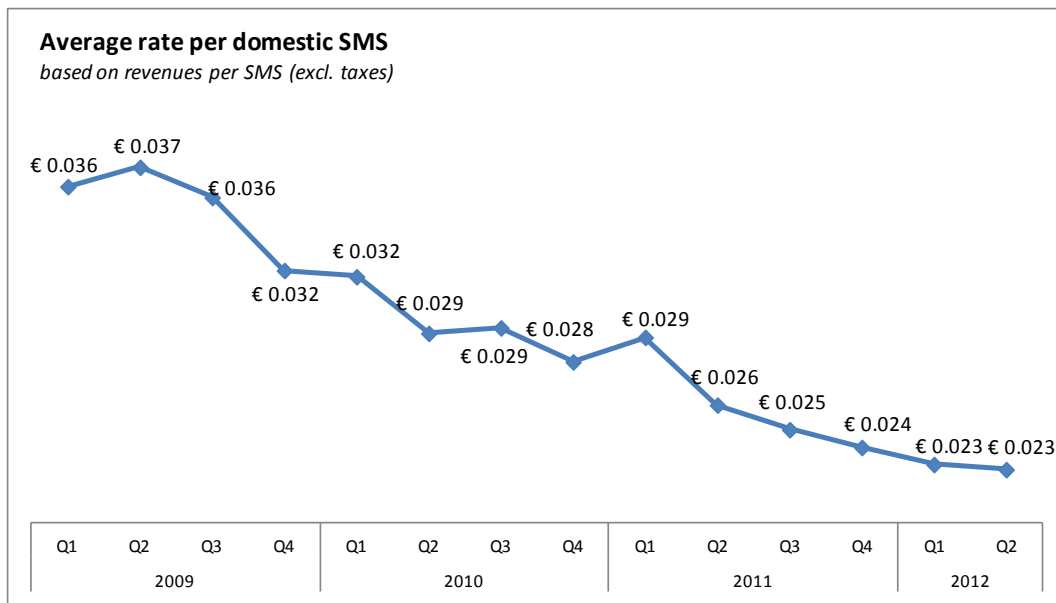


Figure 34: Average rate per domestic SMS

Meanwhile, the average rate per domestic SMS stood €0.023 in Q2 2012, which is also down from €0.026 as at Q2 2011.

5.12. Average rate per minute of mobile communications: Malta vs EU

The 2011 EU Commission report on 'Telecommunication Market and Regulatory Developments'²² makes specific reference to an indicator providing a comparison of the average revenue for mobile voice minutes across the EU in 2010.

The rate for each EU country is arrived at by dividing retail mobile revenues²³, including all retail voice related revenues including monthly fees, by the number of mobile voice call minutes during a particular period²⁴.

Based on this indicator, Malta ranked first at the high end of the scale in 2010, with an average revenue per minute of €0.21 compared to an EU average of €0.11.

Since 2010, however, the average revenue per minute of mobile communications in Malta went down significantly.

²² Link to EU Commission document, issued as part of the Scoreboard 2012:

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/countries_2012/information_society/bin12/pdf/Telecom_Horizontal_Chapter.pdf

The Scoreboard 2012 is found at http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/scoreboard/

²³ The indicator does not include wholesale revenues, such as revenues from interconnection, revenues from SMS, MMS, data, content and handset revenues, and VAT. The rates quoted in the EU Commission report comprise both the national and international call segments.

²⁴ The MCA applies the same methodological approach when calculating the average rate per minute of mobile communications, highlighted in Section 6.11.

MCA calculations show that the average rate per minute of mobile communications has gone down from €0.21 in 2010 to €0.136 in 2011.

It is of note that the rates quoted above are annual rates. When looking at quarterly rates, MCA calculations show that Maltese consumers were charged lower charges in the fourth quarter of 2011 than the rate quoted for the whole of 2011. The rate for the second quarter of 2012 was even lower than that calculated for the fourth quarter of 2011.

Since Q2 2011, when the average rate per minute of mobile communications stood at €0.136, the rate went down to €0.125 in Q4 2011 and eventually to €0.122 in Q2 2012.

6. Internet

Broadband Internet continues to experience growth as the take-up of both fixed and mobile broadband improves. The number of fixed broadband subscriptions increased by 6.3% in the year to Q2 2012 to reach 134,007 subscriptions.

This corresponds to a fixed broadband penetration rate of 32.1% as at the end of the current reporting period.

The number of fixed broadband connections bundled with some other electronic communications product or service increased by 40.3% to reach 70,393 as at the end of Q2 2012.

During the period under review, DSL continued to be the most popular technology platform for fixed broadband with around 50.2% of all fixed broadband subscriptions as at the end of Q2 2012 having a DSL connection. The cable technology platform accounted for a further 46.7% of the local subscriber base and fixed 'wireless' broadband (hereafter, referred to as "BWA") accounted for the remaining share, at 3.1%.

MCA workings show that, in the year to Q2 2012, the average rate per unit of download speed ("Mbps") fell, mainly because service providers offered higher headline download speeds to existent and new customers whilst keeping the tariffs unchanged. New packages were also launched to cater for new market requirements.

Mobile broadband technology is distinct to fixed broadband technology, in that it encompasses broadband services offered over 3G mobile networks. The use of mobile broadband comes in three main forms, namely the use of 3G-enabled mobile handsets, mainly smartphones, via USB dongles connected to a portable computer and tablets and built-in broadband cards.

An increase in mobile broadband availability and usage in the 12 months to July 2011 has already been reported in the previous CMR publication. During the said period, the number of end-users that could access advanced data services on 3G mobile networks increased by 23.4% to reach 147,146. The usage of mobile broadband services also increased, with the number of end-users increasing from around 60,000 in July 2010 to around 72,000 in July 2011.

Despite these positive developments, the Digital Agenda Scoreboard²⁵ reports that Malta's mobile broadband penetration rate as at July 2011 stood at 3.2%, well below the EU average of 7.5%, indicating that there remains substantial scope for further growth in the area.

An update of mobile broadband statistics as at July 2012 will be published in the next CMR.

²⁵ Link to relevant data: [Visualization of Digital Agenda Scoreboard Indicators](#).

6.1. Trends in fixed broadband subscriptions

In the year to Q2 2012, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions increased by 6.3% to reach 134,007 by the end of the reporting period²⁶.

Fixed broadband is currently offered over three technology platforms: the DSL platform, the cable platform, and the fixed wireless platform.

The increase in fixed broadband subscriptions highlighted above is mainly attributed to the cable platform, which added 7,014 new subscriptions between Q2 2011 and Q2 2012. Cable subscriptions totalled 62,581 subscriptions as at the end of the current reporting period, which is 2.2% more than the number of subscriptions recorded as at the end of Q2 2011.

The DSL platform added 1,444 new subscriptions during the same period, to reach 67,253 by the end of Q2 2012.

Meanwhile, the number of fixed wireless subscriptions declined by 492 and totalled 4,173 as at the end of Q2 2012.

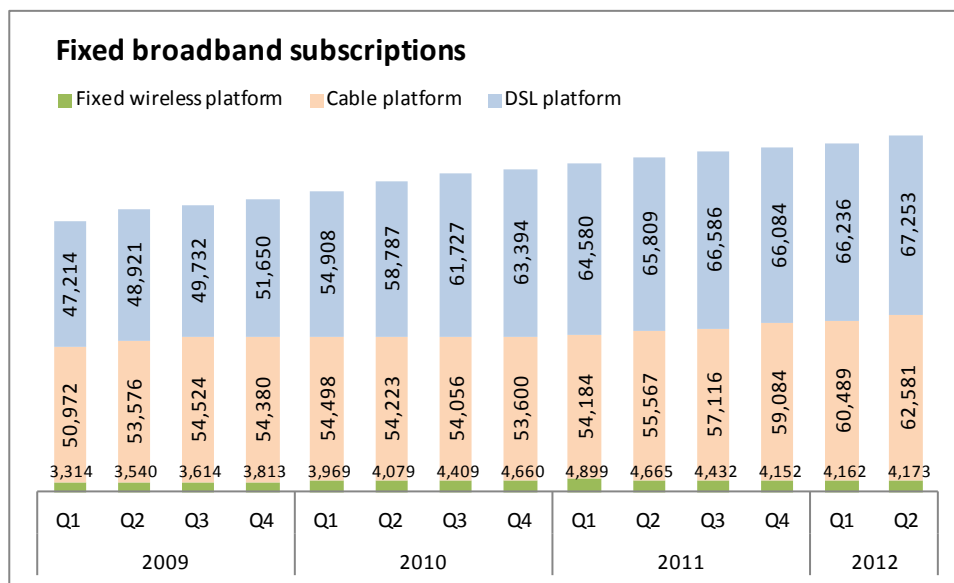


Figure 35: Broadband Internet subscriptions as at end of period - by technology

Although, in the year to Q2 2012, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions on the cable platform increased by a much faster rate than has been the case with DSL, the most popular type of fixed broadband connection remained that on the DSL platform, with this type of connection accounting for 50.2% of the total number of fixed broadband subscriptions recorded as at the end of Q2 2012.

²⁶ For the purpose of this report, fixed broadband Internet subscriptions refer to those connections which are *always on* and have a speed of 128kbps or more.

6.2. Fixed broadband download speeds²⁷

More and more consumers are availing themselves of faster download speeds. This is evident from Figure 36, which depicts a marked shift, starting in Q1 2012, in terms of the number of subscriptions availing of download speeds that are higher than 5Mbps²⁸.

