

12 September 2011

PRESS RELEASE

PAYMENT STATISTICS FOR 2010

The European Central Bank (ECB) has today published the 2010 statistics on non-cash payments, which comprise indicators on access to and use of payment instruments and terminals by the public, as well as volumes and values of transactions processed through payment systems. Statistics are published for each EU Member State, in addition to EU and euro area aggregates and comparative data.

Payment instruments¹

The total number of non-cash payments in the EU, using all types of instruments, increased by 4.4% to 86.4 billion in 2010 compared with the previous year. Card payments accounted for 39% of all transactions, while credit transfers accounted for 28% and direct debits for 25%.

The number of credit transfers within the EU increased in 2010 by 3.8% to 24.0 billion. The importance of paper-based transactions continued to decrease, with the ratio of paper-based transactions to non-paper-based transactions falling to around one to five. The number of cards with a payment function in the EU remained relatively stable at 726.7 million compared with 725.2 million in 2009. This represented around 1.45 payment cards per EU inhabitant. The number of card transactions rose by 6.7% to 33.9 billion, with a total value of € 1.8 trillion. This corresponds to an average value of around € 52 per card transaction. Chart 1 below shows the use of the main payment instruments from 2000 to 2010.

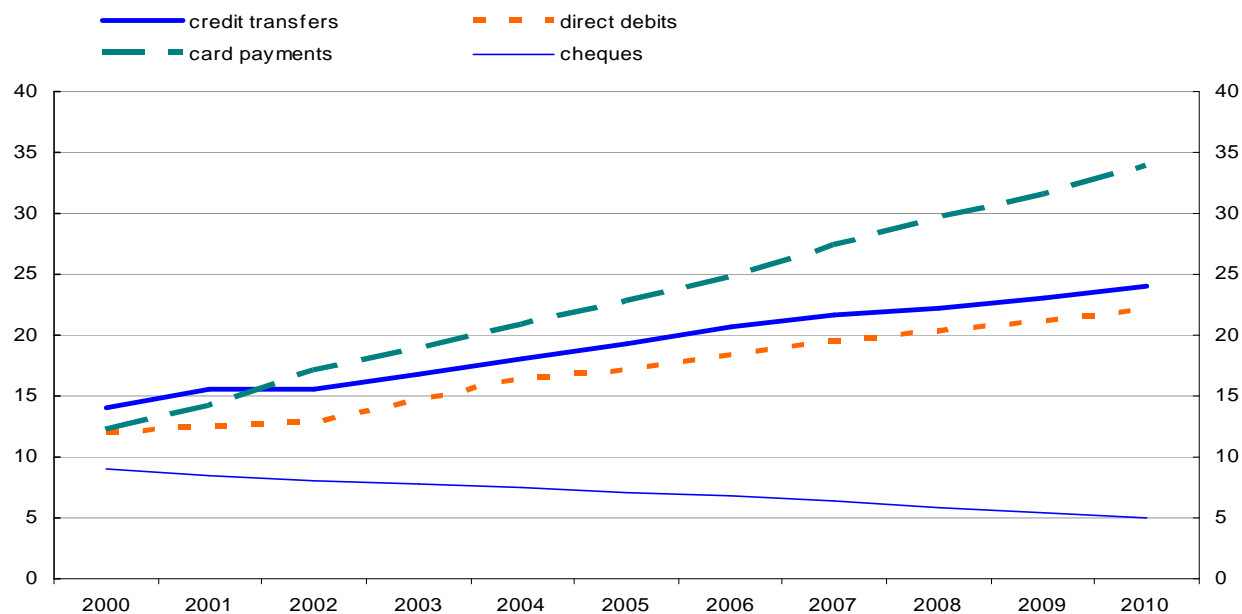
The relative importance of each of the main payment instruments varied across EU countries in 2010. The biggest difference was observed for credit transfers, the usage of which ranged from 10% in Luxembourg to 72% in Bulgaria (see Annex).

