

UNION POSTALE

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UPU HIGH-LEVEL FORUM
ON WIDER POSTAL SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

13 FEBRUARY 2020
BERNE, SWITZERLAND

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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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Spring 2020

Refers to the season in the country of publication.

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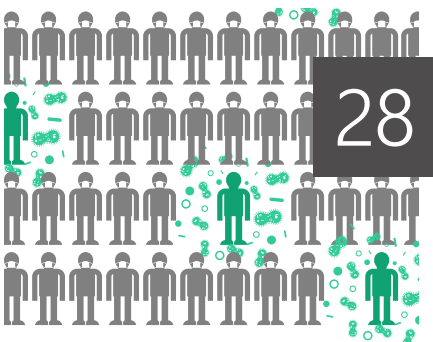


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Mail delivery in the time of Coronavirus

With more than 1.2 billion people estimated to be in lockdown, including the closure of schools and non-essential shops, COVID-19 – now a pandemic – has effectively shut down most of the world.



Last year was spent discussing the future of the Universal Postal Union, but I never dreamt that in March 2020 I would be shuttering its headquarters for an unknown time to protect the safety and health of our staff.

COVID-19 has rampaged across countries and made our globalized world feel vulnerable, and at times, almost defenseless. Posts and their partners in airlines, shipping and logistics have all faced dizzying downturns. The world was placed in crisis mode and teeters on a recession every bit as desperate as the one we faced in 2008.

With the declaration of a global pandemic by our friends at the World Health Organization, I knew we confronted a crisis of unparalleled proportions. Our reaction was both proportionate and coherent. We closed the office for all non-essential personnel on 16 March and cancelled travel and all meetings at the headquarters. Non-essential staff were sent home to work remotely.

A word about COVID-19

The health and safety of our staff was my overriding priority, and this is why the office was quickly closed. Business continuity was another concern for the General Management and we swiftly organized ourselves to ensure we could continue to deliver our groundbreaking services and products to member countries.

To all of UPU's many friends, colleagues, members and stakeholders: **stay safe.**

I am proud of the response from the UPU staff. We pulled together and with very little fuss managed to make the transition from headquarters to home in a short period of time. The crisis has not yet receded and I urge everyone to follow the guidance of the World Health Organization and the medical advice of countries. To all of UPU's many friends, colleagues, members and stakeholders: stay safe.

A new year, a new direction

On a more positive note, a new year is always built upon the success of previous years, and this is especially true of the Universal Postal Union's work in 2020. Over the year we will be broadening the organization's involvement with the private sector, while continuing the essential work of building capacities and offering technical assistance to the international postal sector.

Our efforts to catalyze the private sector have been a long time in the making. The subject has been the source of numerous discussions among member countries over the decades. However, there is a feeling this is the year we will finally agree on the way forward. If so, it would be a game-changing decision for the Union.

To kick start the process, on 13 February, I held a High-Level Forum on Wider Postal Sector Engagement bringing together experts to discuss the matter. **The discussions were incisive, honest and innovative.**

I was particularly taken by the remarks of Andrew Bremberg, United States' Ambassador to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, who said it was important to create a roadmap for the change and then work backwards.

Another inspirational speaker was the Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union Houlin Zhao who offered his full support and said that ITU's processes had accelerated with the inclusion of private players. To do this, the organization had to, in Mr Zhao's words, "have good contact with the industry to encourage them to have confidence to come to us."

In my closing remarks, I encouraged members to consider the relevance of the Universal Postal Union and the post as they go forward. I said, "You will be the ones to determine what to open and how it will be opened. Please, let's take the first steps."

The Taskforce created for this purpose will now evaluate the recommendations that were proposed to the Council of Administration, refine them and we will debate the issue once more in Abidjan at the 27th Universal Postal Congress. I hope that the end of this particular road is in sight and we will now be able to move forward in partnership with our colleagues from the private sector.

It is my firm belief that we are on the cusp of a truly exciting future for the Universal Postal Union.

Bishar A. Hussein, Director General,
Universal Postal Union

EDITOR'S NOTE

STANDING TOGETHER

The first quarter of the year has been one full of adaptation for the entire world as countries have worked to put measures in place to protect their citizens from the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These circumstances have forced Posts into a new way of working as they try to protect their staff while ensuring customers around the globe continue to receive their mail. At the time of writing this Editor's Note, 117 countries have submitted messages to the UPU's Emergency Information System (EMIS) to notify members of disruptions to their postal services.

The situation has caused our editorial team to shift gears as well. Though our cover story narrows in on another change facing the UPU's membership – the potential opening of the organization to wider sector players – we also wanted to acknowledge the challenging situation we are all facing during this pandemic. For that reason, throughout the pages of this magazine, you will read about how different countries have reacted to the pandemic, what the UPU is doing and the impact the UPU expects this situation will have on the sector.

Many of our readers are likely working from home, as are the UPU's staff members. We have decided to try a new digital-first format for this magazine – the first ever to be produced from our homes – to make sure everyone can read and share its content. If you are not already reading on this new platform, we invite you to check it out now: news.upu.int/magazine/union-postale-online/

We also invite any of our colleagues working in the postal sector to share stories about how they and their organizations are managing during this time: communication@upu.int.

Stay safe.

Kayla Redstone, Editor-in-chief



Participants of the Initial Damage Assessment training session



The training facilitator demonstrates proper first aid techniques



Grenada Postal Corporation employees engaged in a role play exercise during first aid training



Participants demonstrate proper first aid practices when someone is choking

UPU helps Grenada boost disaster readiness

TEXT: Owena Beepot-Pryce

The Grenada Postal Corporation is implementing a disaster preparedness project thanks to a Universal Postal Union technical assistance programme funded by Japan. The project aims to enhance the postal networks ability roll out effective response measures during disasters and emergencies through planning, capacity building and equipment donations.

The UPU, in collaboration with the Grenada Postal Corporation, has taken steps to procure the disaster risk management (DRM) equipment through the United Nations Development Programme, including two power generators and automatic switches, one camcorder, two satellite phone kits and ten transistor radios.

Prior to the launching the project in late 2019, the Grenada Postal Corporation had no role within the country's National Structure for Disaster Management. However, the Post is now included and now serves on the Relief Management

Committee. Consequently, initial damage assessment and relief and supplies management were recommended areas for training.

The Grenada Postal Corporation has already concluded a four-day DRM capacity building session as part of the project, which included train-the-trainer training workshops on hazard awareness and disaster risk management, initial damage assessment, relief and supplies management and first aid.

The idea is to have those who participated in the training teach other staff members during the course of 2020. When the project comes to an end, DRM training will continue under the Post's human resources training programme. **OBP**

Owena Beepot-Pryce is the UPU's Regional Project Coordinator for the Caribbean.

Aude Marmier joined the UPU family six years ago.

She studied French literature and Chinese studies – which included Chinese history, literature, and language – at the University of Geneva. Having discovered a real interest in Chinese during these formative years, it has remained her passion ever since.

While still a student, Marmier worked as an Administrative Assistant and, later, a French substitute teacher in a public school in Geneva. However, she realized that she was meant to tread a different professional path – one that aligned with her interests. After graduating and obtaining her Master's degree in Chinese studies, she applied for an internship at the Human Security Division of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

"I found it very motivating to support the promotion of issues that interest me: human rights, peace, humanitarian affairs, and migration," she explains.

At the UPU, Marmier has gained valuable experience working for many programmes in the organization's Postal Operations Directorate (DOP), such as Quality of Service, Postal Financial Services, Customs and Transport, as well as the Postal Operations Council Secretariat.

"It has been a great opportunity for me to learn about and understand the activities carried out by the DOP," says Marmier.

Now a Transport Programme Assistant in the same directorate, Marmier helps with the organization of internal and external meetings, staff missions and conferences. For example, she contributed to the organization of the UPU Global Conference on Cross-Border Cooperation in an E-commerce World held in Xiamen, China, at the end of November last year. She also supports the coordination and preparation of documents and follow up on different correspondence.

Recently, due to the coronavirus outbreak, Marmier's daily work is now focused on one important job: the publication of large numbers of EmIS (Emergency Information System) messages from Union member countries. Therefore, she has started working closely with the UPU's language services, who revise and translate these messages.

"All of us work hard on the same issue and this has become important teamwork, to which I am happy to contribute," she says.

Marmier is quite the polyglot herself. Her mother tongue is French, but she is fluent in English, Chinese and German, and also understands Spanish and Italian. For her, one of the most inspiring parts about working at the UPU is communicating and working with people from around the world.

"My coworkers come from different cultures and backgrounds, and they speak so many foreign languages. I strongly believe there is always a lot to learn from each other. It has been a real privilege for me to work with my colleagues on a daily basis."

Although challenges can arise when working under pressure in an intercultural environment, Marmier explains, "despite how different we are, I believe it is possible to reach consensus, find solutions and achieve success together if we are all willing to cooperate as colleagues and if we are aware of how important our work is."

Marmier is thankful for her work at the UPU. "It means a lot to me. When I come to work every day, I remind myself that I am at the service of people of the world without exception."

She believes strongly in the need for international organizations and their significant positive influence on society.

"I have always wished to work in an organization that helps address global challenges. Having the possibility to do so now, at my humble level, is a dream come true. I am very proud and happy to be part of the UPU staff and to work on something that is bigger than ourselves," she says sincerely.