As at the end of Q2 2012, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions having a connection that allowed for a download speed of less than 5Mbps accounted for 36.3% of the local subscriber base, down from 73.7% as at the end of Q2 2011.

In absolute terms, the number of subscriptions under this category went down from 92,828 as at the end of Q2 2011 to 48,700 as at the end of Q2 2012.

The category encompassing fixed broadband subscriptions with a connection allowing for a download speed of 5Mbps but less than 10Mbps accounted for 12.6% of all fixed broadband subscriptions as at the end of Q2 2012, which is up from 12% as at the end of Q2 2011.

In absolute terms, this category accounted for 16,928 subscriptions as at the end of the current reporting period.

Meanwhile, the respective share of fixed broadband subscriptions with a connection allowing for a download speed of 10Mbps but less than 20Mbps and a download speed of 20Mbps but less than 30Mbps went up by 27.5 percentage points and 8.1 percentage points respectively. The former category accounted for 37.9% of all fixed broadband subscriptions as at the end of Q2 2012. The latter category accounted for 11.52%.

In absolute terms, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions at the end of Q2 2012 with a connection allowing for a download speed of 10Mbps but less than 20Mbps and a download speed of 20Mbps but less than 30Mbps totalled 50,842 and 15,436 respectively.

²⁷ Quoted figures refer to advertised speeds.

²⁸ In previous CMR publications, the MCA classified fixed broadband subscriptions under six different categories, with each category specifying a range of download speeds, expressed as megabits per second ("Mbps"). The 'slowest' download speed category was set at 'less than 144kbps' and the 'fastest' download speed category was set at '10Mbps or more'.

The MCA revised these categories as from this publication to match local market developments in terms of faster download speeds at which broadband products are currently marketed in Malta.

Fixed broadband subscriptions are now being classified on the following categories: 'less than 5Mbps'; 'equal to or greater than 5Mbps, but less than 10Mbps'; 'equal to or greater than 10Mbps, but less than 20Mbps'; 'equal to or greater than 20Mbps, but less than 30Mbps'; 'equal to or greater than 30Mbps, but less than 50Mbps'; 'equal to or greater than 50Mbps, but less than 10Mbps'; and '100Mbps or more'.

The categories encompassing fixed broadband subscriptions with a connection allowing for a download speed of 30Mbps but less than 50Mbps and a download speed of 50Mbps but less than 100Mbps together accounted for 0.9% of all fixed broadband subscriptions recorded as at the end of Q2 2012.

In absolute terms, these two categories accounted for 1,255 fixed broadband subscriptions as at the end of Q2 2012, up from 317 as at the end of Q2 2011.

The last category under consideration encompasses those connections that allow for a download speed of 100Mbps or more. As at the end of Q2 2012, this category accounted for 0.6% of all fixed broadband subscriptions recorded at the time.

In absolute terms, the number of fixed broadband subscriptions under this category totalled 846 as at the end of the current reporting period.

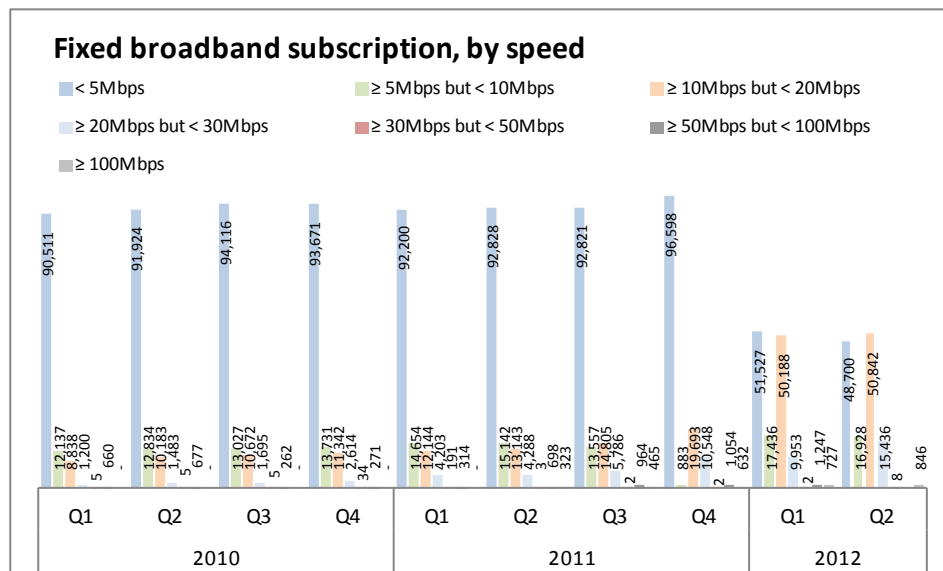


Figure 36: Fixed broadband subscriptions, by speed

Upon assessing subscriptions on the different broadband platforms in terms of download speed would show that, as at the end of Q2 2012, 96.7% of all fixed wireless broadband subscriptions had a connection with a download speed of less than 5Mbps; 3.2% had a connection with a download speed of 5Mbps up to, but not including 30Mbps; and 0.1% had a connection with a download speed of 30Mbps up to, but not including 50Mbps. No wireless-based subscriptions had a connection allowing for a download speed of 50Mbps or more.

With respect to DSL, 65.9% of all subscriptions on this type of broadband platform had a connection with a download speed of less than 5Mbps; 34.1% had a connection with a download speed of 5Mbps up to, but not including 30Mbps; and a meagre 0.01% had a connection with a download speed of

30Mbps up to, but not including 50Mbps. No DSL-based subscriptions had a connection allowing for a download speed of 50Mbps or more.

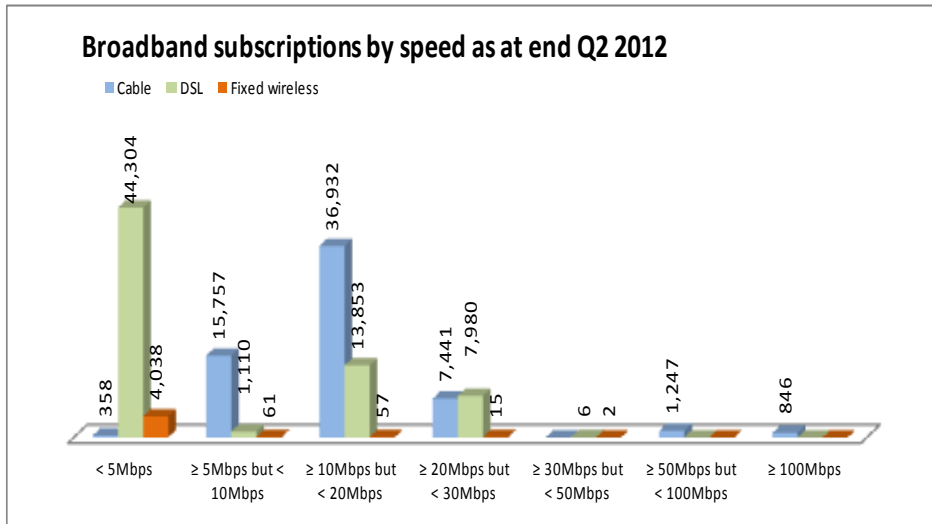


Figure 37: Broadband Internet subscriptions as at end of period - by connection speed

Meanwhile, only 0.6% of all fixed broadband subscriptions on the cable platform had a connection with a download speed of less than 5Mbps. 25.2% of all fixed broadband subscriptions on the cable platform had a connection of 5Mbps, up to, but not including 10Mbps; 59% had a connection with a download speed of 10Mbps, up to but not including 20Mbps; 11.9% had a connection with a download speed of 20Mbps, up to, but not including 30Mbps; nearly two percent had a connection with a download speed of 30Mbps, up to, but not including 100Mbps; and 1.4% had a connection with a download speed of 100Mbps.

6.3. Fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer

The number of fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer as at the end of Q2 2012 totalled 70,393 i.e. 20,236 more than reported as at the end of Q2 2011.

Fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer	2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Two-play bundled offers	861	641	865	1,046	7,319	7,013	7,239	8,035	2,815	12,931
Fixed broadband + Fixed post-paid	861	641	865	1,046	7,319	7,013	7,239	8,035	2,815	10,960
Fixed broadband + Pay TV	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,971
Fixed broadband + Mobile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Triple-play bundled offers	4,757	4,723	5,083	5,934	7,589	6,798	5,872	7,136	12,697	18,443
Fixed broadband + Fixed post-paid + Pay TV	402	279	128	45	7,105	6,365	5,504	6,832	12,393	18,006
Fixed broadband + Fixed post-paid + Mobile	4,355	4,444	4,955	5,889	484	433	368	304	304	437
Fixed broadband + Pay TV + Mobile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quadruple-play bundled offers	37,812	43,044	49,657	57,135	35,361	36,346	37,422	37,734	38,335	39,019
Total fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer	43,430	48,408	55,605	64,115	50,269	50,157	50,533	52,905	53,847	70,393
Number of fixed broadband subscriptions	113,375	117,089	120,192	121,654	123,663	126,041	128,134	129,320	130,887	134,007
As a percentage of fixed BB Internet subscriptions	38.31%	41.34%	46.26%	52.70%	40.65%	39.79%	39.44%	40.91%	41.14%	52.53%

Table 8: Fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer

The proportion of fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer increased by 12.7 percentage points between Q2 2011 and Q2 2012, and stood at 52.5% by the end of the current reporting period²⁹.

