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UNION POSTALE



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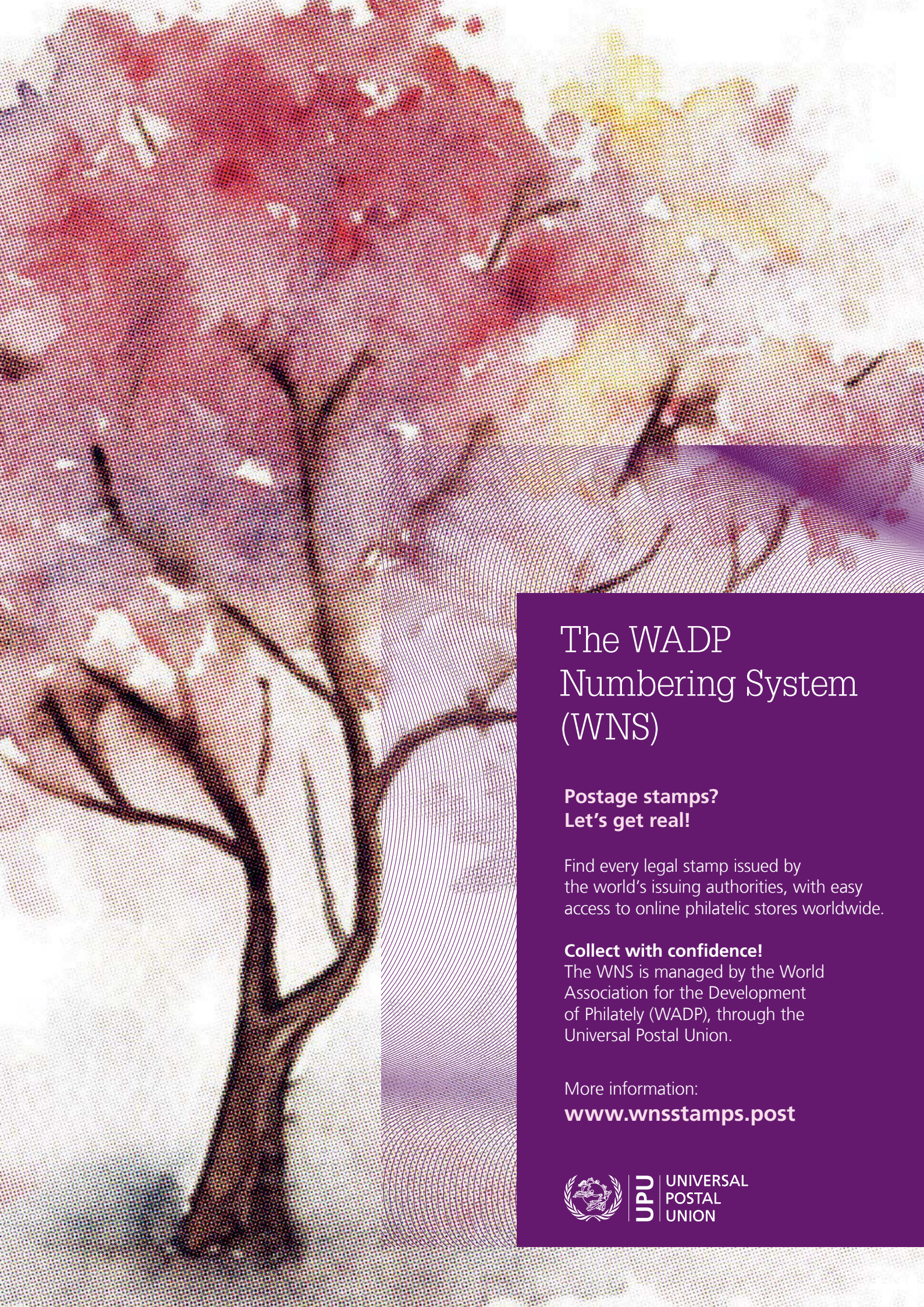
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Postal development
on the move



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UPU

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Union Postale is the Universal Postal Union's flagship magazine, founded in 1875. It is published quarterly in seven languages and takes a closer look at UPU activities, featuring international news and developments from the postal sector.

The magazine regularly publishes well researched articles on topical issues facing the industry, as well as interviews with the sector's leading individuals. It is distributed widely to the UPU's 192 member countries, including thousands of decision-makers from governments and Posts, as well as other postal stakeholders. All regard it as an important source of information about the UPU and the postal sector at large. Union Postale is also published in French, Arabic, Chinese, German, Russian and Spanish.

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DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Japan pledges additional support for disaster risk management

The successful cooperation agreement signed between Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the UPU in 2013 has been extended for a further four years.

UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein exchanged the agreement with Japanese Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein Etsuro Honda during the plenary session of the Postal Operations Council on 31 March.

Under the cooperation agreement, Japan will continue to support the UPU's disaster risk management activities until 2021, including a voluntary contribution of 520,000 USD in 2017. A key focus of the extended agreement will be to design a technical assistance methodology to support developing countries.

Recalling the devastating earthquake that hit Japan in 2011, the ambassador reminded members of the fundamental role postal services can play in case of a national emergency, for example by distributing aid materials.

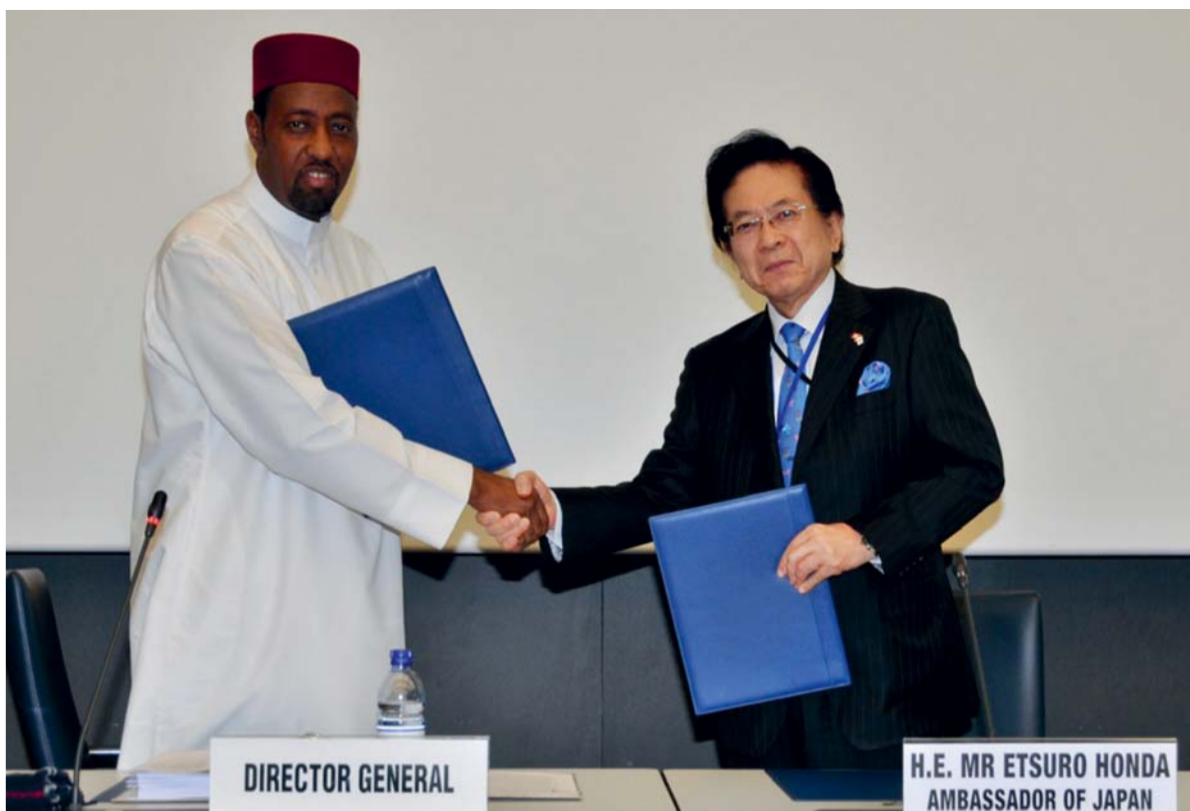
"Building a disaster-resistant postal network is extremely important for postal operators and users alike. And it is very significant for providing stable postal service on a global scale. I am honoured that Japan can contribute to such an important mission," he said.

For his part, the UPU Director General thanked the Japanese government for its generosity: "Though we can't stop the course of nature, we can do our best to ensure that we are as prepared as possible to

withstand natural disasters, and help our countries recover. This agreement will help us do just that."