In any challenging situation, Marmier always chooses to stay positive and to enjoy life. Her inspirational advice: "Despite the difficulties, notice the beauty of simple things and do not forget to focus on what really matters." **OM**

Photo by: Cindy Evans, Photo Vertige



Name

Aude Marmier

Directorate

Postal Operations

Position

Transport Programme Assistant

Nationality

Swiss-French



UPU celebrates gender equality

Staff members working at the UPU's Berne, Switzerland, headquarters gathered for a special event to mark International Women's Day.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone
PHOTOS: Mark Prosser

Staff and the UPU's general management gathered in the foyer of the UPU's largest meeting hall, the Heinrich von Stephan room, on March 6 for a series of activities to show support for the day.

As a UN specialized agency, the UPU honoured UN Women's theme for the day, **"I am Generation Equality"**. The theme recognized the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and aimed to bring together people of every gender, age, ethnicity, race, religion and country to drive actions towards gender equality.

In a special video message released on the day, UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein wished the world a happy International Women's day, saying, "As the head of the Universal Postal Union, I support gender equality and we promote that very strongly here at the UPU."

UPU Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz echoed the statement in his own video message in French.

As part of the celebrations, staff were invited to sign their commitment to gender quality on a special canvas that will be displayed in the IB. They also had the opportunity to record video messages stating their support for tackling various issues impeding gender quality – from economic, political and health rights, through to broader issues such as environmental justice and peace. They gathered with general management for a group photograph, holding up the day's slogan in all UN languages.

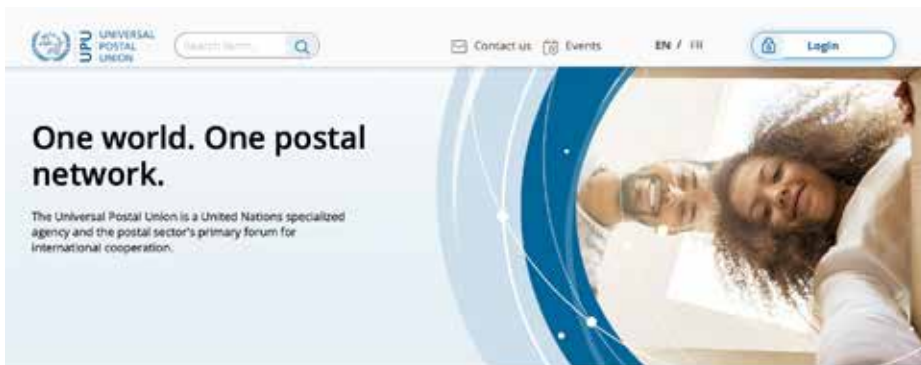
The event was held just one week after the UPU's last Council of Administration session ahead of the 2020 Congress, during which countries supported a proposal by Australia to develop and implement a gender policy for the UPU and amend the UPU Acts to reflect gender-inclusive language. The proposal will also be presented at the Congress in Abidjan. **KR**





New decade, new digital presence: A preview of the new UPU website

After a decade, UPU stakeholders can look forward to seeing a new and much improved website in the Spring of 2020.



TEXT: Kayla Redstone

The UPU launched the project to revamp the organization's website – upu.int – in 2019, selecting Swiss IT company Infoteam to develop the new solution after a thorough tendering process.

Together, the UPU and Infoteam have worked to meet three key objectives for the new solution: to improve the user experience throughout the UPU's digital ecosystem, to improve the UPU's ability to communicate about its activities, products and services; and to present a more modern image of the organization to stakeholders and potential partners.

After consulting a sample of UPU staff, as well as representatives from member countries, the team was able to settle a new approach for the design, organization and functionalities to meet users' needs and ensure they can always find what they are looking for on the website.

Focus on users

Entry points on the website's new homepage will direct users to content that is suited to their needs. Those looking for general information about the organization will be directed to the "About UPU".

The "Partner with UPU" heading is designed to attract potential partners and donors who can support the UPU's activities.

Latest news



Address information and mapping vital in COVID-19 fight

3/25/2020 -- As COVID-19 spreads across the world, it is vital to identify and map declared cases and the progression of the disease through affected areas.



The Post & COVID-19: Your safety first!

3/23/2020 -- COVID-19 has severely impacted the world's flow of mail. Postal operators from Europe to the Americas, and from Asia to Africa, have been forced to adapt the way mail is delivered to customers.



Keeping the mail flowing: How the world's postal operators are confronting COVID-19

3/20/2020 -- COVID-19 resembles a deadly firestorm that appears to have begun in Asia and rapidly fanned out leaving few nations untouched. Today, the center of gravity of COVID-19—declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 11 March—has shifted towards Europe.



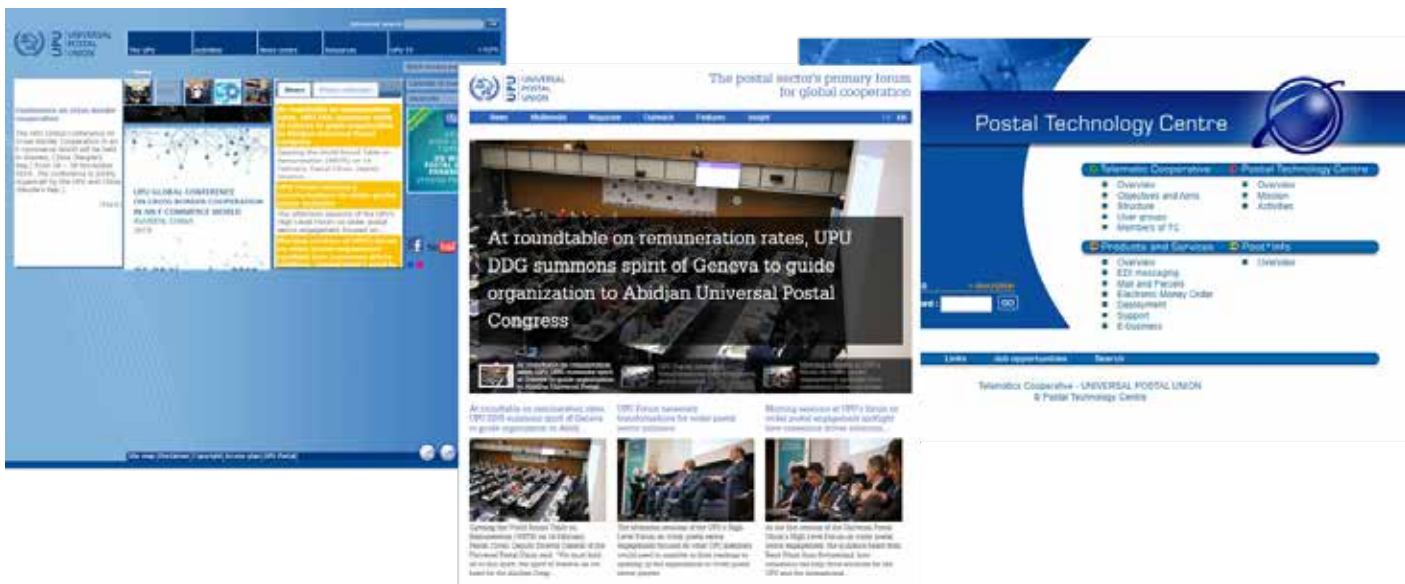
Breathing new life into a veteran postal product

3/19/2020 --



UPU: Making e-commerce work for...





The “Members’ Centre” will become a resource centre for those who participate in the UPU’s decision-making processes, namely, delegates from the UPU’s member countries. Finally, a new “Postal Solutions” section will provide information about the products and services that UPU offers to its member countries and become a space to share technical and operational information with members.

Integration

The revamp project has also given the UPU an opportunity to better integrate its IT resources to facilitate the user experience.

As part of the project, the UPU’s multimedia news website, news.upu.int, will become part of upu.int so that members will always be able to see the latest updates from the organization. The Postal Technology Centre’s (PTC) website will also become part of upu.int so that information about the latest UPU IT solutions are easily found on the main website.

Users will also be able to register for a universal login on the new website, which will give them access to solutions such as the delegate registration system, UPU documentation and the workspaces. This login will give them access to a user dashboard personalized to their needs, including quick links to online resources, news and alerts, and access to any protected elements they have access to, such as the Telematics Cooperative, remuneration spreadsheets, .POST Group documentation and more.

Member countries will receive instructions on how to create their user account.

New features

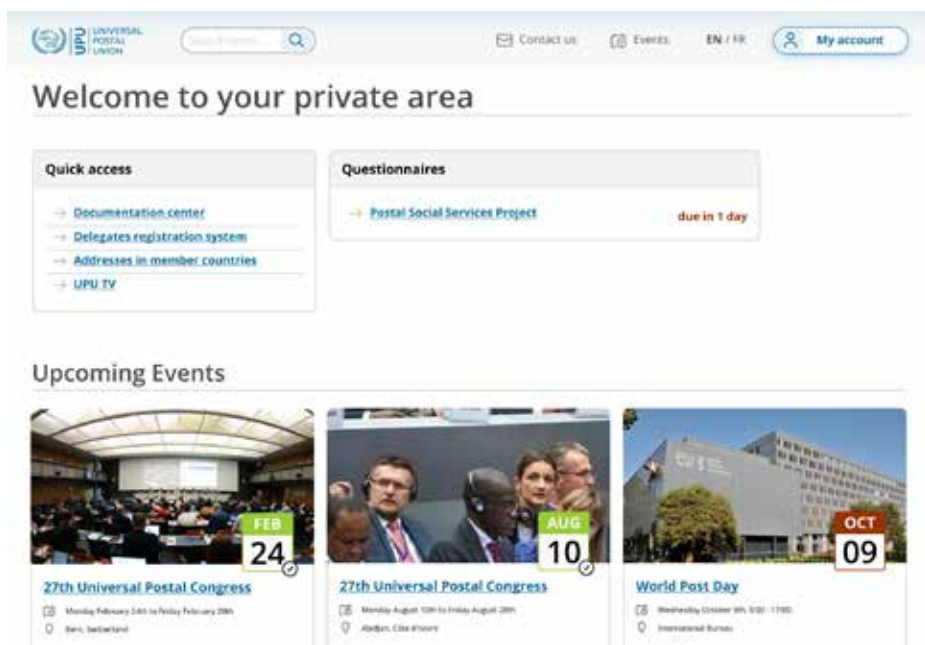
In addition to better integration of the UPU digital ecosystem, users can look forward to several exciting new functionalities.