²⁹ It is important to note that the significant shift in the number of fixed broadband subscriptions on a bundled offer observed between Q4 2010 and Q1 2011 is the result of a re-classification of data by Melita.

Figures in Table 8 are provisional and subject to change.

6.4. Fixed broadband penetration rate

Malta’s fixed broadband penetration (per population) reached 32.2% as at the end of Q2 2012, up by 1.9 percentage points over the corresponding period a year earlier.

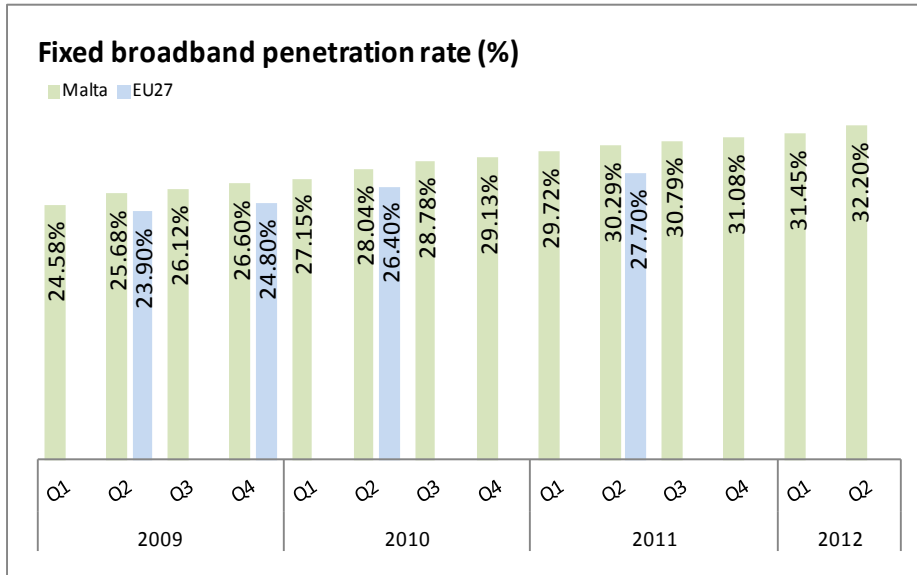


Figure 38: Fixed broadband penetration rate as at end of period

6.5. Fixed broadband ARPU

An indicator evaluating operators' revenue per fixed broadband subscription (hereafter, also referred to as "retail fixed broadband ARPU") has been developed. The data is presented below on a quarterly basis.

ARPU for fixed broadband reflects the average quarterly spend by users for broadband services, calculated as the total retail revenues for broadband subscriptions, divided by the average of the total number of broadband subscriptions within a quarter.

The revenue element is composed of the total retail revenues from subscriptions to broadband services, excluding revenues from installation and connection fees.

The average total number of subscriptions is calculated by taking the sum of the total subscriptions at the start and the end of the quarter under consideration divided by two.

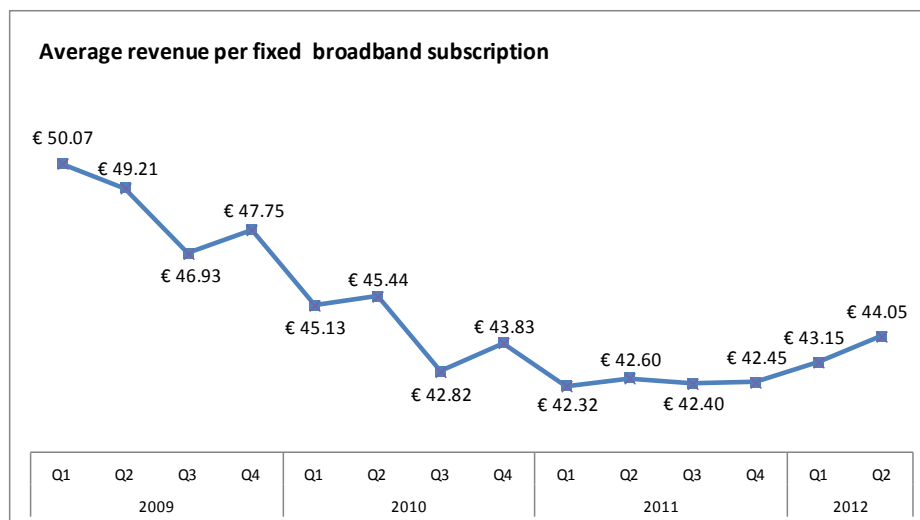


Figure 39: Average revenue per broadband user

Figure 39 shows that fixed broadband ARPU as at Q1 and Q2 of 2012 stood at €43.15 and €44.05 respectively. Both figures are higher than the ones reported in Q1 and Q2 of the previous year.

6.6. Average advertised rates for fixed broadband

The MCA considers the average advertised rate of fixed broadband per unit of download speed (i.e. per Mbps) as a proxy measure of how pricing for fixed broadband develops over time.

This is done by classifying the broadband products offered in the market into categories of headline download speeds, and then working out the average advertised rate for each category.

Seven different categories are identified as follows, encompassing:

- products with a download speed equal to or greater than 2Mbps but less than 4Mbps;
- products with a download speed equal to or greater than 4Mbps but less than 6Mbps;
- products with a download speed equal to or greater than 6Mbps but less than 8Mbps;
- products with a download speed equal to or greater than 8Mbps but less than 10Mbps;
- products with a download speed equal to or greater than 10Mbps but less than 20Mbps;
- products with a download speed equal to or greater than 20Mbps but less than 30Mbps; and
- products equal to or greater than 30Mbps.

As at the end of Q2 2012, local service providers did not market broadband products with a download speed of less than 4Mbps or with a download speed of 8Mbps but less than 10Mbps. No price assessment is therefore available for these two product categories.

With respect to the category encompassing broadband products with a download speed equal to or greater than 4Mbps but less than 6Mbps, the average rate per Mbps went down from €5.68 in Q2 2011 to €3.81 in Q2 2012. This is a result of Ozone reducing the price of its broadband products falling within this category and other operators upgrading products available in Q2 2012 to higher download speeds.

With respect to the category encompassing broadband products with a download speed equal to or greater than 6Mbps but less than 8Mbps, the average price per Mbps went down from €2.86 in Q2 2011 to €2.22 in Q2 2012. This is a result of Melita no longer marketing its 5Mbps product to new customers as from Q2 2011, Ozone reducing the price of its broadband featuring in this category as from Q4 2011, and Vodafone launching its 7.2Mbps product in Q2 2011. These factors contributed to pull down the average rate per Mbps.

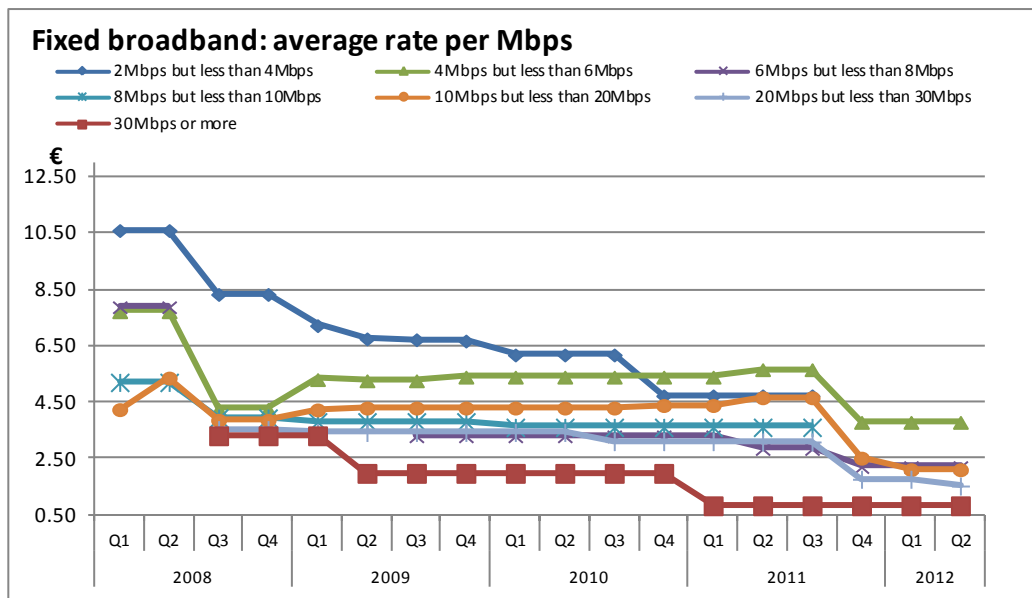


Figure 40: Average price per Mbps of fixed broadband for packages

With respect to the category encompassing broadband products with a download speed equal to or greater than 10Mbps but less than 20Mbps, the average rate per Mbps also went down from €4.68 in Q2 2011 to €2.13 in Q2 2012. This is a result of both Ozone and GO reducing the prices charged for broadband products featuring in this category as from Q4 2011 and Melita introducing its 15Mbps (100GB) product as from Q1 2012.

