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Exploring key aspects of postal regulations in the Asia-Pacific region

A UPU project implemented with support from APPU – Final report

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	*Full term*
APPU	Asian-Pacific Postal Union
APPU EC	APPU Executive Council
CEP	Courier, express and parcels
DO	Designated operator
EAD	Electronic advance data
GST	Goods and services tax
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDL	Postal development level
2IPD	Integrated Index for Postal Development
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SPB	State Post Bureau of China
UPU	Universal Postal Union
USO	Universal service obligation
VAT	Value-added tax
WCO	World Customs Organization

Executive summary

This report, “Exploring key aspects of postal regulations in the Asia-Pacific region”, provides an overview of current regulatory structures, reform efforts and evolving policy directions across 24 Asian-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) member countries. Developed within the framework of APPU-UPU collaboration, the report draws on member surveys, policy reviews and expert consultations to offer comparative insights that support regulatory modernization and sector development.

The Asia-Pacific postal sector is undergoing a period of significant transition, influenced by digitalization, the growth of cross-border e-commerce, and the increasing role of private logistic providers. Many member countries are actively reforming their postal frameworks to meet rising service demands, foster innovation, and align with national economic priorities. While the universal service obligation (USO) and sector stability remain core concerns, there is also growing emphasis on market openness, digital infrastructure and service diversification.

The report identifies a range of regulatory models, including government-integrated systems, independent regulatory bodies and ministerial collaborative governance structures. Despite differences in implementation, most countries share a common direction toward a more responsive and inclusive regulatory regime, supported by legal reform, licensing systems and improved consumer protection.

In areas such as USO financing, market access, pricing oversight and cross-border coordination, member countries are adopting tailored approaches suited to their local contexts. Although legal definitions and regulatory tools vary, the underlying goals of accessibility, competitiveness and sustainability are broadly aligned.

Key challenges identified include adapting regulatory frameworks to new business models, strengthening interagency coordination, and building institutional capacity for effective policy execution. Member feedback also reflects shared interest in improving last-mile delivery, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in e-commerce logistics, and integrating green and digital solutions into postal service strategies.

Looking ahead, the APPU will continue to serve as a regional platform for sharing knowledge, promoting regulatory cooperation, and supporting capacity building among its members. This report aims to contribute to those efforts by providing practical references and encouraging continued collaboration in shaping future-ready postal regulatory systems.

Acknowledgments

The successful completion of this report would not have been possible without the active participation and support of all member countries and organizations. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all member countries that contributed their expertise and experience. Additionally, we would like to express our special thanks to the following organizations for their strong support:

– UPU International Bureau Development and Cooperation Directorate – Served as the primary coordinating agency for this project, overseeing the project's initiation, approval, review and overall coordination and ensuring its smooth execution.

– State Post Bureau of China – Funded this project through the UPU China Fund, providing critical support for research and development.

– Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) of Viet Nam, now merged with the Ministry of Science and Technology – Sponsored and hosted the APPU regulatory and policy workshop, creating a key platform for in-depth discussions and experience-sharing. The MIC also actively contributed Viet Nam's postal regulatory reform insights, fostering policy dialogue and industry cooperation.

– World Customs Organization Regional Office for Capacity Building – Provided expert insights on cross-border clearance cooperation, offering essential references to help the postal sector better understand customs regulatory requirements.

The completion of this report not only consolidates the collective expertise and experience of all contributors, but it also reflects the industry's joint efforts in advancing regulatory reform. Moving forward, we look forward to ongoing collaboration among member countries to develop regulatory models that align with the region's dynamic needs. Together, we can strengthen the postal sector's role in the digital era and an increasingly interconnected global market.

1 Introduction

The Asia-Pacific postal sector is undergoing substantial transformation, shaped by rapid digitalization, the expansion of e-commerce, and evolving consumer expectations. This report explores how regulatory systems across 24 APPU member countries are adapting to these trends, while balancing the USO, market competitiveness and technological innovation.

1.1 Research background

The background of this report is shaped by four key driving forces behind the ongoing transformation of the postal sector:

– The rapid expansion of e-commerce: the surge in cross-border parcel volumes has significantly increased demands on postal operational efficiency, customs supervision and clearance processes, as well as data sharing and security.

– The accelerated adoption of emerging technologies: innovations such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT) and blockchain are driving the digitalization and intelligent evolution of postal logistics.

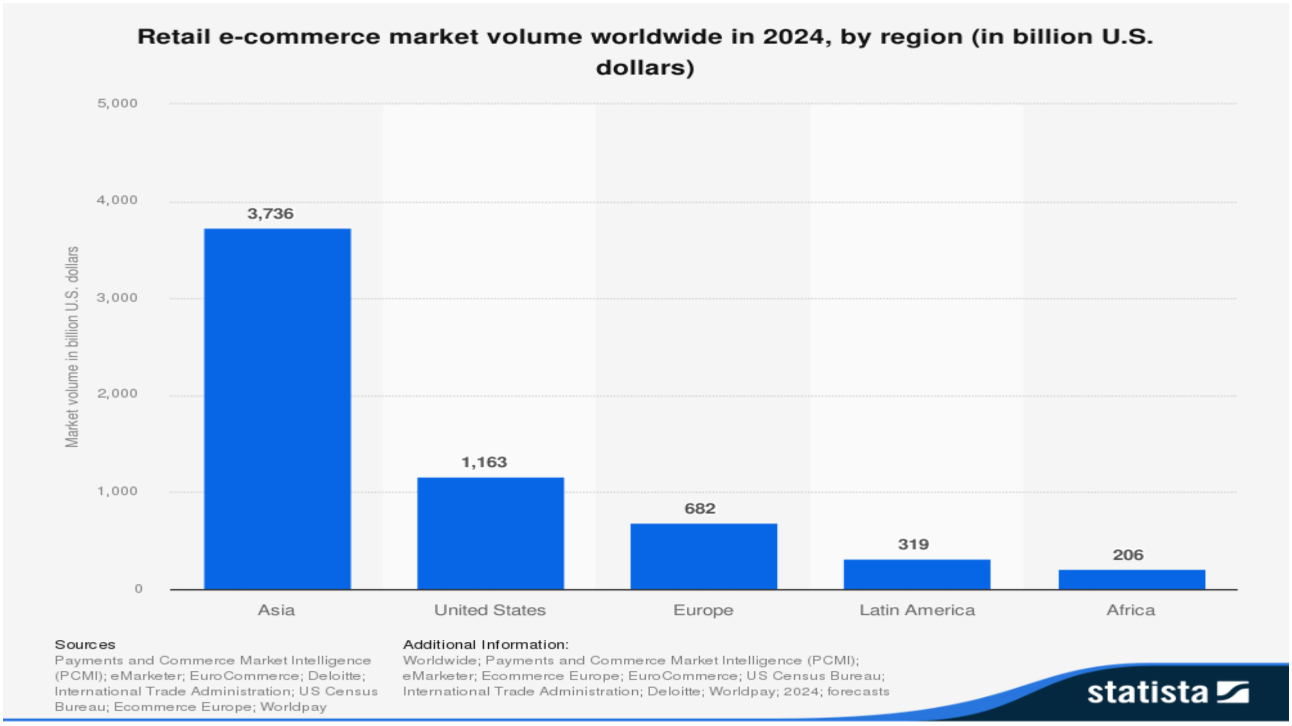
– The shifting competitive landscape: the rise of private express logistics companies and e-commerce platform-based logistics providers has reshaped market dynamics, increasing competition and altering the level of market openness in the postal sector.

– Regulatory adaptation and innovation: governments and regulatory agencies need to adapt policies to foster market competition while ensuring the USO and protecting consumer rights.

Postal sector overview

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the global postal sector has been undergoing a profound structural transformation. With the evolution of communication methods, digital tools such as e-mail, social media and instant messaging have increasingly replaced traditional letter mail. According to preliminary statistics, in the Asia-Pacific region, domestic letter volumes declined by 24.9% between 2013 and 2023, while international letter volumes fell by 63.2%.[1]

At the same time, the rapid expansion of e-commerce has driven a fundamental shift in the postal sector, transitioning from traditional letter delivery to parcel and logistics services.



[1] Data sourced from the UPU's statistical database.

According to Statista, the global retail e-commerce market reached an estimated 6 trillion USD in 2024.[2] Asia led globally with over 3.7 trillion USD in market volume, followed by the United States of America (over 1 trillion USD) and Europe (682 billion USD). This underscores the Asia-Pacific region's dominant role in the global e-commerce market and highlights the postal and express delivery industry as a central pillar of the regional economy.

The rapid growth of e-commerce has not only accelerated the expansion of the postal and express delivery market, but it has also prompted governments to adjust their regulatory policies on parcel delivery, cross-border logistics, data governance and market access to align with the evolving landscape of the modern postal sector.

The direct impacts of this transformation include:

– Transformation of postal enterprises' business models

  Increasingly, postal enterprises are shifting from traditional letter services to integrated logistics solutions, expanding their scope to include the delivery of parcels, warehousing and supply chain management, cross-border e-commerce logistics and financial services. This evolution enhances their market competitiveness and enables them to meet the growing industry demands driven by e-commerce.

– Market competition driving industry upgrades

  The entry of express delivery companies and e-commerce logistics firms has introduced advanced technologies, innovative operational models and higher customer service standards, accelerating the digitalization and modernization of the industry. Traditional postal operators, under mounting competitive pressure, are continuously refining their business models to enhance their service quality and market responsiveness.

– Regulatory frameworks adapting to market changes

  As industry structures evolve, governments and regulatory bodies must update policies to ensure fair competition, encourage innovation and optimize market access systems. This includes enhancing data governance, strengthening consumer protection, and refining cross-border logistics regulations to create a more adaptive and future-ready regulatory framework. Additionally, aligning regulatory policies with national economic and development strategies ensures cohesion between postal sector reforms and broader policy objectives, fostering long-term industry growth.

  Postal regulatory policies and market openness vary across the Asia-Pacific region. While some member countries maintain government-led models, others have advanced toward market-oriented reforms. A key consideration for countries is to balance the USO with the need to enhance market competitiveness and foster e-commerce logistics development. As digitalization and globalization reshape the industry, establishing a flexible and adaptive regulatory framework has become essential to ensuring that the postal sector remains innovative, competitive and sustainable.

1.2 Research objectives and scope

The main objectives of this project are to:

– Systematically document postal regulatory systems by organizing and analyzing the regulatory frameworks of major Asia-Pacific member countries, summarizing the characteristics of different models and their evolution trends;

– Conduct a comparative analysis of policy arrangements by examining the USO, price regulation, market access and cross-border logistics supervision across various countries, highlighting differences in policy implementation and regulatory approaches; and

– Identify key trends and regulatory development directions by providing insights into the evolution of postal regulatory systems, serving as a reference for member countries in optimizing their regulatory frameworks.

[2] Statista. (n.d.). *Retail e-commerce sales worldwide from 2022 to 2028*. Retrieved 30 April 2025, from www.statista.com/statistics/379046/worldwide-retail-e-commerce-sales.

Scope of the study

This report covers 24 member countries in the Asia-Pacific region and categorizes them based on the openness of their regulatory systems and the degree of government intervention, as follows:

– Government-integrated model: postal services are operated by a government ministry or department. The ministry is responsible for both service provision and regulation, with ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing efficiency and responsiveness.

– Independent regulatory agency model: a separate, autonomous body regulates the postal sector. It operates independently from both government ministries and postal operators, ensuring impartial oversight and promoting market fairness.

– Ministerial collaborative regulatory model: a government ministry leads postal regulation while coordinating with multiple public agencies and industry stakeholders to formulate and implement policy.

This report conducts research from three key dimensions

– Sector regulatory system structure: analyzes the postal regulatory models of various countries, including the division of responsibilities among government agencies, regulatory bodies and postal operators.

– Administrative regulation: examines how countries regulate the postal sector through administrative measures, focusing on market entry management, the USO, price regulation and consumer protection mechanisms.

– Legal and economic regulation: explores the impact of postal law evolution on the industry, analyzing the implementation of price management, fiscal subsidies and fair competition policies.

1.3 Research methods

This report employs a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including data analysis, policy literature review and stakeholder interviews.

Main research methods

– Survey: In May 2024, the project team distributed questionnaires to 32 APPU member countries. By the end of October 2024, 22 formal responses had been received, in addition to which two other member countries provided information through discussions, resulting in an overall coverage rate of 75%.[3]

– Expert interviews: In August 2024, the project team facilitated a round table on postal regulation and policy issues during the APPU EC meeting held in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Subsequently, in December 2024, the team organized a workshop in Hanoi, Viet Nam, engaging in in-depth discussions with experts from APPU member countries with a view to supplementing the collection and analysis of data.

– International institutional cooperation: The project team conducted interviews with experts from the WCO Regional Capacity Building Office in Bangkok, focusing on customs-related regulatory issues, particularly the clearance of cross-border parcels.

Data sources

The analysis in this study is based on multiple data sources, including:

– Policy documents from government and regulatory agencies: covers postal laws, market regulation policies, tax policies and customs management, among other regulatory frameworks;

– Industry statistics: includes data from Statista and other publicly available sources, primarily used to analyze e-commerce growth trends, postal business volume changes and other macro industry trends;

– Industry research by international organizations: references analysis reports from institutions such as the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

[3] In this report, “China” refers exclusively to mainland China (i.e. excluding Hong Kong, China and Macao, China).

1.4 Postal sector focus on regulatory reform

In the rapidly evolving digital economy, the postal sector faces an increasing risk of marginalization. With the widespread adoption of electronic communication, demand for traditional letter services is in continuous decline. Meanwhile, parcel services – including collection and delivery, returns management, payment solutions, cross-border logistics and related value-added services – have emerged as new potential pillars sustaining the industry's growth.

However, public perception of the postal sector remains largely tied to traditional communication services, resulting in limited attention to modernization efforts from policymakers, investors and society at large. This constrained visibility may reduce the sector's prioritization on policy agendas and hinder investment and innovation, slowing the transformation needed to stay competitive in the digital era.