The UPU's disaster risk management activities have benefited significantly from the agreement, which saw Japan contribute a total of 1.4 million USD in the 2013 – 2016 cycle.

This support enabled the UPU to hold three regional capacity-building seminars – one each in Barbados, Chile and Thailand – and produce a disaster risk management guide for member countries in four official UN languages. **FR**



UPU Director General shakes hands with Japanese Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein Etsuro Honda after exchanging the agreement.

Measuring & fostering development

The UPU plays a central role as the primary forum for cooperation between postal stakeholders, ever striving to build a more globally connected and seamless postal network. To achieve this, countries must continue to develop their postal services to meet modern needs.

As explained in our cover story, the UPU's newly devised Integrated Index for Postal Development (ZIPD) maps the evolution of postal services worldwide on four dimensions: reliability, reach, relevance and resilience. While postal services in several member countries excelled – take top performers Switzerland, France and Japan, for example – there is some work to be done to ensure all Posts can offer the latest quality global services to their customers.

Readers will learn that in addition to creating new ways of measuring postal development, the UPU has also been busy in the field, providing member countries with means to grow. On the home front, the UPU's OSCAR tool is helping propel sustainable development by giving member countries a way to track and minimize their carbon outputs. Through a campaign launched in 2016, the UPU has also helped several countries in Latin America reduce carbon emissions, improve postal worker health and increase service quality by outfitting postal delivery staff with new bicycles.

The UPU is also cooperating with other international organizations to not only further postal development, but also leverage the postal network's role in global development with regards to e-commerce and ICTs. As you will read, UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein made this clear in his remarks to stakeholders at the recent UNCTAD E-Commerce Week and WSIS Forum gatherings.

KAYLA REDSTONE, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

E-COMMERCE

E-commerce in Africa: Strategic agreement signed

The Universal Postal Union and Tunisia signed an agreement in July for the development of e-commerce in the country under the Ecom@Africa project initiative.

UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein and La Poste Tunisienne Chief Executive Officer Moez Chakchouk, who represented Tunisian government, signed the cooperation agreement at an event witnessed by Tunisian Minister for Communication Technologies and Digital Economy Mohamed Anouar Maârouf, UPU Council of Administration Chairman Kenan Bozgeyik and UPU Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz.

The cooperation agreement formalizes commitment to implement the Ecom@Africa Tunisian platform.

Experts from the UPU and Tunisia have for the past months been setting up suitable technical and operational structures that will enable the roll out of the project.

Both parties to the agreement recognized the initiative as an important step to enable the Post to contribute more to the national development of the country.

The initiative has been launched by UPU to assist African countries develop and facilitate online trade using the postal network. The signing of the agreement makes Tunisia the first country among the six selected to pioneer the project. Others are Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Morocco and South Africa. UPU has also received requests from

Djibouti and Uganda to assist them in setting up e-commerce platforms for their Posts.

The objective of the Ecom@Africa project is to facilitate the development of e-commerce through the postal network in Africa, thus giving micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) better access to local international markets. This will be made possible by simplifying import and export procedures, with the support of designated operators of UPU member countries and other key players in the supply chain. **FR**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

OSCAR: the tool that measures our future

Postal operators are becoming increasingly conscious of climate change and the impact their own operations have on the climate. Rising to the challenge, the UPU has developed the Online Solution for Carbon Analysis and Reporting, or OSCAR for short.

The UPU has performed annual inventories of the environmental impact of the postal operators in its member countries since 2008. In 2015, with the financial support of La Poste France and the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), the UPU rolled out OSCAR to its 192 member countries. This free online tool puts sustainability at the heart of postal operations by enabling Posts to calculate their greenhouse gas emissions and compare their results year on year.

With the launch of OSCAR, postal operators now have access to an easy to use, interactive calculator that allows them to evaluate in detail their biggest environmental impacts and where the most environmental gains can be had, whether it be by taking measures to save on fuel or electricity, or by making transports between facilities more efficient. OSCAR's platform provides a foundation for making the link between environmental and economic efficiency, and by providing a list of KPIs, OSCAR makes it easy for the user to set targets and benchmark performance.

Successful first year

In OSCAR's first year, 64 member countries made use of the tool to analyse their carbon footprints. Among these, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cambodia, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Luxembourg, Morocco, Monaco and Myanmar were recognized as "top users", providing exceptionally good quality of data.

The reporting for 2016 is still in process, but indicates an even higher level of participation from across the globe. This is a good start, but there is much more to be done.

Whilst keeping individual country data confidential and secure on OSCAR, the aggregation of global and regional averages enables the UPU to paint a picture of the greenhouse gas contribution of the postal sector worldwide. The UPU works together with international organizations and actors in the field to keep the methodology in OSCAR current and relevant and to position the postal sector on the global environmental scene.

Endorsed by PostEurop

In this context, the UPU and PostEurop have signed a cooperation agreement with a view to jointly addressing the greenhouse gas emissions by PostEurop members, and to ensure the widest possible use of OSCAR.

At the plenary session of the UPU's Postal Operations Council in March 2017, PostEurop Secretary General Botond Szebeny said that the agreement would be a new opportunity for his organization's members to

manage their environmental impact more efficiently. Noting the global importance of the environment for all industries, he underlined that the postal sector had long been taking specific, proactive steps to reduce its CO₂ emissions.

With more than 600,000 post offices processing billions of items, relying on more than 1.5 million vehicles and 5.5 million staff worldwide to deliver various services, there is no doubt that the postal sector makes a considerable contribution towards global greenhouse gas emissions. But the actions already taken by our member countries show us that there is plenty of room to improve, with reduced emissions and costs as a result. In OSCAR we now have the first carbon accounting methodology tailored to postal operations and the momentum to push forward as a significant sector on the global environmental scene. We encourage all UPU member countries to make full use of the tool. **FR & LS**

For more information contact oscar@upu.int.



OSCAR.POST
Online Solution for Carbon Analysis and Reporting

PARTNERSHIPS

UPU and IPC to cooperate on postal development

The UPU and International Post Corporation (IPC) have signed a new cooperation agreement setting a framework for collaboration on areas of common interest, such as the promotion of quality and innovation, as well as joint work on technological solutions, market research and sustainability.

"The UPU's foremost aim is to secure the organization and improvement of postal services worldwide and to promote international collaboration in this area. We are therefore particularly pleased to engage in a partnership that brings measurable benefits for the industry by contributing to the development of accessible, efficient and innovative postal services in our member countries," said UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein. "This joint cooperation programme supports the advancement of the UPU's goals and strategy

while conforming to its principles for cooperation with the private sector," he pointed out.

"Both our organizations share the same goal of helping our member Posts to enhance postal service in today's challenging markets and in particular to play a greater role in e-commerce delivery," commented Holger Winklbauer, CEO of IPC. "This agreement represents a major step in our cooperation, aiming at building a mutually supportive working relationship for the benefit of the postal industry worldwide, in a context of increasingly scarce resources," he added.

IPC is a cooperative association of postal operators from Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America, which offers services and solutions to the postal industry. It is also a member of the UPU Consultative Committee.

An exciting facet of the agreement is increased collaboration on IT solutions, where there is currently an overlap in work, allowing the two organizations to identify potential synergies. A prime example of this is end-to-end tracking using radio frequency identification (RFID) technology. The two organizations will now work together to develop an interoperable RFID global tracking network for e-commerce, as well as solutions for facilitating cross-border shipments.

As part of the agreement, the two organizations will hold a biannual forum to review the progress of their cooperation, and will supervise the five expert teams responsible for implementing joint projects. **SB & KR**



UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein and IPC CEO Holger Winklbauer exchange the agreement.

Who's who at the UPU

New momentum for philately

Name: Lisa Salcedo Pfeiffer
Directorate: Logistics
Position: WNS specialist
Nationality: Ecuadorian and French



Lisa Salcedo Pfeiffer has been working at the UPU since 2015, where she began as a support with the Philately programme, with particular focus on the world numbering system (WNS) for postage stamps. She now works as the programme's WNS specialist. The WNS was created and developed by the World Association for the Development of Philately (WADP) and the UPU in 2002 to combat illegal stamp issues. It not only serves as a database of all authentic stamps issued by UPU member countries, but also a directory for philatelists keen on accessing the world's thousands of unique stamps.

In coordination with the manager of the Philately and International Reply Coupons programme, Lisa has full responsibility for managing the WNS. She registers stamps from the

system's 190 members, verifying technical information provided by the designated operators before having the stamps uploaded on the WNS website.