A decline in the average rate per Mbps was also reported for those broadband products with a broadband speed falling within the category of equal to or greater than 20Mbps but less than 30Mbps, from €3.11 in Q2 2011 to €1.55 in Q2 2012. This development is a result of Ozone and GO again reducing the prices charged for broadband products featuring in this category, Melita reducing the price charged for its 25Mbps product (branded as Fibre Power 25), Ozone introducing its 20Mbps product in Q4 2011, and Vodafone introducing its 21.6Mbps 'Home portable wi-fi' product range in Q2 2012 (branded as LibertyLite, LibertyPlus, and LibertyMax).

The last category under consideration encompasses broadband products with a download speed of 30Mbps or more. In this regard, the average price per Mbps went up from €0.85 in Q2 2011 to €1.25 in Q2 2012. This is because as from Q2 2012, GO started featuring in this category, formerly characterised by Melita's 50Mbps and 100Mbps product range (branded Fibre Power 50 and Fibre Power 100), by launching its 35Mbps product range. GO's prices for the 35Mbps products actually drove up the average rate per Mbps.

7. Reception of TV broadcasts via Pay TV platforms

The current CMR covers developments in the take-up and pricing with respect to four technology platforms over which Pay TV services could be delivered in Malta. These are the digital terrestrial ("DTTV") and Internet Protocol television ("IPTV") platforms, which are owned by GO, and the analogue cable and digital cable platforms, which are owned by Melita³⁰.

The take-up of Pay TV services has gone up further in the period under review, mainly as a result of an increase in digital cable and IPTV subscriptions. The digital cable platform added 1,977 new subscriptions between the end of Q2 2011 and the end of Q2 2012. The IPTV platform added 2,375 new subscriptions during the same period.

These increases have made up for declines recorded under the analogue cable and DTTV platforms. Subscriptions under the former platform, which is no longer offered to new customers, went down by 2,451. Those under the DTTV platform went down by 1,153.

As at the end of the current reporting period, digital cable features as the Pay TV platform with the highest number of subscriptions, at 49.9% of the local Pay TV subscriber base, followed by the DTTV platform with a share of 42.3%.

The number of Pay TV subscriptions bundled with some other electronic communications service totalled 69,470 as at the end of Q2 2012, corresponding to a proportion of 46.8% of the local Pay TV subscriber base (excluding analogue subscriptions) recorded at the time.

MCA workings on the average tariff applicable for the different Pay TV channel categories identified below show that figures for Q2 2012 are generally higher than those for Q2 2011. This, however, was mitigated by a number of upgrades to their product line-up in the latter part of the year 2011.

Indeed, the value of some packages may have improved, given the increase in the number of channels listed in standard packages and the introduction of more HD channels.

³⁰ There are to date no authorised satellite broadcasters or satellite Pay TV platforms in Malta.

7.1. Trends in Pay TV subscriptions

In line with the Pay TV technology platforms outlined in the previous section, Pay TV subscriptions are grouped under four categories: DTTV subscriptions, IPTV subscriptions, cable analogue subscriptions and digital cable subscriptions.

Overall outcome

The number of Pay TV subscriptions increased by 748, or 0.5% since the end of Q2 2011, to reach 148,470 as at the end of the current reporting period. This increase is attributed to positive developments for digital cable and IPTV, which recorded an increase of 1,977 and 2,375 subscriptions respectively.

These increases outweighed a decline of 2,451 analogue cable subscriptions and 1,153 DTTV subscriptions.

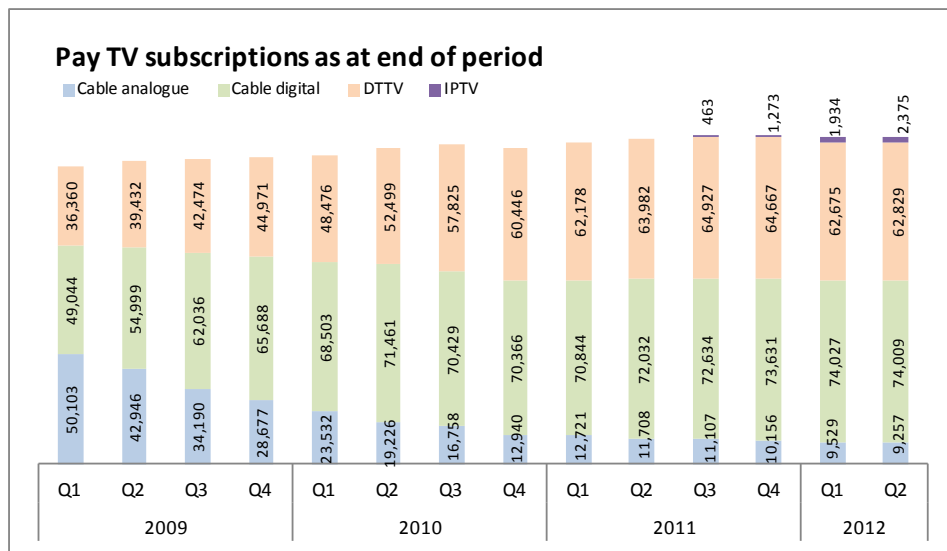


Figure 41: Pay TV subscriptions as at end of period

Focus on the digital Pay TV platform

As at the end of Q2 2012, the number of digital Pay TV subscriptions totalled 136,838. This figure encompasses 74,009 digital cable subscriptions, up from 72,032 as at the end of Q2 2011, and 62,829 DTTV subscriptions, which is down from 63,982 subscriptions as at the end of Q2 2011.

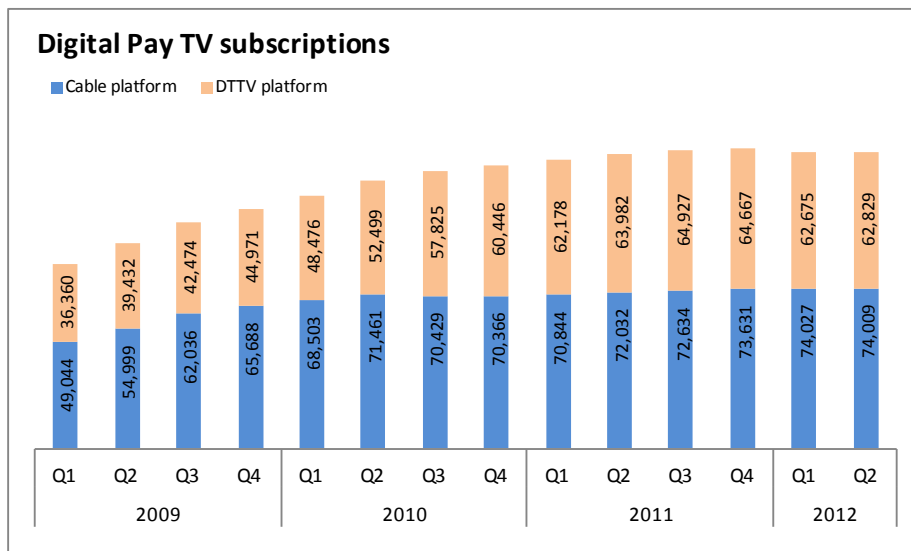


Figure 42: Digital Pay TV subscriptions as at end of period - by platform

As at the end of the current reporting period, the proportion of digital Pay TV subscriptions on the digital cable platform stood at 54.1%, up by 1.1 percentage points since the end of Q2 2011, and that of the DTTV platform stood at 45.9%.

7.2. Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer

The first half of 2012 showed an increase in the number of Pay TV subscriptions (excluding analogue cable subscriptions) on a bundled offer. Bundled Pay TV subscriptions increased from 60,213 as at the end of Q2 2011 to 69,470 as at the end of Q2 2012³¹.

Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer	2009				2010				2011				2012	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Two-play bundled offers	14,546	14,656	17,827	15,065	14,258	11,307	11,578	10,207	16,951	17,502	17,875	16,545	15,315	12,445
Pay TV + Mobile	-	-	3,014	3,438	3,792	3,886	4,083	4,301	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pay TV + Fixed broadband	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,971
Pay TV + Fixed post-paid	14,546	14,656	14,813	11,627	10,466	7,421	7,495	5,906	16,951	17,502	17,875	16,545	15,315	10,474
Triple-play bundled offers	2,444	2,150	943	478	402	279	128	45	7,105	6,365	5,504	6,832	12,393	18,006
Pay TV + Fixed post-paid + Fixed broadband	2,444	2,150	943	478	402	279	128	45	7,105	6,365	5,504	6,832	12,393	18,006
Pay TV + Fixed post-paid + Mobile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pay TV + Fixed broadband + Mobile	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Quadruple-play bundled offers	15,369	21,002	26,706	30,639	37,812	43,044	49,657	57,135	35,361	36,346	37,422	37,734	38,335	39,019
Number of Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer	32,359	37,808	45,476	46,182	52,472	54,630	61,363	67,387	59,417	60,213	60,801	61,111	66,043	69,470
Number of digital Pay TV + IPTV subscriptions	85,404	94,431	104,510	110,659	116,979	123,960	128,254	130,812	133,022	136,014	138,024	139,571	138,636	139,213
as a percentage of digital Pay TV + IPTV subscriptions	37.89%	40.04%	43.51%	41.73%	44.86%	44.07%	47.84%	51.51%	44.67%	44.27%	44.05%	43.78%	47.64%	49.90%

Table 9: Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer

The proportion of Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer stood at 49.9% as at the end of the current reporting period, 5.6 percentage points over that recorded as at the end of Q2 2011.

³¹ It is important to note that the significant shift in the number of Pay TV subscriptions on a bundled offer observed between Q4 2010 and Q1 2011 is the result of a re-classification of data by Melita.