Reforming the regulatory system is essential not only for adapting the postal sector to market changes, but also for aligning it with national economic objectives, increasing public awareness and securing policy support. A transparent, fair and modern regulatory framework can effectively:

– Enhance alignment with national economic objectives by positioning postal sector development as an integral component of broader national economic strategies, aligning market and regulatory frameworks with national priorities to drive innovation and improve service accessibility, so as to contribute meaningfully to overall economic growth;
– Increase public recognition and industry visibility by shifting the perception of the postal sector from merely a traditional communication provider to a critical enabler of economic transformation, e-commerce expansion and cross-border trade, thereby reinforcing its strategic role in national economic development;
– Ensure fair competition and sustainable development by establishing clear and effective regulatory oversight to maintain balanced competition among postal enterprises, express delivery companies and e-commerce logistics providers, safeguarding effective implementation of the USO and aligning market operations with broader sustainability and economic policies;
– Attract investment in technology and innovation by strengthening the postal sector's appeal to investors, accelerating digital transformation, smart logistics, data integration and innovative value-added services, ensuring that the sector remains competitive and technologically advanced in line with national digitalization goals.

In this context, governments, regulatory agencies and postal operators must establish a collaborative framework to ensure that the postal sector retains its fundamental role in the modern economic system and achieves sustainable development amid intense market competition.

1.5 Reference models for the global regulatory framework

During the research process of this report, several international organizations were referenced, including the ITU, OECD and UPU. Their analyses were utilized to examine regulatory models within the Asia-Pacific postal sector and provide international benchmarking references for comparative insights.

1.5.1 ITU digital regulatory framework

The regulation framework (five generations) proposed by the ITU offers a structured approach to guiding the sector's digital regulatory reform. This framework describes the evolution from a government-controlled model (first generation) to a data-driven collaborative regulatory model (fifth generation), mainly including the following stages:[4]

RATIONALE FOR GENERATIONS OF REGULATION

	1. Regulatory authority	2. Regulatory mandate	3. Regulatory regime	4. Competition framework
G1	• Consolidated with policy-maker and/or industry	• Business as usual	• Doing as we have always done	• State-owned monopoly
G2	• Separate agency	• First wave of regulatory reform	• Doing more	• Liberalization
G3	• Separate agency, autonomous in decision-making	• Advanced liberalization of ICT sector	• Doing the right things	• Partial competition
G4	• Separate agency with enforcement power	• Adjacent issues become core mandate	• Doing the things right	• Full competition
G5	• Separate agency as part of a network of partner regulators	• **Active collaboration across the board**	• Doing things together	• Intra-modal competition

Source: ITU.

1.5.2 OECD's inclusive regulation and data-driven approach

The data-driven collaborative regulatory model proposed by the OECD emphasizes the integration of smart technology, cross-departmental collaboration and market openness to enhance public service delivery and industry regulation. Its core principles include:

– Data-driven decision-making: leveraging data analytics to improve regulatory efficiency, enabling policy adjustments based on market demand rather than relying on traditional administrative command models;

– Cross-industry collaboration: encouraging government agencies, businesses and industry associations to participate in the regulatory process, ensuring policies are adaptive, inclusive and fair;

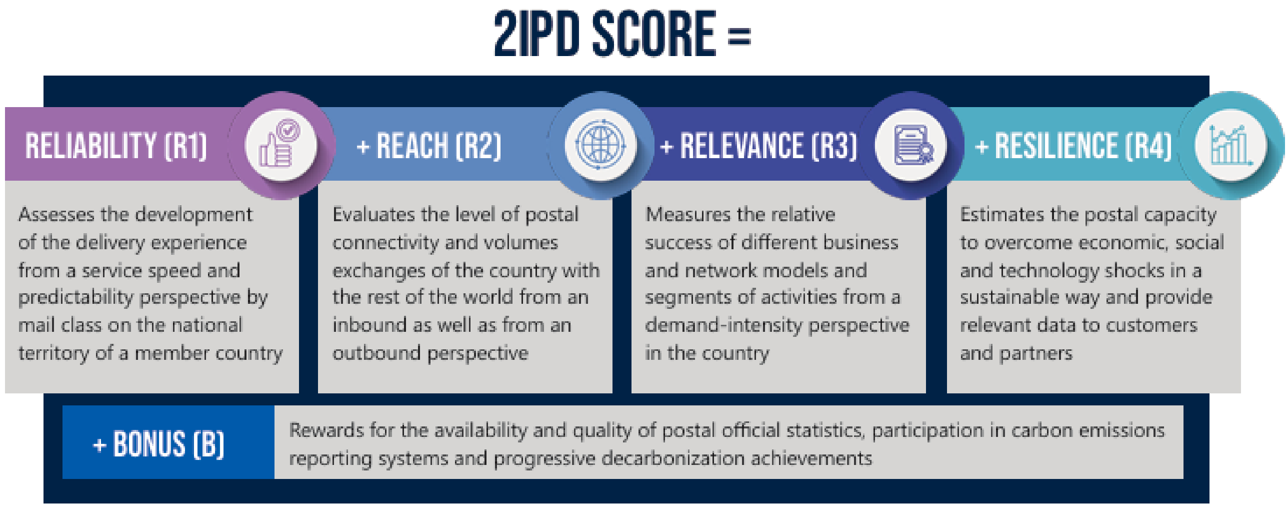
– A regulatory sandbox mechanism: allowing companies to test innovative services and emerging technologies in a controlled environment, reducing policy risks while ensuring that industry innovation remains compliant and sustainable.

1.5.3 UPU State of the Postal Sector 2024

The UPU's State of the Postal Sector 2024 report offers useful benchmarks for comparing postal regulatory evolution with sector development outcomes. Its updated Integrated Index for Postal Development (2IPD) continues to assess countries based on four core dimensions – reliability, reach, relevance and resilience – while assigning a score (0–100) for each and categorizing countries into 10 postal development levels (PDLs).

A key innovation in the 2024 edition is the introduction of a bonus system, which rewards countries for aligning with emerging postal priorities. In 2024, bonuses are awarded for two areas: high-quality postal statistics and carbon footprint reporting and reduction efforts.

[4] Source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Global ICT Regulatory Outlook 2020. Image retrieved from www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Regulatory-Market/Pages/Policy-&-Regulatory-Frameworks.aspx.



2 The structure of postal sector regulatory systems in the Asia-Pacific region

2.1 Key stakeholders in regulatory reform

According to the UPU Postal Reform Guide (2019), the regulatory system governing the postal sector involves multiple stakeholders, including governments, regulatory agencies and postal operators, each with distinct roles in policymaking, market supervision and business execution. Their interactions and responsibilities are crucial in shaping the direction and implementation of postal sector reform.

2.1.1 The role of the government: policymaker

As the highest decision-making authority, the government is responsible for formulating national postal development strategies and ensuring alignment with economic policies, technological advancements and international trade objectives. Its key responsibilities include:

– Industry policy and legal formulation: establishes market access regulations, the USO, service quality standards and pricing mechanisms to ensure the sustainability and accessibility of postal services;

– Fiscal and policy support: provides financial subsidies and tax incentives to support postal enterprises in fulfilling their USO commitments, while encouraging digitalization and smart technology adoption in the industry;

– International regulatory coordination: engages in global postal and logistics regulatory frameworks, optimizing cross-border e-commerce and logistics supervision to enhance the sector’s competitiveness and relevance.

2.1.2 The role of regulatory agencies: market supervisors

Regulatory agencies are responsible for implementing government policies, ensuring fair market competition and overseeing compliance within the postal sector. Their primary functions include:

– Market access and licence management: establishes market entry standards for postal enterprises, manages industry licensing systems and ensures fair and competitive market conditions;

– Price and quality regulation: supervises postal service pricing strategies and quality standards, ensuring that they comply with consumer protection laws and market regulations;

– Consumer rights protection: develops complaint and appeal mechanisms to address issues such as lost mail, delays and service quality concerns, ensuring that consumer grievances are handled effectively;

– Promoting fair market competition: monitors the market structure, regulates competitive relationships between postal enterprises, express delivery providers and e-commerce logistics firms, and prevents market monopolization.

2.1.3 The role of the operator: service provider

Postal operators are responsible for the collection, sorting, transmission and delivery of postal items, thereby fulfilling specific social and economic objectives of member countries. With increasing market competition, their role has expanded from traditional mail delivery to include comprehensive logistics, e-commerce support and digital financial services. Their core functions include:

– Fulfilling the USO: ensuring that both urban and rural residents have access to basic postal services, in compliance with government-mandated service standards;

– driving business innovation and digital transformation: adopting emerging technologies to enhance postal logistics efficiency and developing new services that meet evolving market demands;

– Optimizing operational efficiency and strengthening market competitiveness: adjusting cost structures in an open market environment to ensure the sustainability and profitability of postal enterprises amid increasing competition;

– Enhancing collaboration with governments and regulatory agencies: ensuring regulatory compliance while maintaining fair competition in the market.

Conclusion

The regulatory reform relies on the collaboration of governments, regulatory agencies and postal operators:

– Governments are responsible for policy formulation and guiding industry development;

– Regulatory agencies ensure fair competition and enforce regulatory policies; and

– Operators, while upholding their USO commitments, are actively embracing market-oriented strategies and digitalization.

This tripartite coordination mechanism directly influences the regulatory models and market development of the postal sector across different countries. However, significant variations exist in market openness, government intervention and regulatory agency independence, leading to diverse regulatory approaches across the Asia-Pacific region.

2.2 Overview of postal regulation models in the Asia-Pacific region

Based on questionnaire responses and discussions among 24 participating member countries, the current regulatory frameworks can be classified into three main models, each differing in market competition dynamics, government regulatory intensity and the role of postal operators. A deeper analysis of these models provides valuable insights into how different member countries balance market-driven development with the provision of public postal services in the context of regulatory reform.

2.2.1 Government-integrated model

– Regulatory and operational functions are intertwined, with the postal operator functioning as a government department or agency rather than a separate legal entity.

– Private express delivery services may face certain restrictions, while the designated postal operator often retains partial market exclusivity.

– In some of these cases, the government provides strategic oversight of postal pricing, operations and development policies, reflecting a centralized regulatory approach.

Examples: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Tonga.

2.2.2 Independent regulatory agency model

- Regulatory agencies operate independently from both the government and postal enterprises, overseeing market supervision, price control and USO management.
- The market is partially open. While state-owned postal operators remain active in many cases, their dominant position is being increasingly challenged by private courier companies as market competition intensifies.
- Regulatory efforts focus on promoting fair competition, managing market access, and standardizing cross-border logistics operations.

Examples: Brunei Darussalam, China, Iran (Islamic Rep.), Malaysia, Maldives and Mongolia.

2.2.3 Ministerial collaborative regulatory model

- The postal sector is regulated by a government ministry, while state-owned postal operators maintain commercial autonomy and participate in competitive markets.
- The ministry engages stakeholders through consultation, coordination and joint policy development.
- Market openness varies across countries, with some fully liberalized and others in transitional phases.

Examples: Australia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People's Dem Rep., Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

2.3 The evolution of postal regulation towards a collaborative governance model

2.3.1 Background

The overall trend is shifting from single-government regulation to a multi-stakeholder collaborative governance model, though specific approaches vary depending on national conditions, market maturity and industry needs. Regulatory evolution is reflected not only in policy adjustments, but also in advancements in industry digitalization, market openness and government functions.

This transformation mirrors the evolution of regulatory models in industries such as telecommunications and finance, where government functions have shifted from direct control to market supervision and data-driven governance. Postal governance is also evolving from a government-led approach to a collaborative model, engaging governments, enterprises and society in regulatory and operational roles.

In various postal markets, the key driving forces behind this transformation include:

- Industry digitalization and intelligence: the postal and logistics industry increasingly relies on data collection, algorithm optimization and intelligent decision-making, making traditional administrative supervision models insufficient to keep pace with the industry's rapid development;
- Changes in market structure: the increasing presence of private courier firms and e-commerce logistics providers has reshaped the sector, shifting it from a government-controlled service to a dynamic market-driven ecosystem;
- The evolution of governance models: modern social governance principles emphasize the maximization of public interest, deliberative democracy, self-organizing capabilities, decision-making transparency and data-driven regulation. As a result, government regulation is shifting from a centralized control model to a multi-stakeholder collaborative framework.

2.3.2 Regulatory models in transition: different approaches and developments

To understand the different approaches to postal sector regulation and their ongoing evolution, we examine the cases of three member countries – Pakistan, China and Japan. These countries illustrate various regulatory frameworks with differing structures of government oversight, market participation and collaborative governance.

These cases reflect a range of regulatory approaches shaped by each country's unique market conditions, policy priorities and economic framework.

Member country	*Regulatory model*	*Government role*	*Characteristics of collaborative governance*	*Market competition*
Pakistan	Government-integrated model	Direct regulation by the Ministry of Communications.	Primarily based on government decisions, with limited participation from market and social entities.	Private enterprises are yet to be incorporated into the formal regulatory system.
China	Independent regulatory agency model	The State Post Bureau (SPB) functions as both regulator and policymaker, closely aligned with government strategies.	Centralized regulatory control balanced with market participation via a licensing system.	Competitive express delivery regulated through SPB licensing alongside state-managed universal postal services.
Japan	Ministerial collaborative regulatory model	Government is primarily responsible for rule-making and market supervision.	Active multi-stakeholder collaboration involving government, industry and society.	The postal market is partially open, with partial strong competition among enterprises.

Case 1: Pakistan – government-integrated postal system

Background

The postal sector in Pakistan is managed by the Ministry of Communications, with the postal enterprise directly operated by the government. Market access and regulatory rules are primarily established through government directives. Currently, Pakistan is advancing the review of the Courier and Logistics Regulatory Authority Bill to optimize industry regulatory mechanisms.[5]

Characteristics of the regulatory model

– Strong government dominance: the government maintains significant control over industry policies, with governance primarily achieved through the formulation and implementation of regulations;

– Gradual market opening: the postal market remains largely state-controlled, though the participation of private enterprises is gradually increasing;

– Exploration of digital regulation: the government is studying the use of tools like electronic advance data (EAD) to improve regulatory efficiency and inter-departmental collaboration.

Evolution towards collaborative governance

– Independence of regulatory agencies: policy discussions are considering the establishment of an independent postal regulatory agency to enhance market transparency and reduce direct government intervention;

– Increased participation of market entities: new regulations may introduce clearer market access rules for private enterprises, promoting a more open and competitive industry environment;

– Adjustment in government regulation methods: the government's role is expected to shift from direct management to providing market rules and ensuring a fair competitive environment.

[5] Source: Questionnaire response submitted by Pakistan Post in 2024 as part of the APPU postal regulatory reform survey.

Case 2: China – independent regulatory agency model

Background

China's postal sector operates under an independent regulatory agency model, but with government coordination. The State Post Bureau (SPB) functions as both the regulator and key policy executor, overseeing market supervision, managing licensing and ensuring policy implementation. The SPB operates in close alignment with national economic strategies.

