

Technical notes

INTRODUCTION

Sources of postal data

Postal Statistics presents data collected annually by the International Bureau from member designated operators of the Universal Postal Union. The International Bureau would like to thank the designated operators and the Population Division as well as the Statistics Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs for their contribution to this publication.

Abbreviations used

SDR Special Drawing Right

Symbols used

NA Not applicable (the service is not provided)

ND No data available

NG Negligible amount

... Data not requested by the International Bureau or not provided by the designated operator for the year concerned

Special remarks

– All financial data are expressed in SDR.

1 GENERAL INFORMATION

Area and population

Headings 1.1 and 1.2 give general data for each country, i.e. the area of territory (1.1) and the number of inhabitants (1.2).

The source of these data is the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, and in particular, the Statistics Division and the Population Division.

Exchange rate

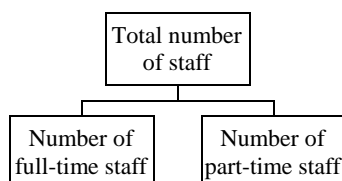
Heading 1.5 presents the exchange rate applied to convert the financial data.

To allow comparison of data between countries, all financial information is presented in Special Drawing Rights (SDR), the unit of account of the International Monetary Fund.

The exchange rate applied for currency conversion is the end-of-period exchange rate, taken from the International Monetary Fund's *International Financial Statistics* publication.

2 STAFF

For most designated operators, postal staff consists of full-time and part-time staff.



The total number of staff (heading 2.1) is calculated as the sum of the number of full-time staff and the number of part-time staff. This total gives an indication of the number of physical persons employed by designated operators (not of the number of posts filled, full-time).

Full-time staff (heading 2.2) represents established or unestablished staff under contract to the Post and performing their functions during normal working hours.

Part-time staff (heading 2.3) work less than the normal number of hours worked by full-time staff. Unless stated otherwise, the data show the number of staff (not the number of posts filled in full-time equivalent).

People employed by contractors and temporary staff taken on during holiday periods or for occasional events are not included in these headings.

The number of posts (heading 2.4) refers to the total workforce, expressed in terms of full-time posts, at 31 December. The number of posts is calculated as the number of full-time staff plus the number of part-time staff, converted to full-time equivalents.

Heading 2.5 represents the share of female employees as a percentage of the total number of staff.

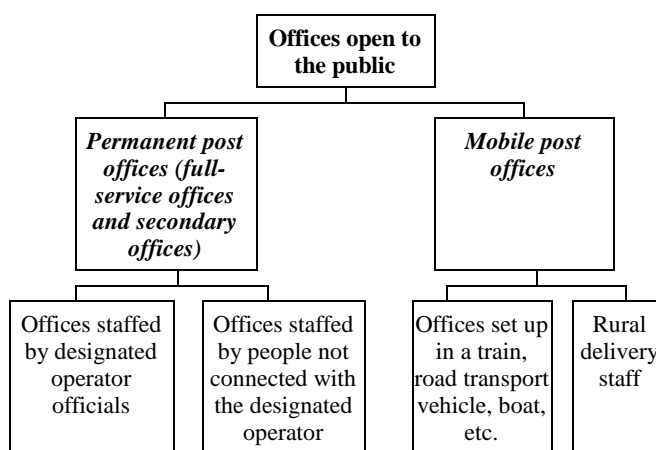
3 POSTAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Postal establishments can be classified in two categories, i.e. offices open to the public and offices not open to the public.

Offices open to the public

Postal establishments open to the public are post offices to which customers may go for postal services. Offices open to the public may be staffed by officials of the designated operators or by persons from outside the designated operator, and they may be fixed (permanent) or mobile.

Offices open to the public include the different types of office shown in the diagram below:



Permanent post offices

Heading 3.1 gives the total number of permanent post offices, corresponding to the sum of headings 3.2 and 3.3. It represents all offices open to the public and operating on fixed premises.

Permanent post offices include offices staffed by officials of the designated operator and offices staffed by persons not connected with the designated operator. Offices staffed by designated operator officials (heading 3.2) may be full-service offices or secondary offices. Full-service post offices are post offices to which, in principle, customers may go for all postal services. This category also includes sections of exchange offices or sorting offices offering similar services. Secondary offices generally have reduced services and, in principle, come under a main post office.

Offices staffed by persons not connected with the designated operator (heading 3.3) are post offices or other establishments staffed by

persons not connected with the operator that provide post office counter services on the basis of a contract with the designated operator.

Indicators of the degree of coverage of permanent offices

Headings 3.4 and 3.5 provide indicators of the degree of coverage of permanent offices in each country, i.e. the average area covered by a permanent office and the average number of inhabitants served by a permanent office.