Data in Table 9 is preliminary and subject to change.

7.3. Pay TV ARPU

The current review is publishing an indicator evaluating operators' revenue submissions per Pay TV subscription (hereafter, also referred to as "Pay TV ARPU"), with figures presented on a quarterly basis as shown below.

The ARPU calculation reflects the average quarterly spend by users for Pay TV services and is derived by dividing the total retail revenues for Pay TV services by the average number of Pay TV subscriptions for the period.

The revenue element encompasses total retail revenues from subscriptions to Pay TV services but excludes revenues from premium services³², installations and connections.

The average total number of subscriptions is calculated by taking the sum of the total subscriptions at the start and the end of the quarter divided by two.

Figure 46 shows that Pay TV ARPU as at Q1 and Q2 of 2012 stood at €42.89 and €42.92 respectively. Both figures are higher than those recorded in Q1 and Q2 of 2011.

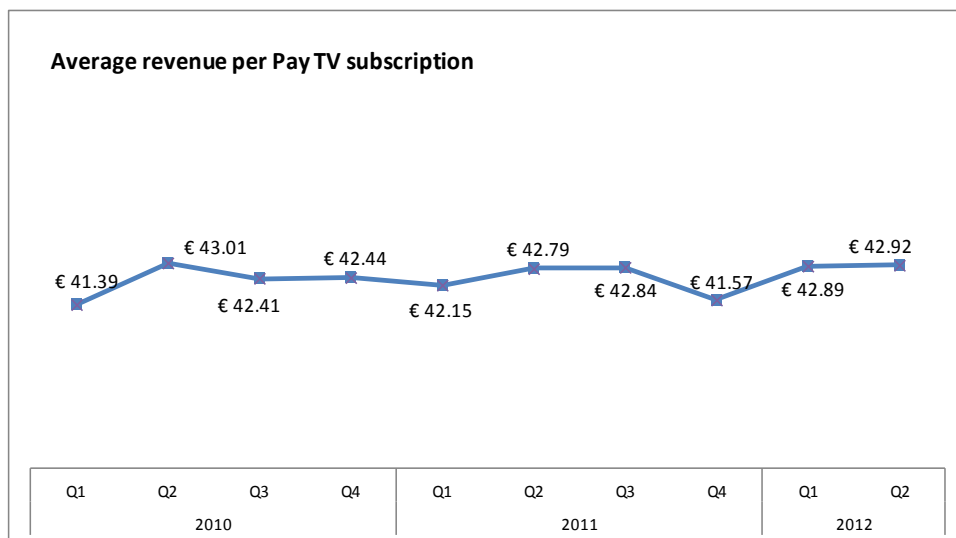


Figure 43: Average revenue per Pay TV user

³² Premium services includes revenues from services, such as, Sports, Movies, and VOD subscriptions.

7.4. Average advertised rates for Pay TV

This section presents findings based on an evaluation of advertised rates for local Pay TV packages. For ease of reference and practicality, price movements are captured according to five distinct Pay TV package categories encompassing: up to 24 channels, 25 to 49 channels, 50 to 74 channels, 75 to 99 channels, and 100 channels or more. Each category would encompass those packages with a number of channels corresponding to the specified channel range.

In Q2 2012, the average tariff for Pay TV packages listing not more than 24 channels stood at €3.99. This reflects the tariff charged by GO (including the access fee) for its long-standing Free+ digital package, rebranded Bronze, which was the only product that featured under this product category at the time. This rate is higher than that charged by the same operator in Q2 2011, which then stood at €2.99.

The average tariff for Pay TV packages listing between 25 and 49 channels stood at €12.49 in Q2 2012, which is again higher than the average tariff of €11.38 in Q2 2011. This change is a result of Melita increasing the tariff charged for its Medium Pay TV package, from €7.76 to €9.99, whilst GO offered its Silver package (formerly branded as Silver+). Both operators upgraded their package channel line-up during the period under consideration.

Contrary to developments in the previous two instances, the average tariff for the category encompassing Pay TV packages listing between 50 to 74 channels went down, from €24.99 in Q2 2011 to €23.49 in Q2 2012. This is because GO, which is the only operator active under this category, introduced the Silver Interactive Pay TV package in Q4 2011, listing 73 channels at a tariff of €26.98, in addition to its established Gold Pay TV package (formerly branded Gold+), listing 59 channels at a tariff of €24.99. The launch of the Interactive Pay TV package brought down the average tariff for this category by €1.5.

For the purposes of assessing movements in average tariffs, the additional fee of €4.99, associated with access to 8 High Definition ("HD") channels in the Silver Interactive Package line up, is not included in the calculations at this stage. This fee will however be taken into consideration when assessing price movements for the category encompassing Pay TV packages with 75 to 99 channels. This is because, upon paying this fee, a customer of GO's Silver Interactive Pay TV Package would get 81 channels instead of 73.

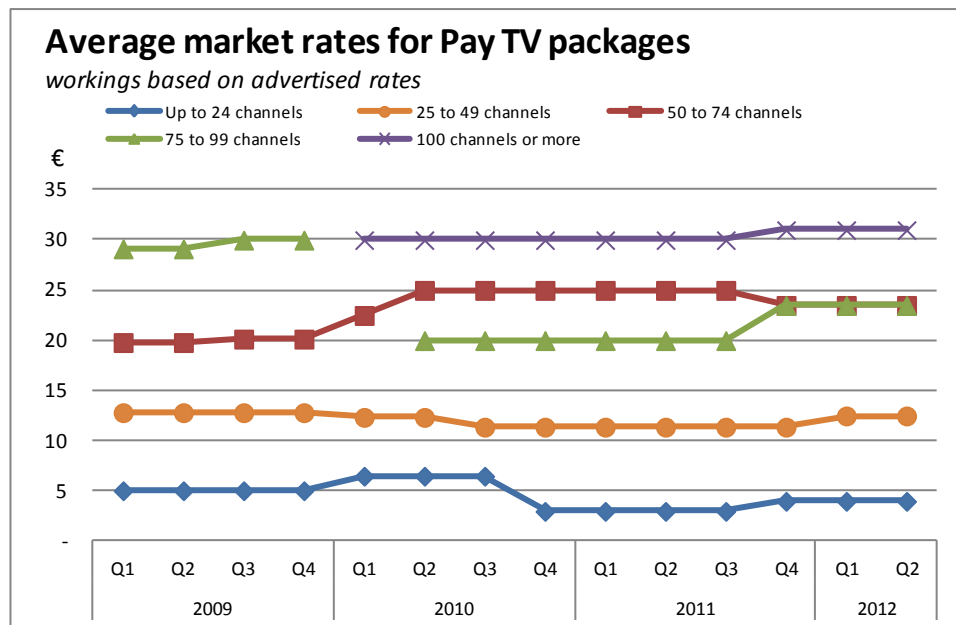


Figure 44: Average market rates for Pay TV packages

Melita has been offering Pay TV packages listing between 75 to 99 channels and 100 channels or more for a number of years. Competition intensified in these two categories as GO launched the Silver Interactive and Gold Interactive Pay TV packages as from Q4 2011.

Regarding the category encompassing Pay TV packages listing between 75 to 99 channels, the average tariff went up from €19.99 in Q2 2011 to €23.49 in Q2 2012. Melita is currently advertising its Large Pay TV package under this Pay TV category, listing 83 channels against a monthly tariff of €19.99, whilst GO is advertising its Silver Interactive, including 8 HD channels, against a monthly tariff of €26.98. The said increase is explained by the inclusion of the tariff related to GO's Silver Interactive Pay TV package in the calculations, which pushed the average tariff upwards.

Similar to the Silver Interactive Pay TV package, an additional fee of €4.99 applies in the case of the Gold Interactive Pay TV package if a subscriber opts to purchase access to the 13 HD channels that are advertised with the said package. This fee has not been included in the calculations so far, but is accounted for in the assessment below.

With respect to the '100 channels or more' category, both Melita and GO marketed two products each. Melita advertised its Extra Large Pay TV packages, the distinction arising as to whether or not the HD service is purchased, and GO advertised its Gold Interactive Pay TV packages, again depending on whether or not the HD service is purchased. The increase in the average tariff in this channel category, from €29.99 in Q2 2011 to €33.99 in Q2 2012, is mainly a result of the inclusion of HD-related fees, given that both operators ask for an additional monthly tariff for such service, €4.99 in the case of GO and €8 in the case of Melita.

8. Post

Local postal service providers operate within different postal areas. The main distinction arises between those service providers operating within the scope of the universal service³³ area, which need a licence to operate, and those operating outside the scope of the universal service area, namely couriers/express mail service providers, who operate under a general authorisation regime.

Over the last few years, the postal sector in Malta has seen an overall decline in mail activity, mainly as a result of falling mail volumes within the universal service area, which outweighed increasing mail volumes reported in the competitive area.

With respect to postal rates, Malta benchmarks well below the EU average over the last years, with rates standing out amongst the cheapest across the EU.

With respect to the quality of postal service provided, the universal service provider ("USP") has consistently met its legal obligations for the delivery of domestic and cross border mail.

³³ The Universal Service refers to the delivery and collection, on every working day, of a minimum set of postal services to any person who requests such services. The universal service covers both inland and cross-border services and includes the following minimum facilities: the clearance, sorting, transport and distribution of postal articles up to 2kg; the clearance, sorting, transport and distribution of postal parcels up to 20kg; services for registered and insured articles; and a basic counter service throughout Malta.