Aside from her WNS registration duties, Lisa says she is also working to modernize the system to give it better visibility, as well as improving its use as a means of combating illegal issues, as a source of expertise and as a sales platform. Furthermore, the fees paid by member countries for the service allow her team to plan training workshops to modernize the philatelic industry at large.

"What I like most about my job is the diversity of tasks. I discover new stamps every day and I can combine both practical and strategic activities toward the development of philately," says Lisa.

Another perk of the job, she says, is that it allows her to flex her language skills. Lisa says she often translates stamp titles into English or French for the bilingual website, and sometimes even from Spanish or Portuguese.

"I appreciate working in a multicultural environment. I couldn't imagine myself in a work environment in which I didn't use different languages throughout the day," she says.

This interest in multiculturalism extends to her personal life, where she volunteers her spare time with an association for the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Browse through the official stamps of issuing postal authorities and visit online philatelic shops from around the world at www.wnsstamps.post.

FR

CA & POC off to productive start

The two UPU bodies have launched into their work for the 2017 – 2020 cycle under new and more effective working methods.

Changes to the Council of Administration (CA) and Postal Operations Council (POC) working methods have been made in response to a decision taken by member countries at the 2016 Istanbul Congress. The decision directed the councils to streamline decision-making processes and decrease the length of their respective sessions to five days each.

“The key principles of the reform of our Union are faster decision-making processes and more efficient ways of working. New and innovative electronic working methods have been designed to increase the participation, representation and integration of UPU stakeholders in our work – this will increase the role and relevance of our Union in solving the challenges faced by the postal sector,” said UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein, referring to the new deliverables matrix developed by the International Bureau (IB) to help monitor the implementation of Congress decisions, resolutions and work proposals.

The matrix was developed for both councils and can be monitored by delegates using a new online workspace application also developed by the IB.

Green for the POC

All deliverables assigned to the first POC session were marked green as completed. Headway made during the first session of the year included several strides forward for postal financial services, electronic advanced data (EAD) and .POST.

With regards to postal financial services, the POC approved the Posttransfer Group business plan, the proposed postal payment services quality of service standards, amendments to two articles of the Postal Payment Services Regulations, and the licensing agreement for PosTransfer.

Another milestone was the approval of a roadmap for the implementation of EAD, item-level messages shared between Posts, Customs and air carriers to facilitate safe and efficient delivery of international mail containing goods. This roadmap will be an essential component in ensuring that all Posts are able to exchange this information by 2020.

In terms of digital transformation and markets development, the POC decided to amend the .POST Domain Management Policy to make it easier for organizations to register their .POST domain names and benefit from increased Internet presence and security of online services.

During the POC session, members also adopted the revised UPU Regulations and Final Protocols regarding international postal operations, which are drawn up by the POC every four years in line with decisions taken during the last Universal Postal Congress. These rules will come into effect on 1 January 2018.

CA's work launched

The CA's first session of the 2017 – 2020 cycle provided a good overview of the work to be carried out during the period.

Following a decision made by the 2016 Congress to devise an access policy for wider postal sector players to use the UPU's products and services, the CA agreed to the

IB's proposal to study a priority list of products and services and to present the results at the next session.

Members also took note of the IB's presentation of its strategy for implementing the UPU development cooperation policy for 2017 – 2020. The strategy sets out a detailed plan for bolstering development in the regions, including the formulation of a level one priority project focused on operational readiness for e-commerce. All regions identified e-commerce development as a priority for the Istanbul cycle.

In another move towards postal development, the IB announced the launch of a new UPU financial inclusion technical assistance facility funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The facility will bring together UPU experts and external consultants to train postal operators in various aspects of financial inclusion. The first training will focus on digitized financial services.

Next meetings

The next session of the POC will take place between 16 and 20 October 2017. The CA will follow from 23 to 27 October. **KR**



Swiss Post prevailed as the top performer due to its exceptionally high quality-of-service score

2IPD yields new insights for global postal sector

In these fast-changing times, postal stakeholders are looking for insights into what makes a postal operation successful. A newly launched research product, the Integrated Index for Postal Development, or 2IPD, is the latest UPU response to this pressing question.

**TEXT:
DAVID
KOCH**

The index – which consolidates information drawn from official statistics, survey results, and big data from 170 UPU member countries – has been in the works for years, says Fernão De Borba, Head of Research and Strategy at the UPU.

The UPU developed the methodology after the concept was floated in 2013. Congress gave the UPU a mandate to release 2IPD on a regular basis last year, and the International Bureau has now published the first edition.

“This constitutes a major milestone, because now we have an integrated tool to comprehensively and objectively measure postal development worldwide,” says De Borba. “And we can use it to inform our strategic processes.”

The index is already yielding insights that are expected to encourage investments in the Post, helping stakeholders come to grips with the challenges and opportunities facing the postal sector in the age of e-commerce.

“We need to understand the current trends,” said UPU Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz in a speech introducing 2IPD to postal stakeholders at a conference in June. “We need to step back, broaden our vision, and view postal development from a global perspective.”

The index is a step towards this wider view, as it draws on information that is truly global in scale, says José Ansón, the UPU’s Chief Economist. “We’re using an extremely large amount of data,” he adds.

Indeed, the index includes postal data gathered through the UPU’s electronic tracking systems, comprising more than 3 billion records in 2016 alone. This includes data from each individually tracked item, as well as dispatches of bags of letters or parcels.

This ultra-rich data produces valuable insights that benefit not only postal operators, but other stakeholders such as governments and regulators.

Untapped potential

“There is vast untapped potential for postal development in many countries in the world, following decades of declining mail volumes and electronic substitution,” explains Ansón. The outlook for Posts became increasingly dire, especially for developing countries, as governments lost interest in postal infrastructure investment in the context of the digital revolution.

However, the tide is now turning in favour of the postal sector as e-commerce volumes grow exponentially. “The window of opportunity for the Post has never been so good for the past two decades,” says Ansón. “If countries and governments understand how to take advantage of these opportunities, they will be able to deliver development to postal infrastructure.”

This is where 2IPD comes in. Countries can learn about their position on the benchmark, gain insights from the best-in-class, and request an in-depth analysis from the UPU of their country-specific results. Countries are already requesting this kind of in-depth breakdown, which can then help them to make strategic choices and tap into new opportunities, such as investing in the global e-commerce market.

In terms of big-picture results, 2IPD scores correlate with the level of postal income per capita in each country. “We are able to predict quite well the level of sales and the level of revenue in each country – real revenues, taking into account inflation,” says Ansón.

“This shows that, for those who are lagging behind in the index score, there is a big untapped potential in terms of revenue,” he explains.

In other words, the close relationship between 2IPD scores and postal revenue suggests that the index could be a valuable tool for helping Posts understand how to improve their financial position, using insights gleaned from the data.



Poland's Poczta Polska was recognized for its globally connected postal services

The “four Rs” of postal development

The index contains results that are sometimes surprising, with several developing countries outscoring their industrialized counterparts. However, all top countries share a set of qualities, dubbed the “four Rs”: excellent quality of service (reliability), international connectedness (reach), high customer demand for a full range of services (relevance), and the ability to innovate (resilience).

Scores for each category are based on a wide range of indicators. For example, resilience draws on data including the level of diversification at a given Post, in terms of four main revenue sources: letter post, parcel post and logistics, financial services, and other services.

“If your revenues are way too concentrated in one or the other of those categories, you have a vulnerability,” says Ansón. If a postal operator relies on letter mail for 80 percent of its income, for example, that will affect its resilience score. In these circumstances, the operator’s level of resilience to a technological shock, such as the acceleration of the mail electronic substitution phenomenon, puts its business model at risk.

This is only one indicator among many for resilience. Together, they are geared towards understanding how well a postal operator is equipped to cope with sudden changes, such as environmental, technological or economic crises. And although any global benchmark is a simplification of reality, it is a useful way of revealing where a country stands and how it can grow.

Union Postale reached out to the countries that achieved the best results in their respective regions, to share their insights with readers.

Switzerland

In the industrialized countries category – and of all countries worldwide – Swiss Post emerged as the top performer. The reasons for its superior performance include “diversified and globalized activities,” an exceptionally high quality-of-service score, and a focus on developing sustainable business models, according to the official ZIPD results for 2016.

“We are very pleased that the UPU study has shown that we are the most innovative postal operator in the world,” says Susanne Ruoff, CEO of Swiss Post. “This emphasizes our efforts towards further innovation and the development of interface solutions according to our vision: ‘Simple yet systematic.’”

Domestic and inbound items are delivered in an average of 1.6 days in Switzerland, compared to 2-5 days in other high-performing countries. Swiss Post attributes these excellent results, in part, to regular investments in new technologies.