Mobile post offices

Mobile post offices (heading 3.6) are offices set up in a train, road transport vehicle, boat, etc. which serve regions without permanent post offices. This category also includes rural delivery personnel providing services similar to the counter services of a post office. Users can deposit parcels, letters or express items with them or make payments to them.

Post offices accepting financial transactions

Post offices accepting financial transactions (heading 3.7) include fixed offices, mobile offices and delivery personnel providing financial services (money orders, COD, transfers, payments, etc.).

Postal establishments not open to the public

Postal establishments not open to the public are those which carry out postal operations not involving customer contact. As such, they are not open to the public.

Sorting centres

Heading 3.8 gives the number of sorting centres. This category includes offices whose main activity is sorting. Sorting sections of post offices open to the public are not included under this heading.

Electronic network

Designated operators are making increasing use of new information and communication technologies in their day-to-day operations.

Heading 3.9 represents the number of permanent post offices (whether or not managed by the designated operator) providing public Internet access points.

Heading 3.10 gives the number of permanent post offices connected to an electronic network. An electronic network is a communications infrastructure installed between retail outlets and district, regional, and headquarters locations that allows the offices to share information and data.

Heading 3.11 represents the number of permanent post offices using counter automation systems, i.e., a computer system and related electronic network installed within postal outlets to automate over-the-counter customer-related activities including retail postal services, postal financial services, government agency-related transactions and other business transactions at postal retail counters.

4 FINANCIAL RESULTS

To ensure comparability of the data, the financial results are presented in SDR for all countries. The exchange rate used to convert the data is presented under heading 1.5

Heading 4.1 covers all operating revenue, including:

- income from the sale of services: postal charges (stamps, franking marks, etc.), income from passenger transport operations, the giro service and the postal savings bank service;
- remuneration for the transport and delivery of international mail;
- remuneration from public or private non-postal operators (e.g. road, rail or sea carriers);
- various subsidies received from the State, community, public or private institutions;
- other income (e.g. insurance policies sold by the operator).

Heading 4.2 covers all operating expenditure, including:

- purchases of tangible assets (including transport equipment, IT equipment, other logistical postal service facilities (e.g. logistical equipment for offices of exchange, sorting centres, etc.), buildings, land);
- purchase of intangible assets (licences, patents);
- staff costs, wages, salaries, payroll taxes, etc.;
- depreciation of tangible assets (amortization);
- domestic and international mail transport charges paid to third parties (e.g. road, rail, sea or air carriers);
- remuneration paid to public or private operators, including terminal dues and rates paid to other postal operators;
- various subsidies paid (State, community, public or private institutions).

Heading 4.3 presents the operating result (operating loss or profit) while heading 4.4 gives the net result (net loss or profit).

The financial information supplied by each designated operator obviously results from the application of accounting standards applied by the operator concerned. However, these accounting standards vary considerably from one country to another, making it difficult to compare financial information published by the different operators.

5 REVENUE BY POSTAL PRODUCT

Headings 5.1 to 5.4 give the breakdown of total revenue by postal product: letter-post, parcels and logistics services, postal financial services, other revenue. The data are in percentages. The sum of headings 5.1 to 5.4 is therefore 100%.

Heading 5.5 gives the share of philately revenue in relation to total revenue.

6 COLLECTION

The data under this chapter pertain to collections of correspondence posted by customers in letter boxes located on streets.

Frequency of collection

Since the frequency of mail collection is not always the same throughout the country, the statistics are given under two headings:

- heading 6.1 gives the number of collections per working day in urban areas;
- heading 6.2 gives the number of collections per week in rural areas.

Number of letter boxes

Heading 6.3 gives the number of letter boxes located on streets and in post offices for the posting of mail.

7 DELIVERY

The data under this chapter pertain to the delivery of ordinary mail, not including express mail.

Frequency of delivery

Since the frequency of mail delivery is not always the same throughout the country, the statistics are given under two headings:

- heading 7.1 gives the number of deliveries per working day in urban areas;
- heading 7.2 gives the number of deliveries per week in rural areas.

Number of post office boxes

Heading 7.3 gives the number of post office boxes (pigeonholes, boxes, bags, etc.) placed in a postal establishment, to which customers' mail is delivered.

Heading 7.3.1 gives the number of postal establishments and public access points which have post office boxes.

Delivery through post office boxes

Heading 7.4 gives the number of items delivered through post office boxes as a percentage of the total number of items delivered.

Breakdown of the population according to the delivery services they receive

The total population may be classified in three groups according to the delivery services they receive:

- population having mail delivered at home (7.5);
- population having to collect mail from a postal establishment (7.6);
- population without postal services (7.7).

These data are in percentages. The sum of headings 7.5 to 7.7 is 100%.

Users who, for personal convenience, prefer to collect their mail at the post office are regarded as having their mail delivered at home.