A postal service shall be considered to be within the universal service area (also referred to as within the scope of the universal service) if:

- the postal service is within the description of the universal services as set out in the Postal Service Act (Cap 254 of the Laws of Malta) (the 'Act'); or
- if the postal service is within the description of the universal service set out in the Act, but the collection and delivery is not made on each of the working days as required in the Act, or the postal service is not provided throughout Malta, or the postal service is not provided at an affordable uniform price; or
- the postal service is of a kind that, having regard to postal service users, could reasonably be said to be interchangeable with a postal service that falls within the description a universal service set out in aforementioned Act.

For a detailed description of the postal services that are considered as forming part of the Universal Services including the definition of those services that are considered as falling within the scope of the Universal Service area, kindly refer to the MCA's decision entitled 'Specific Aspects of the Universal Postal Service', which was published on the 25th March 2011. Link to decision: <http://www.mca.org.mt/article/decision-specific-aspects-universal-postal-service-mcad11-0227-0>

7.5. Postal mail volumes

In the first half of 2012, postal mail volumes handled by local operators³⁴ totalled 20.7 million items, down by nearly five percent over the same period a year earlier.

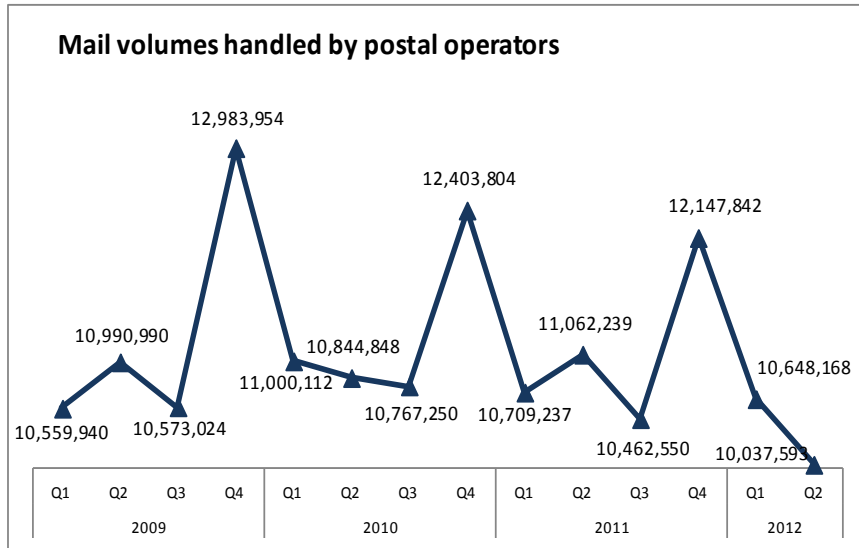


Figure 45: Postal activity - number of handled mail items³⁵

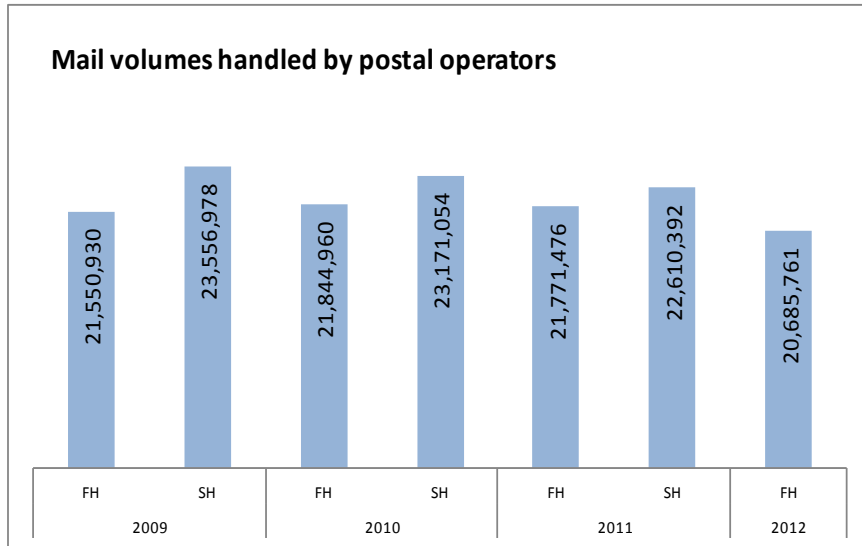


Figure 46: Postal activity - number of handled mail items

³⁴ Maltapost plc (the designated Universal Service Provider, hereafter also referred to as “the USP”) and Premiere Post Ltd. provide services within the universal service area. As part of its universal service obligation Maltapost is obliged to provide a set of services, outside the reserved area.

Another 16 registered postal operators (courier and express services) provide services outside the scope of the universal service area.

³⁵ Figure 45 shows that postal mail volumes peak in Q4 of each respective year as a result of higher activity registered during the Christmas period.

Postal mail volumes in the universal service area accounted to 98.8% of all mail items handled in the first half of 2012. Postal mail volumes in the competitive area accounted for the remaining share, at 1.2%.

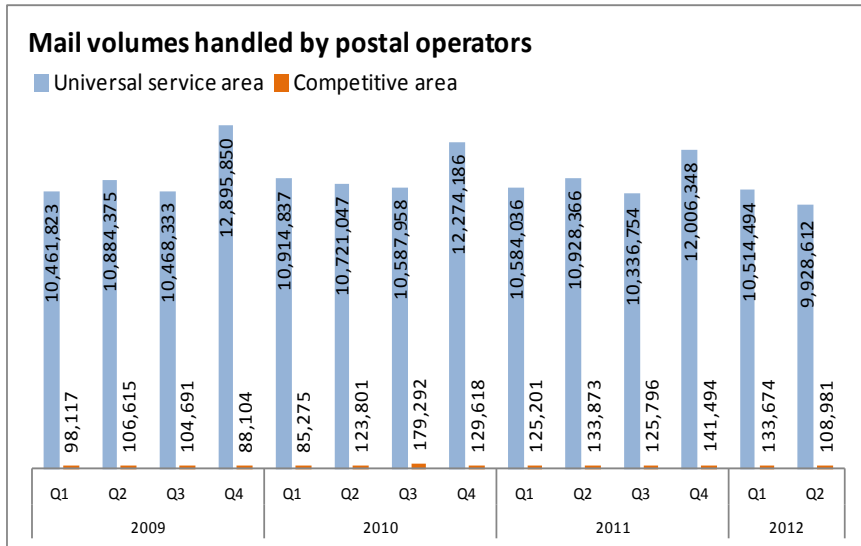


Figure 47: Postal activity - number of handled mail items by postal area

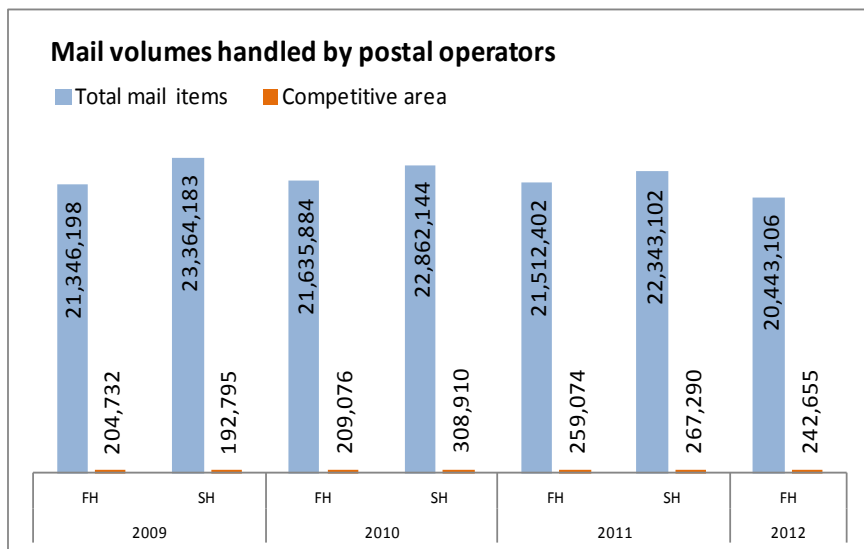


Figure 48: Postal activity - number of handled mail items by postal area

In the first half of 2012, mail volumes handled in the universal service area declined by nearly five percent when compared to mail volumes handled in the first half of 2011, down from 21.5 million mail items to 20.4 million mail items.

Postal activity within the competitive area in the first half of 2012 was also lower relative to postal activity in the same period of 2011, down by 6.3%, from 259,074 mail items to 242,655 mail items.

A further assessment of postal activity is presented below on the basis of the type of postal mail item and the type of postal mail activity.

Total mail items delivered, by type

Postal mail is categorised on the basis four different headings: letter post mail, parcel mail, bulk mail and registered mail.

The number of letter post items handled in the first half of 2012, which totalled 7.7 million mail items, were up by 1.8% when compared to the first half of 2011. Letter post mail accounted to 37.9% of all mail items handled during the current review period.

Meanwhile, registered mail volumes handled in the first half of 2012 also increased, by 34,424 mail items, or 7.0%, compared to the volumes recorded in the first half of 2011.

Contrary to developments for letter post and registered mail volumes, parcel mail and bulk mail volumes were down. When compared to the first half of 2011, parcel mail volumes in the first half of 2012 declined by 5.7% and bulk mail volumes also declined by 9.3%.