China maintains direct oversight of universal postal services through China Post Group, a state-owned enterprise that holds exclusive rights to deliver legally defined mail services. At the same time, the express delivery market is highly competitive, with private players operating under the SPB's regulatory framework and licensing system.

Characteristics of the regulatory model

Integrated policy and regulatory role: the SPB serves as both policymaker and regulator, performing key functions such as market supervision, licensing and regulatory enforcement under the broader direction of national development goals.

Government-controlled universal postal service: China Post Group holds exclusive rights for legally defined postal services, ensuring service accessibility in both urban and rural areas in line with government-mandated USOs.

Market-driven express delivery: the express delivery market is open to private competition and regulated through a licensing system managed by the SPB.

State-set pricing and the USO: postal pricing and service standards are set by the government to ensure affordability, service quality and equal access nationwide, in contrast with fully market-based models.

Evolution towards collaborative governance

– Enhanced industry autonomy: postal enterprises have gained greater autonomy in operational management, while remaining subject to regulatory oversight;
– Optimization of market access mechanisms: rules for private sector participation are becoming more clearly defined, with safeguards in place to ensure fair competition;
– Development of data-driven regulation: regulators and industry stakeholders are jointly exploring the use of electronic regulatory systems to improve transparency and the efficiency of policy implementation.

Case 3: Japan – ministerial collaborative regulatory model

Background

Japan's postal sector has undergone market-oriented reforms while remaining subject to direct government oversight. Japan Post Co., Ltd., formerly a government entity, now operates as a private joint-stock company. Japan Post continues to provide universal postal services under the supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC). The MIC retains strong regulatory functions, including price regulation, licensing oversight and quality control, ensuring that postal services remain accessible and affordable while allowing private operators to enter the correspondence delivery business.

The collaborative governance model in Japan involves government agencies, industry stakeholders and consumer organizations, ensuring market efficiency, consumer protection and sustainable industry growth.

Characteristics of the regulatory model:

- Regulated market functions: The government sets postal service standards, universal service obligations and pricing regulations, while allowing private operators to enter the market;
- Structured market competition: While letter-mail services remain under Japan Post's legally mandated role, the parcel and logistics sector is open to competition under a licensing system regulated by the Japanese government;
- Collaborative industry governance: policymaking and industry regulation involve government agencies, enterprises and advisory councils to balance public service obligations and market efficiency;
- Universal service and consumer protection: Japan Post must maintain nationwide accessibility, including a minimum number of post offices and mailboxes, ensuring equitable access to postal services.

Evolution towards collaborative governance:

- Policy-driven market regulation: the government guides industry development through policy frameworks and regulatory oversight, ensuring service quality and financial sustainability;
- Diversified industry participation: market participants, consumer groups and industry associations collaborate in setting service quality standards and operational policies;
- Fair competition in parcel and logistics services: the government refines competition policies, ensuring a balanced playing field for all market players while maintaining universal service obligations in the mail sector.

2.4 The implementation of postal reform policies and the process of marketization

In the Asia-Pacific region, governments have adopted varied reform strategies for the development and regulation of the postal sector. According to survey feedback, member countries have demonstrated differing development paths and priorities in areas such as legislation, policy planning, implementation monitoring and the corporatization process of postal reform.

2.4.1 Policy coverage and legislative progress

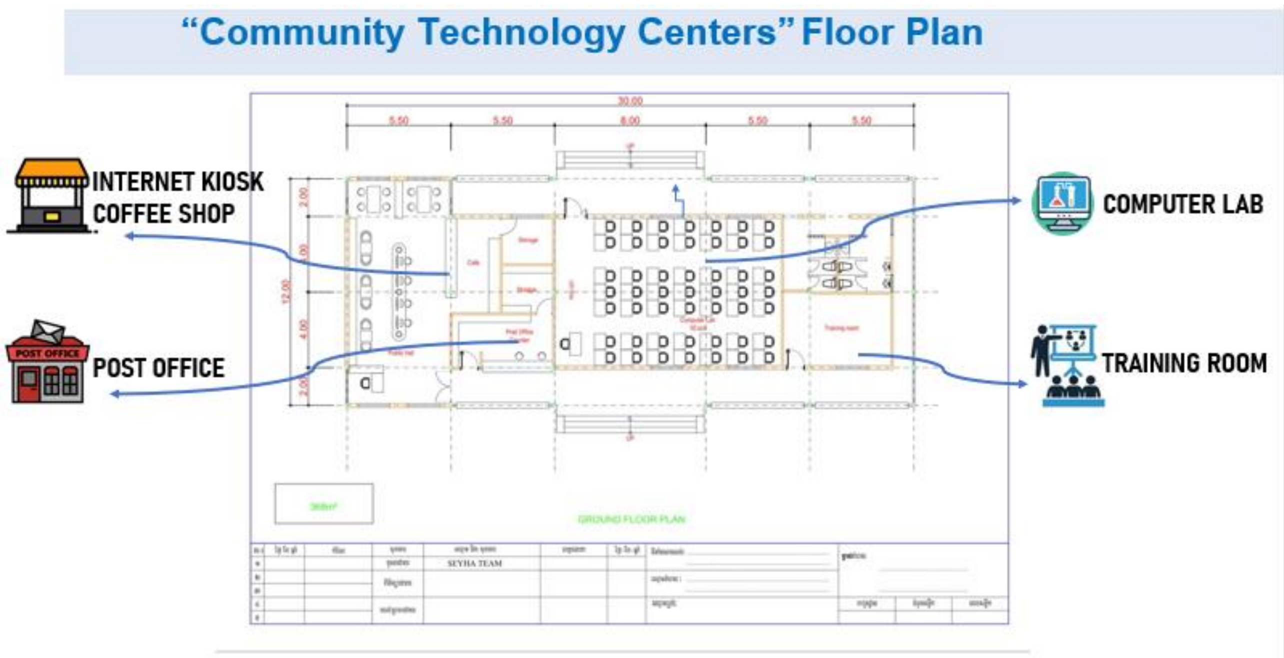
Data from 22 survey responses indicates that 16 member countries (73%) have explicitly incorporated postal reform objectives into their legislation, policies or action plans. This suggests that the majority of member countries have established clear national-level strategies for postal development. These policies commonly address areas such as the USO, market competition, digital transformation and postal modernization.

For instance, Singapore and Japan have clearly outlined postal sector reform goals in their national policies, actively promoting the corporatization and modernization of their postal enterprises. However, six member countries have yet to formally integrate postal reform into their legislative or policy frameworks, reflecting varied levels of regulatory development across the region.

Case study – Cambodia

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (MPTC) has adopted the Postal Sector Development Policy 2022–2030, which outlines clear objectives for making postal services more affordable, fast and widely accessible. A new Law on Postal Services, defining institutional responsibilities, updating licensing procedures and establishing service standards for both public and private postal operators, is also being drafted to modernize the legal and regulatory framework.

The MPTC is also advancing the digital postal ecosystem, including the development of a national digital postal platform and the launch of the DGPost mobile application, which allows citizens and businesses to track delivery orders in real time across multiple couriers. Additionally, Cambodia is integrating the blockchain-based verify.gov.kh platform into the postal and logistics sectors. This platform enables a unified QR code system that enhances transparency and interoperability among logistics and e-commerce stakeholders.



One of the most notable initiatives is the integration of post offices into community technology centres established at 598 high schools nationwide. These centres are designed to serve as digital and logistical hubs, offering services such as the sending and receipt of parcels, digital skills training, and access to Internet-connected equipment for local businesses and residents. By embedding postal functions within broader community-based infrastructure, Cambodia is leveraging postal reform to enhance local development, digital inclusion and last-mile service delivery.

2.4.2 Monitoring and oversight of policy implementation

Formulating policies is only the first step, as effective implementation and monitoring are equally crucial. Survey data shows that 13 member countries (59%) have established monitoring frameworks for their policies, strategies or action plans, while nine member countries (41%) have yet to implement relevant oversight mechanisms.

Among the countries with existing monitoring frameworks, governments typically track the progress of reforms through regular evaluations, industry reports and key performance indicator (KPI) assessments. For example, in some member countries, postal regulatory agencies publish annual industry reports evaluating the effectiveness of reform and ensuring that policy objectives align with market developments.

2.4.3 Stakeholder involvement in policy formulation

The postal sector involves multiple stakeholders, including governments, postal enterprises, courier companies, consumer organizations and industry associations. Surveys indicate that 16 member countries (76%) incorporate stakeholder participation in the policy-making process, while five member countries (24%) have yet to establish formal stakeholder consultation mechanisms.

In countries that adopt stakeholder participation models, governments typically ensure that both internal and external stakeholders have a voice through public consultations, sector dialogue, regulatory hearings and other engagement channels.

To better understand the diversity and prominence of stakeholder involvement across the region, survey respondents were asked to identify the stakeholder groups most relevant to postal policy formulation in their country. The five most frequently involved stakeholder groups are:

Rank	*Stakeholder type*	*Mentions*	*Remarks*
1	Government agencies	19	Core decision-makers; lead national postal policy
2	SMEs	18	Increasingly influential due to e-commerce reliance

Rank	*Stakeholder type*	*Mentions*	*Remarks*
3	Logistics and transport companies	17	Vital for last-mile and cross-border services
3	National customs authorities	17	Key for cross-border trade and customs clearance rules
4	Technology providers	15	Rising importance with digitalization and smart logistics
4	Aviation authorities	15	Crucial for airmail and global shipping coordination
5	Regulatory bodies	14	Oversee licensing, compliance and service obligations

2.4.4 Market-oriented reforms: corporatization and privatization

Currently, postal enterprise ownership structures differ across countries, generally falling into three main models. Some member countries have corporatized their operators and listed them publicly, while most still follow state-owned or government-controlled models. The table below summarizes the ownership structures of postal operators in 24 member countries (based on survey responses), and offers a direct comparison of their regulatory models and market transformation processes.

Member	*Operator designated to fulfil the obligations arising from adherence to the UPU Convention*	*Status of operator*
Australia	Australia Post	Government business enterprise
Bangladesh	Bangladesh Post Office	Government
Bhutan	Bhutan Postal Corporation Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
Brunei Darussalam	Brunei Postal Services Department	State-owned enterprise
Cambodia	Cambodia Post	Public enterprise
China	China Post Group Co., Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
Fiji	Post Fiji Pte Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
India	Department of Posts	Government
Indonesia	PT Pos Indonesia	State-owned enterprise
Iran (Islamic Rep.)	Iran National Post Company	Government
Japan	Japan Post Co., Ltd.	Private company
Lao People’s Dem. Rep.	Lao Post Company Limited	State-owned enterprise
Malaysia	Pos Malaysia Berhad	Public listed company
Maldives	Maldives Post Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
Mongolia	Mongol Post	State-owned enterprise
Myanmar	Myanmar Post	Government
Nepal	Postal Services Department	Government
New Zealand	New Zealand Post Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
Pakistan	Pakistan Post	Government
Philippines	Philippine Postal Corporation	Government-owned
Singapore	Singapore Post Ltd.	Private company
Thailand	Thailand Post Co., Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
Tonga	Tonga Post Ltd.	State-owned enterprise
Viet Nam	Vietnam Post (VNPT)	State-owned enterprise

According to the survey, 32% of member countries have incorporated corporatization or privatization into their recent policy or strategic plans, while 64% have not included these approaches in their reform paths.

The adoption of market-oriented reforms is shaped not only by internal policy direction, but also by external pressures such as digital transformation, rising competition and the rapid growth of cross-border e-commerce. As a result, member countries face the dual challenge of adapting ownership models while ensuring that public service obligations are not compromised.

2.5 Main regulatory challenges

As governments advance postal reform policies, they need not only to focus on legislative implementation and strategic planning, but also to address emerging regulatory challenges driven by sector-wide transformations. With the digitalization of the postal sector, new business models are constantly emerging, industry boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred, and regulatory frameworks are undergoing a complex adaptation process.

At the 2024 APPU policy and regulation workshop in Viet Nam, representatives from various countries primarily focused on key issues such as the diversification of business models, rising market competition, cross-border regulatory coordination and adjustments to the sector ecosystem. Discussions also centred on how to maintain a balance between market openness, public service obligations and effective sector governance.

2.5.1 Diversification of business models and regulatory complexity

The boundaries between traditional postal companies, platform-based logistics firms and emerging delivery service providers are becoming increasingly blurred. Companies are no longer confined to offering only postal or express services and many now operate across multiple sectors. For example, some provide express delivery while also providing grocery, food and medicine delivery services, as well as financial payment services.

Accurately defining industry attributes and formulating appropriate regulatory frameworks have become critical challenges for regulatory agencies worldwide. Additionally, some member countries have noted that in licensing management, new market entrants often do not fit neatly into traditional postal or express service categories. Striking a balance between encouraging innovation and ensuring regulatory compliance has become a key policy challenge for regulatory authorities.

2.5.2 The impact of intensified market competition

The rapid growth of the express delivery industry and e-commerce logistics has placed traditional postal companies under increasing service demands and cost pressures. Some member countries have reported that as market players diversify, differences in service models and operational efficiency have emerged between postal companies and new express delivery and e-commerce platform providers.

While governments aim to promote fair competition, they also need to ensure the stability of postal infrastructure to support the sector's sustainable development. Striking a balance between market liberalization and postal operators' public service obligations remains a key regulatory priority.

2.5.3 Ensuring the stability of postal infrastructure

The sector's evolving landscape has introduced new demands for public postal services. As traditional mail volumes decline, express delivery and e-commerce logistics have become central to the sector. However, governments still need to ensure that the postal sector continues to play its role as an essential component of national infrastructure.

Some member countries emphasize that the postal sector continues to hold irreplaceable value in areas such as disaster response, bridging service gaps in remote regions, and supporting inclusive social development. Policymakers face the challenge of maintaining essential service capabilities while advancing market-oriented reforms, ensuring that public service obligations are not compromised in the process.

2.5.4 Challenges of cross-border regulatory coordination

Differences in customs policies, tariff systems, EAD requirements and data management practices across countries can affect the efficiency of international mail and express delivery. Some member countries have highlighted that the rapid growth of cross-border e-commerce has further complicated postal and customs management.

To address these challenges, there is a growing need to enhance information sharing and streamline business process coordination within existing cooperation mechanisms. Strengthening regulatory alignment will be crucial in ensuring the smooth and efficient movement of cross-border shipments amid increasing logistical demands.