The Post notes that it enjoys a high level of trust among Swiss consumers. This trust is crucial for the Post as it turns to new opportunities in digital services, to diversify its core offerings. Examples of online services include “My Consignments”, which automatically noti-

fies customers, by SMS or e-mail, about incoming registered mail or parcels, allowing them to control how, where and when the delivery is received. For example, customers can opt to have their items delivered to a neighbour, or on a particular day.

The Post, which already handles shipments of voting materials and postal ballots, has also branched out into electronic voting infrastructure. E-voting allows voters to cast their votes using a personal computer, tablet or smartphone. The Swiss Post e-voting solution was first implemented last year in the Canton of Fribourg.

Singapore

SingPost was the top performer for Asia-Pacific, and number eight worldwide. The main reason for its excellent performance is "superior quality of service and a wide range of postal delivery services," according to the official 2016 results.

Asked to comment on this outcome, SingPost highlights its services catering for the e-commerce market, including postage-paid envelopes and packing boxes popular with "blogshops," small online retailers that reach customers through free blog platforms.

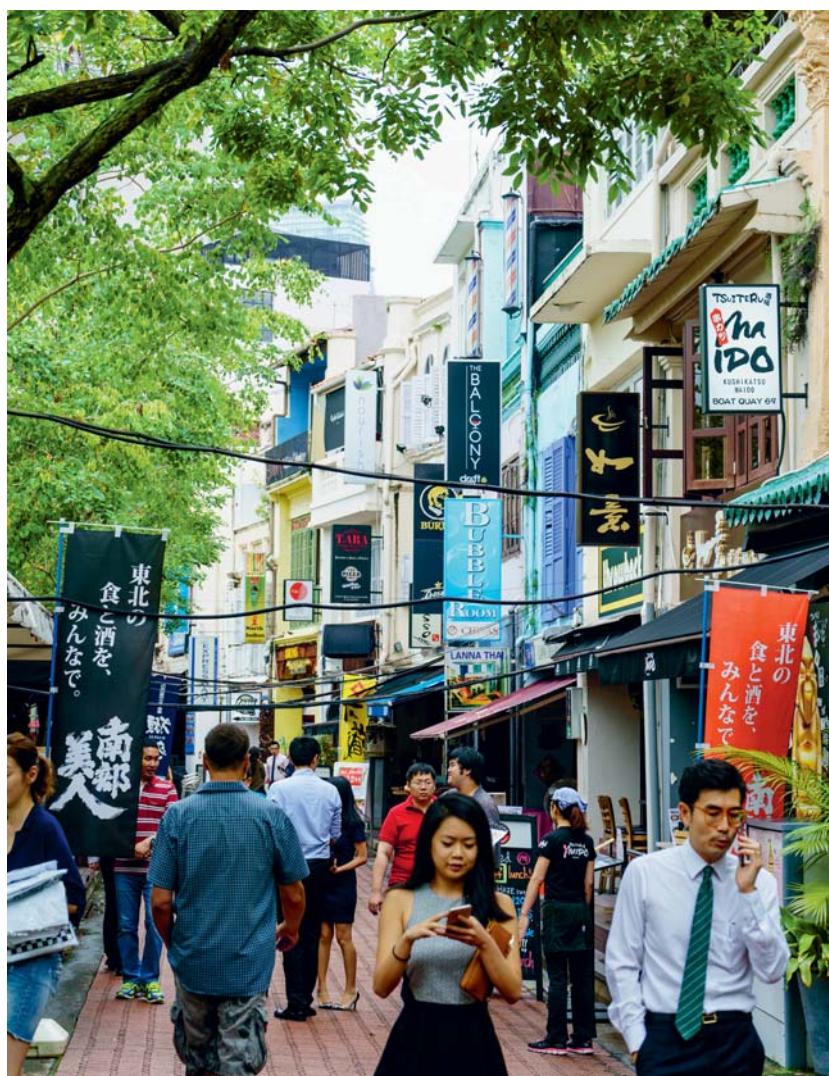
SingPost also points to its network of parcel lockers, known as POPStations, where consumers can pick up e-commerce items at their convenience. Singapore boasts the "world's densest smart parcel locker networks, with more than 140 locations around the island," according to SingPost. A newly launched service – called Rent-A-POP – allows small business owners and others to drop items into rented lockers directly.

"We want to harness technology to give our people new skills and tools that will help them work better and smarter," says Woo Keng Leong, CEO of postal services at SingPost.

Poland

Poland's Poczta Polska achieved top marks for the Eastern Europe and CIS region, and was rated seventh worldwide. Reasons cited for its excellent performance include "globally connected postal services," meaning that it exchanges mail with all (or almost all) possible countries worldwide. Related to this is a "strong demand for the portfolio of products and services in the area of e-commerce and logistics."

Singapore's superior quality of service and range of postal delivery services placed it at the top in Asia-Pacific



Grzegorz Warchol, a spokesman for Poczta Polska, calls the results “a very kind surprise,” but also a confirmation that the Post is going in the right direction. “In recent years, Poczta Polska has proven that we can operate successfully in the fully liberated market,” says Warchol, calling liberalization “the greatest challenge for postal operators in Eastern Europe for decades.”

He attributes the Post’s success to its investments both in basic postal activities and innovative online services. “Today we are not only one of the biggest companies in Poland, but also a fully competitive postal and logistics operator,” Warchol says, noting that the Post’s share of the parcel and courier market is about 25 percent. “Online services, meanwhile, are growing massively year-on-year,” he adds.

The international e-commerce market remains an important part of the Post’s strategy, notably in relations between the European Union and Asia. The Post has a “unique opportunity to become an e-commerce logistics hub for the new “One Belt, One Road” initiative,” he says, a reference to China’s plans for an extended global trade network.

Mauritius

In the Africa region, Mauritius Post emerged as the top performer, and 33rd worldwide. Mauritius owes this distinction to its excellent quality of service, with an average delivery time of 2.1 days.

The CEO of Mauritius Post, Giandev Moteea, attributes the results to “a well-planned and defined strategy of the company to re-engineer our delivery sector,” along with a strategy centred on customers and quality of service. Moteea adds that the Post has employed several UPU technologies, including the Global Monitoring System (GMS), and has implemented a postcode and addressing system.

“To safeguard our current position, we will invest in new tools and technology to increase efficiency and become the favoured delivery hub in the region, with high focus on the dynamics of constant training to our staff at our postal academy,” says Moteea, adding that e-commerce is becoming an important area for the Post. (See “In focus: Mauritius Post,” beside)

United Arab Emirates

In the Arab region, the top performer was Emirates Post, which landed in the 51st position worldwide. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) boasts the “fastest postal delivery service in the world,” according to the ZIPD report, with most shipments arriving within just one day.

“The areas of improvement that led to higher service quality and performance were mainly in the line haul network,” according to a statement provided by Emirates Post. One of the main changes is that the sorting of mail now occurs in origin branches, instead of the office of

Mauritius Post emerged as the top regional performer due to its excellent quality of service, with an average delivery time of 2.1 days





United Arab Emirates boasts the fastest postal delivery service in the world

exchange. In cases where the origin branch doesn't have a direct transport link to the destination, the mail travels in closed bags to the exchange centre, the transport network's hub. From there, it goes in the first available car to its target location. This arrangement has reportedly sped things up considerably.

The Post has also split up services formerly assigned to divisions at the exchange centre that otherwise had to multitask. Better focus and efficiency has resulted from this kind of specialization, according to the Post. In another change, the EMS section was split into two shifts, effectively operating around the clock.

Investing in technology has also benefited quality of services. "Automation and logistical tools such as electric stackers, lift-pallet trucks and truck loading/unloading systems have been and will be a major driver for our operational effectiveness," according to Emirates Post. Finally, the Post has installed computer-controlled sorting machines, and discussions are reportedly ongoing with manufacturers for high-tech parcel sorting systems and other solutions.



Brazil has overcome its challenging geography, leading Latin America and the Caribbean

Brazil

The top performer for Latin America and the Caribbean was Brazil's Correios, which ranked 46th worldwide. Reasons for the country's performance include its global postal connectedness and a high demand for its diversified services.

Over the past few years, "the number of postal transactions (both physical and financial) per capita in Brazil has consistently stayed between 10 and 100 times higher than the level seen among its regional peers," according to the ZIPD report.

"These exceptional results can be traced to Brazil's strong historical support for its national postal service since the company was established from a ministry department in 1969," says Vantuyl Barbosa Jr, Institutional Relations Manager at Correios.