The new site will feature a powerful search tool that covers pages, news, events and documents. Filterable databases of news stories, publications, events and UPU IT solutions will also ensure that visitors find

what they are looking for. It will also be fully mobile-adaptive, meaning it can be viewed on any device.

Although the team is working to finish development on the new upu.int, users can browse the preview website at <https://www-qa.upu.int/en/Home>

If you would like to share any feedback on the new site, please contact us at web.feedback@upu.int. **KR**



Last Councils of the Istanbul Cycle close with success

The Council of Administration and Postal Operations Council closed in February completing nearly 100 percent of their respective deliverables for the 2017-2020 work cycle.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone
PHOTOS: Alexandre Plattet



The last sessions, which took place February 17 through 27, gathered member countries to wrap up remaining work from the Istanbul Cycle and send proposals forward to the 2020 Congress scheduled to take place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, this August.

Opening the last CA Plenary for the cycle, UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein said, "We should all be proud of the transformation that we have achieved and aim at achieving more in coming years. It is only constant change that would ensure our Union remains relevant and useful to members."

The Director General thanked members for their support in resolving sensitive issues, noting in particular the accomplishments of the third UPU Extraordinary Congress in Geneva last year, where countries agreed on a way forward for the remuneration of letters and small packets.

During the session, countries took note of the draft Abidjan Postal Strategy and Business Plan – key strategic documents that will guide the Union's work between 2021 and 2024. The document was drafted with input from more than 170 member countries and territories, taking into account postal trends monitored by The CA's Committee 3 (Strategy and Postal Economics) as well as inputs from the 2018 UPU Ministerial Conference, regional strategy conferences held in 2019 and a dedicated task force.

The CA also sent forward a proposal for a new development cooperation policy for the next cycle. The new policy zeros in on eight target areas: developing a strategy based on postal development indicators; implementing a new and more effective model for UPU's presence in the field; enhancing assistance in developing countries to reduce gaps; strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation; deepening development initiatives for LDCs; developing human resource capacity; and disaster risk management for the postal sector.

The draft Integrated Product Plan (IPP) and Integrated Remuneration Plan (IRP) were also among proposals sent forward to the Congress. The plans strive to rationalize, modernize and integrate the portfolio of UPU products and their remuneration systems to keep pace with changing customer needs.



Special forums

The gathering of countries presented a prime opportunity for the UPU to host two special forums ahead of the Councils.

The first, held on 13 February, was the UPU's High-Level Forum on Wider Postal Sector Engagement. The event brought together representatives from postal operators, government and the private sector to discuss the possibility of expanding access to UPU products and services to those outside the organization's current membership (read more in our cover story).

"We should all be proud of the transformation that we have achieved and aim at achieving more in coming years. It is only constant change that would ensure our Union remains relevant and useful to members."

The second was the World Round Table on Remuneration, held on 14 February. Senior management and remuneration experts from member countries gathered to take stock of the UPU's current remuneration

systems and the outcomes of the third Extraordinary Congress, as well as looking forward to the Integrated Remuneration Plan and draft proposals for an Integrated Remuneration System that member countries will discuss in Abidjan.

Speaking during the forum, UPU Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz told participants, "We must hold on to this spirit, the spirit of Geneva, as we head for the Abidjan Congress."

Recognizing success

The Councils also took time to recognize member countries that had achieved success implementing UPU programmes.

In a ceremony held during the POC, Algeria, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Ecuador, Korea (Rep.), North Macedonia, Qatar and Saint Lucia were awarded certificates for achieving the UPU's S42 standard on addressing.

A ceremony during the CA recognized the top users of the UPU Online Solution for Carbon Analysis and Reporting (OSCAR) – including Correo Argentino, Pošta Srpske, BH Pošta, Correios, Bulgarian Posts, Poste Italiane, Correos de México, Poste Maroc, Qatar Post, Slovenská pošta, Hongkong Post, Correos de Ecuador, Omniva, An Post, Post of Serbia, Postes du Togo, and JSZ Kazpost. **KR**



UPU secures its cloud solutions

The Postal Technology Centre's (PTC) cloud environment is more secure than ever, having recently achieved certification under an internationally recognized standard.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone
PHOTOS: Alexandre Plattet



The PTC is committed to supporting UPU members in socio-economic development through the efficient and effective use of Information Technology, in line with the UPU Strategy. As part of this, the PTC has been working to ramp up security, achieving ISO 27002 certification in November 2019 after a thorough review of the new information security management system for its cloud services.

“By adopting the best practices for secure software development, new services will be even more secure on release to the UPU members,” says PTC Director Lati Matata.

The standard sets requirements for the data protection, including a methodology for identifying cyber threats; managing and controlling risks associated with information held by the PTC; and establishing measures to ensure the confidentiality, availability and integrity of this information.

Achieving the certification demonstrates the PTC’s continuing dedication to ensuring the security of data – particularly commercial and personal data – as it moves toward providing cloud technologies.

“All the PTC customers adopting cloud services will benefit from a reduction in IT infrastructure costs and its management, with the knowledge their commercial and personal data is highly secured,” Matata explains. “The PTC benefits from more stable and consistent work processes resulting in higher quality products and services delivered to its customers.”

Though the UPU’s technological body has always done the utmost to ensure data security. To further guarantee to its customers that their data is safe, the PTC has adopted a strategy to implement internationally recognized best practices. It shows that the PTC is fully aware of possible risks to data security and is actively protecting itself from them.

Certification requirements

To prepare for the certification, the PTC’s Information Security (InfoSec) team devoted considerable time and effort to implementing a new information security management system (ISMS), featuring both physical and technological protections against hacking and other security breaches. This ISMS was applied to all information systems, software development processes and individuals involved data exchange and storage. The process took a total of two years, including preparatory internal and external security audits to gauge the PTC’s readiness for certification.

InfoSec’s mission for developing the new system was threefold. The first step was to establish a security framework covering the UPU’s cloud services. In a second step, the team implemented controls and measures that would help it assess the PTC’s ability to manage potential security threats. Finally, the team set a procedure for regular monitoring and performance reviews to ensure the PTC could continuously improve the system.

“All the PTC customers adopting cloud services will benefit from a reduction in IT infrastructure costs and its management, with the knowledge their commercial and personal data is highly secured... The PTC benefits from more stable and consistent work processes resulting in higher quality products and services delivered to its customers.”

This work included a full analysis of data security needs across the UPU’s International Bureau, the development of new processes to detect possible security events and ensure a quick response, and a campaign to educate staff on best practices.

Staff were given specific roles and obligations for protecting information security, as well as training to this effect.

A new set of metrics will help the InfoSec team monitor the PTC’s performance on the new security measures going forward.

Added benefits

These measures have come with added benefits for the team. In addition to securing the trust of clients using the PTC’s products and services, the exercise has helped the PTC harness its staff’s skills and help to further develop them. Optimized work process and more clearly defined roles have also led to increased productivity.

Given the benefits for the certification, Matata explains that the PTC will move forward with standardizing other services as well.

“To ensure robust security, data needs to be secured, end-to-end across all the platforms and systems managed by the PTC,” he says.

The certification will be extended to other critical services, such as Post*Net and the UPU’s big data platform. The team will also work towards special certifications for the management of personal data and business continuity. **KR**



The UPU is at the crossroads for transformation, with members weighing in on whether the organization should open its doors for wider postal sector players to contribute to its decision-making processes and benefit from its products and services.

TEXT: Kayla Redstone
PHOTOS: Sophia Bennett



At the crossroads of change

This was the subject of the UPU's High-Level Forum on Wider Postal Sector Engagement held at the organization's Berne headquarters earlier this February. The event saw representatives from governments, regulators, designated operators, international organizations and the private sector gather to explore three questions: why the UPU should open, what value it could offer to the wider postal sector, and what transformations the UPU would have to undergo to invite in new members.

Opening the forum, UPU Director General Bishar A. Hussein said liberalization and e-commerce had changed the landscape of international postal services and that excluding the many new market players would limit the organization from maintaining its universal nature.

"We have kept you out of this building for far too long because we fear you," Mr Hussein told the wider postal sector players in the room.

Repeat discussions

The organization has been discussing whether and, if so, how much the UPU should open itself to new players for more than 20 years.

As an intergovernmental organization, the UPU has traditionally restricted its decision-making processes exclusively to member countries. However, as Posts began to privatize and the market in many countries was opened to new competition, the UPU's member countries began to think about how these new players should interact with the UPU.

The first push to open the UPU came during the 1999 Universal Postal Congress in Beijing, where member countries decided to create an Advisory Group to increase wider postal sector participation in the UN specialized agency's work.

The next step came during the following Universal Postal Congress in 2004, which established the Consultative Committee, a body of non-governmental organizations representing the wider sector that is overseen by the Council of Administration. Although the Committee provides its input into UPU process, it has limited influence in UPU decision-making.



During the 2016 Istanbul Congress, member countries took a more serious step towards opening up, instructing the UPU's Council of Administration to approve and oversee the implementation of a policy for wider postal sector players to access UPU products and services.