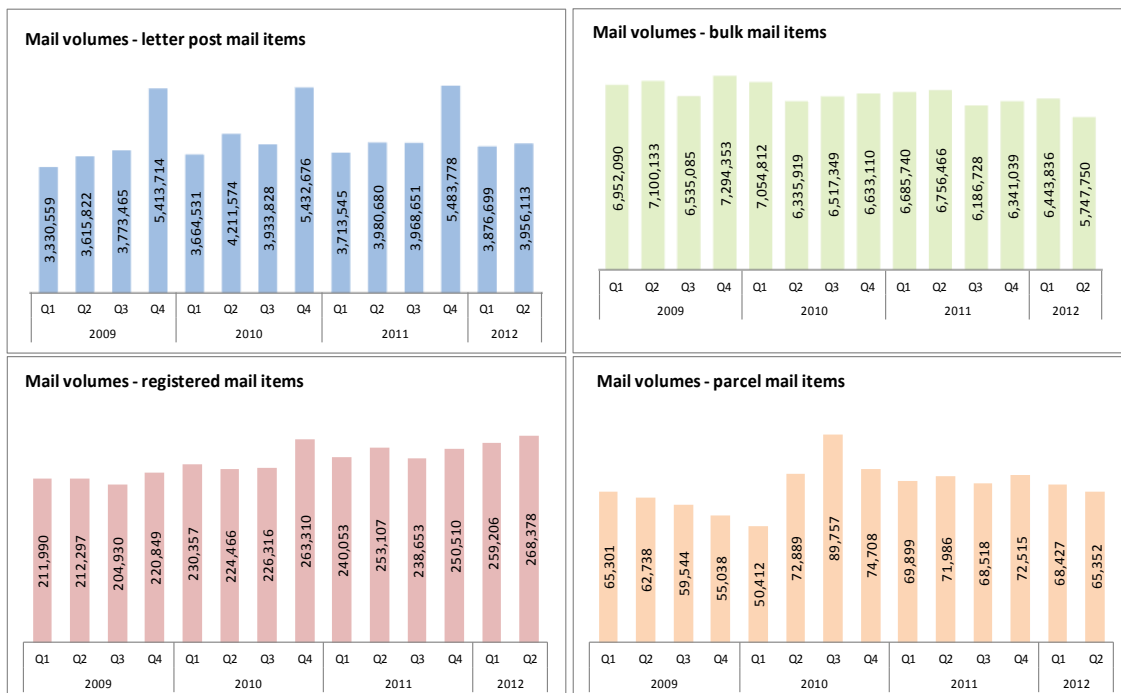


Figure 49: Postal activity – mail volumes by item

Total mail items delivered, by type of postal mail activity

This section distinguishes between three postal mail activity headings: postal activity reported under domestic mail; postal activity reported under outbound cross border mail³⁶; and postal activity reported under inbound cross border mail³⁷.

In the first half of 2012, the domestic mail heading recorded a decline of 6.6% or 1.2 million mail items when compared to the first half of 2011.

The domestic mail category accounted for 79.9% of all mail activity recorded during the first half of 2012.

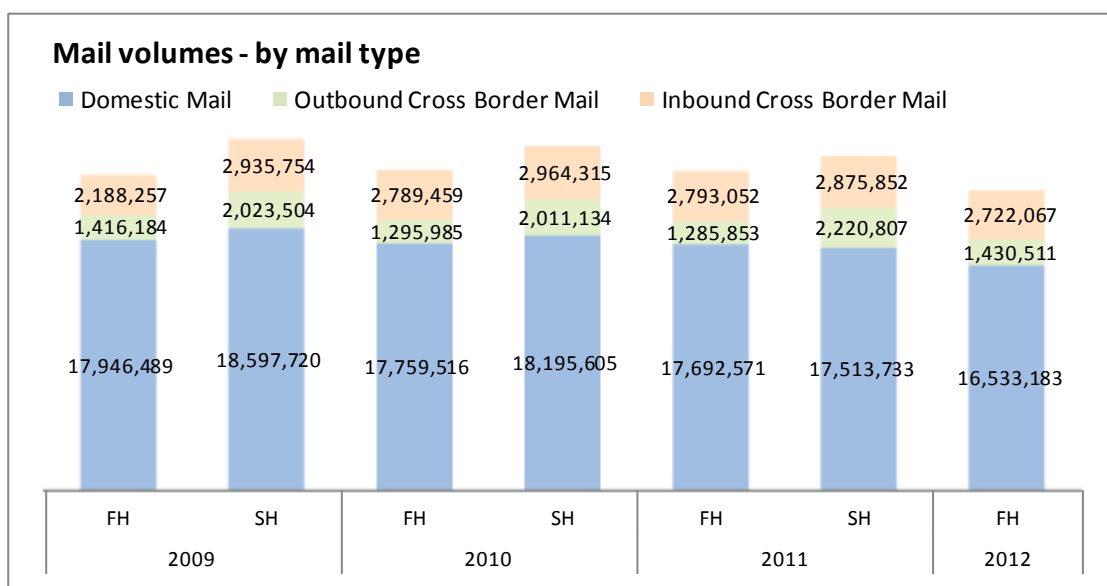


Figure 50: Postal activity - number of handled mail items by type of mail

Volumes of outbound and inbound cross border mail in the first half of 2012 totalled 1.4 million items and 2.7 million items respectively.

Volumes were higher than in the first half of 2011 for outbound cross border mail, up by 11.3%.

On the other hand, volumes were lower for inbound cross border mail, down by 2.5%.

³⁶ Domestically-originated mail forwarded to foreign destinations.

³⁷ Foreign-originated mail forwarded to Malta.

7.6. Quality of postal delivery service

The MCA has established a series of Quality of Service ("QoS") targets to ensure that universal service obligations are achieved by Maltapost in its delivery of different mail items.

This section benchmarks Maltapost's quality of its mail delivery services with respect to the QoS targets set for the delivery to destination of local ordinary mail, bulk mail, local registered mail and priority inbound parcels.

QoS targets are set in accordance to the MCA Decision³⁸ on the quality performance measurement of postal items delivered within the defined service standard.

In the first half of 2012, the QoS targets for the delivery to destination of local ordinary mail and bulk mail³⁹ on the next day (D+1) has been set at 94%.

Meanwhile, the QoS targets for the delivery to destination of local registered mail and priority inbound parcels has been set at 98%.

Data is presented on the basis of the full calendar year.

Maltapost met and exceeded its targets for delivering local ordinary mail and bulk mail within one working day.

Figure 51 shows that in terms of local ordinary mail, results achieved in Q1 and Q2 2012 were however less positive than those achieved in 2011. With respect to bulk mail, Maltapost's performance was more positive in Q1 2012 than in Q1 2011. This was not the case in Q2 2012, as Maltapost's performance was less positive than that reported in the corresponding period a year earlier.

³⁸ Link to MCA Decision concerning the 'Review of Quality of Service Targets and Requirements to be achieved by Maltapost plc': http://www.mca.org.mt/sites/default/files/articles/QoS_Review_-_DN.Nov.10.pdf

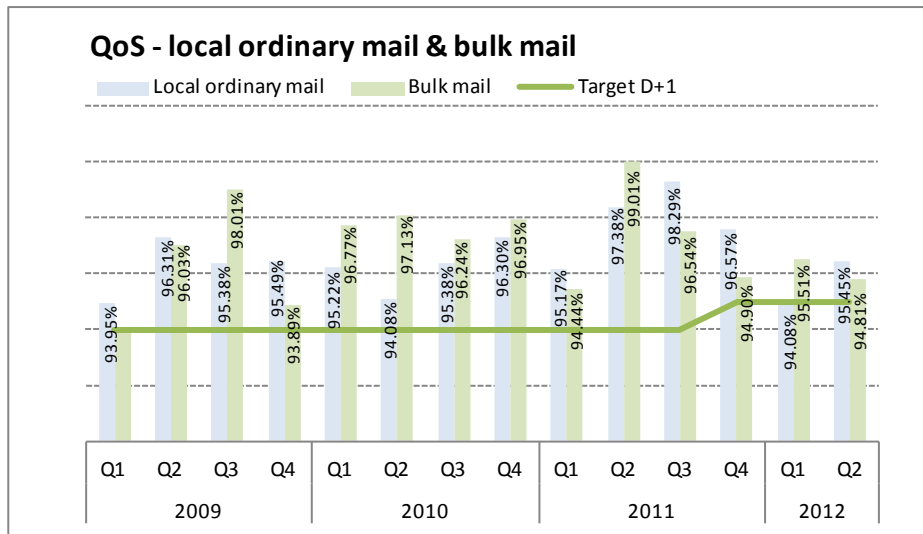


Figure 51: Quality of service - local ordinary and bulk mail

In 94% and 95% of local ordinary mail handling in Q1 and Q2 2012 respectively, local ordinary mail was delivered to destination on the next day.

The corresponding rates for the delivery of bulk mail stood at approximately 96% and 95% respectively.