"Postal communications received high priority in the Government since they were the only affordable means of communication for the general public," he says. "We must consider that, at that time and up to 1980s, telephones were not available (for technical and economic reasons) to large segments of Brazilian society."

The gigantic South American territory, with its area of over 8.5 million km², has perhaps the most challenging geography in the Americas. "Services offered by the Post had to overcome these barriers while catering for a growing economy," says Barbosa.

"This enabled the company to remain relevant and benefit from the overall economic growth Brazil experienced through the years," he says. "And this also generated more business for the Brazilian Post, since it has been regarded as a natural solution for the communication needs of Brazilian people and institutions."

He notes that the Brazilian Post is required by the Government to be present in every municipality, and these number more than 5,000 in total. "We were the first public organization to achieve this and the capillarity of our retail network is also a very important asset to attract business."

"Correios is often cited as one of the most highly trusted institutions in the country, a reputation earned partly through its close proximity to the public," Barbosa remarks. "Post offices and postmen (and postwomen) became familiar to the public and their presence day by day was appreciated and esteemed."

"The importance of its logistics activities – including the transport of voting machines and the distribution of books to public schools – also helped strengthen the bond with the public," he notes. This kind of institutional strength likely helped land the Post its top spot in the ZIPD. **DX**

Designing the future of Saudi Post

Within the framework of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which covers various reforms, Saudi Post is witnessing a quantum leap thanks to the adopted strategic planning. Dr. Usamah bin Muhammed Saleh Altaf, acting CEO of the Saudi Post, explains the most important developmental phases and plans to promote the country's postal sector.



INTERVIEW BY:
FELLA RABBAHI

PHOTOS:
SAUDI POST

What roadmap are you planning to adopt to achieve the objectives of Vision 2030? Do you have the capacities and resources needed to overcome these challenges and take forward your projects with a view to Saudi Post becoming self-financing?

Since 2005, Saudi Post has adopted strategic planning and strategic management principles to achieve the defined objectives and develop the postal industry within Saudi Arabia. To that end, it has introduced a series of objectives and initiatives in order to implement the strategic plan in three phases.

The first phase, "Building infrastructure and networks" 2005 – 2009, was focused primarily on infrastructure, leading it to put in place an infrastructure suited to current needs. One of the most important parts of that infrastructure is the national address system, which has become the main addressing reference in Saudi Arabia. It is a unified and inclusive national address system for all regions, cities, towns and villages in the Kingdom. Applying the latest addressing developments and standards from around the world, the national address project has today generated over five million addresses. Over three million individuals and institutions are registered in the national address system.

The Post also worked to improve transport operations, creating the company Naqel to provide supply chain support to Saudi Post. Its success in privatizing one sector of the postal market remains a positive example. Naqel is now one of the region's largest transport companies.

We now have an infrastructure that includes the national address, which placed the Kingdom among 17 countries with a uniform and complete standard address, and a large network comprising over 600 offices supported by a logistic transport network with a fleet of 1,900 vehicles serving more than 2,000 customers.

During the second phase, "Independence and development of business units" 2010 – 2014, the Post finalized the development of its services, adapting them to the needs of transport logistics, commerce, and current and future e-government services. It began establishing business units that could become independent in the future and acquire business status.

We also launched a pilot project to begin transforming certain segments of the Post into businesses, such as the Postal Services company, which offers services like Wasel Alami, which provides a free address in the United States to facilitate international online shopping; and the Express Mail company, which offers express mail services to enable the business units to develop and which offers services such as Moreeh, used to conduct transactions with government institutions, and Rehab, which facilitates the delivery of e-commerce purchases.

The Post introduced Al-Jisr, an item tracking system that continuously tracks each operation and step in the delivery and exchange process across the Kingdom.

The Post has now entered the communications sector, creating the Jawraa consortium in partnership with the private sector, thus becoming a founding partner of the Lebara company, which specializes in low-cost communications and Internet services.

And the third and last phase is dedicated to "Commercial transformation – Incorporating a commercial component into business activities" 2015 – 2019.

All of Saudi Post's hard work and effort in the previous two phases have contributed significantly to laying the foundations for the launch of a critical new phase for its transformation into a commercial services sector that offers accessible, high-quality services while ensuring sound financial and commercial performance.

As a result, Saudi Post is now ready to implement the transformation plan and conduct the studies necessary for its shift into a holding company that manages a group of subsidiaries, separating service delivery activities from postal market regulation activities.

All regulatory requirements for transforming the Post's status to a holding company have been met.

Currently, it is awaiting the relevant decisions from its governing authority to achieve its strategic objectives, namely, speeding up the restructuring and organization of the postal sector and transforming Saudi Post into a viable commercial business.

“We are in a race against time.”

The postal sector worldwide is evolving and changing in response to the technological developments and challenges associated with the digital age. What is Saudi Post doing to meet customer expectations by reviewing the nature and quality of the services it provides?

We are in a race against time, and the worldwide postal sector is facing significant challenges as a result of the technological revolution sweeping the globe. However, the postal sector has a vast geographical reach, which is a considerable asset. It is important to understand that the technological developments and challenges facing the postal sector represent an opportunity, not a threat. We consider our customers to be partners in, and even the key to, the transformation process. From that standpoint, we continue to work, as we have always done, to provide services that respond to the needs of the digital age and the needs and wishes of our customers.

“One of Saudi Post’s biggest challenges right now is probably ensuring customer satisfaction, in particular against the backdrop of customer expectations on an international level.”

Saudi Post has created a number of businesses as part of its commercial and logistical restructuring. How is this affecting citizens? Is the restructure a commercial competitive project or a national development project?

There are a number of reasons behind the transformation: change in demand for postal services, market liberalization, and competition from and participation of the private sector in areas that had previously been government monopolies. This has had a significant impact on the customer. Obviously, adding new businesses to the market can only benefit citizens. They will have a wide range of products to choose from, and they can choose the products that are convenient for them and that meet their needs.

As for the second part of the question, the project is mainly a development project because it makes it possible to achieve national development objectives and satisfy competition requirements, thus having an impact on institutional development.

What are the main strategic projects under way and the measures currently being taken to foster the development of e-commerce in Saudi Arabia and at the international level?

Saudi Post has created the infrastructure for e-commerce. We have created the E-mall online market, the first platform for providing e-commerce solutions and services in both English and Arabic in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It enables businesses, institutions and charitable organizations in the Kingdom to offer and sell their products and services online.

In fact, the product can be delivered anywhere in the world. This is the first integrated electronic market in the region. It includes a transport and delivery network and over 700 service centres, a number that could grow in the future. The e-market enables all companies to engage in e-commerce and to set the rules governing this promising business area. This is achieved through the regulation of the transport, delivery, payment and customer service sectors.

Saudi Post has also launched the Parcels Stations service, with which postal parcels and materials are deposited inside boxes, hence allowing clients to pick theirs electronically anytime 24 hours/7 days.

Makani is another service launched by Saudi Post. This is the latest e-government service and e-commerce application developed for the citizens and residents of Saudi Arabia. Using this online service, people can book and buy tickets to a number of sporting, cultural, social, and entertainment events.

Saudi Post has worked on improving all of its services to support and develop e-commerce both inside and outside the Kingdom, in accordance with one of the UPU’s objectives for the 2017 – 2020 cycle, namely, to ensure that Posts are in a state of operational readiness for seamless cross-border e-commerce. Indeed, we consider e-commerce to be a real catalyst for change in the postal sector, and it is essential that we keep pace with the rapid changes in that area.

Saudi Post is the sole deliverer of many of Saudi Arabia’s official government documents to the public. How has this service been extended?

The Wasel service delivery team ensures that all documents issued by government agencies are delivered to the customer’s national address.

Saudi Post has signed several agreements with government ministries and agencies to provide this service to all citizens and residents in the Kingdom. We began with documents issued by the Ministry of the Interior, such as passports and driver’s licences, and then expanded the service to include documents issued by the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Labour, and so on. Since its launch, this service has continued to grow.



As part of transforming its infrastructure, Saudi Post has put in place a national addressing system.

Which financial services and solutions does Saudi Post provide through the Ersal system? How is Ersal performing?

Ersal company offers its services through a wide range of branches around the Kingdom. It provides multiple remittance options at competitive rates, fastest transactions, and best in class service. Ersal offers a variety of services such as the cash delivery to the beneficiary through correspondent banks and bank agencies in the country of the beneficiary and to the beneficiary's address in some countries, the direct deposit to the beneficiary's account at a local bank in the destination country, also Ersal notification service and Global Western Union service in more than 200 countries and more than 500,000 agent locations worldwide.