“Your views can be a powerful blueprint for change and will help shape the strategy for a progressive and sustainable UPU.”

The Council has since approved supply chain partners, such as airlines, customs and transport companies to access a set of UPU IT services. It also created a task force to study opening up the Union even further, instructing it to provide recommendations to take forward to the 2020 Congress in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, later this year.

The task force's work comes at a pivotal moment for the UPU. According to the organization's research, the Post is losing its share in booming markets such as express services, where it holds only a 39 percent share, and parcels, where its share is 38 percent compared to private operators.

The task force set ahead with its work, casting the net wide on collecting the views of sector players – from governments and regulators, to designated operators and the private sector – first through a survey and then through the High-Level Forum, held on 13 February.

Not if, but when

Speaking after the Director General in the forum's opening ceremony, Consultative Committee Chair Walter Trezek stressed that the lines between public service and the private sector were becoming blurred.

“Your views can be a powerful blueprint for change and will help shape the strategy for a progressive and sustainable UPU,” he told the packed meeting hall.

The first panel drew together high-level decision-makers from around the world to examine whether the UPU should even open. The resounding consensus was that the time to discuss “if” had passed and it was now time to discuss “when” and “how”.

Côte d'Ivoire's Minister of Digital Economy and Post, Mamadou Sanogo, opened the panel, calling the trend toward working with the private sector “unstoppable”.

Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the Office of the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, Ambassador Andrew Bremberg supported the Minister's point of view. He recalled the 2019 UPU Extraordinary Congress, citing the rapid decisions made there on difficult remuneration issues as an example of the UPU's willingness to adapt when necessary. He recommended the UPU create a roadmap for change and work its way backwards to accelerate the process.

Though the panellists agreed opening was inevitable, they noted a few conditions to be met.

Director of the International Affairs Office for Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Yukata Kitagami, warned that, as a UN specialized agency, the UPU should be mindful that its network was an important vessel for accomplishing the SDGs. In a similar vein, Deputy Director of the Swiss Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM), René Dönni, added that inclusion was just as important a focus as innovation when discussing opening the Union.

UPU's USP

The forum's second panel narrowed in on the UPU's unique selling proposition – the value it could provide to private sector and civil society. It was clear that the wider sector was interested in benefiting from UPU products and services, but how could the UPU take advantage of this opportunity to harness new customers?

UPU Deputy Director General Pascal Clivaz led the way by positioning the UPU in the current global postal ecosystem. He stressed that, although the UPU had valuable products and services to offer, 80 percent of them were still closed to the wider postal sector. Noting the International



Telecommunications Union as a successful example of working with wider sector players, he added that change was still possible.

First to speak for the private sector on the panel was UPS Senior Vice President of Global Public Affairs Keith Kellison, who emphasized the importance of keeping the sector moving.

“Remaining competitive is paramount to everyone in this room,” he said.

Circling back to concerns about covering the universal service obligation (USO), he recognized that the USO was important, but recommended that it be defined and quantified to avoid creating unnecessary challenges for Posts and other sector players.

International Mailers’ Advisory Group Executive Director Kate Muth noted that the customer was paramount for her association’s members. Though they would take advantage of the opportunity to benefit from UPU products and services, she warned that the UPU would need to do more to give associations a role and introduce reasonable rates for wider sector members.

Representing global e-commerce giant, Alibaba, the company’s Head of Government Relations in Europe, Annalisa Barbagallo, emphasized that the private sector was moving quickly ahead and the UPU would have to keep apace.

“We don’t talk about e-commerce anymore, just commerce – the lines are now completely blurred,” she said.

Barbagallo added that private sector could help drive the UPU’s goals, noting that Alibaba was an advocate of the SDGs and had already worked to help other UN organizations accelerate their work. The panel’s final two speakers reinforced the message that the private sector could and, in many cases, already was offering value to public sector partners.

“We don’t talk about e-commerce anymore, just commerce – the lines are now completely blurred”

MasterCard’s Head of Business Development Strategy and Government Engagement in Europe, Davide Ticcone, shared how the company was working with governments to deliver financial inclusion.

RIA Money Transfer Chief Operating Officer Ignacio Reid added that Posts were an essential partner to achieving global financial inclusions goals, noting that the company was already working with 20 postal operators.

Change is necessary

Speakers in the forum’s third panel brought their experience to the table, assuring participants of the benefits new members could bring to the organization’s work.



Bishar A. Hussein, Director General, UPU

“Sectoral and institutional reforms are necessary in order for us to be able to keep pace with the market. It’s absolutely necessary today because we are going through a major revolution in terms of the nature of business we are involved in – that is e-commerce. We must be able to stay up to speed with the demands of the market.”



Pascal Clivaz, Deputy Director General, UPU

“We have been working hard on our different products and services for years already ... We have tried to adapt them to make sure that they are open enough to entitle other parties to use them. Think about, for instance, the clearing systems or IT products and services, which are open standards. The idea is to prepare the UPU’s products and services to be used by more than just today’s customers.”

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) began its transformation in 1992, when it introduced a new category for sector members. ITU Secretary General Houlin Zhao detailed the UN specialized agency’s model, which now includes more than 900 non-governmental members. He encouraged UPU members to forge ahead with opening, explaining that communication would be key to ensuring wider stakeholders’ confidence in the UPU.

World Customs Organization (WCO) Deputy Secretary General Ricardo Treviño encouraged UPU members to focus on opportunities for exchanging information with stakeholders across the sector.

Brendan Sullivan, who heads the International Air Transport Association’s (IATA) e-commerce and cargo operations, explained how opening up had helped the organization focus its energy on developing quality products and services to generate revenue.

Opening to an additional 400 observers also helped the World Intellectual Property Organization offer a better service to its end-users, according to WIPO Deputy Legal Counsel Anna Morawiec Mansfield.

Moving ahead

The final panel reflected on the day’s key messages and left participants with considerations for future discussions on opening up the UPU.

For UNI Global Union Secretary General Christy Hoffman, concerns about workers’ rights were front and centre.

“We encourage the opening of the UPU, but on an even playing field,” she said, adding

that there would need to be “a uniform set of regulations that also covers the private sector companies.”

Georgian Post Director General Levan Chikvaidze suggested that the UPU draw on private sector partnership success stories to ensure a level playing field. He used his own Post’s partnership with a private courier to deliver express items in weak parts of the country’s postal network as an example of how working with wider players could actually help Posts achieve the USO.

The World Economic Forum’s Head of International and Trade and Investment, Sean Doherty, also encouraged UPU members to foster collaboration with other stakeholders by keeping lines of communication open.

Co-chairs of the UPU’s task force on opening to wider sector players, Jack Hamande of Belgium and Matano Ndaró of Kenya, also weighed in on the panel.

With the Post’s share of the rapidly growing parcels market being taken up by private operators, Ndaró urged members consider the changing needs of customers.





“The universal service obligation is not the only need of a citizen,” he added.

Hamande wrapped the panel by congratulating UPU members for opening the path to cooperation, assuring members that the Task Force would continue the discussion ahead of its presentation to the Council of Administration.

“The universal service obligation is not the only need of a citizen”

Recommendations

After considering and debating the feedback received during the forum, the task force presented its recommendations during the Council’s final meeting before the 2020 Congress.

The group recommended that the Council of Administration let the Congress decide on matters relating to institutional change, the opening of UPU products and services and the roadmap for implementation.

The Council agreed, instructing the task force to continue its work through August so that it could define a more concrete proposal to be discussed in Abidjan. **KR**



Houlin Zhao,
Secretary General, ITU

“Today, the world is very democratic. In the past, telecom, Post or the government monopolized the business. Today that is no longer the case. We have to learn how to work with our industry partners. In ITU, we invite our sector members from industry, academia and NGOs to engage them in our processes and to look at the challenges and opportunities. We create a good environment to make them feel comfortable to work with us. Of course, we have to keep in mind that our goal is to bring about the latest technology benefitting everybody.”





Ambassador Andrew Bremberg,
Permanent Representative
of the United States of America to the
Office of the United Nations and Other
International Organizations in Geneva

“Opening the UPU to wider postal sector engagement comes with tremendous benefits for stakeholders around the world. Most importantly, consumers and producers all around the world will have better access to lower costs and stable methods of delivery, so they can receive imported goods from around the world and [provide] an opportunity for smaller producers to ensure that they can also participate in a vibrant 21st Century global economy and sell their goods to millions of people around the world.”



Brendan Sullivan, Head E-Commerce
& Cargo Operations, International
Air Transport Association

“We work in a number of different ways with the private sector in order to capture as much information as we possibly can and produce the best output for everyone. What the UPU can learn from that is that is can be difficult to balance the fact that members, in our case, make the ultimate decisions and, yet, the rest of the industry actually provides all of their input, expertise and time. There’s a balance to be struck in what is given back to them in terms of what value they actually get from their efforts in being involved in this.”



Ricardo Trevino, Deputy Secretary
General, World Customs Organization

“We have new challenges every day and our standards of service have increased and this is because open markets have been demanding this. This requires more financial and human resources, but also, it requires us to have more control and access to information. Today we see that not only the public sector is controlling this information, but that most of the information and data that we need to exchange comes from private sector. I would recommend UPU to keep an open mind on this, to keep a target on the benefits we can get as operators of cross-border trade, but also to seek for innovative and new ways of adapting to this change.”



Kate Muth, Executive Director, International Mailers' Advisory Group (IMAG)

"I think we have a number of members that partner with the postal service, partner with designated operators, partner with the private sector and build upon public-private partnerships where there's an opportunity to serve the end user customer. In my estimation, and speaking on behalf of the members, having a wider private sector engagement allows that partnership to build and go deeper and to actually continue on what is really our association's mission, which is to reduce the barriers to the efficient flow of goods and information across borders. The UPU is already a partner in that in many ways with IMAG, but we also have the opportunity to take that a step further by allowing for greater participation at the working group level all the way up to thinking about the long-term reform of the Union."