In 2010, the total number of Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) in the EU decreased slightly by -0.2% to 434.2 thousand, while the number of Points of Sale (POS) terminals increased by 3.0% to 8.8 million.

¹ SEPA instruments are included in the respective categories. Information on the SEPA instruments can be found on the ECB's website (<http://www.ecb.europa.eu/paym/sepa/html/index.en.html>). Owing to incomplete data in 2009, growth rates for 2010 have been adjusted.

Chart 1: Use of the main payment instruments in the EU (2000-2010)

(number of transactions per year in billions, estimated)



Source: ECB.

Note: Data have been partially estimated for periods prior to 2010, as methodological changes were implemented in previous years and some data are not available. The historical estimation done by the ECB for this press release ensures comparability of figures over the entire ten-year period. Statistics are also collected (but not shown in Chart 1) on e-money transactions and other payment instruments, which account for less than 2% of the total number of EU transactions.

Retail payment systems

Retail payment systems in the EU handle mainly payments that are made by the public, with a relatively low value and no time-criticality.

In 2010, 39 retail payment systems existed within the EU as a whole, serving a total population of approximately 500 million.² During the year, 39.3 billion transactions were processed by those systems in an amount of € 27.8 trillion. 19 of these systems were located in the euro area, where they served a total population of 330 million. The euro area systems processed 27.8 billion transactions in 2010 (i.e. 71% of the EU total) with a value amounting to € 17.8 trillion (i.e. 64% of the EU total).

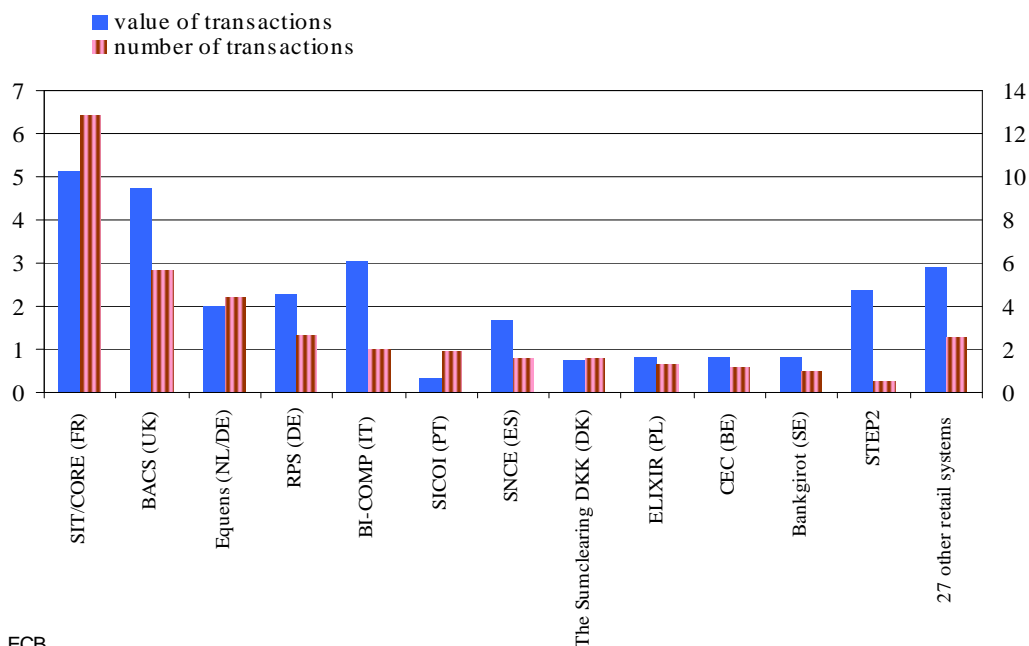
There was a notable degree of concentration in EU retail payment systems in 2010. The four largest systems (SIT/CORE in France, BACS in the United Kingdom, Equens in the Netherlands and Germany, and RPS in Germany) processed 64% of the volume and 54% of the value of all transactions processed by EU retail payment systems. Chart 2

² STEP 2 is considered as a single system.

shows the number and value of transactions processed by EU retail payment systems in 2010.