I would also like to add that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the founding members of the Posttransfer Group, which plays an important role in the development of the postal payment services network at the UPU.

How would you summarize the current situation and achievements of Saudi Post, as well as the challenges it faces?

Over the past 10 years, Saudi Post has made tremendous progress and achieved many accomplishments in terms of infrastructure, networks, business unit development, quality-of-service improvement, and use of commercial businesses.

Currently, and in the context of the development and transformation going on in the Kingdom, our efforts are focused on transitioning to a fully commercial model, diversifying our sources of revenue, and complying with the relevant international standards. One of Saudi Post's biggest challenges right now is probably ensuring customer satisfaction, in particular against the backdrop of customer expectations on an international level. **FR**

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

UPU World CEO Forum 2017: Bringing postal strategy to the fore

In 2016 the UPU held its first-ever UPU World CEO Forum, an exclusive event at which CEOs of designated postal operators gathered in Paris to discuss growth amid disruptive innovations. This year, postal CEOs will gather in Moscow between September 17–19 for a bird's-eye view on the postal market today and predicted strategies for tomorrow.

TEXT:
KAYLA
REDSTONE

So far, more than 70 CEOs have registered for the 2017 forum, which will be hosted by Russian Post and led by its CEO Nikolay Podguzov under the theme: "Leading multidimensional growth: the hows and whys of postal strategy".

This year's forum is shaped to build upon last year's discussions, but with a more proactive approach to examining current affairs, predicting the postal sector's next trends and developing a "strategic toolkit" and potential business models for CEOs to take home to their Posts.

"The International Bureau conceived the idea of a World CEO Forum in recognition of the key role of designated operators in the development of the Post globally," said UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein, speaking to CEOs during the forum's launch in 2016.

"We believe by interacting on these topics, you will enrich your knowledge of global postal dynamics and perhaps provide help for better decision-making for your businesses," he said.

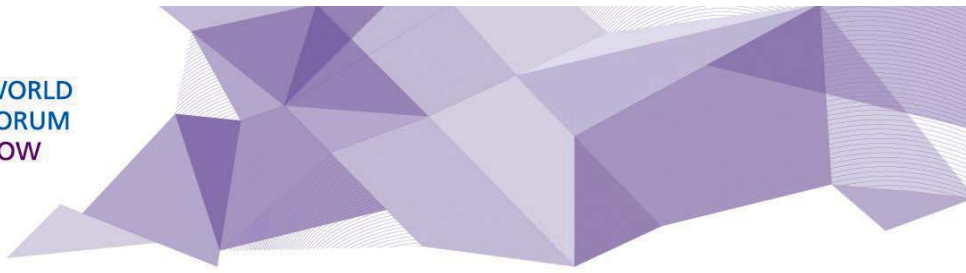
In addition to providing a free space where chief executives can share ideas and best practices, the forum provides a unique opportunity for CEOs to network with their peers.

UPU World CEO Forum 2017 panel topics include:

- Coping with global dynamics:
What's in it for Posts?
- From physical to virtual: Understanding customer needs
- Between the lines: Public service and profitability
- Surviving or thriving: Are Posts meeting expectations?
- From want to need: Bridging the expectation
and delivery divide
- Is trust enough? Successful business models
for modern Posts



UPU WORLD
CEO FORUM
MOSCOW
2017



Leading multidimensional growth

The hows and whys of postal strategy

#UPUCEOs



2016 success

The 2016 event attracted more than 50 CEOs from around the world, who came together for focused discussions on strategic positioning in the competitive e-commerce landscape, and postal products and services in the postal economy. Panels touched on the challenges and opportunities presented by the digital economy, the development of postal financial services and the harnessing of big data, which was the subject of the keynote speech given by 2014 Nobel Prize winner in Economic Sciences, Jean Tirole.

Discussions among speakers and participants yielded some interesting results, with CEOs expressing agreement that Posts worldwide would need to transform not only their product and service offerings, but also their institutional mindsets.

"The postal sector is confronted by the biggest transformation in its history. The digital revolution has turned the postal business upside down, profoundly changing the business model," said La Poste France CEO Philippe Wahl, who hosted the inaugural forum.

Some participants concluded that a greater openness to cooperation, both with Posts and the private sector, should be part of this transition, moving from competition to "co-opetition" by offering up two of the Post's key assets: reach and customer trust.

Speaking about India Post's collaboration with Amazon and other e-retailers, former Indian Postal Services Board Chair Boyapati Venkat Sudhakar noted the Post's reach in semi-urban and rural areas, where demand for e-commerce goods is high. "It makes no business sense for them to develop these networks now," he said.

Another area of focus included harnessing innovations to the Post's advantage. One such example was the use of digital financial solutions, which speakers noted tend to carry a lighter regulatory burden than traditional cash services. They suggested that Posts could partner with fin-tech providers to offer these new solutions.

Forum discussions, including Tirole's keynote speech, also highlighted the valuable part big data use could play in future postal business models.

"The Post will have a role to play as trusted intermediaries for data collection and use," Tirole explained.

Building on discussions

In 2017, panels will touch on specific models that Posts can leverage to their advantage, but within the context of broader discussions on the state of the market, current macroeconomic trends and the needs of all postal stakeholders: from customers to governments and regulators, to competitors.

Participants in the 2017 forum will also benefit from an extended conference – one-and-a-half days instead of only one – allowing them more time for in-depth panel discussions.

Those interested in following the forum live can tune into #UPUCEOs on Twitter. **KR**



FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON THE 2017 UPU CEO FORUM, INCLUDING THE EVENT PROGRAMME, VISIT:

<http://news.upu.int/outreach/ceo-forum/>

Dangerous goods update

While many Posts have been vigilant in educating their customers about which items are safe to send through the postal network, ongoing and new safety concerns warrant a reminder on dangerous goods for postal operators and their clients.

TEXT:
TRIPP
BRINKLEY



Lithium battery fire in a postal item.

The UPU has worked with partners such as the World Customs Organization (WCO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Air Transport Association (IATA) to continue the development of guidelines and standards to reduce the postal transport of inadmissible dangerous goods. This is an area of growing concern, as the volume of small packets and parcels continues to increase with the expansion of e-commerce.

To ensure the safety of postal workers, the postal supply chain and the general public, goods such as explosives, flammable liquids and toxic substances are prohibited for transport via the Post.

The UPU's Postal Security Programme is in close contact with Posts and international partners to stay abreast of the latest postal security concerns. In recent months, two particular dangerous goods have come to light as growing safety concerns: synthetic opioids and inadmissible lithium batteries.

Synthetic opioids

Law enforcement authorities around the world are reporting increases in synthetic opioid smuggling, misuse, and overdose fatalities. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid prescribed to relieve chronic and severe pain. Pharmaceutical grade fentanyl is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine. A similar drug, carfentanil, is 100 times more potent than fentanyl. Other variations include acrylfentanyl and tetrahydrofuran.

Although there is no basis to suggest that the postal supply chain is a primary conduit for synthetic opioid smuggling, mail is being used to transport a portion of the illicit drugs. This poses a threat to postal employee safety. If a postal item containing powdered fentanyl or carfentanil were to break open during mail processing, personnel in the area could face significant risks to their health. There have not been any reports of fentanyl exposure involving postal employees, but police officers and other first responders have experienced accidental overdoses through workplace contact.



An amount of carfentanil equivalent to that of one grain of salt – inhaled, ingested, or absorbed – may be enough to kill an adult. (Photo: Tripp Brinkley)

Exposure to synthetic opioids quickly results in symptoms including confusion, dizziness, excessive drowsiness, shallow breathing and loss of consciousness. The equivalent of one grain of salt – inhaled, ingested or absorbed – may be enough to kill an adult, meaning medical treatment must be provided quickly. Effects of most synthetic opioids can be counteracted by rapid administration of the drug naloxone. Some Posts have even acquired naloxone auto-injectors or nasal spray in order to be prepared for possible employee exposure.

The risk of fentanyl exposure in mail processing is very low, and it is even more unlikely that an employee would inhale, ingest or absorb a lethal amount of the drug. However, Posts should be aware of the symptoms and have a plan in place to react appropriately, if necessary. Additional information on illegal drug trafficking and dangerous goods in the postal supply chain is available on the UPU's Trainpost website.

Lithium batteries

A fire is bad enough when it happens in a postal facility. Most are quickly extinguished, and personnel in the area are usually never far from an emergency exit. Passengers on aircraft do not always have those options, and the passengers and crew on a recent 10-hour transatlantic flight were unaware there was a poorly packaged or defective lithium-ion battery in the cargo hold below them. Fortunately, the battery did not catch fire until it had been offloaded, but it was still in the air cargo container when the fire was extinguished by the quick actions of an employee. If the fire had occurred mid-flight over the Atlantic Ocean, the results may have been tragic.