Christy Hoffman, Secretary General, UNI Global Union

"UNI Global Union has opened up its postal sector to include logistics for many years and we understand that the road is not always easy. Right now there is a huge difference in the working conditions between the traditional postal workers and those who work in the precarious logistics industry – especially those working in last-mile delivery. We think that one of the first things that would have to be tackled if the UPU were to open up is there must be a condition that we bridge the inequality gap between these two groups of workers, that the private sector workers also have access to bargaining and trade unions so that we can start to level-up."



Walter Trezek, Chair, Consultative Committee

"At the moment the Consultative Committee is a committee consisting of private sector players, but also of designated operators. It's a mixed group, which is quite good on the one hand. On the other hand, we have the challenge that we only have the possibility to be observers, which also means it is up to the committees we would like to engage with to decide if our members are actually allowed to participate. This is a very tricky situation because those issues that are rather pressing for the wider sector are in most cases closed to our members. This is leading to a challenge to transform the Consultative Committee into something more viable and leading to more inclusive engagement in the UPU. Only if we achieve that can we bring much more value to the UPU, but also more value to our members."





Latin American perspectives: an interview with Roberto Cavanna Merchán

UNION POSTALE had the chance to ask Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal (PUASP) Secretary General Roberto Cavanna Merchán for his views on the postal sector in Latin America.

INTERVIEW BY: Kayla Redstone

You have been at the helm of PUASP for several years now. How have you seen the postal landscape in your region change during this time?

I have been leading PUASP since 2014, and during this time and in my previous years working as CEO of the Ecuadorian Post, I have seen many changes in the postal sector.

The emergence and development of new technologies, in particular the Internet, deceived governments and the general population into thinking that the Posts had their days numbered, without realizing that the Internet is a major ally of the Post due to the growth of online shopping. It should be noted that only Posts have the required coverage to meet domestic demand. At the same time, new technologies have evolved into important tools for Posts to improve their quality of service.

In recent years, designated operators of developing countries have in most cases lacked a state service policy and received little or no government support at all.

Although the state has an obligation to provide a universal postal service, this obligation has often been transferred to the designated operator without an adequate support, which is not necessarily economical.

As a consequence, there is an increased development of private operators, which are even more efficient than public operators in some cases. This demonstrates that the postal business is an excellent one as long as it is well managed by postal sector experts.

Designated operators have lost certain privileges in the market that once assured them a substantial income making the universal postal service sustainable.

The economic and political situation of certain countries has produced major migratory movements, which has also brought about the growth of postal streams accompanied by increased economic revenue arising from the global remuneration system.

What do you think is the most common shared challenge faced by Latin American postal operators?

The most common shared challenge is that the quality of service in most of the countries of our region is far from adequate, to say the least. It should also be noted that they do not have appropriate infrastructure.

The situation is continually changing, and of course there are other challenges countries face, such as the lack of long-term government and regulatory postal policies. Abandoning the Post to its own fate and not modernizing it on time, among other things, has exposed the Post's weaknesses to face worldwide problems in the postal service.

Additionally, there is a high turnover of senior postal authorities in the region and the current financial situation of some Posts shows that they are dependent on the ruling government.

“It depends on us to ensure that the postal sector becomes one of social public policies in each country.”

What is your vision to help designated operators in your region overcome this challenge?

What is needed is perspective, perseverance, decision-making power, a will to change things, intelligence, industry knowledge, willingness to listen to those who know better, strategy and humility to acknowledge the real situation. Posts need to seize the opportunity to do something good for their country.

In other words, leaders have to have their feet on the ground, have good judgement, be positive, be practical, know how to communicate with all staff members, be good communicators with a hotline to the government, and to share a vision of long-term business growth, among other virtues.

What opportunities should Latin American postal operators look towards in the coming years?

I think that in the foreseeable future we must wonder what we want for the postal sector. Do we want to strengthen it? Do we want to sell designated operators? Do we want to license designated operators? Do we want to create strategic alliances? Do we want to serve the those excluded? Do we want to use the postal service as the executive branch of social public policies?

We have to pose these and other questions because the Post can become a powerful tool for governments thanks to its infrastructure and coverage, as well as the services that it provides. Please, let's stop thinking that the Post is a service used exclusively for transporting letters. The postal service is much more than that.

The governments of the member countries have in their hands the opportunity to modernize the postal sector, so that the Posts and other stakeholders can focus on customers' needs and quality improvement. An accessible and affordable universal postal service should be provided throughout all countries and Posts should become job and business generators that are self-sustainable and not reliant on the state budget. Posts should also be prepared to meet the changing needs of the society they serve.

It depends on us to ensure that the postal sector becomes one of the executive branches of social public policies in each country. It should benefit the country itself and particularly the inhabitants of rural and remote areas, as well as our fellow-citizens living abroad.

How do you think the UPU could help with both challenges & opportunities in the region?

The UPU always has a key role to play. As a platform for establishing international agreements and providing worldwide cooperation, the Union is in an incomparable position to come up with solutions, dialogue with governments and focus on regional and global technical cooperation projects to face new challenges. In addition to this, it gathers and analyzes essential knowledge for the postal sector framed within the UN System, so it is vital that we take advantage of this in order to benefit the sector from opportunities.

“What is needed decision-making power, a will to change things, intelligence, industry knowledge, willingness to listen to those who know better, strategy and humility to acknowledge the real situation.

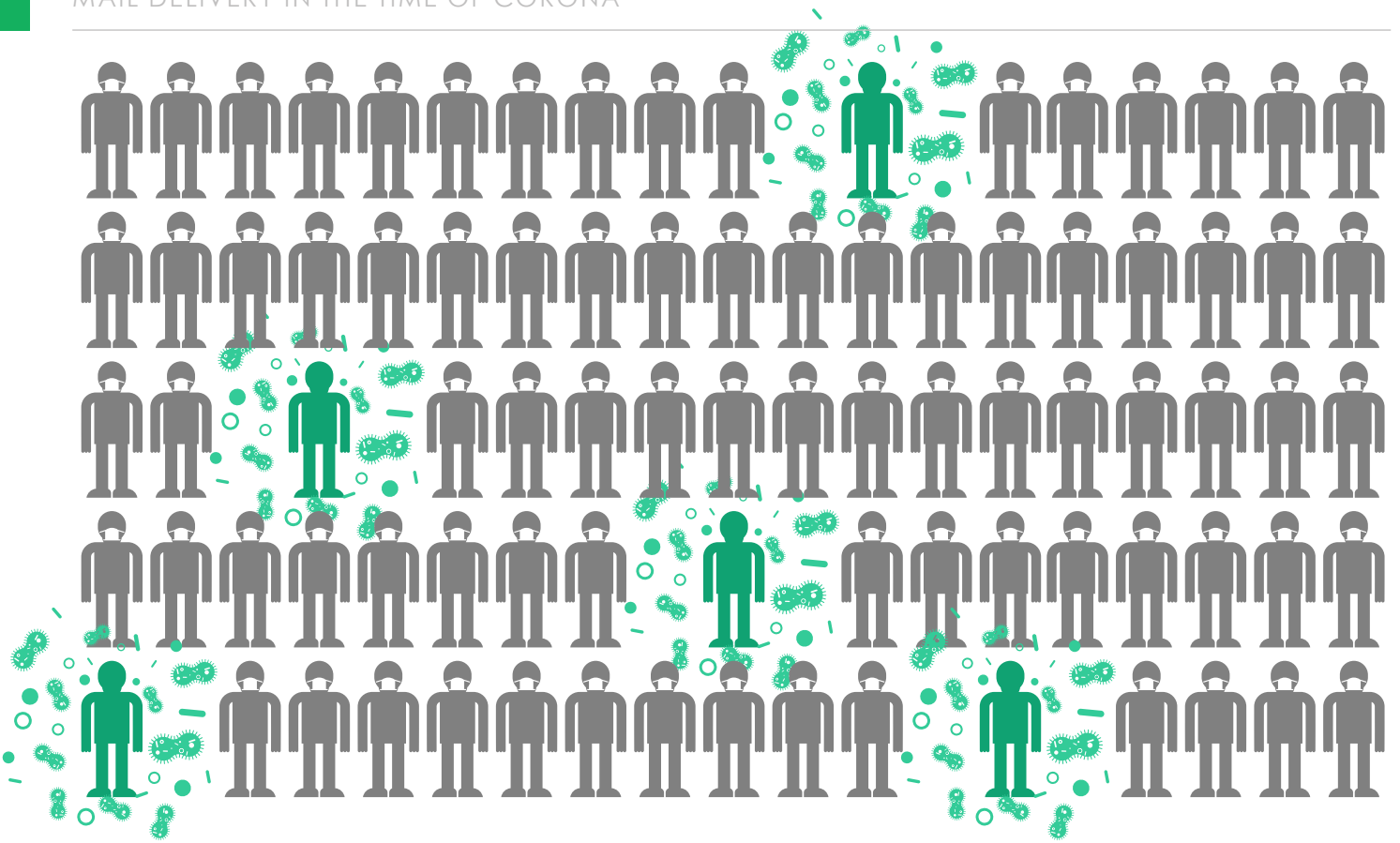
Posts need to seize the opportunity to do something good for their country.”

Although achieving agreements among so many member countries is always the first tough challenge ahead, the UPU has to put all of its efforts into researching and sharing valuable information with member countries and creating a productive, executive and comfortable space for dialogue among them. In this sense, the Union could use all the tools it has at hand and work with stakeholders willing to help, such as Restricted Unions.

