



UPU

UNIVERSAL
POSTAL
UNION

Article 6 of the Convention

Article 6 Postage stamps

1 The term "postage stamp" shall be protected under the present Convention and shall be reserved exclusively for stamps which comply with the conditions of this article and of the Regulations.

2 Postage stamps:

2.1 shall be issued and put into circulation solely under the authority of the member country or territory, in conformity with the Acts of the Union;

2.2 are a manifestation of sovereignty and constitute proof of prepayment of the postage corresponding to their intrinsic value when affixed to postal items, in conformity with the Acts of the Union;

2.3 must be in circulation, for postal prepayment or for philatelic purposes, in the member country or territory of issue, according to its national legislation;

2.4 must be accessible to all citizens within the member country or territory of issue.

3 Postage stamps comprise:

3.1 the name of the member country or territory of issue, in roman letters, **or, if the UPU International Bureau is so requested by the member country or territory of issue, the abbreviation or initials officially representing the member country or territory of issue, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Regulations;**¹

3.2 the face value, expressed:

3.2.1 in principle, in the official currency of the country or territory of issue, or as a letter or symbol;

3.2.2 through other identifying characteristics.

4 Emblems of state, official control marks and logos of intergovernmental organizations featuring on postage stamps shall be protected within the meaning of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

5 The subjects and designs of postage stamps shall:

5.1 be in keeping with the spirit of the Preamble to the UPU Constitution and with decisions taken by the Union's bodies;

5.2 be closely linked to the cultural identity of the member country or territory, or contribute to the dissemination of culture or to maintaining peace;

5.3 have, when commemorating leading figures or events not native to the member country or territory, a close bearing on the country or territory in question;

5.4 be devoid of political character or of any topic of an offensive nature in respect of a person or a country;

5.5 be of major significance to the member country or territory.

6 Postal prepayment impressions, franking machine impressions and impressions made by a printing press or another printing or stamping process in accordance with the Acts of the Union may be used only with the authorization of the member country or territory.

7 Prior to issuing postage stamps using new materials or technologies, member countries shall provide the International Bureau with the necessary information concerning their compatibility with mail processing machines. The International Bureau shall inform the other member countries and their designated operators accordingly.

¹ An exception shall be granted to **the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, the country which invented the postage stamp.

Prot. Article II

Postage stamps

1 Notwithstanding article 6.7, Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom will process letter-post items and postal parcels bearing postage stamps using new materials or technologies that are not compatible with their respective mail processing machines only upon prior agreement with the designated operator of origin concerned.

Article 06-001

Prepayment. Methods of denoting prepayment

1 Letter-post items

1.1 As a general rule, letter-post items shall be fully prepaid by the sender.

1.2 Methods of denoting prepayment

1.2.1 Prepayment shall be denoted by means of any one of the following methods:

1.2.1.1 postage stamps printed on or affixed to the items and valid in the member country of origin;

1.2.1.2 postal prepayment impressions valid in the member country of origin and dispensed by automatic vending machines installed by designated operators of origin;

1.2.1.3 impressions of officially approved franking machines valid in the country of origin, operating under the direct supervision of the designated operator of origin;

1.2.1.4 impressions made by a printing press or other printing or stamping process when such a system is authorized by the regulations of the designated operator of origin.

2 Letter-post items may also be provided with an indication that full postage has been prepaid, for example, "Taxe perçue" ("Postage paid"). This indication shall appear in the top right-hand part of the address side and be authenticated by a date-stamp impression of the office of origin. In the case of unpaid or underpaid items, the impression of the office which prepaid the item or made up the postage on it shall be applied opposite this indication.

3 Parcels shall be prepaid by means of postage stamps or by any other method authorized by the regulations adopted by the country of origin or by its designated operators.

Article 06-002

Postage stamps. Notification of issues and exchange between designated operators

1 Each new issue of postage stamps shall be notified by the designated operator concerned to all other designated operators, with the necessary information, through the intermediary of the International Bureau.

2 Designated operators shall exchange, through the intermediary of the International Bureau, one set of each of their new issues of postage stamps and shall send 15 sets to the International Bureau. This represents a total of 235 stamps to be dispatched for each new issue.

Article 06-003

Characteristics of postage stamps and postal prepayment or franking impressions

1 Postage stamps and postal prepayment impressions

1.1 Postage stamps and postal prepayment impressions may be of any shape provided that, in principle, their vertical or horizontal dimensions are not less than 15 mm nor more than 50 mm.

- 1.2 They may be distinctively marked with punched perforations or embossed impressions produced by means of an embossing stamp, subject to the conditions laid down by the designated operator or the member country which has issued them, provided that those processes do not interfere with the clarity of the particulars prescribed in article 6 of the Convention.
 - 1.3 Commemorative or charity postage stamps may bear an indication of the year of issue in Arabic numerals. Similarly, they may bear an inscription in any language to indicate the occasion for which they are issued. When a supplementary charge is payable in addition to their postage value, they shall be so designed as to leave no doubt about that value.
 - 1.4 In accordance with article 6 of the Convention, postage stamps may, in place of the name of the issuing member country or territory, and subject to a formal request duly sent by the issuing member country or territory to the International Bureau, include the abbreviation or initials officially listed in the ISO 3166 standard for the member country or territory concerned.
- 2 Franking machine impressions
- 2.1 Designated operators may use themselves or authorize the use of postal franking machines reproducing on items the name of the member country of origin and the postage value, as well as the name of the place of origin and the date of posting. However, the last two items of information shall not be compulsory. For franking machines used by designated operators themselves, the postage value may be replaced by an indication that postage has been prepaid, for example in the form: "Taxe perçue" (Charge collected).
 - 2.2 Impressions produced by postal franking machines shall, in principle, be bright red. However, designated operators may permit that the impressions produced by franking machines may be made in a colour other than bright red. The impressions of any publicity slogans used with the franking machines may also be produced in a colour other than red.
 - 2.3 The names of the member country and place of origin shall be given in roman letters, which may be supplemented by the same information in other letters. The postage value shall be shown in arabic figures.
- 3 Franking impressions
- 3.1 Franking impressions obtained from a printing press or by another printing or stamping process shall bear the name of the member country of origin and, if appropriate, of the office of posting in roman letters, which may be supplemented by the same information in other letters. They shall also bear an indication that postage has been prepaid, for example in the form "Taxe perçue" (Charge collected). In every case, the phrase adopted shall be shown in bold letters in a space the area of which shall not be less than 300 mm². The date-stamp, if used, shall not appear in this space.
 - 3.2 Franking impressions obtained from an electronic printing process may be applied above the address field, separated from it by a vertical distance of between 2.5 and 5 mm, regardless of the location of the address. Such franking impressions may be applied directly on the envelope or inside the envelope window. In the latter case, the printing and positioning of the item inside the envelope shall be constrained such that no part of the franking impression is closer than 5 mm to the edge of the window. The provisions of paragraph 3.1 shall apply to this type of impression. Where the franking impression incorporates or is supported by data encoded in a two-dimensional symbol, this shall comply with UPU Technical Standard S28.