Currently, only 27 postal operators have been authorized by their civil aviation authority to accept lithium batteries in postal items. Even when authorized, the lithium batteries are only permissible when properly installed in equipment. Further, only relatively small batteries are allowed: two batteries (maximum four cells) with a power rating of 100 watt-hours or less.

The battery in the recent fire was quite large – more than 20 kg. It was not installed in equipment, and it had a power rating of more than 600 watt-hours. It was clearly prohibited in all categories of postal items.

The frequency of prohibited lithium batteries in postal items is a topic of increasing attention within IATA, ICAO and other aviation groups and government regulators. At a recent ICAO meeting, members of the organization proposed requiring civil aviation authorities to approve and oversee dangerous goods training for Posts. This issue is still being considered, but postal operators are reminded of the provisions of article RC 119bis of the UPU Parcel Post Regulations: "Each designated operator shall establish procedures and training programmes with a view to controlling the introduction of admissible dangerous goods into its postal services, in compliance with national and international rules and regulations." Aviation safety cannot be compromised. If Posts do not have effective measures in place, it is reasonable to expect additional requirements from regulators.

To aid in employee training and public awareness, the UPU – in partnership with ICAO, IATA and the WCO – developed a public awareness campaign complete with materials available for use by any postal operator. To date, more than 40 designated operators have added their logo to the "Keep me safe to get me there faster" posters and pamphlets to complement employee training and public education efforts. Those looking for information on joining the awareness campaign may contact Sonam Bernhard (sonam.bernhard@upu.int). **TB**

Tripp Brinkley manages the UPU's security programme.



CAMPAIGN VIDEOS:

<http://news.upu.int/outreach/keep-me-safe-to-get-me-there-faster/learn-more/>



COVER STORY ON DANGEROUS GOODS, UNION POSTALE MAGAZINE 4/2015:

http://news.upu.int/fileadmin/magazine/2015/en/union_postale_4_2015_en.pdf

TRAINPOST COURSE ON DANGEROUS GOODS:

www.upu-trainpost.com/eng/Detail_cours45.htm

Riding towards sustainability

Mail carriers in Latin America are saddling up on newly purchased bicycles in a UPU-sponsored bid to fight climate change. Early results of the pilot project – a collaboration with the Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal (PUASP) – also suggest benefits for the health of postal workers and financial bottom-line of operators.

**TEXT:
DAVID
KOCH**

Twelve countries took part in the approximately 130,000 USD programme, with funds from the UPU (100,000 CHF) and PUASP (30,000 USD) allowing Posts to purchase some 350 conventional bicycles and 46 electric or “e-bikes”, along with other necessary gear, such as helmets, locks and baskets.

This is the first time that the UPU and PUASP have worked together on a project geared specifically towards greenhouse gas reduction, which is becoming an increasingly urgent priority.

Results across the region

The UPU and PUASP are currently reviewing the project’s impact through a series of questionnaires, including one sent to participating countries before the project’s launch and four to be disseminated during 2017. It is still too early to determine the extent to which fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced overall, but the preliminary data gathered has been positive so far.

Several countries have reported an increase in their deliveries. During the first quarter in Honduras, for example, routes with conventional bicycles saw a 60 percent increase in their deliveries, while e-bike routes enjoyed a 33 percent boost. Postal workers formerly made their deliveries on foot or using public transport.

The preliminary results also suggest physical and mental health benefits for workers. A number of countries reported that mail carriers using bicycles experience less physical exhaustion. Chile, which acquired nine e-bikes, noted “improved quality of life and weight loss”, while Venezuela reported that “personal motivation of postmen increased” following the purchase of 13 conventional bicycles.

E-bikes in Ecuador

Some of the most encouraging results so far have come from the streets of the Ecuadorian capital, Quito, where six new electric bicycles purchased through the programme are helping mail carriers on their rounds in the mountainous metropolis.



Promotional postcards were circulated as part of the campaign

The e-bike use a “pedelec” (electric pedal) system, which involves an electric motor activated when the passenger starts pedaling. One retailer described the pedelec as an experience akin to riding an ordinary bicycle, but with the wind always at your back.

The motor does not replace physical exertion, but complements it. “They are useful for the geography of Quito,” says Gabriela Zurita, Director of Communications and International Affairs at Correos del Ecuador. The hilly landscape is an important consideration in a city perched high in the foothills of the Andes, and the Ecuadorian capital is certainly known for its steep, narrow streets.

“The e-bikes can reach a clip of 30 km/h and operate using a rechargeable 250 Wh lithium battery that can last for up to 12 hours, depending on the specifics of the route,” says Zurita.

The mail is carried in saddlebags mounted on a rear rack. Mail carriers sport a helmet with integrated safety light and a Correos-branded jacket with reflective features for visibility.

Correos del Ecuador reports that e-bikes have allowed triple the amount of mail to be delivered, while reducing transport costs. Less time is spent in traffic jams, for example. Moreover, the Post is reporting health benefits for its workers. "Postmen using the e-bikes underwent a thorough medical examination before the start of the project and receive a monthly check-up," says Zurita, who has noted improvements in the physical condition and mood of postal workers.

Greener deliveries

With their vast fleets of gas-burning vehicles, postal operators are among the biggest polluters on the planet, which makes it especially important for them to reduce their emissions.

There are over one million postal vehicles on the road worldwide, and hundreds of airplanes charged with mail crisscross the globe daily. The global postal sector was responsible for at least 62 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in 2014 alone, mostly due to transportation by Posts in industrialized countries, according to UPU estimates.

The Latin American bicycle project is a step towards the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of objectives adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. One of the SDGs requires countries to take urgent action against global climate change.



Colombian postmen show off their new bikes
(Photo: 4-72 La Red Postal de Colombia)

"We are doing everything possible to work on this goal," says Adams Morales, who is in charge of sustainable development at Correos de Costa Rica. The Post anticipates a total reduction of 1.76 tonnes of CO₂ per year with its 25 new bicycles, which it is using in ten localities across the country. Savings on gas and other expenses are also expected to reduce costs by roughly 18,500 USD annually.

"Pedal for a sustainable future!"

"The Latin America bicycle project is also a way for Posts to position themselves as key players in the fight against climate change," says Fernanda Perez, Project Manager at PUASP in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Indeed, public relations campaigns by Posts in the region have featured the initiative on radio, in social media and on posters, many with the slogan "¡Pedaleamos por un futuro sostenible!" ("Pedal for a sustainable future!").

"As a result, more people know what the postal sector can do to contribute to combat climate change," explains Perez, who goes on to point out that it is important for society and customers to know that the postal sector is working to reduce CO₂ emissions.

The project is also a way for Posts to raise their profile among governments in the region, which may otherwise overlook the sector's role in socio-economic development.

Through the implementation of this project, postal operators can show governmental authorities what designated operators can do.

And while 400 or so bicycles may offset only a fraction of global postal emissions, the pilot initiative could pave the way for increased efforts, as designated operators grapple with the transition to a low-carbon economy. **DK**

Twelve Latin American countries took part in the programme:

Country	Traditional bikes	E-bikes
Argentina		6
Chile		9
Colombia		10
Costa Rica	25	
Cuba	93	
Ecuador		6
Guatemala	65	
Honduras	30	15
Peru	40	
Suriname	40	
Uruguay	53	
Venezuela	10	
Total	356	46

UPU participates in global discussions on digital inclusion

The UPU Director General and key experts recently participated in the UNCTAD E-Commerce Week and the WSIS Forum, reaffirming the Post's critical role in the digital economy.

**TEXT:
KAYLA
REDSTONE**

The third edition of UNCTAD's E-Commerce Week in Geneva this spring brought together more than 1,000 representatives from international, regional, national and private sector organizations to discuss the challenges and opportunities of providing inclusive e-commerce to all citizens.

The UPU co-organized several sessions of the event, including those on e-commerce in Africa and measuring e-commerce readiness.

Addressing e-commerce stakeholders, UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein advocated the postal sector's role in developing an inclusive digital economy.

"All of us who are seated here today and even those of us who are not here are all agreed about one thing: that e-commerce is the reality and it is something that has to be developed worldwide. What we are grappling with here is how to do it and who should do it," said Hussein.

The Director General drew a link between the expansive physical postal network made up by the UPU's 192 member countries and inclusive access to e-commerce, noting that the postal sector's more than 5 million employees are "knocking at [citizens'] doors every day to deliver services".