2.5.5 Adaptability of the regulatory system

The trend toward marketization in the postal sector is becoming increasingly evident. While regulatory policies may promote market openness, they must also ensure fair competition and protect consumer rights. Some member countries have adopted a gradual regulatory approach to encourage industry innovation while simultaneously safeguarding the stability of the postal sector and preserving its role as an essential part of national infrastructure.

Overall, the postal regulatory system requires continuous adaptation to keep pace with industry developments. Countries are actively exploring ways of optimizing regulatory frameworks to achieve balanced sector development amid the ongoing trends of marketization, digitization and globalization.

3 Legal regulation of the postal sector

The legal framework governing the postal sector is continuously evolving worldwide to keep pace with digital transformation, shifting market dynamics and evolving consumer demands. Regulatory adjustments across countries not only shape the operational models of the sector but also have a direct impact on market competition, consumer rights protection and the long-term sustainability of postal infrastructure.

This chapter analyzes the evolving trends in postal regulations across member countries, comparing the legislative priorities of developed and developing economies and exploring how regulatory modernization can enhance sector resilience. It also provides references for future postal regulatory reforms by utilizing UPU 2IPD data.

3.1 Case analysis of the evolution of postal law

The legal framework governing the postal sector in the Asia-Pacific region has evolved along diverse paths, shaped by national conditions, government regulatory models, levels of market openness, the USO, and the rapid expansion of e-commerce.

This section examines two representative groups of member countries – one from a developed economy with a mature market, and another from a developing economy undergoing transformation and upgrading. For each group, the evolution of postal laws, shifts in regulatory focus, and the implementation of market-oriented reforms are analyzed to explore how legal systems influence sector development.

3.1.1 Mature postal markets in developed economies

Using Australia, New Zealand and Singapore as examples, the postal sector in these countries has transitioned from a government-led model to a market-oriented approach. Each has established a comprehensive legal framework to ensure fulfilment of the USO, promote fair competition, and enhance consumer protection. These regulatory developments have played a crucial role in ensuring the provision of competitively priced, reliable, high-quality postal services.

The introduction of market openness and competitive mechanisms

Postal law reforms in developed member countries have generally followed a trajectory from state monopolies to market liberalization. Through legislative adjustments, competition was introduced progressively, steering the postal sector towards commercialization. These reforms aimed to enhance efficiency, encourage innovation, and ensure the sector's adaptability in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Member country	*Key legislation*	*Market opening measures*
Australia	Australian Postal Corporation Act of 1989	Allows competition, but the core postal services (letter-mail delivery) still enjoy some exclusivity.
New Zealand	Postal Service Act of 1998	Abolished the legal monopoly status of postal enterprises and achieved comprehensive market opening.
Singapore	Postal Services Act of 1999	On 1 April 2007, Singapore Post Ltd.'s monopoly in the basic mail services market ended and the market was liberalized. Industry players interested in entering the market are required to obtain a licence from the postal regulator.

In these member countries, following the opening of the postal market, private operators gradually entered the sector, operating alongside state-owned postal enterprises to provide mail and express services. Rather than directly intervening in operations, governments have shifted their role to establishing fair competition rules through legislation, ensuring a level playing field while maintaining service quality and accessibility.

USO under market-oriented reforms

In a competitive market environment, these member countries continue to emphasize the USO, ensuring that basic postal services nationwide remain unaffected by market forces.

Member country	*USO protection measures*
Australia	The government has signed a memorandum of understanding with Australia Post, requiring the maintenance of a certain number of postal outlets and basic services.
New Zealand	New Zealand's postal market was fully deregulated in 1998, allowing for open competition among postal operators. In this competitive environment, New Zealand Post continues to fulfil universal service obligations as outlined in a deed of understanding with the government. This deed specifies service quality standards, including delivery frequency and network coverage, ensuring that essential postal services remain accessible to all citizens
Singapore	SingPost is designated as the sole public postal licensee and is required to perform a set of universal service obligations, which include the provision of nationwide letter collection and delivery services to all persons requesting such services.

This demonstrates that despite the introduction of market competition, governments continue to ensure postal service accessibility through legislation, with a particular focus on protecting services for remote areas and special populations.

Shift in regulatory focus

With marketization, the regulatory focus has shifted from direct operational intervention to ensuring fair competition and protecting consumer rights. Governments primarily maintain market order through the following measures:

– Australia: The regulatory framework ensures fair market entry for private postal companies while implementing moderate postal rate regulations to protect consumer interests;

– New Zealand: Regulates postal operators through a registration mechanism to uphold market order and safeguard consumer rights;

– Singapore: Regulatory framework ensures robust competition, fair play and certainty for all industry players, as well as the protection of consumer interests through the setting of minimum quality of service standards and price regulation.

Integration of postal services with e-commerce and the express delivery industry

With the rise of e-commerce, the postal laws of these member countries are gradually being adapted to include express delivery services and enhance the regulation of cross-border e-commerce logistics.

Australia and New Zealand: Adjustments to postal laws extend to express and parcel services, reinforcing data security, customs supervision, and transparency in electronic transactions.

3.1.2 Transforming postal markets in developing economics

Compared to developed economies, postal legal reform in developing economies is progressing at a somewhat slower pace. However, there is a clear trend towards transitioning from government-led systems to more open market structures. Throughout this process, key challenges include the introduction of market competition, the sustainability of the USO, and the growing influence of the express delivery industry.

Market opening process: from state monopoly to market-oriented reform

In developing economies, the postal sector has traditionally operated under a state-led model. In recent years, market-oriented reforms have been gradually introduced, though progress remains cautious.

Member country	*Key legislation*	*Market opening measures*
China	Postal Law of 2009	The framework allows the development of private courier companies in the express and parcel delivery sector, while reserving the provision of legally defined letter-mail services exclusively for China Post Group.
India	Post Office Act of 2023	While the government retains exclusive rights over letter delivery, private courier companies are permitted to operate in the parcel and express delivery sectors. This allows for private sector participation in areas not reserved exclusively for the government.
Indonesia	Postal Law No. 38 of 2009 on the Post	Abolished the state postal monopoly, allowing private enterprises to enter the market under a licensing system. The government ensures the USO while regulating competition to maintain fair market conditions and consumer protection.

The government's continued dominance in postal services

Unlike in developed economies, the governments of developing economies continue to play a crucial role in the postal sector:

– China: The SPB follows a combined policy and regulatory model, overseeing market regulation, the USO and postal sector policy, while legally defined postal services, including letter mail, remain exclusively assigned to China Post Group.

– India: The Department of Posts remains the primary authority in shaping national postal policies and modernizing India Post, and retains exclusive rights over letter delivery under the Post Office Act of 2023.

– Indonesia: The government regulates and licenses postal operators, while also ensuring the USO and offering financial support for the DO within a competitive, multi-operator postal market framework.

Different USO models

In developing economies, the USO remains closely tied to government leadership, reflecting varying degrees of market liberalization:

– China: Legislation requires postal enterprises to deliver integrated urban and rural services, ensuring comprehensive coverage;

– India: The government ensures nationwide postal access through budgetary and policy support, and legal mandates that preserve India Post's role in delivering universal service;

– Indonesia: The law mandates that both state-owned and private operators share responsibility for universal service, though a fully developed market compensation mechanism is still emerging.

The rise of the express delivery industry drives regulatory reform

The rapid growth of e-commerce and express delivery services has led developing economies to strengthen regulations, ensuring market stability, consumer protection and compliance with evolving digital demands:

– China (Interim regulations on express delivery (2018)) – Enhances regulatory oversight of express delivery companies, focusing on safety, compliance and consumer rights protection;

– India (Post Office Act of 2023): Enables the use of digital formats for stamps and postcodes alongside traditional physical versions, marking a significant step in advancing the digital transformation of postal services in the country;

– Indonesia (Postal Law No. 38 of 2009 on the Post) – Brings courier services under regulatory oversight, though ongoing policy adjustments aim to align regulations with market developments.

3.1.3 Comparative analysis: evolution of postal laws in developed economies vs. major developing economies

Comparison dimension	*Developed economies (Singapore, Australia, New Zealand)*	*Developing economies (China, India, Indonesia)*
Market opening and competition	Fully liberalized postal markets, with regulatory frameworks in place to oversee competition and service standards.	Gradually transitioning from state-dominated postal markets to increased competition, with varying degrees of market opening. While private sector participation is growing, governments continue to play a strong role in regulation and the USO.
USO	Governments clearly establish the USO through regulatory mandates, ensuring accessibility and service quality while allowing market competition to enhance efficiency.	Government plays a key role in ensuring universal service provision, particularly in remote and rural areas.
Regulatory focus	Primarily focused on ensuring fair competition, consumer protection and maintaining universal service standards in a competitive market.	Government-led approach, balancing market regulation with the strategic development and support of state postal enterprises.
Adaptation to e-commerce and express delivery	Adapted early to market-oriented development, with high integration between express delivery and postal services.	Regulations have been strengthened in recent years to address the rapid growth of express delivery and e-commerce.

3.2 Modernization of postal regulations and industry resilience: An analysis based on UPU 2IPD

The regulatory framework is continuously evolving worldwide to adapt to digital transformation, changes in market competition and shifting consumer demands. The degree of modernization in postal regulations significantly influences the industry's adaptability, market competitiveness and sustainable development.

The UPU's Integrated Index for Postal Development (2IPD) is a key tool for assessing the performance of the global postal sector. It evaluates postal development across countries through four core dimensions: reliability, reach, relevance and resilience. Among these, resilience is particularly critical, as it reflects a postal system's capacity to adapt to market shifts, technological advancements and economic disruptions. This adaptability is closely linked to regulatory policies and legal frameworks within member countries.

This section examines the relationship between postal regulatory updates and countries' postal development levels (PDLs), as defined by the UPU 2IPD scores.

3.2.1 The impact of postal regulatory reform on industry resilience

Recent data from the UPU's PDLs suggests that member countries with a higher degree of regulatory modernization tend to demonstrate greater market adaptability, industry competitiveness and resilience. These countries share several key characteristics:

- Timely regulatory adjustments that respond to market changes and technological advancements;
- Enhanced market competition mechanisms, allowing private courier companies to enter the sector and improving overall service quality;
- Advanced digital capabilities, particularly in data governance and cross-border e-commerce.

However, merely amending regulations is not sufficient on its own to ensure the industry's sustainable growth. Regulatory reforms are most effective when aligned with broader efforts such as market liberalization, infrastructure development and digital transformation, all of which contribute to strengthening industry resilience.

It is also worth noting that improvements in postal development may take time to show results, even after regulatory reforms are introduced. The full impact often depends on factors such as implementation, institutional readiness and the broader market environment.

Members	*Year of last amendment*	*Status of operator*	*PDLs*[6]
Australia	2024	Government business enterprise	10
Bangladesh	2010	Government	6
Bhutan	Undergoing	State-owned enterprise	3
Brunei Darussalam	2023	State-owned enterprise	2
Cambodia	2002	Public enterprise	4
China	2019	State-owned enterprise	9
Fiji	2020	State-owned enterprise	3
India	2024	Government	8
Indonesia	2009	State-owned enterprise	8
Iran (Islamic Rep.)	2016	State-owned enterprise	8
Japan	2023	Private company	10
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	2013	State-owned enterprise	4
Malaysia	2012	Public listed company	8
Maldives	2006	State-owned enterprise	4
Mongolia	2019	State-owned enterprise	5
Myanmar	Undergoing	Government	4
Nepal	2019	Government	4
New Zealand	2022	State-owned enterprise	8
Pakistan	2024	Government	6
Philippines	Undergoing	Government-owned	5
Singapore	2021	Private company	9
Thailand	Undergoing	State-owned enterprise	8
Tonga	2006	State-owned-enterprise	2
Viet Nam	2010	State-owned enterprise	8

[6] Data source: UPU publication The State of the Postal Sector 2024.

3.2.2 The key role of regulatory modernization

Analysis of PDL data highlights that regulatory modernization strengthens industry resilience in three key areas:

– Promoting market competition and enhancing corporate adaptability: modernized regulations optimize market access mechanisms, ensuring a fair competitive environment for postal enterprises while fostering industry innovation;
– Driving digital development and improving operational efficiency: a digital regulatory framework enhances industry efficiency, lowers operational costs, and accelerates the adoption of intelligent technologies;
– Ensuring sustainability of the USO: While promoting market liberalization, regulatory frameworks must ensure that postal companies continue to fulfil their obligations under the USO, particularly in remote areas.

4 Universal service obligation

4.1 Definition and policy framework of universal service

The USO is a fundamental policy tool that ensures the accessibility of basic postal services across a nation. However, its definition, scope and regulatory approach vary among member countries.

Legal basis for universal service

– 91.6% of responding member countries explicitly define the scope of universal service through postal laws, government decrees, or specific licensing agreements.
– 8.4% of respondents provide universal services without a formal legal definition. Instead, these services are delivered by the government or operators based on actual needs.

Main content of universal service

Laws in various countries typically define the scope, quality standards and provision methods of the universal service.

Examples:

– Australia: The Australian Postal Corporation Act of 1989 mandates nationwide mail delivery and sets minimum requirements for postal outlets and mailboxes.
– China: The Postal Law specifies that universal service includes letters (up to 5 kg), parcels (up to 10 kg) and remittance services, along with free delivery for special groups, such as reading materials for the visually impaired.
– Japan: Universal service covers letters (up to 4 kg), registered mail, and additional services, ensuring fair and accessible postal services.

Variations in universal service standards examples:

– Package weight limits:
  - China: up to 10 kg;
  - Thailand: up to 20 kg;
  - Pakistan: up to 50 kg.
– Additional financial services: Pakistan’s universal services also include pension payments and utility fee collections.

– Delivery frequency standards:
  - Australia: Requires 98% of delivery points to receive mail at least five times per week.
  - New Zealand: A government agreement mandates that 98.88% of delivery points receive mail at least three times per week.
  - India and Indonesia: Focus on affordability rather than specific delivery frequency requirements.

In some member countries where universal service obligations are not formally defined, such as Nepal and Tonga, postal operators still provide a certain level of universal service in practice.

Tonga: Although the Postal Law of 2007 does not explicitly define universal service, the postal system continues to ensure nationwide mail delivery and fair access to postal services for all residents.

4.2 Financing mechanism and government support for universal service

Countries employ various financing mechanisms to ensure that postal enterprises can meet their USOs while maintaining business sustainability.

Among 24 member countries, eight (33.3%) have explicitly established funding support procedures for universal service providers. The remaining 66.7% of member countries do not have specific funding mechanisms outlined in their legal or policy frameworks.