What decisions do you hope will be made in Abidjan to strengthen the position of postal operators?

Improving quality of service is the key goal postal operators have nowadays. Abidjan should approve decisions in that sense, focusing on fostering partnerships, improving operational processes, strengthening their knowledge of the optimal uses of IT solutions from the PTC. Sometimes operators have the adequate IT solutions, but do not take advantage of all their potentialities and uses, losing information and relevant data to be analyzed in order to improve business and reliability.

Aside from this, remuneration matters will maintain their importance, so a stronger remuneration scenario for all operators should be come about in Abidjan. **KR**



Mail delivery in the time of Coronavirus

With more than 1.2 billion people estimated to be in lockdown with the closure of schools and non-essential shops, COVID-19 – now a pandemic – has effectively shut down most of the world.

TEXT: David Dadge

In the face of this global crisis, Posts have sought to keep on delivering the mail. As the spread of the virus weakened in some countries, it grew stronger in others. There were announcements of the resumption of mail services in some countries, although, as the virus spread, there were further statements of suspensions.

Throughout early and mid-March, countries faced the continued suspension of flights, an integral element of postal logistics. Other countries followed the World Health Organization guidelines and practiced “social distancing.”

Health and safety first

Many Posts are operating against the background of restrictions on the movement of people and the closure of international borders to prevent the spread of the deadly disease. The sole focus of Posts throughout this period has been on the health and safety of staff and customers. To achieve this, postal operators have informed the UPU of a number of changes to their operations in line with the guidelines of the World Health Organization and the medical advice of governments. Every Post emphasizes fundamental hygiene procedures to be followed, including handwashing, sneezing

and coughing into the elbow, and social distancing.

Deutsche Post DHL announced that its goal was full-coverage of postal operations, while implementing recommendations to slow the spread of the pandemic. Similar decisions were made in Australia, the Netherlands and elsewhere to waive the requirement for a signature upon receipt of parcels and registered mail with personal delivery. The new approach curtails contact between customers and postal workers, and prevents the spread of the virus through handheld scanners and pens. A message from Australia Post read: "Delivery will be conducted via limited face-to-face methods and will be effective immediately."

"Many Posts are operating against the background of restrictions on the movement of people and the closure of international borders to prevent the spread of the deadly disease."

Correo Uruguayo in Uruguay announced that it was minimizing the spread of the disease by reducing staff numbers at postal facilities and introducing telecommuting where possible. The Latin American postal operator also reduced physical contact, closed post offices with large numbers of customers and created special collection points.

Italy has suffered one of the greatest challenges due to the tragic impact of the global pandemic on its population. Already the country's top employer, Poste Italiane, has worked courageously and diligently to maintain the flow of post and to protect both its staff and customers. In a message sent to the UPU, the postal operator said it was "fully committed to playing its part in helping Italy to overcome this major challenge." In addition, the message stated that, "A dedicated committee, involving all senior management, has been working around the clock for a number of weeks, in close contact with the relevant institutional bodies, to define and continuously adapt directives and provisions in compliance with the

government-mandated precautionary measures intended to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus."

The Italian postal operator also introduced a detailed sanitation plan accounting for its entire post office network, as well as vehicles and post offices. Safety equipment was also distributed to staff to protect them in their daily work and to ensure that customers could safely enter the country's post offices. These methods are being adopted across the world as postal operators continue to work tirelessly to ensure that customers receive mail.

Suspension of services

Other countries acted to minimize contact between customers and postal workers to prevent the spread of the disease. These announcements followed a familiar pattern and many were also driven by the suspension of flights around the world.

Hondurcor announced it was suspending services until 29 March and said it was operating in line with the strict measures introduced by the Honduran government. The postal operator asked other Posts sending mail by cargo plane to discontinue this practice, otherwise it would be forced to store mail in customs warehouses. Hondurcor said it was prepared to make an exception for humanitarian aid. Zimbabwean postal operator Zimpost announced in March that, following the suspension of flights into and out of the country, it was suspending all inbound and outbound international mail operations from 19 March until further notice.

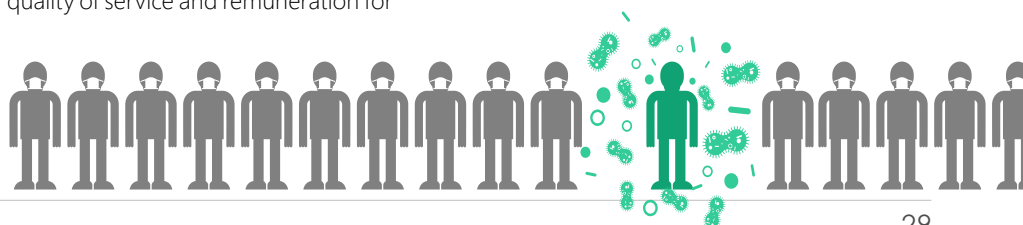
In Hungary, Magyar Posta said it was reacting to the decision of the Hungarian government to introduce a state of emergency for 30 days starting 16 March. The postal operator said it was only able to pursue its activities in strict compliance with the short-term measures passed by the government. For this reason, and due to the cancellation of flights, it was unable to transport mail to a large number of countries. "Magyar Posta is no longer able to guarantee compliance with delivery standards, in particular with regard to quality of service and remuneration for

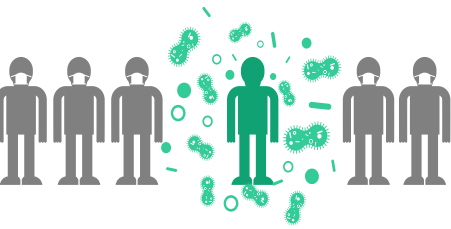
all categories of mail items (letter-post, parcel-post and EMS items) until further notice," said the message.

Keep the mail running

Although this article only provides a snapshot of the enormous challenges faced by postal operators in early 2020, it does give an indication of the sheer enormity of the problem – one never experienced during peacetime in this century or the last. It also shows Posts reacting to circumstances often outside their control, while also determined to act in the best interests of staff and customers. By doing so, they have shown dedication, resourcefulness and considerable courage when confronted by a pandemic that has steamrolled across borders and the best laid plans of many governments. For this continued dedication to the international postal network, they deserve the full respect of everyone on this planet. **DD**

The sole focus of Posts throughout this period has been on the health and safety of staff and customers. To achieve this, postal operators informed the UPU of a number of changes to their operations in line with guidelines of the World Health Organization and the medical advice of governments. Every Post emphasizes fundamental hygiene procedures to be followed, including handwashing, sneezing and coughing into the elbow, and social distancing.





COVID-19 from a postal security perspective

UPU Security Programme Manager Dawn Wilkes shares a behind-the-scenes look into how the UPU is managing the COVID-19 pandemic and what postal operators can and are doing deliver safely.



UNION POSTALE: How is the UPU monitoring the global threat of COVID-19 from a postal security standpoint?

DW: The UPU works transversally across its varied departments to provide support and necessary information to its member countries quickly and efficiently. In addition to the Emergency Information System (EIMS) messages that our Quality of Service colleagues are working to keep current and consolidated for our members, we have also created a Critical Response consolidation folder within the Postal Security Group Sharepoint. All members can access this folder to collaborate on the current situations in their own countries and regions, as well as understanding the responses from around the world.

Has the UPU developed any guidelines for Posts regarding pandemics?

As you know, the UPU's S58 and S59 Security Standards set out the basics for security. Within S58, there is guidance associated with disaster risk management and business continuity. The disaster risk management procedures and business continuity plan are designed to be utilized and adapted to each unique situation and can help with any disaster or unexpected circumstance. Additionally, disaster risk management has been a focus of the UPU's Development Cooperation Directorate for several years, with the majority of financial support being provided by Japan.

What are some best practices you see coming out of designated operators?

The best practices are some of the simplest. One that we have seen from several Posts consists of a very simple consolidated website for employees and customers. Creating one centralized location to inform both employees and customers about the status of the COVID-19 situation domestically and internationally, as well as allaying fears, allows for peace of mind and security across the board.

Have you seen any cases where postal operators are supporting government emergency response measures?

As I mentioned, some Posts have created centralized websites or links to information for both customers and employees, which include alerting customers of scams associated with the crisis. Currently, some Posts are in discussion to deliver test kits within their domestic territories and are investigating the safest method to implement.

What are some of the lessons learned from this pandemic?

Some lessons learned are to be agile and ensure your organization is prepared with the updated disaster risk management and business continuity plans. Posts should test these plans before any crisis to ensure consistency and fluidity when a crisis occurs. Organizations also need to establish strong relationships among internal and external stakeholders to creatively address issues. **KR**



Photo: Pakistan Post



Photo: Pakistan Post



Photo: Philippine Postal Corporation



Photo: Philippine Postal Corporation

Posts on the frontlines

As one of the few organizations to reach people on their doorsteps each day, the Post can be an ally in delivering much-needed services during a pandemic.

Pakistan Post

In order to help the most vulnerable citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan Post has taken up the task of delivering pension payments to 1.5 million pensioners across the country.

The Posts Director of International Postal Service, Hafiz Shakil, called it a "herculean task", but also a national duty.

"Amid Covid-19 pandemic and its deadly impact on human life, Pakistan Post has stood tall to fight the menace and serve humanity," said Shakil.

During the first three days of offering the service, the Post had already dispersed some PKR 3.1 billion (USD 18.7 million) to 200,000 pensioners.