"Because of our reach, because of our footprint, we are the only organization that can provide truly inclusive services to every citizen on this planet," he continued.

Hussein noted that e-commerce was a number one priority for the UPU and that it had launched several initiatives to foster its development, including the Ecom@Africa initiative on the African continent. Ecom@Africa is an e-commerce capacity-building project led by the UPU in collaboration with postal administrations and their national governments.

eTrade for All

Hussein made his remarks during the launch session of the eTrade for All online platform, a project on which the UPU collaborated with UNCTAD and more than 20 other national, regional and international organizations, as well as development banks. It is intended to be a free educational resource for developing countries to boost e-commerce.

"The platform is not just another website, but a resource that works on most electronic devices, and allows users to learn and share with partners and peers. Countries can learn about trends and best practices," said Shamika Sirimanne, Director of UNCTAD's Division of Technology and Logistics.



UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein addressed ICT stakeholders at the annual WSIS Forum (Photo: ITU)

eTrade for All takes a holistic look at the e-commerce environment, bringing together best practices, case studies, research and more under seven pillars: e-commerce assessments, ICT infrastructure and services, payments, trade logistics, legal and regulatory frameworks, skills development and financing for e-commerce.

The UPU contributed to the platform as a founding partner, providing insights for its section devoted to trade logistics. In this section, users will have access to UPU data and resources on ways to make exporting and importing via the national postal infrastructure more affordable and efficient.

The eTrade for All platform was later celebrated at the annual World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum hosted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). It was honoured as a WSIS Champion Project, an award given to outstanding projects that leverage the power of ICT to accelerate socio-economic development.

WSIS

The UPU Director General was present in June at this year's WSIS Forum, where he reiterated the Post's important role in including the world's citizens in the ICT infrastructure, within the context of the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs).

"By our very nature of being able to offer services everywhere, sometimes beyond strict profit motives, we are in a better position than most industries to empower economically weak and marginal communities to realize their potential and enable them to participate in national development," said Hussein during the forum's opening.

He again evoked Ecom@Africa as one example of how the UPU is working with countries to further electronic development, also mentioning several other key programmes such as the Easy Export programme on trade facilitation for small businesses and .POST, the UPU's secure top-level domain that helps Posts to offer financial services and e-commerce platforms where small businesses can carry out transactions with buyers.

He explained that while modern technology had once been considered the "death knell" of the Post, it has revealed itself to be the key to the postal sector's sustainability.

"It is through modern technology that the post is able to innovate and come up with new products and services that resonate with the needs of the population," he added.

The annual WSIS event brings together key ICT stakeholders from international organizations, governments and the private sector to exchange knowledge, share best practices and build partnerships to advance global development goals. These discussions take place under a series of "Action Lines". The UPU contributes primarily to WSIS Action Line 7 on e-business. **KR**

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FAX	

AMERICAS

DHL GLOBAL FORWARDING has launched a new supply chain security consulting service in the Americas. The services will be offered by former customs and law enforcement professionals, as well as a global network of more than 250 security personnel, to help companies become members of the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) or simply assist those wanting to operate a more secure supply chain.

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA POST'S Board has announced that Christine Holgate is to take over as Managing Director-CEO this October. Holgate has spent the last nine years as CEO of the Australian natural health company Blackmores. Her predecessor, Ahmed Fahour, spent more than seven years as head of the Australian designated operator.

AUSTRIA

AUSTRIA POST will now sell cryptocurrencies, such as bitcoin, ether, dash and litecoin, at more than 1,800 postal locations through a partnership with bitcoin broker Bitpanda. The currency will be sold using a paper voucher, which can be redeemed on the Bitpanda website. Vouchers will be available in denominations of 50, 100 and 500 EUR.

BELGIUM

BPOST has installed 6,500 solar panels on two of its sorting centres thanks to a partnership with ENGIE. The installations will double the Post's current solar energy capacity of 15,000 square metres, introducing an additional 17,000 square metres of coverage. The newly introduced panels are expected to generate some 1,700,000 kWh of power per year, which amounts to the consumption of an estimated 500 households.

BOTSWANA

BOTSWANAPOST has introduced a new teleservices channel, which enables customers to renew driving licences or post box rentals remotely by calling or e-mailing the Post's contact centre. Payments for the service will be made online.

CHINA (PEOPLE'S REP.)

ALIBABA has announced that it will increase its stake in the Southeast Asian e-commerce company Lazada Group from 51 percent to approximately 83 percent. As part of the move, Alibaba will invest a further 1 billion USD in Lazada,

bringing its total investment to over 2 billion USD. The company credited Lazada for its "unrivalled access" to customers in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

COSTA RICA

CORREOS DE COSTA RICA is piloting BOX-CORREOS postal lockers in three supermarkets. The boxes are available seven days a week between 6.00 and 22.30 and are intended to meet the demands of customers who are increasingly ordering items online.

FRANCE

LA BANQUE POSTALE has added French crowdfunding platform KissKissBankBank to its list of subsidiaries. The company has helped acquire funding for 27,000 projects and has been a partner of the postal bank for the past six years. The bank said the purchase of KissKissBankBank is in line with its strategy of increasing its digitized financial solutions offering.

GERMANY

DEUTSCHE POST DHL GROUP is set to double the production capacity of its StreetScooter electric vehicle subsidiary to 20,000 units by the end of 2017. This will include doubling its own fleet of 2,500 electric vehicles, as well as selling its vehicles to third-party buyers across Europe.

IRELAND

DHL has opened a 3,700 square metre pharmaceutical grade Life Sciences Centre of Excellence at Dublin Airport, which will increase the company's global pharmaceutical supply chain capacity. This temperature controlled facility will provide pharmaceutical manufacturers in Ireland with global supply chain management services, such as storage, pick and pack, and inventory control.

NETHERLANDS

POSTNL has announced the launch of a new e-cargo bicycle programme, which will allow the designated operator to eliminate 100 diesel delivery van trips. The e-bikes will be used for the delivery of business mail, emptying of post boxes, and evening parcel deliveries in Amsterdam. The Post expects that the bikes will help reduce carbon emissions by 60,000 kg per year.

The Post is also offering a new service that allows customers to change the delivery time and address of their packages via the PostNL app or track and trace. The option is available

from the time a parcel reaches the PostNL sorting centre until 6.00 on the day of delivery.

SINGAPORE

SINGPOST has partnered with Singtel to launch a nationwide mobile and Internet-related recycling programme. The ReCYCLE programme aims to divert environmentally unfriendly e-waste from landfills to have their parts reused. Customers can drop their unused devices off at any ReCYCLE bin or mail them through the Post using special envelopes available at Singtel retailers or post offices.

The designated operator has also announced its new SmartPost initiative, which aims to use wireless and digital technologies to improve its quality of service and operational efficiency. The project will include the use of near-field communication (NFC), radio frequency identification (RFID), digital imaging and electronic communications to develop new tools across the entirety of postal operations. Trackable items will be the focus of the project's first phase.

SLOVENIA

According to The Slovenia Times, **POŠTA SLOVENIJE** and the **RUSSIAN POST** have been in talks to create a joint logistics centre at Maribor Airport in Slovenia. According to the report, which includes quotes from both the Russian Minister of Communications and Mass Media, Nikolai Nikiforov, and the Slovenian Minister of the Economy, Zdravko Počivalšek, the centre is set to serve Europe.

IRELAND

SWISS POST has announced further future changes to its postal network, stating that there will be more than 4,200 postal access points by 2020, with between 800 and 900 traditional post offices predicted. Currently, there are 3,850 total access points, including some 1,250 traditional post offices. The Post plans to replace more traditional offices with postal agencies facilitated through local businesses and administrations, which it says will result in longer opening hours and flexibility.

The designated operator recently launched a pilot of its new "My Local Services" app, which integrates digital services offered by municipalities, local businesses, event organizers and the Post through a single platform that can be accessed via the customer's mobile phone. Four municipalities are currently testing the project.

All items by Kayla Redstone



Innovation
bringing
value

Every single day, hundreds of millions of parcels, packages and mailpieces move around the world, along the roads to our houses. In more than 20 countries, on 5 continents, a large part of them is sorted, routed, tracked, prepared for delivery by our solutions. SOLYSTIC provides operators of postal and parcel industry with solutions for e-commerce logistics, B2C delivery preparation, "mixed" mail sorting and automatic resolution of delivery addresses. We help our customers to meet growing demand, to be ahead of the competition, to make their business profitable. SOLYSTIC: we always try to think creatively.

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MAIL AUTOMATION

PARCEL AUTOMATION

LIFECYCLE SERVICES