

PRESS RELEASE

**Banks: immigrant customers increasingly use online banking**

*The number of foreigners who are bank customers is on the rise: a +9% increase was registered at the end of 2008 with respect to 2007.*

*Home banking is among those products that have recorded the greatest surge: +28% in a year.*

The number of foreigners who are bank customers is increasing and, specifically, the number of online customers is on the rise. According to a recent ABI survey of the growth rate by type of customer, the percentage of foreign customers who use banking products and services has risen by 9% in 2008, and that of banked immigrants has reached approximately 70%. Home banking, which approximately increased by 30% in 2008 with respect to 2007, is among those products that have increased the most over the past year.

The results of a survey conducted by ABI's Marketing and Customer Satisfaction Department reveal that 4.4% of current account holders are foreigners; this figure was approximately 4% at the end of 2007. These customers mostly use package current accounts, personal loans, mortgages and prepaid cards. This shows that financial inclusion is also significantly increasing with respect to lending products, and so is the use of those products that meet immigrant customers' specific needs in terms of making their daily payments.

Apart from home banking (+28%), immigrant account holders mostly use prepaid cards (10%) as regards payment products; damage and health insurance (+7%) as regards insurance products; personal loans (+6.5%) as regards lending products; and request that their salaries and pensions are directly paid into their current account (+3%) as regards payment services.

Due to the ever-increasing number of immigrants in Italy (there are nearly 3.5 million foreigners in Italy, representing approximately 6% of the population, according to a recent survey by ISTAT, the Italian National Statistics Institute), the banking system has created new products and services in order to meet the specific banking and financial needs of this segment of the population. The results of the ABI-Cespi study, which was presented at the 2009 CSR Forum, show that financial inclusion is increasing and that the number of banked immigrants (68% of immigrants) has increased by 12% over the past two years.

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