The new service is meant to help encourage elderly citizens to protect themselves from the virus and honour social distancing guidelines. Encouraging customers to stay at home will also protect the health of the country's postal office staff. Delivery staff have been equipped with masks, gloves and hand sanitizer to protect themselves while making their rounds.

Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost)

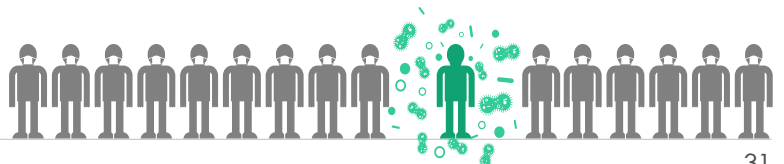
In addition to continuing mail delivery, PHLPost is now helping municipalities roll out COVID-19 relief operations by delivering supplies to medical personnel and communities.

Postmaster General Joel Otarra said it was the Post's role to serve the public.

"In our own little way, we are fulfilling the organization's mission of serving Filipinos wherever they may be. PHLPost vowed to help the community any way we can, after all we are in this together," he said.

In Pasig City, for example, postal staff were assisting on the frontlines using the Post's recently acquired "Green Delivery" electric bicycles. The small vehicles make it easier for postal workers navigate narrow streets to help deliver the relief supplies quickly to those in need.

In a statement, the PHLPost said, "Through our concerted efforts, PHLPost hopes that we shall continue helping each other with dignity and pride. Because the essence of service is our love for the people, for the nation, and together we will win this fight." **KR**





Mapping the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

New data from the UPU shows that measures taken to slow the spread of COVID-19 have disrupted international postal services, resulting in a decline in global mail volumes.

According to the report, the UPU recorded a 10 percent drop in tonnage and a 15 percent drop in the number of postal items on the previous year during the period 23 January to 23 March, 2020. The period aligns with the first wave of measures taken against the virus, beginning with the closure of Wuhan Airport on 23 January.

The decrease in volume amounts to at least 10,000 tons. Postal items weighing less than 2 kg saw the most significant drop, with a 13 percent decrease in tonnage and a 16 percent decrease in the number of items sent.

The UPU has established an Operational Continuity Unit to discuss best practices for dealing with the pandemic and support member countries with information and potential solutions to mail disruptions. More information on the actions undertaken by the UPU can be found here:

<http://www.upu.int/en/covid-19>. **KR**

Read the "Impact of COVID-19 on the Postal Sector" report here: <http://ow.ly/fxhy50z7oLt>

TELECOMMUTING TIPS



HELP YOURSELF MAINTAIN FOCUS

Designate a particular area of the home to be your work area. When it is time to “leave work,” leave your materials there.

Understand your regular “work rhythms” by scheduling more complex tasks for when you are most alert.



REMAIN VISIBLE

Set up regular checkpoints with teammates and supervisor so you can update others on your current tasks and progress.

At the end of the day, inform relevant stakeholders what you have accomplished and provide timelines.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR WELL-BEING

Start work on time and finish on time by creating clear boundaries between work and life as much as possible.

Set alarms to remind you to take breaks. Don't fall into trap of being “overproductive” just because there are no distractions.

Be mindful of your workspace, audio setup, and desk and chair comfort which can affect your posture and productivity.

You may choose to wear work clothes or work shoes to trigger your brain to differentiate between work time and home time.



Try a multi-pronged method that includes a balanced and personal approach to each of the following basic components to a healthy lifestyle:

Maintain a balanced diet



Exercise regularly



Set aside enough time for sleep/rest



Get enough social support — use technology creatively to meet with friends/family



Spiritual practice, if any

Set aside time for relaxation



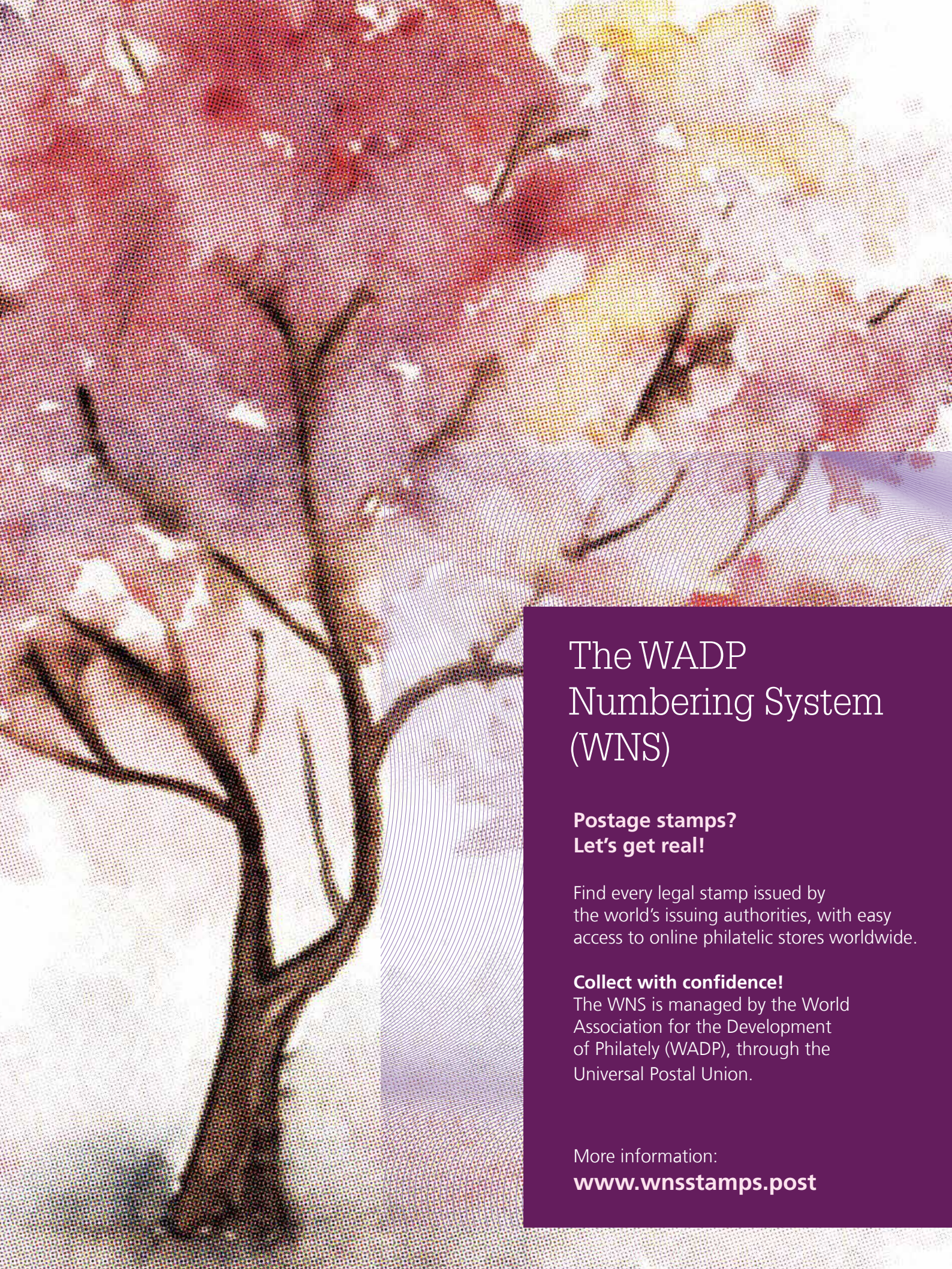
Engage with favorite art/culture/entertainment (many museums and cultural centers offer virtual experiences!)



FINALLY

With a new working schedule and lifestyle, think about learning a new skill, attending an online class offered in your organization, practicing midday wellness breaks, etc.

**Talk with friends and colleagues to brainstorm and get ideas.
BE CREATIVE!**



The WADP Numbering System (WNS)

**Postage stamps?
Let's get real!**

Find every legal stamp issued by the world's issuing authorities, with easy access to online philatelic stores worldwide.

Collect with confidence!

The WNS is managed by the World Association for the Development of Philately (WADP), through the Universal Postal Union.

More information:

www.wnsstamps.post

Australia Post commmits to new green measures

TEXT: Kayla Redstone

The Australian designated operator announced in March that its entire line of plastic satchels would be replaced with recycled versions by 2021.

The Post's Executive General Manager for Community and Consumer, Nicole Sheffield, announced the new sustainability initiative during National Plastics Summit, which was opened by Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison on 2 March.

"Australia Post continues to incorporate sustainable design principles in the development of our packaging, as we reduce greenhouse gas emissions, non-renewable resource use and water consumption," said Sheffield.

"As online shopping grows, Australia Post is focused on reducing the quantity of non-recycled packaging that moves through our network," she added.

As a signatory of the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation since 2005, Australia Post has had a long-standing commitment to achieving national targets on sustainable packaging.

Australia Post launched an Environmental Action Plan in 2018 and has since worked to improve the design and production of its packaging in line with sustainability principles. This was also supported in the company's 2020-2022 Group Corporate Responsibility Plan.

In December 2019, the Post partnered with retail client Country Road to launch its first line of recycled plastic satchels. That year, it also introduced more than 1,800 soft plastics recycling points in supermarkets through a partnership with REDcycle. **KR**



Photo: Australia Post

Australia

The Deloitte Access Economics Report declares that **AUSTRALIA POST** supports some 11,000 jobs and a \$10.6 billion e-commerce market, and is increasingly important in remote and rural areas. In response to the report, Australia Post CEO Christine Holgate said that Post serves areas other services cannot reach. Due to recent bushfires, post offices have become increasingly important to deliver information, shelter, and some basic services.