4.2.1 Member countries that have established a universal service financing mechanism

Member countries finance the USO through various mechanisms, including direct government grants, industry cross-subsidies, special fund support, and specific postal business revenues.

Examples:

– Australia: Australia Post, as a government business enterprise, must fund the USO from its own business revenue without direct government subsidies. However, the government, through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, and the Treasury, oversees compliance with USO requirements.

– China: The postal law mandates financial subsidies from the government for the USO and special services (e.g. military mail, reading materials for the blind), with strict supervision of subsidy funds.

– Bangladesh: The government supports the USO through budget allocations and provides necessary logistical and policy support to Bangladesh Post.

– Bhutan: Bhutan Post can apply for subsidies from the Ministry of Finance if it encounters financial difficulties in fulfilling the USO, though such funds have not been utilized.

– Indonesia: USO funding is supported through the operational subsidy for universal postal services mechanism.

– Iran (Islamic Rep.): The Ministry of ICT provides USO funding through specific allocations, including direct payments and equipment procurement.

– Mongolia: The government provides financial support for Mongol Post in fulfilling the USO, though the specific funding mechanism is not defined.

– Fiji: The government occasionally offers financial support for the USO, but postal enterprises must apply for funding and obtain approval from the Ministry of Finance.

4.2.2 Member countries without a clear USO financing mechanism

Beyond the eight member countries that have established explicit financing mechanisms, most other countries, despite providing services under the USO, do not specify concrete financial support methods within their legal or policy frameworks.

Market-oriented operation model (e.g. New Zealand, Japan)

Postal enterprises fulfil the USO, primarily through market-driven operations (without receiving special government support funds).

Temporary financial support (e.g. certain developing countries)

Some governments provide short-term financial subsidies when rising operational costs threaten the sustainability of universal postal services. However, such support is not part of a stable long-term financial plan.

4.2.3 Main forms of government support for the USO

While USO financing models vary across countries, governments typically provide support through the following measures:

– Fiscal grants: some governments directly fund universal service providers to sustain postal operations.
  - China: Provides financial support for the construction of postal facilities in rural areas;
  - Bangladesh: Funds postal operations through the national budget.
– Tax incentives: some member countries offer tax reductions to postal companies fulfilling the USO to help reduce operating costs.
– Infrastructure investment: in some countries, the government directly invests in postal infrastructure to bridge service gaps left by market mechanisms, particularly in remote or underdeveloped areas.

4.3 Main challenges of the USO

Based on feedback from 22 countries, the most pressing difficulties include:

– Cost-effectiveness (86.4%) – Managing high operating costs while maintaining USOs, especially in rural and remote areas.
– Changing customer demands (72.7%) – The rise of e-commerce and digital communication has led to a decline in letter volumes, while demand for parcel services, express delivery and e-government services has surged.
– Service quality assurance (68.2%) – Lower delivery efficiency in remote areas affects overall service standards.
– Digital divide (54.5%) – Uneven development of digital infrastructure between urban and rural areas affects the equitable provision of e-postal services.
– Universal accessibility (50%) – Remote and low-population-density areas still struggle to access sustainable postal services.
– Regulatory compliance issues (40.9%) – In a competitive market, postal enterprises must balance their obligations under the USO with regulatory requirements, including policy adaptations, fair competition compliance and operational regulations.

4.4 Improvement directions and innovative practices

Postal enterprises are adopting various innovative measures to enhance the sustainability of the USO. Key strategies include:

– Enhancing service flexibility (81.8%) – Optimizing postal resources through on-demand delivery and shared delivery networks.
  - Expanding access to postal services via online platforms, mobile apps and self-service terminals.
  - Implementing flexible delivery models, such as on-demand services and shared delivery networks, to better meet diverse user needs.
– Optimizing cost management (77.3%) – Improving economic viability through smart logistics and dynamic pricing strategies.

– Strengthening the integration of physical and digital networks (68.2%) – Promoting technologies like smart parcel lockers, online postal platforms and electronic identity verification systems to enhance interconnectivity between physical postal services and digital solutions.

– Expanding digital postal services (54.5%) – Introducing electronic letters, digital stamps and online parcel management to strengthen digital capabilities.

  - Some member countries have piloted electronic mail delivery and digital postal communication, reducing reliance on paper mail while improving efficiency.

– Fostering cross-industry cooperation (45.5%) – Encouraging collaboration between postal, telecommunications, financial and transport sectors to expand service coverage.

  - Some member countries are exploring regulatory frameworks for cross-sector partnerships, integrating postal services with e-commerce, fintechs and logistics industries for enhanced synergies.

4.5 Reform of USO regulation and integration with e-commerce

The rapid growth of e-commerce is significantly transforming the USO system, prompting governments to adjust regulatory strategies to better adapt to market dynamics, optimize delivery networks and enhance operational efficiency. Regulatory bodies are exploring ways of improving the competitiveness of the sector while ensuring USO compliance through policy innovation, public-private partnerships, digital transformation and sustainable development.

Below are the key regulatory directions for integrating e-commerce with the USO, ranked by the proportion of responses from member countries:

4.5.1 Enhancing last-mile delivery infrastructure

81.8% of respondents consider optimizing the last-mile delivery network a key priority for USO regulatory reform.

Key measures include smart delivery lockers, self-pickup points and community delivery services to reduce delivery costs and improve delivery efficiency.

Some member countries have already invested in last-mile infrastructure, integrating digital solutions to improve the efficiency and accessibility of postal services.

4.5.2 Improving access to postal services for SMEs

63.6% of respondents believe that optimizing the universal service system to support the promotion of SMEs is a key goal for government and regulatory agencies.

Countries are promoting the modernization of logistics infrastructure to enable SMEs to access postal logistics networks more easily and reduce operational costs.

Additionally, some regulatory agencies have introduced special policies that encourage postal companies to offer customized logistics services, warehousing and distribution support, and cross-border e-commerce logistics solutions to promote fair competition in the industry.

4.5.3 Encouraging public-private partnership models to optimize logistics resources

63.6% of respondents believe that optimizing logistics resources through public-private partnerships (PPP) can effectively reduce universal service operating costs and expand service coverage.

Some member countries have allowed private logistics companies and e-commerce platforms to participate in the universal service delivery network to fill the service gaps left by postal enterprises in certain areas.

Some regulatory authorities are promoting the sharing of infrastructure between postal companies and private courier companies, as well as the joint operation of parts of the delivery network, to enhance delivery efficiency and optimize cost structures.

4.5.4 Promoting sustainable delivery solutions

59.1% of respondents believe that advancing green delivery models is a key direction for future regulatory reform in the postal sector.

Governments across the Asia-Pacific region are intensifying measures, such as electric vehicle deliveries, low-carbon delivery networks and intelligent logistics optimization, to reduce the sector's carbon footprint.

Several member countries have already implemented green postal policies that encourage companies to adopt environmentally friendly delivery methods by providing policy support or tax incentives for new energy vehicles and recyclable packaging

4.5.5 Optimizing digital services to improve transaction convenience

59.1% of respondents believe that enhancing postal digital capabilities can streamline e-commerce transactions.

Government and regulatory agencies are actively promoting data sharing between postal companies and e-commerce platforms to boost logistics efficiency and improve user experience.

Key measures include:

– Providing seamless package delivery services (e.g. smart lockers);
– Developing an online digital platform that supports electronic payments and real-time tracking;
– Strengthening digital postal services, such as electronic invoices, digital letters and online authentication, to enhance customer experience.

4.5.6 Adjusting the universal service framework to align with digital development

50% of respondents believe that the universal service framework must be restructured to align with digital transformation and the growth of e-commerce.

Regulatory agencies are exploring how to incorporate e-commerce-related services, such as electronic invoicing, digital letters and electronic government authentication services.

This trend is expected to expand the scope of the universal service from traditional postal services to include digital communication and cross-border e-commerce logistics.

4.5.7 Strengthening local partnerships to support community sustainability

50% of respondents believe that local governments and postal enterprises should collaborate to optimize regional logistics networks and enhance delivery efficiency.

Additionally, another 50% of respondents stressed that postal enterprises should contribute to sustainable community development by promoting environmentally friendly delivery methods and integrating postal services with community logistics centres to reduce delivery costs.

Case example: Bhutan Post's Gelephu building project

Bhutan Post's Gelephu building project is a practical example of how sustainability can be integrated into postal development. Completed in 2024 and supported by the Ministry of Finance, the project involved constructing a multi-purpose, eco-conscious commercial building in Gelephu, which is a strategic location in southern Bhutan. This landmark facility combines postal services with commercial retail space and a 3-star hotel, contributing to the broader national plan to develop Gelephu into a logistics and tourism hub.

The building incorporates energy-efficient systems, water-saving technologies and eco-friendly materials, aligning with Bhutan's strong environmental values. Operationally, it provides modern space for postal processing and customer services, while economically, it supports local employment, enhances regional logistics and creates new revenue streams for Bhutan Post. The project demonstrates how infrastructure investment can reinforce both environmental responsibility and postal sector sustainability.

5 Administrative supervision in the postal sector

5.1 Overview of administrative supervision

In the government's regulatory system for the postal sector, administrative supervision typically comprises three key stages: pre-emptive supervision, ongoing supervision and post-event supervision.

– Pre-emptive supervision is primarily carried out through market access systems that establish licensing or registration conditions for companies entering the postal market, ensuring that only qualified entities provide postal services. For example, member countries such as New Zealand use a lenient registration system, whereas Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Viet Nam require operators to obtain formal licences.

– Ongoing supervision focuses on monitoring the market behaviour of enterprises during their operations to ensure compliance with relevant laws and industry standards. This includes fulfilling the USO, maintaining a competitive market environment, and ensuring service quality. Countries like China, Japan and Australia have established universal service quality monitoring systems and complaint feedback mechanisms.

– Post-event supervision involves investigating illegal and irregular activities to protect market fairness and consumer rights. This is achieved through complaint handling, the imposition of administrative penalties and market interventions. For instance, China has set up independent complaint management centres and enforces administrative penalties for companies that violate regulations.

The postal sector is an important sector undertaking public service functions, and its regulation has long been centred on universal service guarantees rather than complete market competition. Compared to the telecommunications sector, the pace of opening up the postal market has been relatively slow, with some member countries still retaining exclusive rights for letter services and the government maintaining strong intervention in prices, service coverage and the USO.

In recent years, the regulatory focus in the postal sector has gradually expanded. In addition to ensuring fulfilment of the USO, market access regulation has become an important part of policymaking. Many member countries have introduced private enterprises to improve market efficiency. At the same time, consumer rights protection has also received greater attention, with an increasing number of member countries establishing independent postal complaint handling mechanisms to enhance sector transparency and user satisfaction.

5.2 Market access management

With the gradual opening of the postal market, pre-entry regulation of new entrants has become an integral part of government policy. Traditionally, regulation focused on the USO and maintaining market order. However, as market-oriented reforms have progressed, market access management has emerged as a key tool to steer industry development, enhance service quality and ensure that new entrants possess essential operational capabilities.

The primary goal of market access management is to ensure that the new postal and express delivery companies entering the market meet established qualification standards, maintain stable operations, and deliver services that comply with industry benchmarks. To achieve this, countries typically set market access thresholds and evaluate potential entrants based on criteria such as company qualifications, infrastructure development, technical capabilities and overall service performance, thereby maintaining a stable competitive order.

In recent years, the rapid growth of parcel services has significantly transformed the postal sector's operational model. Changes in first-mile and last-mile delivery quality, the integration of sorting and delivery networks, and improved customer complaint management have all heightened the professional requirements of companies. Consequently, countries continue to adjust their market access policies to meet the postal sector's evolving demands.

This section will analyze the level of market openness, the current state of access systems, and future development trends among major member countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

5.2.1 Degree of market openness among member countries

There are varying levels of market openness across the Asia-Pacific region. For instance, countries such as New Zealand, Singapore and Japan have introduced full market liberalization, enabling multiple companies to operate under competitive conditions. Meanwhile, countries including China, India, Malaysia, Thailand, and Viet Nam retain differing levels of exclusivity in letter services, while fostering competition in the parcel and express delivery sectors. In addition, some emerging markets, such as Cambodia, Lao People's Dem. Rep., Myanmar and Brunei Darussalam, are progressively easing restrictions on private sector participation in postal services, contributing to gradual increases in market competition.

Degree of market openness	*Member country examples*	*Key characteristics*
Fully open	New Zealand, Singapore, Japan[7]	No exclusivity: all companies are free to enter the market and provide postal services.
Partially open (reserved area + competitive segments)	China, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam	Certain letter services remain reserved for DOs, while parcel and express services are open to market competition.
Gradual opening (Regulated entry in progress)	Cambodia, Lao People's Dem. Rep., Myanmar, Brunei Darussalam	Private enterprises can apply for licences, though the market remains dominated by state-owned postal enterprises.

5.2.2 Approaches to market access systems

Countries have implemented various models for market access management, which can broadly be classified into three main approaches: the licensing system, the registration system and the open market model.

5.2.2.1 Licensing system

Some member countries require postal or courier companies to obtain government-approved operating licences and meet specific operational criteria, such as financial strength, robust infrastructure, network coverage and service quality standards.

Examples:

– Brunei Darussalam: The Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI) issues two types of licences: the public postal licence for the DO, and the courier, express and parcels (CEP) licence, which includes domestic and international categories.

– Indonesia: Every company operating in the postal sector must apply for a postal licence and comply with the requirements of the Postal Law of 2009. This process includes submitting a five-year operational plan, financial reports and market assessment reports.

– Iran (Islamic Rep.): Companies must obtain an operating licence from the Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) and adhere to operational quality standards, which cover customer complaint management, service assurance and penalties for violations.

– Malaysia: Under the Postal Services Act of 2012, all postal service providers must secure a licence from the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). There are two categories of licence: the universal service licence and the non-universal service licence. Under the non-universal service licence, there are three types of licence: class A, class B and class C, depending on the scope of services.

– Viet Nam: For letter services (items up to 2 kg), companies are required to secure a postal business licence approved by either the Ministry of Information and Communications of Viet Nam[8] or the relevant provincial communication department. The application must demonstrate network coverage capability and include a comprehensive business plan.

[7] Some mail classes are price regulated or require government approval.

[8] Formerly the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC). As of January 2025, the Ministry has merged with the Ministry of Science and Technology and continues under the name Ministry of Science and Technology.

5.2.2.2 Registration system

Some member countries employ relatively lenient market access systems requiring companies to simply complete registration to enter the market. Strict qualification reviews are not, therefore, imposed.