Chart 2: Retail payment systems in the EU in 2010

(value of transactions in EUR trillions (left-hand scale) and number of transactions in billions (right-hand scale))



Source: ECB.

Large-value payment systems

Large-value payment systems (LVPSs) are designed primarily to process urgent or large-value interbank payments, but some of them also settle a large number of retail payments. During 2010, 16 LVPSs settled 684 million payments with a total value of € 810 trillion in the EU.³ The two main LVPSs in the euro area (TARGET2 and EURO1/STEP1)⁴ settled 147 million transactions amounting to € 696 trillion in 2010, i.e. 86% of the total value. In the non-euro area EU countries, CHAPS Sterling⁵ in the United Kingdom is the largest LVPS in terms of value and number of transactions.

³ Among the LVPSs that also process retail payments, CERTIS –a Czech Republic system- is the main contributor in terms of number of transactions to the EU aggregate figure, with 469 million. In terms of value, CERTIS settled € 5.3 trillion during 2010.

⁴ TARGET2 is the second-generation Trans-European Automated Real-time Gross settlement Express Transfer system. It is operated by the Eurosystem and settles payments in euro in central bank money. TARGET2, including all its national modules, is considered as a single system.

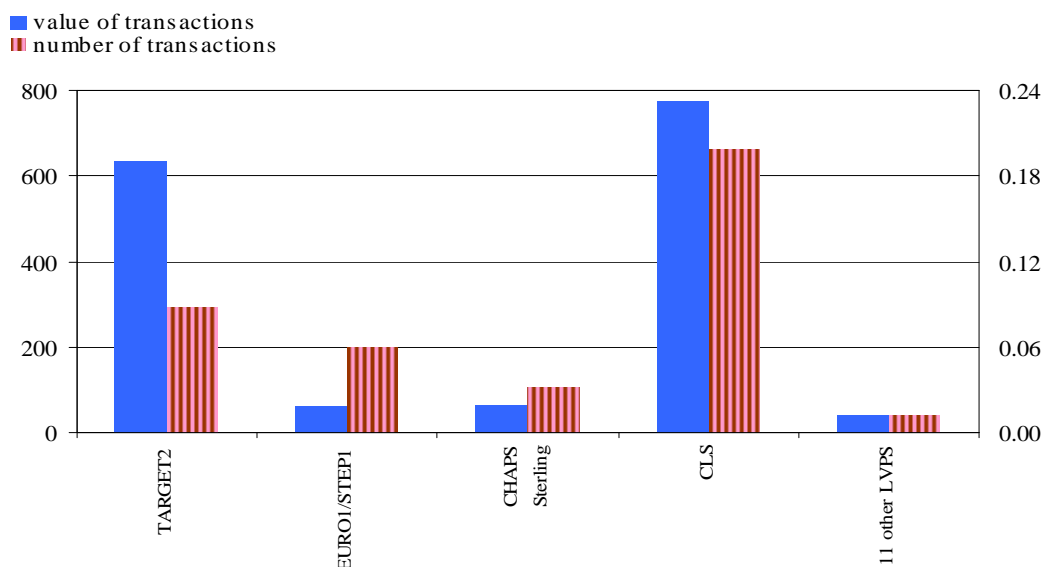
EURO1/STEP1 is an EU-wide multilateral net large-value payment system for euro payments operated by the EBA Clearing Company. Credit transfers and direct debits are processed in EURO1 throughout the day and final balances are settled at the end of the day in TARGET2.

⁵ CHAPS Sterling handles sterling-denominated interbank payments.

Outside the EU, CLS⁶ is the most important large value payment system processing inter alia euro and other EU currencies. CLS (all currencies) settled 198 million transactions with a value of € 774 trillion in 2010. Chart 3 below shows the number and value of transactions processed by LVPSs in 2010.

Chart 3: Large value payment systems in 2010

(value of transactions in EUR trillions (left-hand scale) and number of transactions in billions (right-hand scale))



Source: ECB.