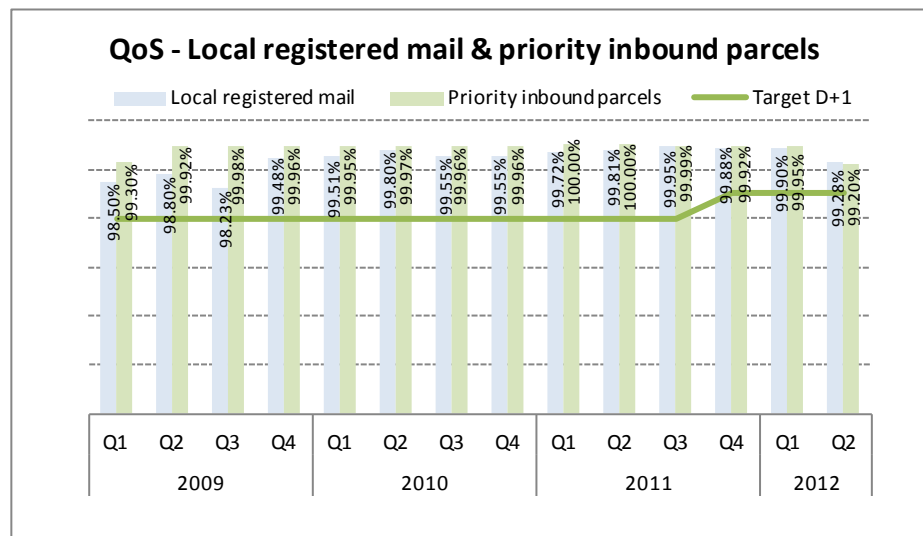


Figure 52: Quality of service - local registered mail and priority inbound parcels

In the period under review, QoS (D+1) targets have also been met and exceeded in the delivery to destination of both local registered mail and priority inbound parcels.

In Q1 and Q2 2012, the delivery to destination in (D+1) has been achieved in more than 99 percent of handling of local registered mail and inbound priority parcel mail. Still, delivery performance was slightly less positive than in Q1 and Q2 2011.

7.7. Postal rates: Malta vs the EU

This review makes use of a regular publication by Deutsche Post concerning 'Letter prices in Europe'⁴⁰ in gathering data on local postal rates and how these compare with rates applicable across the EU.

According to the latest figures published by Deutsche Post in April 2012, Malta's nominal price for a domestic standard letter, at €0.20, benchmarked as the cheapest rate across the EU. This confirms the trend observed in earlier publications, whereby Malta always featured 'at the bottom of the ranking' with the lowest applicable rate⁴¹.

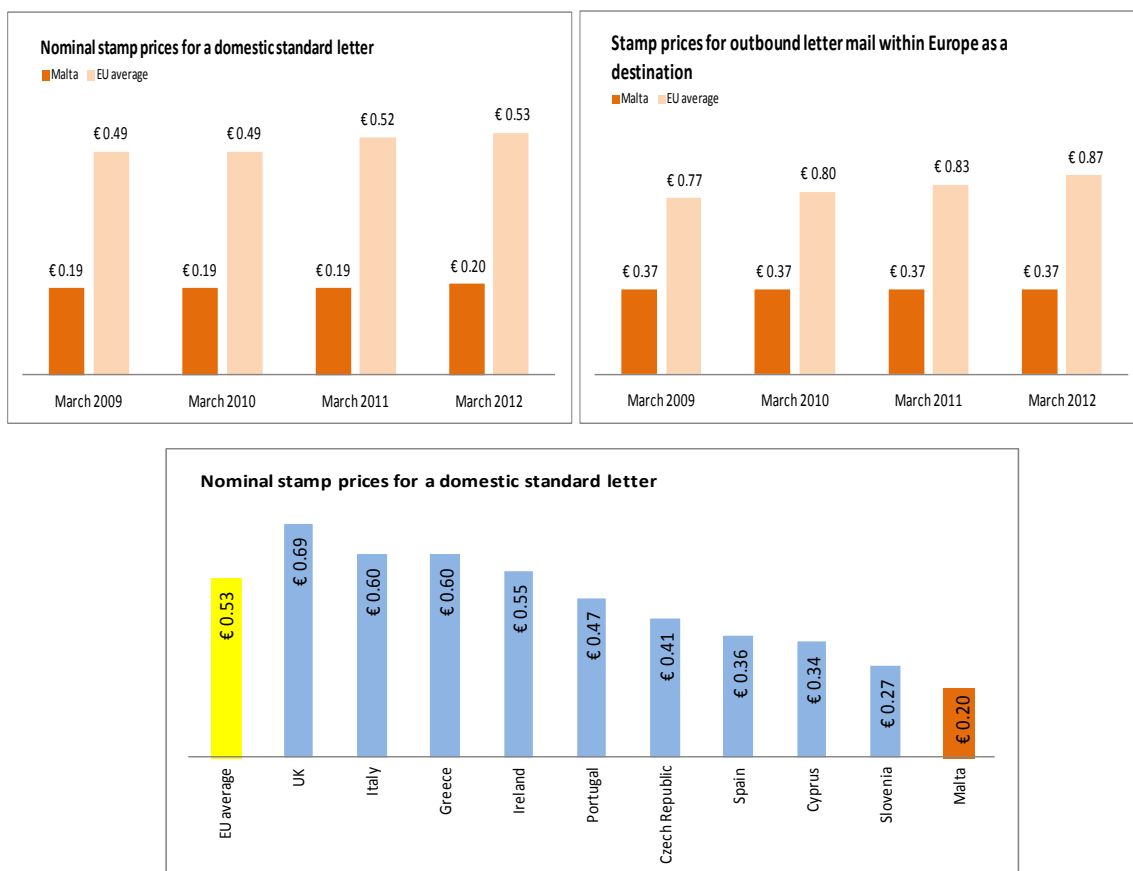


Figure 53: Nominal stamp prices in Malta and the EU

⁴⁰ Link to latest publication: http://www.dp-dhl.com/en/media_relations/media_library/documents/letter_price_survey_europe.html

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⁴¹ The publication findings are based on a survey taking 'into account all postage rate changes that were known at the time of its printing (April 2012)' across the 27 EU Member States, the EFTA countries of Norway and Switzerland.

The publication again identifies Malta with the lowest nominal price for outbound letter mail with Europe as a destination, at €0.37, with the result that Malta benchmarks again at the very bottom of the respective ranking.

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11. Glossary of Terms

ARPU	Average revenue per user. Total revenues of the operator divided by the average number of active subscribers during the period. Total revenues include revenues from monthly access fees, revenues from all local and international voice call activity (excluding interconnection revenues), revenues from roaming activity but excluding inbound roaming revenues, revenues from MMS and SMS activity, and revenues from data services.
Broadband	A service or connection to the Internet which is 'always on' and has a speed of more than 128kbps. The number of active broadband subscriptions refers to subscriptions/connections having recorded a transaction within 90 days of the period stipulated.
Dial-up	The number of active dial-up subscriptions refers to those subscriptions/connections which made a call to an Internet number (2188, or 2186) within the last 90 days.
DSL	Digital Subscriber Line. A high-speed transmission technology mainly applied for Internet and video file access service. DSL services allow voice and data to share the same infrastructure and usually require a splitter at the customer's premises to separate voice and data traffic from the line. Forms of DSL include ADSL, HDSL, and VDSL.
DTTV	Digital Terrestrial Television. The term refers to a delivery platform primarily for television programmes in digital format, using the DVB-T standard.
FH	First half of the year, referring to the period January to June.
FNO	Fixed network operator. A provider which owns a fixed line network.
FTF	Fixed-to-fixed traffic.
FTI	Fixed-to-international traffic.
FTM	Fixed-to-mobile traffic.
ISPs	Internet Service Providers. An ISP is a point of access to the Internet for small business and individual users. The ISP provides its customers with access to its router which relays traffic to web servers on the Internet.

Mbps	Megabits per second ("MBit/s") or millions of bits per second. Unit applied to measure the transmission speed of digital information.
MCA	Malta Communications Authority.
MMS	Multimedia Messaging Service. MMS extends the short messaging service ("SMS") to include longer text, graphics, photos, audio clips, video clips, or any combination of the above, within certain size limits.
MNO	Mobile network operator. A provider which owns a mobile network.
MPR	Mobile penetration rate. The MPR is a term used to describe the number of active mobile subscriptions (or SIM cards) as a percentage of total population.
MTM	Mobile-to-mobile traffic.
MTF	Mobile-to-fixed traffic.
MTI	Mobile-to-international traffic.
MVNO	Mobile Virtual Network Operator. An MVNO is a mobile operator that usually would not have a licence to use radio spectrum but would have access to the radio networks of one or more of the current mobile operators and would be able to offer services using that spectrum.
Off-net activity	Activity between two or more connections on different networks.
On-net activity	Activity between two or more connections on the same network.
Pay TV	Television services (generally a channel or set of channels) paid for by the user, by means of subscription or other ways of service payment.
Q	Quarter of the year. Q1 refers to first quarter (January to March), Q2 refers to second quarter (April to June), Q3 refers to third quarter (July to September), Q4 refers to fourth quarter (October to December).
QoS	Quality of Service. A statistical measure of a system or service. May also be used to set varying priorities for traffic.

- Service provider** A supplier of electronic communications and postal services, to third parties, either through its own network or through a network of another operator.
- SH** Second half of the year, referring to the period July to December.
- SMS** Short message service. This refers to short text messages which can be sent from one mobile phone to another, usually up to 160 characters. Such messages can also be sent from the Internet to a mobile phone.
- Universal service** The basic level of telecommunications services which should be available to all customers.
- USO** Universal Service Obligations. A provision in Maltese law requiring certain operators to provide certain services to all specified persons who may reasonably request them.
- VAT** Value Added Tax.

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