Examples:

– New Zealand: Since 1998, the postal market has been fully open. Businesses need only register with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to engage in postal services, with no additional licensing requirements.

– Singapore: The government has established two types of licence: "postal service operator" and "express letter service". The overall registration process is relatively simple.

5.2.2.3 Open market

A few member countries impose minimal entry restrictions on the postal market, allowing any company to freely enter and provide postal or courier services.

Examples: Cambodia: Regulatory requirements currently apply only to specific postal categories (such as letters), while the express delivery market remains almost entirely free from competition. The government primarily conducts post-event supervision.

5.2.3 Development trend

From the perspective of regulatory trends, the market access systems of various countries are developing in a more standardized and refined direction:

i Strengthening pre-approval supervision and raising entry thresholds: some member countries are increasing market entry requirements to ensure that new entrants possess the necessary network coverage, technical support and compliance capabilities. For example, Malaysia and Indonesia now require companies to submit more detailed market plans and financial guarantees.

ii Strengthening regulation of parcel services: competition in the parcel sector has become increasingly fierce owing to the rise of e-commerce. Some member countries are considering strengthening regulation of the parcel delivery market by setting minimum service standards, enhancing data sharing requirements and improving delivery security.

iii Promoting digital regulation: some member countries have begun to introduce electronic approval systems to enhance the transparency and efficiency of access management. For example, China has adopted an online licence application system to streamline the approval process.

iv Promoting public-private partnerships (PPP model): to improve market efficiency, some member countries encourage state-owned postal enterprises to collaborate with private courier companies, thereby enhancing market service levels through network sharing and joint distribution. For example, Australia and Viet Nam have already allowed postal enterprises to cooperate with private companies to optimize resource allocation.

5.3 Consumer protection and complaint handling

Consumer rights protection is an important component of government regulation. In the traditional postal sector, complaint handling was mainly the responsibility of postal operators as part of their corporate duty to provide services. However, with the diversification of market entities, the rapid development of e-commerce, and the increasingly blurred boundaries within the industry, the complexity of consumer complaints has steadily increased. The government's regulatory role has gradually strengthened, complaint channels have become more standardized, and some member countries have established consumer complaint systems led by independent regulatory agencies to improve the resolution process and enhance consumer satisfaction.

5.3.1 Self-management in enterprises

In member countries where the postal market is not yet fully open or where government intervention in consumer protection is less extensive, consumer grievances are primarily managed by the postal enterprises themselves. Typically, the government does not intervene directly, but instead guides these enterprises to enhance service quality through industry standards and policy recommendations.

Examples:

– Indonesia: In the highly open express delivery market, grievances are predominantly resolved by the operators themselves, as there is no dedicated government grievance redressal mechanism.
– New Zealand: The government has not established a dedicated postal grievance redressal agency. Consumers can directly appeal to the courts or to consumer protection organizations under the Consumer Guarantees Act of 1993 and the Fair-Trading Act of 1986.
– Thailand: Consumer complaints are managed by the Thailand Post (THP) customer service centre (THP Contact Centre), with minimal direct intervention from government departments.

5.3.2 Intervention of government regulatory agencies

In recent years, with the diversification of market entities, some member countries have established independent regulatory agencies or specialized consumer grievance redressal platforms. Consumers can directly file grievances with government agencies, and the government can impose administrative penalties on companies in accordance with the law.

Examples:

– Australia: The Postal Industry Ombudsman (PIO) is an independent government-established body tasked with handling postal-related grievances and making industry improvement recommendations. Additionally, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) oversees postal market behaviour to ensure consumer rights.
– China: The SPB’s complaint handling centres are established by the government at both national and provincial levels to specifically handle consumer grievances. Operators must respond to grievances within seven days and resolve them within 30 days; otherwise, regulatory authorities may intervene directly. The government also regularly publishes reports on postal express service grievances and takes punitive measures against violating companies.
– Malaysia: The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) has designated the Association of Malaysian Express Carriers (AMEC) to function as the postal forum by virtue of section 49 of PSA 2012. The postal forum looks into matters concerning the interests of postal service consumers.
– Singapore: The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) has the authority to look into complaints affecting the postal operator’s delivery of its licence obligations, and impose penalties and directions on the operator.

5.3.3 The challenges brought by the blurring of industry boundaries

With the rise of e-commerce logistics, consumer grievances may involve multiple market entities, such as postal companies, express delivery companies, e-commerce platforms, payment platforms and Customs. Consequently, government regulatory agencies must coordinate across various sectors to ensure that consumer grievances are addressed effectively.

Examples:

– China: Postal authorities require postal enterprises, e-commerce platforms and express delivery companies to establish a coordinated grievance redressal mechanism, ensuring that consumer grievances are resolved swiftly at different stages.
– Viet Nam: The government encourages postal enterprises to collaborate with e-commerce platforms to jointly develop consumer protection policies and provide multi-channel coordination mechanisms for handling grievances.

6 Economic regulation of the postal sector

Economic regulation of the postal sector mainly involves price controls on postal products, tax policies for postal operators, and import taxes on cross-border packages. Due to the long-term USO assigned to DOs, governments often regulate DOs' prices to some extent and support them in fulfilling social responsibilities through tax incentives or financial support. Additionally, tax policies for cross-border postal packages vary significantly among member countries, reflecting different considerations in trade management and fiscal policies.

6.1 Price management of postal products

In the Asia-Pacific region, price regulation for universal postal services primarily adopts three models: government pricing, price cap setting, and market regulation combined with government supervision.

In some member countries, the government directly sets prices for universal services and requires postal enterprises not to adjust them without approval. For example, Japan enforces strict price regulation on basic postal services, with fees for letters needing government approval or notification to the government. In China, universal service operations are subject to strict regulation, and postal companies are not allowed to arbitrarily adjust the prices of basic postal products, ensuring both the universality and affordability of services. Similarly, the Indian government approves prices for universal services and exempts them from goods and services tax (GST) to preserve their public nature.

Another model involves setting a price cap, which permits postal enterprises to adjust prices within limits specified by the government. For instance, the Malaysian government mandates that prices for letter services provided under the USO be regulated, prohibiting postal enterprises from charging above the government-specified standards. Similarly, the Philippines implements price caps on basic postal services to prevent excessive price fluctuations resulting from market changes, thereby ensuring social equity.

Some member countries are gradually relaxing control over postal prices by adopting a market regulation combined with government supervision model, as seen in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. For example, in Singapore, only the public postal licensee responsible for fulfilling the USO is subject to price regulation for basic letters, while other licensees' have the autonomy to decide on prices. In Australia, the government regulates only the basic tariffs for universal services, allowing postal companies to adjust prices for non-USO services based on market demand. Additionally, although Fiji and Tonga regulate the prices of basic postal services, an increased degree of marketization has enabled commercial services, such as express delivery, to adopt market mechanisms for pricing.

6.2 Tax policy of postal operators

Government tax policies for postal enterprises are primarily reflected in tax exemptions. These measures aim to balance the need for postal operators to fulfil their social responsibilities while maintaining economic sustainability. Tax policies in the Asia-Pacific region vary across member countries, depending on differences in development levels, market competition environments, and the government's positioning of the postal sector.

Tax exemptions are the most common support measures. Many member countries reduce the operating costs of postal enterprises by exempting them from VAT or GST.

- In Brunei Darussalam, all postal products and services are exempt from VAT, allowing postal enterprises to avoid paying additional consumption taxes.
- In Cambodia, postal products within the scope of the USO are exempt from VAT, although commercial postal services remain subject to a 20% corporate income tax.
- The Maldivian government exempts basic postal services from GST, but commercial express and value-added services are still subject to tax.
- In Bhutan and Mongolia, VAT exemptions are provided for certain postal services to reduce user costs and support industry development.
- Specifically in Mongolia, the government supports the postal sector's role in cross-border trade by granting VAT exemptions for eligible international postal parcels, helping to stimulate the growth of the e-commerce market.

6.3 Import taxes on cross-border packages

Countries have differing tax policies for imported mail and cross-border packages, mainly regarding whether imported mail is taxed and the setting of tax exemption thresholds. These policies are influenced by government fiscal revenue targets, local industry protection and international trade facilitation.

Some member countries apply import taxes on all incoming goods to ensure tax fairness between foreign and domestic sellers. Singapore, Thailand, and Mongolia all impose VAT or GST on imported goods and postal services, but their specific policies and exemptions differ. Singapore imposes 9% GST on all imports and applies additional tariffs on specific items such as alcohol, tobacco and automobiles. Similarly, Thailand imposes 7% VAT on all imports, though books, newspapers and magazines are exempt. Mongolia also applies 10% VAT on postal services and imported goods; however, certain international postal parcels sent to individuals may qualify for VAT exemptions if they meet specific value limits and product category restrictions.

Beyond general import taxation, some countries have adopted policies that exempt low-value imported goods from taxes, aiming to reduce administrative burdens and facilitate cross-border e-commerce. For instance, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji exempt customs duties on imports valued below 1,000 local currency units. Similarly, Philippines has set its exemption threshold at 10,000 pesos, while China exempts mailed goods from tax if the tax amount does not exceed 50 Chinese yuan (CNY).

In some cases, import tax policies are adjusted to regulate the impact of low-cost overseas products. Indonesia imposes import taxes on small goods valued at less than 3 USD, limiting the influence of low-cost imports on its domestic market.

Malaysia has implemented a 10% sales tax on low-value goods (LVG) imported for online businesses selling directly to Malaysian consumers. This tax, which took effect on 1 January 2024, applies to goods valued at 500 Malaysian ringgit (MYR) or less and imported by land, sea or air. Unlike general import taxes, this policy specifically targets online business transactions, ensuring tax fairness between foreign and local e-commerce sellers while contributing to fiscal revenue.

7 Core issues of postal regulatory reform from members' perspective

7.1 Major challenges in postal regulatory reform: coordination mechanisms and implementation difficulties

During the process of postal regulatory reform, governments are facing a series of complex challenges. These challenges arise from rapid changes within the industry as well as from external environmental influences. According to feedback from member countries, the main difficulties can be summarized into four aspects: the uncertainty brought by new business models; the contradiction between technological development and regulatory updates; the impact of cross-border e-commerce and evolving consumer demand; and the challenges in regulatory coordination and resource allocation.

7.1.1 Regulatory uncertainty caused by new business models

With the rapid evolution of the logistics and postal industries, 77% (17 out of 22) of member countries highlight that the growing diversity of market participants, including integrators, transport and delivery companies, logistics enterprises, and smart service facilities, further complicates regulatory frameworks. Additionally, 68% (15 out of 22) of member countries identify the lack of a clear definition for emerging business models as a major challenge. This includes the platform economy, the integration of express and traditional postal services, and the rise of smart logistics technologies.

7.1.2 Misalignment between regulation and technological development

64% (14 out of 22) of member countries indicate that rapid technological advancements are outpacing regulatory updates, creating compliance challenges for the postal sector during its technological transition. For example, technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) are becoming increasingly prevalent in industry, yet existing regulations have not evolved to accommodate these new service models. Additionally, 55% (12 out of 22) of member countries emphasize that data privacy and security concerns are becoming increasingly critical in this evolving landscape.

7.1.3 The impact of e-commerce on consumer demand

The rise of global e-commerce, particularly cross-border transactions, has placed immense pressure on postal regulation. Half of the member countries (11 out of 22) indicate that the growth of cross-border e-commerce challenges traditional postal laws and procedures. Governments are required to improve the efficiency and convenience of international logistics while ensuring safety and regulatory compliance.

Meanwhile, 64% (14 out of 22) of member countries believe that increasing consumer demand for faster and more flexible delivery services is straining the existing regulatory framework. Traditional universal service standards struggle to keep up with market expectations for on-demand delivery, smart dispatching and other emerging service models.

7.1.4 Challenges in regulatory coordination and resource allocation

Regulating the postal sector involves multiple government departments, with 68% (15 out of 22) of member countries reporting that limited inter-agency coordination contributes to fragmented regulation, making it more challenging to advance reforms efficiently. Additionally, 59% (13 out of 22) of members note that constrained commercial and financial resources may affect the pace of industry development and the adoption of modernization initiatives. Furthermore, 46% (10 out of 22) of member countries observe that low public awareness of postal sector challenges can reduce engagement and momentum for reform efforts.

7.2 Government expectations for regulatory reform: policy goals and development direction

In the formulation and reform of postal regulations, governments seek to achieve multiple policy objectives. According to feedback from member countries, the expected benefits of postal regulatory reforms primarily focus on four core areas: market adaptability, economic and social development, technological innovation and sustainability.

7.2.1 Adapting to market changes and promoting industry modernization

Data indicates that 91% (20 out of 22) of member countries consider adjusting regulations to accommodate market dynamics and evolving consumer behaviour as the most important goal. This reflects governments' intent to align the postal sector with e-commerce and the digital economy through a flexible regulatory framework. Additionally, 77% (17 out of 22) of member countries emphasize that promoting competition, enhancing service quality and fostering innovation are also key objectives of the reform.

7.2.2 Promoting economic development and social equity

The postal sector is not only a key component of logistics infrastructure, but it also plays a crucial role in trade facilitation and economic growth. 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries believe that maintaining postal and logistics network coverage, particularly to remote areas, is a key objective of regulatory reform. Furthermore, 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries aim to support economic development by optimizing postal services, while 64% (14 out of 22) of member countries emphasize the need to establish a favourable regulatory environment for SMEs and local businesses to drive commercial growth.

7.2.3 Promoting digital transformation and enhancing technology application

As digital technology advances, governments are actively driving technological upgrades in postal services. 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries support the development of more efficient and reliable postal services to facilitate e-commerce growth. Meanwhile, 55% (12 out of 22) of member countries seek to promote the adoption of advanced technologies such as AI, IoT and blockchain to improve operational efficiency and service quality.

7.2.4 Emphasizing sustainable development and security

Sustainable development has become a core focus in postal regulatory reform, with 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries prioritizing environmental sustainability to reduce carbon footprints and promote green postal services. Additionally, 64% (14 out of 22) of member countries emphasize that enhancing data privacy and security measures is essential for consumer protection.

7.3 Priorities for regulatory reform: adapting to industry changes and market demands

As the postal sector continues to evolve, governments are working to adjust regulatory frameworks to address emerging market demands, technological advancements and global development trends. Based on feedback from member countries, future postal regulatory reform will primarily focus on enhancing infrastructure and network functions, integrating data and technology, improving market adaptability to meet consumer needs, and strengthening government collaborative governance.