Note: Other LVPSs exclude CERTIS and ESTA, which act as both LVPS and retail system.

The full set of payment statistics can be downloaded from the Statistical Data Warehouse (SDW) on the ECB's website (<http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu/browse.do?node=2746>). The "Reports" section of the SDW also contains pre-formatted tables with payment statistics for the last five years. The data are presented in the same format as in the former "Blue Book Addendum", which is available in the "Statistics" section of the ECB's website (<http://sdw.ecb.europa.eu/reports.do?node=100000760>). For detailed methodological information, including a list of all data definitions, please refer to the "Statistics" section of the ECB's website (<http://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/payments/paym/html/index.en.html>).

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⁶ CLS (Continuous Linked Settlement) is a worldwide clearing and settlement system that settles FX transactions on a payment-versus-payment basis.

Internet: <http://www.ecb.europa.eu>

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Annex

Table 1: Relative importance of the main payment instruments in the EU (2010)

(percentages of total number of transactions)

	Credit transfers		Direct debits		Cards		Cheques	
	2010	Change from 2009 (pp)	2010	Change from 2009 (pp)	2010	Change from 2009 (pp)	2010	Change from 2009 (pp)
Belgium	42.13	0.50	10.31	-1.06	44.71	1.14	0.30	-0.05
Bulgaria	71.66	-9.23	0.26	-0.05	28.08	9.27	0.00	-
Czech Republic	54.73	-	15.63	-	22.61	-	0.07	-
Denmark	18.41	-1.22	11.94	-0.19	69.20	1.61	0.45	-0.20
Germany	33.86	-1.30	50.16	0.77	15.47	0.64	0.28	-0.07
Estonia	34.23	-1.60	6.67	-0.21	59.10	1.81	0.00	0.00
Ireland	22.62	0.09	15.70	-0.32	48.46	1.72	13.22	-1.50
Greece	34.24	4.01	9.20	1.46	42.67	-3.96	12.21	-1.77
Spain	14.42	-0.13	42.21	-1.54	40.82	2.01	1.85	-0.19
France	17.53	0.54	20.00	0.11	43.33	1.18	18.31	-1.80
Italy	30.65	0.21	14.81	0.26	37.52	0.34	7.88	-0.59
Cyprus	27.78	0.78	8.61	0.12	39.01	1.87	24.60	-2.78
Latvia	51.93	-0.69	1.88	-0.12	45.70	0.70	0.01	0.00
Lithuania	50.49	-0.22	6.12	0.48	43.31	-0.25	0.08	-0.01
Luxembourg	9.50	-2.49	2.23	-0.51	9.24	-0.77	0.03	-0.01
Hungary	67.84	-0.77	7.35	-0.70	23.47	1.66	0.00	0.00
Malta	19.96	1.16	3.97	-0.11	42.48	4.14	33.59	-5.20
Netherlands	29.57	-0.28	24.39	-0.98	42.71	1.47	0.00	-
Austria	42.31	-0.59	37.19	-0.79	18.60	1.27	0.09	0.00
Poland	62.88	-1.53	0.97	-0.14	36.14	1.66	0.01	0.00
Portugal	10.85	-0.34	13.59	-0.15	67.99	2.01	7.42	-1.50
Romania	61.77	-3.68	0.56	-0.70	34.08	3.94	3.59	0.44
Slovenia	50.10	-1.02	14.94	0.56	34.90	0.48	0.06	-0.02
Slovakia	55.89	0.54	15.41	-1.62	28.68	1.08	0.01	0.00
Finland	48.07	3.59	5.11	0.27	46.79	-3.86	0.02	0.00
Sweden	31.92	0.03	8.74	0.28	59.33	-0.28	0.00	-0.02
United Kingdom	20.53	-0.08	19.52	-0.30	53.23	1.72	6.73	-1.34

Source: ECB.

Notes: Percentages may not add up to 100% as e-money transactions and other payment instruments are not shown. A dash (-) indicates that data are not available.