CHAPTER XII

INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS
TECHNOLOGY
This chapter contains data on the information and communications technology (ICT) sector in the ESCWA region during the period 2004-2012. Data and definitions are drawn from the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators 2012 Database and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) ICT Eye.

Table XII-1 is on fixed telephone lines. It shows the number of fixed telephone mainlines per 100 population. A fixed telephone line connects a subscriber’s terminal equipment to the public switched telephone network. Synonymous with direct exchange line, it may or may not be the same as an access line or a subscriber. In 2012, the highest ratio of around 24 fixed telephone lines per 100 population was recorded by the United Arab Emirates. The lowest, 1 line per 100 population, was recorded by the Sudan. During the same year, the number of fixed telephone lines per 100 population in the ESCWA region was less than the world rate by about 4 lines.

Table XII-2 deals with cellular phones. It provides the number of cellular phone subscribers per 100 population. Mobile subscribers are users of portable telephones who subscribe to an automatic public mobile telephone service which provides access to the public switched telephone network, using cellular technology. The number of cellular subscribers has significantly increased in most of the ESCWA member countries. In the ESCWA region, this number increased from 35.3 per 100 population in 2004 to 122.3 in 2012, exceeding the world average of 91.2 subscriptions per 100 population in 2012.

Table XII-3 displays the ratio of cellular phones to total fixed and mobile phones. It is derived from the data provided in the previous two tables. The table depicts a higher ratio of 90.3 per cent for the ESCWA region compared to 84.4 per cent for the world in 2012. The Sudan recorded the highest ratio of 98.5 per cent, while the lowest ratio was recorded in the

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Table XII-3 displays the ratio of cellular subs...
Syrian Arab Republic at 74.5 per cent in 2012. There has been a boom in the use of mobile phones over the past years in contrast with the small increases in the fixed telephone lines in the ESCWA region.

Table XII-4 shows the number of Internet users per 100 population. The estimation method varies by country or area. The number of actual users is usually derived from the number of subscribers indicated by Internet service providers. Specialized surveys are also a source for this data in some countries. The number of Internet users ranged between 88.1 per 100 population for Qatar and 7.1 users in Iraq for 2012. The average number of Internet users in the ESCWA region was about 49.2 users per 100 population compared to 35.7 users for the world in 2012.
Sources

International Telecommunication Union
http://www.itu.int/home/index.html