7.3.1 Adapting to market changes and meeting consumer demands

With the rapid growth of e-commerce, 68% (15 out of 22) of member countries believe that regulatory systems must be optimized to better manage the impact of cross-border e-commerce on traditional postal services and customs procedures. Meanwhile, 86% (19 out of 22) of member countries emphasize that adjusting regulations to meet consumer expectations for faster, more reliable and more flexible delivery services is a core priority for reform. This highlights the need for governments to maintain universal service while creating space for greater innovation.

7.3.2 Strengthening government coordination to promote alignment with international standards

The postal sector involves multiple government departments, and 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries recognize the need to enhance inter-agency cooperation to develop more coherent regulatory policies, preventing fragmented management that could hinder industry growth. Additionally, 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries support aligning with international best practices and standards to modernize postal services and strengthen global market integration. This trend underscores that regulatory reforms in the postal sector require not only domestic policy adjustments, but also international alignment.

7.3.3 Strengthening the infrastructure and functions of the postal network

The postal network is evolving from a traditional logistics channel into a multifunctional service platform. A total of 64% (14 out of 22) of member countries believe that clarifying the postal network's role should be a priority, with an emphasis on enhancing its functions in instant messaging, government services, community centres, retail and inclusive financial payments to establish it as key infrastructure. Meanwhile, 68% (15 out of 22) of member countries stress that postal regulatory reforms should drive economic development, support SMEs, and ensure the achievement of sustainability goals. This reflects the government's recognition of the postal system as a vital pillar for promoting socio-economic development.

7.3.4 Promoting data sharing and technological integration to enhance industry efficiency

59% (13 out of 22) of member countries recognize the growing demand for postal data sharing among various regulatory agencies, including transport, customs, security and quarantine authorities. Governments must strike a balance between improving data-sharing efficiency and ensuring user information protection. Additionally, 50% (11 out of 22) of member countries seek to promote the integration of advanced technologies, such as AI, blockchain and IoT, to enhance operational efficiency and innovation capabilities in the postal sector.

7.4 Key focus of government efforts to promote postal regulatory reform: policy innovation and implementation pathways

Governments have taken different approaches to advancing postal regulatory reforms, yet the overall trend shows a common focus on updating legal and market frameworks, improving service quality, fostering regional cooperation and capacity building, and promoting sustainable development. Based on feedback from member countries, the core priorities of governments can be summarized into the following four areas:

7.4.1 Legislative updates and fair market competition

As the postal sector undergoes profound changes, governments are primarily focused on regulatory adaptability and market fairness. 73% (16 out of 22) of member countries believe that updating postal legislation and establishing clear guidelines to support new business models and technological advancements are key aspects of regulatory reform. At the same time, 59% (13 out of 22) of member countries believe that promoting market liberalization and fair competition is essential.

7.4.2 Centring on customer needs to improve service quality

Amid digitalization and marketization, the postal sector must continuously enhance service quality to meet evolving consumer demands. 77% (17 out of 22) of member countries believe that establishing and enforcing high service quality standards, along with developing new products and services that align with market needs, is central to regulatory reform. Furthermore, 59% (13 out of 22) of member countries emphasize the need to establish mechanisms that balance the USO with financial sustainability, ensuring the long-term stable operation of essential postal services.

7.4.3 Regional cooperation, capacity building and technology investment

Governments are increasingly recognizing the importance of cross-border cooperation and industry capacity building. 68% (15 out of 22) of member countries seek to strengthen regional cooperation by establishing partnerships with other postal regulatory agencies and international organizations to facilitate knowledge sharing. At the same time, 59% (13 out of 22) of member countries support investing in training programmes to enhance industry capacity building and leadership development, reflecting the government's aim to drive industry innovation and reform through talent cultivation.

Moreover, 50% (11 out of 22) of member countries plan to encourage the adoption of advanced technologies such as AI, blockchain and IoT to enhance operational efficiency and customer experience. They also aim to invest in digital infrastructure, including e-commerce platforms and automated sorting systems.

7.4.4 Green sustainable development and consumer rights protection

Sustainable development has become a key focus in postal regulatory reform. 55% (12 out of 22) of member countries plan to promote environmental initiatives, such as adopting electric vehicles (EVs), optimizing delivery routes, and using eco-friendly packaging to minimize the postal sector's environmental impact. At the same time, 55% (12 out of 22) of member countries believe that strengthening consumer protection laws to safeguard customer rights in a rapidly evolving market reflects governments' proactive efforts to maintain market order and stability.

8 The way forward

As the digital economy continues to evolve, postal services in the Asia-Pacific region are playing an increasingly vital role in e-commerce, trade facilitation and public service delivery. Yet in some countries, the postal sector's involvement in regulatory policy formulation and resource allocation remains limited. At the same time, rapid advancements in Internet technology are transforming traditional postal operations and reshaping the market landscape.

In response, many countries are updating their regulatory frameworks through legal reform, institutional restructuring and improved governance. These efforts often focus on cybersecurity, digital oversight and the renewed relevance of USO. However, Asia-Pacific member countries vary widely in political structures, economic maturity and infrastructure capacity. While all are undergoing industry transformation, their regulatory models and policy approaches remain diverse.

Despite the emergence of new technologies and business models, regulatory experiences from one country may not be easily transferrable to another, especially in areas such as data governance, market access and pricing mechanisms. This highlights the need for tailored regulatory strategies that account for local conditions, while remaining flexible across different stages of market development.

Going forward, governments and regulators are encouraged to adopt a comprehensive and adaptive approach to regulation, balancing the USO, promoting market openness, safeguarding consumer rights, and enabling innovation. The success of such reforms also depends on institutional readiness and implementation capacity, not just legislative change.

At the global level, momentum around postal regulatory reform is growing. The UPU and various regional postal unions have promoted policy dialogue and experience-sharing across regions. As the dedicated platform for the Asia-Pacific, the APPU will continue to:

– Facilitate regional knowledge exchange, particularly in emerging areas such as digital governance, cross-border e-commerce and inclusive service design;

– Support member countries in building institutional capacity, through training, technical assistance and strategic collaboration; and

– Monitor evolving regulatory trends to help members navigate change and strengthen long-term sector resilience.

This report marks an early contribution to these goals. It offers insights into the diverse regulatory journeys across the region and reaffirms the APPU’s commitment to supporting sustainable postal sector development in the digital era.

Country-by-country regulatory information of APPU member countries

This annex contains national regulatory information as provided by the participating member countries

Australia

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989
– Year of enactment: 1989
– Year of last amendment: 2024
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A03812/2011-12-27/text
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
  - Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989
  - Australian Postal Corporation Regulations 2021
  - Australian Postal Corporation (Performance Standards) Regulations 2019

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications-arts/post/australia-post

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Australia has different government agencies that provide regulation and oversee Australia Post's performance against the standards and other reporting obligations as part of its shareholder function, including:
  - Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC);
  - Postal Industry Ombudsman (PIO);
  - Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.

Licensing body

Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: No

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Community Service Obligations (CSOs), which stipulate that Australia Post shall supply a letter service following particular requirements, including making "the letter service available at a single uniform rate of postage for the carriage within Australia, by ordinary post, of letters that are standard postal articles."
– Prescribed number of post offices: minimum of 4,000 post offices, with 2,500 in rural and remote areas
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: at least 10,000 street posting boxes
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Australia Post
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government Business Enterprise

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes

Australia Post is a government business enterprise and is wholly owned by the Australian government. The Australia Post Board and management are responsible for the day-to-day running of the organization. Australia Post is required by law to operate commercially and does not receive funding from the government.

How does the government support the Universal Service Provider in your country: through the shareholder departments – the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts and the Department of Finance.

Quality requirements

The performance standards concerning the frequency, speed and accuracy of mail delivery were recently amended and have been operational since 15 April 2024. These standards stipulate that:

– For 98% of locations within Australia, ordinary letters will be delivered every second day;

– Australia Post has an extra day to deliver ordinary letters across Australia; and

– Australia Post can change the way it manages priority mail so it can deliver services at a more commercial rate and work with customers to set appropriate terms and conditions.

The geographic classification for post office outlets was also updated to more accurately reflect recent population changes.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

a At least every second day (disregarding a Saturday, a Sunday or a public holiday in the place where the delivery point is located) to 98% of all delivery points; and

b At least two days each week to 99.7% of all delivery points.

*Any other relevant informa*tion

Mail must be delivered in accordance with the prescribed delivery timetable stipulated in the Regulations, and follow an accuracy timetable.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Postal Industry Ombudsman at the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Australia Post has the exclusive right to carry letters within Australia, whether the letters originated within or outside Australia. Australia Post also has the exclusive right to issue postage stamps within Australia.

Price regulations

The ACCC provides regulatory oversight of letter pricing. The price of letters is mandated by the basic postage rate (BPR). The BPR is currently 1.50 AUD.

Australia Post must notify the ACCC and the Minister of Communications about any proposed price increases. Non-reserved services are outside the scope of price notification. Australia Post operates commercially for parcels and other postal services.

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Goods and services tax (GST) – a tax of 10% on most goods, services and other items sold or consumed in Australia.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in the cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Australia Post
  - Department of Home Affairs, through its Australian Border Force arm
  - Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 1,000 AUD
– Threshold value regarding VAT: 1,000 AUD
– Is there any national legislation mandating electronic advance data for cross-border transfer of items: No

Bangladesh

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: the Post Office Act, 1898
– Year of enactment: 1898
– Year of last amendment: 2010
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.bdpost.gov.bd/site/view/legislative_information/%E0%A6%AA%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%B8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%9F%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B2-%E0%A6%86%E0%A6%87%E0%A6%A8
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
  - The Post Office Act, 1898
  - The Post Office (Amendment) Act, 2010
  - Government Savings Bank Rules, 1873
  - Post Office National Savings Certificate Ordinance, 1944

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Posts and Telecommunications Division, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: ptd.gov.bd

Regulatory authority

Is there an agency/authority that regulates the postal operations: No

Licensing body

– Agency/authority responsible for issuing postal service operation licences to postal service operators: Mailing Operator and Courier Services Licensing Authority
  - Licensing/registration mandatory only for domestic and international courier service companies;
  - Any courier service company of Bangladesh wishing to engage in business in Bangladesh must apply to the chairman for a licence.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Both domestic and international letter-post services.
– Prescribed number of post offices: No
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Bangladesh Post
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes

According to the requirements of Bangladesh Post, the government allocates the money in the national budgetary system.

How does the government support the Universal Service Provider in your country: The government allocates the money, providing logistics and policy support to the universal service provider.

Quality requirements

Ensuring the postal service everywhere in the country within the shortest time and at an affordable price.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

Five days per week, Government working days.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Bangladesh Post

Price regulations

– Name of the body that regulates the price of postal products and services: Ministry of Finance
– Scope of such price regulations:
  - Bangladesh Post submits proposed prices to the relevant ministry;
  - The relevant ministry reviews and forwards the proposal to the Ministry of Finance;
  - The Ministry of Finance grants final approval.

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– VAT applicable for outbound express mail and for all dutiable inbound articles.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– The following authorities are stakeholders in the cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Bangladesh Customs;
  - Civil Aviation Authority;
  - Biman Bangladesh Airlines;
  - Bangladesh Port Authority.
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 2,000 BDT
– Threshold value regarding VAT: NA
– Is there any national legislation mandating electronic advance data for cross-border transfer of items: No

Bhutan

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Bhutan Postal Act of 1999
– Year of enactment: 1999
– Year of last amendment: Currently submitted for amendment by the Parliament
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule:
– All the postal legislations in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
  - UPU standards and principles;
  - Bhutan Post Service Rules and Regulations 2024.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (MoIT)
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.moit.gov.bt
– Key Functions:
  - Policy Support: Develops and reviews policies to enhance postal service efficiency and infrastructure.
  - Strategic Guidance: Provides strategic direction for the growth and modernization of Bhutan Post.
  - Infrastructure Development: Supports the development and maintenance of postal infrastructure in terms of city addressing.
  - Coordination: Acts as a liaison between Bhutan Post and other government agencies for international correspondence.

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator:
  - Department of Revenue and Customs (DRC) and Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA) as regulators for taxes/customs and biosecurity/quality assurance, respectively – both working in close collaboration with the office in Bhutan Post.
  - Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority for consumer protection.
  - GovTech for ICT promotion with Department of Trade for issuance of necessary licences and permits.

Licensing body

– Agency/authority responsible for issuing postal service operation licences to postal service operators: Department of Trade under the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment
– Types of licences required:
  - Financial service provider (remittance) licence;
  - Trade licences for e-commerce;
  - Postal services, including courier and parcel services.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation:
  - As per the definition of the UPU Convention, Bhutan Post provides letter-mail and parcel services at affordable prices throughout the country.
  - Letter mail includes ordinary letters, postcards, periodicals, printed matter and newspapers.
  - The weight limit for parcels is up to 30 kg for the domestic market.
– Prescribed number of post offices: the number and distribution of post offices are determined by Bhutan Post based on factors such as population density, geographical coverage, topography and demand for postal services. The goal is to ensure that postal services are accessible to all regions of the country, balancing the needs of urban and rural areas while optimizing operational efficiency and removing redundant post offices.
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: The number and placement of letter boxes is determined by Bhutan Post based on service needs and demand.
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: Bhutan Post may have exceptions to Universal service obligations in remote or challenging terrain/areas where service delivery is very difficult or sometimes impractical. In such cases, alternative solutions may be applied to ensure service coverage, especially by means of community mail offices and community mail carriers.
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Bhutan Post Corporation Limited.
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: State-owned enterprise (SOE).

Financing of universal service obligations

– Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes

  If Bhutan Post incurs significant financial implications, we will seek support from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) for subsidies. However, to date, we have not approached the MoF for such support.
– How does the government support the Universal Service Provider in your country: The government supports the universal service provider if the company suffers a liquidity crunch, providing funds to revive the business and cover operating costs.

Quality requirements

Bhutan Post, as the national postal operator, is mandated to ensure provision of the following:

– Timely delivery: Meet specific delivery time frames for domestic and international mail.
– Reliability: Offer tracking services and maintain consistent service quality.
– Accessibility: Provide services nationwide, including in remote areas, at affordable rates.
– Customer service: Deliver courteous and efficient service, with effective complaint resolution.
– Security: Ensure the safety of mail and parcels and comply with health and safety regulations.
– Regulatory compliance: Adhere to national standards, postal laws and international agreements.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

Bhutan Post operates with flexibility to ensure that services are accessible and efficient. Collection frequencies can vary depending on the location and volume of mail, with regular collections in urban areas and adjusted schedules in remote regions to meet service needs effectively.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Bhutan Post is required to establish mechanisms for addressing customer complaints and grievances effectively.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Bhutan Post has exclusive rights over certain reserved postal services, including letter-post services and stamp issuance.