The population without postal services covers the population living in a region where there is no postal network.

8 LETTER POST

This chapter shows, in numbers of items, the volume of letter-post mail processed by each designated operator:

- in its domestic service;
- in its international service – dispatch (items sent abroad);
- in its international service – receipt (items received from abroad).

It is important to note that the definitions of the services and of the categories of items contained in the Letter Post Manual (2005) and presented below apply to the international service. In the domestic service, each designated operator has the authority to establish the rules and conditions governing the classification of items and the operation of the postal services.

Letter-post items basically consist of letters, postcards, printed papers (newspapers, periodicals, advertising, etc.), small packets, literature for the blind and, as applicable in the domestic service, commercial papers, samples of merchandise, "Phonopost" items, postal packets, etc.

These items may be given special treatment, such as items admitted free of postal charges, registered items or insured items.

Reference should be made to the Convention and to the Letter Post Manual for a more comprehensive definition of the concept of letter post.

Article 12 of the Convention (excerpt)

Basic services

- 2 Letter-post items are:
 - 2.1 priority items and non-priority items, up to 2 kilogrammes;
 - 2.2 letters, postcards, printed papers and small packets, up to 2 kilogrammes;
 - 2.3 literature for the blind, up to 7 kilogrammes;
 - 2.4 special bags containing newspapers, periodicals, books and similar printed documentation for the same addressee at the same address called "M bags", up to 30 kilogrammes.
- 3 Letter-post items shall be classified on the basis of either of the speed of treatment of the items or of the contents of the items in accordance with the Letter Post Regulations.
- 4 Higher weight limits than those indicated in paragraph 2 apply optionally for certain letter-post item categories under the conditions specified in the Letter Post Regulations.

Items per inhabitant

Heading 8.1 gives an indicator of the use of letter-post services, i.e. the number of letter-post items posted per inhabitant.

Number of letter-post items

The statistics on total letter-post traffic (LC items plus AO items or priority items plus non-priority items) are presented in headings 8.2 to 8.4.

These headings present the total volume of letter-post mail according to the service:

- domestic service (8.2);
- international service – dispatch (8.3);
- international service – receipt (8.4).

The total volume of mail includes, in principle, both ordinary items and items given special treatment (registered items, insured letters, newspapers) as well as advertising items and hybrid mail. However, only since 2001 have operators been requested to indicate clearly whether or not these different types of items are included under headings 8.2 to 8.4.

Until 2000, heading 8.1 was calculated as being the sum of headings 8.2 and 8.3 divided by the population.

As from 2001, other types of items not included in headings 8.2 and 8.3 have also been included in the calculation.

Registered items

Registered items are items which the sender has asked to be delivered to the addressee against a receipt.

The general provisions governing registered items are laid down in article 13 of the Convention.

Headings 8.5 to 8.7 give the volume of registered items according to the service:

- domestic service (8.5);
- international service – dispatch (8.6);
- international service – receipt (8.7).

Insured letters

Insured letters are letters containing securities or valuable documents or articles. Insured letters are insured for the amount of the value declared by the sender.

The general provisions governing insured items are laid down in article 13 of the Convention.

Headings 8.8 to 8.10 give the volume of insured letters according to the service:

- domestic service (8.8);
- international service – dispatch (8.9);
- international service – receipt (8.10).

Number of copies of newspapers

Heading 8.11 gives the number of copies of newspapers dispatched and delivered by the Post in the domestic service.

Advertising items

Advertising items cover direct marketing mail and unaddressed printed matter ("all boxes" or "targeted").

Headings 8.12 and 8.15 give the total number of advertising items (domestic service and international service – dispatch). Headings 8.13 and 8.14 detail the domestic service advertising items (addressed and unaddressed, respectively).

Hybrid mail

Hybrid mail is mail initially consisting of an e-mail message sent by the customer to the Post, which then prints it, dispatches it and delivers it in physical form. Headings 8.16 and 8.17 give the number

of items dispatched and delivered (domestic service and international service – dispatch).

9 EXPRESS ITEMS AND POSTAL PARCELS

This chapter shows, in numbers of items, the volume of express items and postal parcels processed by each designated operator.

Express items

Express items are items (documents and merchandise) forwarded and delivered in the most rapid way. At the international level, this service corresponds to EMS and other similar services. The provisions relating to express items are laid down in article 14 of the Convention.

Headings 9.1 to 9.3 give the number of express items according to the service:

- domestic service (9.1);
- international service – dispatch (9.2);
- international service – receipt (9.3).

Article 14 of the Convention (excerpt)

Electronic mail, EMS, integrated logistics and new services

1 Postal administrations may agree with each other to participate in the following services, which are described in the Regulations.

(...)