Brazil

CORREIOS has launched a new service that allows delivering packages to recipients' neighbours. A sender can now indicate an alternative address of a person living close to a recipient in order to deliver a package to them at no additional cost. In this way, even if the recipient is not home, the package can still be delivered. Correios introduced the new service based on customer demand. It is available throughout the country for its Sedex express service and its PAC service for parcels containing goods.

Côte d'Ivoire

LA POSTE CÔTE D'IVOIRE is partnering with UNCTAD, the UPU and other eTrade for All partners, and Germany to evaluate its preparedness for e-commerce. The assessment mission took place from March 2 to 6, in the capital, Abidjan. The assessment was funded by the German government. German trade minister Stephan Bethe expressed that while many developing countries want to benefit from e-commerce, they do not know where to start.

Croatia

HRVATSKA POŠTA has invested almost 60 million HRK (approximately 8.5 million USD) in the construction of a sorting hub in Bakar-Kukuljanovo in order to improve the quality of postal services. It will become the fourth modern hub of its kind introduced across the country, following others located in Zadar, Osijek, and Velika Gorica. The Kukuljanovo hub will have its own solar power plant and will occupy a total area of 5,000 m².

Egypt

EGYPT POST has implemented a new postcode system across the country in order to improve the quality of service. Each group of locales in Egypt has received a unique postcode comprising seven digits. The project was developed over a span of two years based on data received from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics. The new postcode system will simplify the work of delivery companies by helping them find addresses in a more accurate and timely way, cutting shipping costs.

Finland

The Finnish postal operator **POSTI** is acquiring three new sorting machines, called "MSM sorting machines," which are capable of sorting letters, publications, and other addressed mail. They will be placed in Oulu and Helsinki, important shipping hubs, and are being added to the Post's existing six machines. This will benefit customers with better speed and tracking.

Germany

DEUTSCHE POST DHL has launched the podcast series – "Living Logistics" – focusing on sustainability, corporate responsibility and volunteering. The series has five episodes, starring and prepared by the company's staff, who have spoken about their volunteer work in disaster risk management, training, biodiversity, and transport networks.

India

INDIA POST has launched a new delivery service, which allows customers to collect their packages from digital lockers for free. Pilot lockers have been installed in two post offices in Kolkata, where hundreds of migrant professionals work. The service is expected to ensure more convenient deliveries for these customers as they often do not have anyone to receive their packages on their behalf and do not prefer their packages delivered at work. Instead of an address, a recipient only needs to indicate a locker number in order to collect their package at any time of the day using a one-time password.

Ireland

AN POST has launched zero carbon emission deliveries in Dublin after the purchase of two postal electric vehicles delivering 100,000 parcels and letters to more than 70,000 premises on a daily basis. By the end of 2020, postal items will be delivered carbon free in Cork, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, and Waterford to 700,000 people. An Post has invested 7.5 million EUR in its electric fleet, which currently includes 212 electric vehicles but in two years is expected to reach 900. The postal operator is using renewable resources for all of its electricity needs, bringing forward its commitment halve its carbon footprint to 2025 rather than 2030.

Italy

POSTE ITALIANE plans to expand its available services across several sectors: finance, insurance, payments, mobile services, and logistics. The operator plans to use internal innovations, such as its Postepay QR system, to help Italy transfer from cash to digital payment systems. Poste Italiane has partnered with start-ups through its Open Innovation IT platform to accomplish this. The Post plans to invest 2.8 billion EUR in the Deliver 2022 program. The investments will go toward technology infrastructure, for example, cloud, API, and data management, in order to enable the development of new services.

Malaysia

POS MALAYSIA has adopted a new development strategy focused on digitalization in order to make the country's current postal system more efficient and innovative, and to seize new market opportunities. The postal operator has already begun implementing digital solutions by launching its own track-and-trace service, as well as cashless payment options. Within the next two years, the Post plans to start its own online data analytics system. The budget allocated for the implementation of other digital transformation projects totals approximately 72.8 million USD.

Netherlands

POSTNL and postal operator Sandd have merged. Only 4,000 of Sandd's delivery workers have signed up to deliver for PostNL, with 300 drivers and sorters also transferring to the Dutch designated operator. The operators had been competitors for 20 years. Before the merger, PostNL controlled 70% of the postal market, and Sandd virtually all the remainder.

Norway

According to 2019 financial results, Norway's postal operator **POSTEN GROUP** has become 1.3% more profitable. The growth was fueled by e-commerce, digital services, and more cost-effective operations of the company's package and freight networks. Posten intends to add more capacity to Sweden and Denmark. To deal with declining letter mail volumes, which have dropped by 9.9%, the Post will deliver letter post every other day beginning in July. Packages will be delivered every weekday in large parts of the country.

Switzerland

SWISS POST and American technology company Matternet have resumed drone deliveries of medical laboratory samples starting with Ticino EOC hospital group in Lugano. After the postal operator terminated the deliveries in May 2019, it asked independent aviation consultants to investigate the safety of its drone deliveries. The review concluded that the flights meet all safety requirements. The companies have implemented technical recommendations from the consultants.

Ukraine

UKRPOSHTA improved its financial results by more than 1.2 billion UAH (approximately 42.9 million USD) in 2019. Last year, the postal operator received 607 million UAH (approximately 21.7 million USD) net profit before taxes compared to 2018, when the company lost 627 million UAH. Due to the improved financial results, Ukrposhta can now invest in the expansion of mobile post offices and the construction of new postal sorting centres.

United Kingdom

ROYAL MAIL has reached its quality of service target of delivering 98.8% of second class mail within three working days, according to the company's recent performance report. The new result exceeded the previous target of 98.5%, which was set for the first three quarters of the financial year 2019-2020 by the regulator. Royal Mail has also shown high service standards in delivering first class mail across the country the next working day within the same time, achieving a 92.9% target.

All items by Olena Muravyova

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UNION POSTALE magazine

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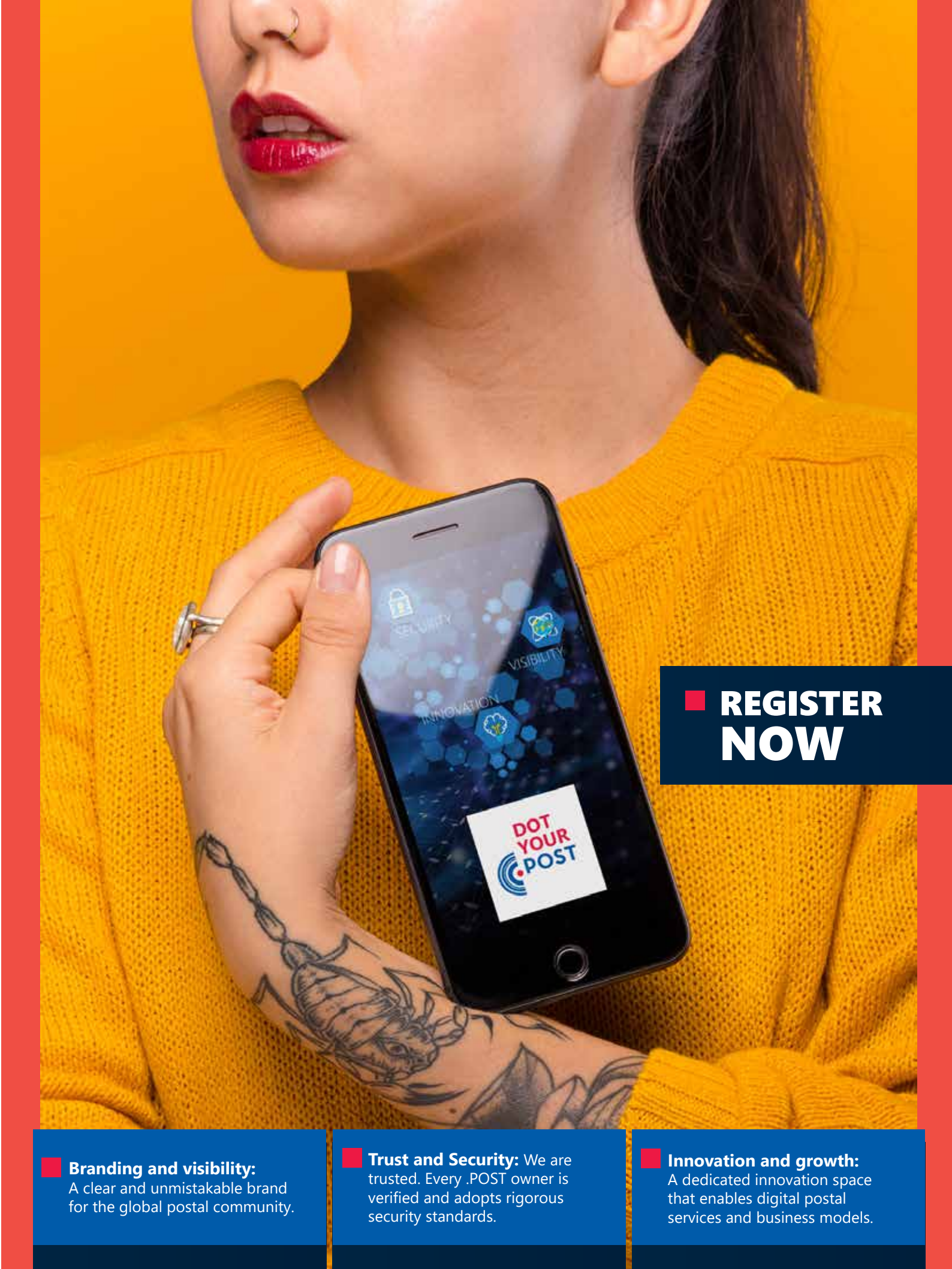
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