



# The worldwide postal network in figures\*

\*Based on information provided by participating Posts and UPU estimates

## DOMESTIC LETTER-POST

Some 1.2 billion letter-post items are posted each day for delivery within national borders. In 2005, this represented 431 billion domestic items handled by the Post.



- The Universal Postal Union's 28 member countries classified as industrialized generate the largest share of domestic letter-post items: 82.7%. Amongst the developing countries, the Asia-Pacific region leads with 10.2%, followed by Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with 4%, Latin America and the Caribbean (2.4%), Africa (0.5%) and the Arab countries (0.3%).

- Amongst the industrialized countries, the United States of America has the highest level of domestic letter-post traffic in the world, with 199 billion items a year. Meanwhile, Japan generates some 25 billion items, while Germany and Great Britain generate about 21 billion items each.

- Amongst the developing countries, the People's Republic of China generates the most domestic letter-post items, more than 23 billion, followed by Brazil with 8.6 billion and India with 7.3 billion.

- Amongst the countries or territories with the lowest level of domestic letter-post traffic, inhabitants of Gambia send just 13,000 items a year

### Additional notes

- Domestic letter-post volumes in 2005 were about 1.7 billion items more than in 2004, which represents a global increase of 0.4%. Since 2000, however, volumes have dropped by an average of 0.2% per year.

- In 2005, domestic letter-post volumes grew in the Latin America and Caribbean region (5.8%) and in the Arab countries (3%). Meanwhile, volumes fell in the developing countries of the Asia and Pacific (5.5%), Africa (1.9%) and Central and Eastern Europe and CIS (1.1%) regions. In the industrialized countries, domestic letter-post volumes grew by 1.1%.

## INTERNATIONAL LETTER-POST

Each day, over 15 million letter-post items are sent beyond national borders. In 2005, this represented annual traffic of 5.6 billion international items.

- Industrialized countries generate 72.9% of international letter-post traffic, followed by the Asia-Pacific region with 10.1%, Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS with 6.3%, the Arab countries with 5.1%, Africa with 2.8%, and Latin America and the Caribbean with 2.7%.



- The United States of America (about 830 million) and Great Britain (almost 450 million) are among the largest exporters of letter-post items.

- Of the developing countries, India (102 million) sends the largest numbers of letter-post items abroad.

- The countries sending the smallest volumes of letter-post items abroad include Djibouti (32,000 letters) and the island of Ascension (22,000 letters).

### Additional notes

- International letter-post volumes dropped by 2.5% between 2004 (5.8 billion) and 2005 (5.6 billion).

- The greatest decreases from one year to the other were seen in the Arab countries (8.8%), Asia and Pacific (3.7%), Africa (3.3%), and the industrialized countries (2.9%). Meanwhile, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS recorded their biggest increase (10%) in the past two decades.

- The Swiss send the largest number of letter-post items per year, the equivalent of some 749 per person. Other large users of the postal network include Americans, who send an average of 670 items per person and Norwegians (574). At the opposite end of the scale, in Azerbaijan, only an average of one item per inhabitant is sent. And in around 60 developing countries, the average number of items sent per person is less than one per year.

### UPU industrialized countries:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Vatican, United States of America.

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In 2005, people throughout the world sent an average of 68 letter-post items per person. This yearly average translates into more than 406 items per person in the industrialized countries, but just 14 in the developing countries.

### ORDINARY PARCELS (DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL)

Some 6 billion parcels are sent by post annually. This represents some 16 million parcels per day.



- Industrialized countries top the list, accounting for 91% of all parcels sent by post worldwide.
- Domestic parcels globally went up 10.9% from 2004. Latin America and the Caribbean experienced the greatest growth (12.9%), followed by the industrialized countries (12.4%), Central and Eastern Europe and CIS (10.8%) and the Arab countries (1.4%).

Eastern Europe and CIS (10.8%) and the Arab countries (1.4%).

• Overall, international parcel traffic saw a 3.4% increase between 2004 and 2005. The industrialized countries, which account for 84.6% of worldwide volumes, experienced an increase of 2.6%. The developing countries saw the global number of international ordinary parcels increase by 8%. Whereas Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS and Asia-Pacific saw an increase of 9.9%, Latin America and the Caribbean experienced a 2.3% decrease in volumes.

#### Additional notes

- Average annual growth for international ordinary parcels was 4.2% between 2000 and 2005. The volume increase is thought to be the continued result of greater e-commerce activity.
- These figures do include insured parcels, which are estimated to account for 3% of overall domestic ordinary parcel volumes and 9% of overall international ordinary parcel volumes.

Postal services employ close to 5.5 million people, making the Post one of the largest employers in the world.



- The industrialized countries employ almost half of all postal employees.
- The United States of America, with 803,000 employees, and China, with 688,000, have the largest numbers of postal employees in the world.
- Ascension Island and the Falkland Islands have only four and six postal employees respectively.
- The average number of people served per employee is 338 in the industrialized countries and 1,960 in the developing countries.



More than 665,000 permanent post offices worldwide make the Post one of the most extensive networks on the planet.

- The Asia/Pacific region heads the list with 46.8% of the world's permanent post offices. 26% are located in the industrialized countries, close to 17% in Eastern and Central Europe and the CIS, 5.6% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2.6% in the Arab countries and just over 2% in Africa.
- Globally, India has the largest number of permanent offices (155,516), while Ascension Island and Norfolk Island have only one each.