

Covid -19 Webinar Series

How has postal regulation responded?

Members and observers of the Council of Administration (CA) are invited to attend a series of three webinars addressing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the postal sector and how postal regulation has responded.

FIRST WEBINAR – THE POST AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE?

The Covid-19 pandemic and the accompanying lockdowns have revealed the importance of the postal services to society. In fact, many governments identified the services provided by postal and delivery operators as essential to the functioning of society during this time of crisis. Posts were often designated by governments as an “essential service” – allowing them to operate while the activities of many other service providers were severely restricted. Importantly, some posts were able to rapidly implement new services in areas such as health, education and welfare, raising questions about the expanding scope of postal policy and regulation, and how best to engage with regulators and ministries from other sectors.

This webinar will discuss the importance of identifying postal and delivery services as essential during the Covid-19 pandemic response. Further, the webinar will specifically include a discussion related to what existing and new activities provided by the postal sector were important contributions to the front-line Covid-19 response. Moreover, we will discuss which, if any, of these services should be incorporated into postal operators’ responsibilities going forward beyond the pandemic.

Date: Tuesday, 22 June 2021, 13.00 to 14.30 CEST (UTC+2) (TBC)

Panellists:

- Dr Bruno Basalisco, Director, Copenhagen Economics
- Mr Yutaka Kitagami, International Affairs Office Director, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan
- Mr Vincenzo Aurelio, Head of Relations with International Authorities and Organizations, Poste Italiane, Italy

Moderator:

Mr Siva Somasundram, Director. Directorate of Policy, Regulations and Markets, UPU International Bureau

SECOND WEBINAR - STATE FUNDING TO SUPPORT POSTAL OPERATIONS

Some universal service providers receive funding from the State to support their provision of postal services. The current environment due to the global pandemic has put specific pressures on postal and delivery operators which has required them to operate at peak levels for a sustained period of time. In addition, some operators were asked to assume additional roles, such as delivering pension checks, to assist on the front-line of the pandemic.

In a survey to European postal stakeholders, developed by an independent economic consultant, in April 2020, 45% of respondents answered that State funding would be more important going forward after the pandemic, while an additional 38% of respondents said that it would be at least as important as it was prior to the pandemic.

As such it is relevant to consider if additional State funding will be required to support postal operations following the pandemic. This seminar will discuss the financial pressures postal operators are facing and the need for State funding.

The webinar will discuss the structures, by regulatory authorities and governments, put in place to provide funding to postal operators providing universal services. The webinar will also address the questions on the expectations of postal regulators and operators regarding the need for funding in the future, particularly as a result of the pandemic. Further, we will also look at opportunities for postal operators to seek financial support specifically for more targeted initiatives.

Date: Tuesday, 29 June, 13.00 to 14.30 CEST (UTC+2)

Expected panellists:

- Mr Germán Vázquez, Chairman, European Committee for Postal Regulation (CERP) / CEPT Co-President & Spanish Ministry of Transport, Mobility and Urban Agenda
- Mr Emil Dzuray, Senior Director, Strategic Planning, United States Postal Service
- Ministry of Communications Digital and Technologies, South Africa (invited)

Moderator: Dr Bruno Basalisco, Director, Copenhagen Economics

THIRD WEBINAR – QUALITY OF SERVICE: TENSIONS AHEAD?

The Covid-19 lockdowns and related restrictions significantly increased the demand on postal and delivery services. This pressure meant that postal operators were operating at peak performance for several weeks while simultaneously adapting to the new safety requirements and incorporating additional services that were necessary to support the pandemic response. This seminar will discuss how quality of service requirements were adjusted in light of the challenges brought up by the pandemic response.

This webinar will discuss important questions on how postal operators adapted their processes to meet quality of service targets during a time of crisis. Likewise, the webinar will specifically discuss how government authorities and regulators adapted targets for the unique situation that arose from the pandemic response. Finally, we will discuss the quality of service requirements that are most relevant to ensure that user needs are met.

Date: Thursday, 1 July, 13.00 to 14.30 CEST (UTC+2) (TBC)

Expected panellists:

- Dr Joakim Levin, Expert in economic analysis and regulation, PTS, Sweden
- Mr Hans Blikman, Advisor Public Affairs, PostNL
- U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (invited)

Moderator: (TBC)