1.2 EMS, which is a postal express service for documents and merchandise, and shall wherever possible be the quickest postal service by physical means. Postal administrations may provide this service on the basis of the EMS Standard Multilateral Agreement or by bilateral agreement;

Letter Post Regulations – Article RL 253 (excerpt)

EMS

1 In relations between administrations which have agreed to provide this service, EMS takes priority over postal items. It shall consist of the collection, dispatch and delivery in a very short space of time of correspondence, documents or goods.

2 EMS shall be regulated on the basis of bilateral agreements. Aspects that are not expressly governed by the latter shall be subject to the appropriate provisions of the Acts of the Union.

Postal parcels

The Parcel Post Manual (2005) provides the definitions that apply to the international service and the general principles governing the international exchange of postal parcels. Each operator has the authority to establish the rules and conditions governing postal parcels in its domestic service.

These limits of weight and size serve to distinguish postal parcels from "small packets" which come under letter-post items, the conditions for which are set out in the Letter Post Manual.

The Parcel Post Manual contains provisions relating to the following optional services: air parcels, insured parcels, express parcels, parcels for delivery free of charges and fees, fragile parcels, cumbersome parcels and cash-on-delivery parcels.

Article 12 of the Convention (excerpt)

Basic services

5 Member countries shall also ensure the acceptance, handling, conveyance and delivery of postal parcels up to 20 kilogrammes, (...);

6 Weight limits higher than 20 kilogrammes apply optionally for certain parcel post categories under the conditions specified in the Parcel Post Regulations.

For the purposes of this publication, two categories are covered: ordinary parcels and insured parcels.

Ordinary parcels

All parcels the value of which is not declared are regarded as "ordinary parcels".

Headings 9.4 to 9.6 give the number of ordinary parcels according to the service:

- domestic service (9.4);
- international service – dispatch (9.5);
- international service – receipt (9.6).

Insured parcels

Insured parcels are parcels that are exchanged with insurance of the contents for the value declared by the sender.

The provisions relating to insured parcels are laid down in article 13 of the Convention and in RL 134 of the Letter Post Regulation.

Headings 9.7 to 9.9 give the number of insured parcels according to the service:

- domestic service (9.7);
- international service – dispatch (9.8);
- international service – receipt (9.9).

10 POSTAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

This chapter covers the main financial services operated by designated operators. The present publication covers the following categories: ordinary money orders and giro and savings bank or postal bank services.

Ordinary money orders

The financial services that countries agree to exchange in their reciprocal relations are governed by the Postal Payment Services Agreement. The provisions related to ordinary money orders are laid down in Article 2.

Postal Payment Services Agreement – Article 2 (excerpt)

Definition of the product

1 Ordinary money order

1.1 The ordering customer hands over funds at a post office counter or orders his account to be debited and requests outpayment of the full amount without any deduction to the payee in cash.

Headings 10.1 to 10.6 give the number and the amount of money orders, according to the service:

- the number of money orders issued in the domestic service (10.1);
- the number of money orders issued in the international service – dispatch (10.2);
- the number of money orders received in the international service – receipt (10.3);
- the amount of the money orders issued in the domestic service (10.4);
- the amount of the money orders issued in the international service – dispatch (10.5);
- the amount of the money orders received in the international service – receipt (10.6).

Giro

The position of giro accounts is shown by the number of accounts at the end of the period (heading 10.7) and the total end-of-year assets in giro accounts (heading 10.8) which represent the available balance of the accounts.

Postal savings bank or postal bank

The position of postal savings bank or postal bank accounts is shown by the number of accounts at the end of the period (heading 10.9) and

the total end-of-year assets in the accounts (heading 10.10) which represent the available balance of the accounts.

11 LOGISTICS SERVICES AND ON-LINE SERVICES

Certain designated operators also provide logistics services and/or online services over the Internet.

Heading 11.1 indicates whether the operator provides logistics services.

Heading 11.2 indicates whether the operator provides public Internet access points.

Heading 11.3 indicates whether the operator provides online services, and headings 11.4 to 11.18 detail whether or not these services include:

- postage prepayment via the Internet (11.4);
- bill payments via the Internet (11.5);
- e-mail services (11.6);
- ordering of merchandise via the Internet (11.7);
- direct mail via the Internet (11.8);
- track and trace (11.9);
- E-stamps (11.10);
- digital post mark (11.11);
- electronic signature (11.12);
- sale of philatelic products (11.13);
- postcode lookup (11.14);
- information on tariffs (11.15);
- address change online (11.16);
- subscription of periodicals (11.17);
- other online services (11.18).

12 COMPETITION

Headings 12.1 to 12.4 indicate whether or not other operators are operating in the postal sector.

Heading 12.1 indicates whether there are other operators operating in the letter post sector and heading 12.2 gives their number.

Heading 12.3 indicates whether there are operators operating in the parcel post sector and heading 12.4 gives their number.