Price regulations

– Body regulating postal service prices: Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (under the MoICE)
– Scope of price regulations:
    - Dynamic yet competitive pricing structure;
    - Affordability;
    - Reliability.

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

  Postal items are generally exempt from value-added tax (VAT). However, other types of taxes, such as customs duties or handling fees, may apply to international parcels and imports. These taxes are not specific to postal services but are imposed on all imported goods and the processing thereof.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– The authorities that are stakeholders in the cross-border postal exchanges:
    - Bhutan Post: Manages and operates postal services, including cross-border mail.
    - Customs authority: Handles customs clearance and regulations for imported and exported items.
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 10,000 BTN
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross border transfer of items: Yes, Bhutan has implemented national legislation mandating electronic advance data for cross-border transfers of items.

Brunei Darussalam

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Services Act (Chapter 271)
– Year of enactment: 2023
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.aiti.gov.bn/reference-documents/list-of-legislations
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.): Postal Rules:
  - R1 – Postal (Parcel Airmail Rates) Rules
  - R2 – Postal Articles (Surface Rates to Foreign Countries) Rules
  - R3 – Postal (Airmail Rates) Rules
  - R4 – Postal (Surface Letter Rates) (Local and Commonwealth) Rules
  - R5 – Postal Fees Rules
  - Post Office (Speed Post Rates) Rules
  - Post Office Rules

Any other relevant information

Currently, Brunei Darussalam is undergoing a transition for the corporatization of the Brunei Postal Services Department (currently a government department under the Ministry of Transport and Info-communications).

The list of above Rules applicable to the operations of the government department. After corporatization, these rules should transition to the charges set by the designated operator (DO).

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Transport and Info-Communications (MTIC)
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.mtic.gov.bn
– Key Functions: Transport, Telecommunications and Digital Infrastructure

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI)
– Covered areas:
  - Regulating the operators providing services for the conveyance of postal article up to 20 kg;
  - Ensuring that quality of service standards are in place and observed by operators;
  - Monitoring of the postal market;
  - Ensuring that all operators have proper complaints handling procedures so that customers are able to provide feedback and lodge complaints.

Licensing body

– Agency/authority responsible for issuing postal service operation licences to postal service operators: Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI)

– Licensing is only mandatory for the following service providers:

  a The Public Postal Licensee (PPL) (the licensee is the designated operator).

  b The Courier, Express and Parcel Licensee (CEP), under which there are two categories:

    - the Domestic CEP Licensee; and
    - the International CEP Licensee.

– The process of applying for licences/registration: The operator is required to fill in an application form depending on which licence it is applying for. There are several documents that the operator must submit. Applications are reviewed within 30-60 days.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation:

  - Letters, postcards and printed papers up to 2 kg;
  - Small packets up to 2 kg;
  - Parcel-post items up to 20 kg.

– The Licensee shall:

  a provide universal postal services throughout Brunei Darussalam for letter items not exceeding 2 kg in weight and parcels not exceeding 20 kg in weight;

  b provide and maintain a network of posting boxes and post offices throughout Brunei Darussalam in accordance with the requirements determined by the Authority;

  c commission, publish and sell philatelic products in accordance with the requirements under the PSA;

  d act as the operator responsible for the provision of international (inbound and outbound postal services) in accordance with the rules and regulations agreed upon by the Universal Postal Union.

– Prescribed number of post office: No

– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: PosBru Sdn Bhd

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

There are different requirements for the PPL and CEP. The PPL (i.e. the designated operator) is required to fulfil certain obligations, which are currently in development. CEP licensees are required to submit quality standards for various services to the Authority and make such information reasonably available to the public.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– The PPL must collect postal articles from post offices and from post office boxes every working day.

– The PPL must provide postal article delivery services to post office boxes every working day.

– The PPL must provide postal article delivery services to premises with a valid address in Brunei Darussalam every alternate working day, unless such premises are served by a postal representative.
– The PPL must provide postal article delivery services through the postal representative at least three times per week.

Any other relevant information

The above is currently under development and will be implemented when it is approved.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

– The USO provides for exclusive privilege in respect of domestic postal articles weighing up to 2 kg. All CEPs providing services in respect of postal articles up to 2 kg are required to charge a minimum of three times the base tariff set by the PPL.
– The USO licensee is given the exclusive right to provide posting boxes throughout Brunei Darussalam.
– The USO licensee is the sole licensee authorized to issue postage stamps bearing the words “Negara Brunei Darussalam”.

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI)
– Scope of such price regulations:
  - The AITI is empowered to introduce price controls but has not done so to date.
  - The PPL can determine postage rates, subject to the Authority’s approval through an annual review.
  - CEPs must submit pricing to the Authority within a set period prior to the implementation thereof and make such information available to the public.

Taxation

Are postal products and services liable for taxation: No

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– The authorities that are stakeholders in the cross-border postal exchanges: The Royal Customs and Excise Department
– Threshold value regarding import duties: No
– Threshold value regarding VAT: No
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross border transfer of items: No

Cambodia

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Law

– Year of enactment: 2002

– Year of last amendment: 2022 (not yet finalized)

– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)

  - Postal Development Policy 2022–2030 (mptc.gov.kh/?s=postal+development+policy)
  - Cambodia Digital Government Policy 2022-2035 (asset.cambodia.gov.kh/mptc/media/Cambodia_Digital_Government_Policy_2022_2035_English.pdf)

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, General Department of Post

– There are three departments within the General Department of Post, namely:

  - Department of Postal Policy;
  - Department of Private Postal Supervision and Regulation; and
  - Department of Postal, Financial and Logistic Management.

– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

– Website: mptc.gov.kh//2022/11/□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□-2

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: General Department of Post

  - Issues licences to private couriers;
  - Formulates law and regulation regarding postal and courier services;
  - Monitors compliance and service quality.

Licensing body

– Agency/authority responsible for issuing postal service operation licences to postal service operators: General Department of Post

  - Licences and registration are mandatory for all classes of postal service.
  - The process of applying for licences/registration:
    – Applicants are required to submit their applications through the online portal.
    – The documents to be submitted include national ID (or passport), certificate of incorporation, VAT registration certificate, patent and memorandum of association.
    – Payment of application fees: approximately 5.00 USD.
    – If the application is approved, a letter of authorization with a one-year validity period will be issued against payment of a fee of approximately 1,050.00 USD.

Universal service obligations

- Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Not yet defined
- Prescribed number of post offices: Not yet defined, but there is a national policy aiming to have post offices at commune level
- Prescribed number of letter boxes: Not yet defined
- Exceptions to universal service obligations: Not yet defined
- Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Cambodia Post
- Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Public Enterprise

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

How does the government support the Universal Service Provider in your country: There is no existing formal support from the government for the USO provider.

Quality requirements

There is no mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation.

Grievance redressal

The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (General Department of Post) has a dedicated bureau responsible for handling disputes between service providers and between service providers and consumers.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Under the current law, there is no exclusive privilege for universal service provision over any area of postal operations.

Price regulations

Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: No.

Taxation

- There is no taxation on postal products and services for customers (i.e. no VAT or direct sales tax).
- Postal service providers are exempted from VAT.
- Postal operators are subject to taxation, including prepaid income tax (1% monthly) and an annual corporate profit tax (20%).

Cross-border regulations

- List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Customs;
  - Ministry of Commerce;
  - General Department of Tax.
- Threshold value regarding import duties: 50.00 USD
- Threshold value regarding VAT: 50.00 USD
- Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No

China

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule:
  - The Postal Law of the People's Republic of China
  - Interim Regulations on Express Delivery
– Year of enactment: 1986, 2018
– Year of last amendment: 2015, 2019
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule:
  - flk.npc.gov.cn/detail2.html?MmM5MDlmZGQ2NzhiZjE3OTAxNjc4YmY3YmI2MzA3ZjM
  - xzfg.moj.gov.cn/front/law/detail?LawID=436&Query=%E5%BF%AB%E9%80%92%E6%9A%82%E8%A1%8C%E6%9D%A1%E4%BE%8B
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
  a The Postal Law of the People's Republic of China;
  b Interim Regulations on Express Delivery.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency:
– Level (Ministry or other):
– Website:

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: State Post Bureau of the People's Republic of China.
– Covered areas: Undertake the responsibility of postal regulation; promote the establishment of a universal postal service system covering urban and rural areas; promote the establishment and improvement of universal service and special service guarantee mechanism; put forward postal service pricing policy; make recommendations on the pricing of basic postal services and oversee the implementation thereof.

Licensing body

Postal enterprises are not required to have licences to provide universal postal services, which are authorized by state law. A licence is, however, required to operate express delivery services.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Postal enterprises shall provide universal postal services for the delivery of correspondence, printed matter up to 5 kg, parcels up to 10 kg, and postal remittances.
– Prescribed number of post offices: There are no specific requirements in respect of the number of postal business premises, but there are provisions on the average service radius and population covered by them, and there is a lower limit providing for the establishment of at least one postal business premise where the township people's government is located.
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: There are no specific requirements in respect of the number of letter boxes, but there are provisions on the average service radius and population covered by them, and it is a requirement to set up at least one letter box in front of postal business premises providing universal postal services.
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

- Name of the universal service provider providing USO: China Post Group Corporation Limited
- Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes

The Postal Law stipulates that the state shall subsidize universal postal services and special services provided by postal enterprises and shall strengthen supervision over the use of subsidy funds.

Quality requirements

The Universal Postal Service Standard stipulates the timeliness, accuracy, safety, convenience, compulsory requirements and universality of postal services.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

- There are no requirements in respect of the frequency of collections, but there are requirements vis-à-vis the business hours of postal business premises and the frequency of collections from letter boxes.
- Mail delivery frequency shall meet the following requirements:
  - At least once a day for cities;
  - At least five times a week for the seats of township people's governments;
  - At least three times a week for other areas beyond the seats of township people's governments;
  - The frequency of deliveries to remote areas shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the postal administration department of the State Council.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Yes. The postal administration department

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

In accordance with the Postal Law, within the scope stipulated by the State Council, the letter delivery business shall be exclusively operated by postal enterprises.

Price regulations

- Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
- Name of the body: The price department of the State Council
- Scope of such price regulation: The scope of postal services subject to government-guided prices or government pricing shall be based on the central government pricing catalogue, and the specific tariff standards shall be formulated by the competent pricing department of the State Council in conjunction with the finance department of the State Council and the postal administration department thereof.

  The tariffs of other postal services provided by postal enterprises shall be subject to market-adjusted prices, and the tariff standards shall be determined independently by the postal enterprises concerned.

Taxation

Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Postal enterprises are primarily liable for various taxes, including value-added tax (VAT), corporate income tax, vehicle purchase tax, property tax, land use tax, and other applicable taxes.

Cross-border regulations

- Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
- Threshold value regarding import duties: Customs impose import duty on imported mail items. However, if the import tax does not exceed 50 RMB, it is exempted by Customs.

Fiji

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Posts and Telecommunications Act 1989
– Year of enactment: 30 November1989
– Year of last amendment: 1 August 2020 – Stamp Duty Act (Repeal Act) 2020
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.laws.gov.fj/Acts/DisplayAct/2999#
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
  a Post Office Regulations 1936
  b Money Order and Postal Order Regulations 1936
  c Post and Telecommunications (call-back schemes) Regulations 2002

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Public Enterprise
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.laws.gov.fj/Acts/DisplayAct/2999#
– Key Functions: The Ministry oversees and implements programmes and monitors the performance and operations of public enterprises in order to increase their efficiency and effectiveness.

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission
– Covered Areas: The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission has the authority to set maximum prices for the services provided by Post Fiji. The Fiji Revenue and Customs Service (FRCS) plays a major role in ensuring VAT enforcement and tax collection.

Licensing body

Agency/authority responsible for issuing postal service operation licences to postal service operators: No

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes
– Postal service is classified as a core business of Post Fiji Pte Limited and is under a UPU obligation for all postal services whose scope is determined by the bodies of the Union (UPU). The main obligations of postal services are to satisfy certain social and economic objectives of member countries by ensuring the collection, sorting, transmission and delivery of postal items.
– Prescribed number of post offices: No
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No
– Exceptions to Universal service obligations: No
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Post Fiji Pte Limited
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes

Post Fiji Pte Limited is sometimes provided with funding by the Fijian government upon request. Requests for funding are deliberated, analyzed and considered according to the budget. The proposals go for consideration by the different ministries concerned and, if approved, Post Fiji and the Ministry of Finance enter into an agreement for the facilitation and execution thereof. All evidence and remittance records are forwarded to the Ministry of Finance.

Quality requirements

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

No

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Letters weighing up to 2 kg shall only be delivered by Post Fiji in accordance with UPU regulations.

Price regulations

– Body regulating postal service prices: Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission
– Scope of such price regulations: For the purpose of section 39 of the Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission Act 2010, the supply of postal services in all quantities, qualities, grades and classes within Fiji is controlled. Additional services, however, such as money orders and bill payments, are not controlled.

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Postal products and services exempt from taxation: With the exception of items that fall under exempted and zero-rated VAT, 15% VAT rate is charged on goods and services.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– The authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Biosecurity Authority Fiji;
  - Airports Fiji Limited;
  - Fiji Revenue and Customs Service;
  - Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission.
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 1,000 FJDs
– Threshold value regarding VAT: Effective since 1 August 2023. A VAT rate of 15% is charged on goods and services.
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: Electronic Transactions Act 2008

India

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: The Post Office Act, 2023
– Year of enactment: 2024
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: utilities.cept.gov.in/dop/pdfbind.ashx?id=9688
    • This Act governs the functioning of the Post Office in India and the matters connected therewith.
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
    • Post Office Rules, 2024 (issued by the union government of India) – covering enabling administrative aspects.
    • Post Office Regulations, 2024 (issued by the statutory authority, empowered through an Act) – covering operational matters.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: No
– Is the "postal sector" defined in official government documents: No

Regulatory authority

– Is there an agency/authority that regulates the postal operations: No
– Name of the coordinating regulator:

Licensing body

Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: No

Licensing is not mandatory for the postal sector.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation:
    • Defined in subordinate legislation – Post Office Rules, 2024. Post Office Regulations, 2024.
    • Affordable postal services and made available to users across the country for domestic and overseas services.
    • Includes letter-post and parcel-post items.
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: India Post
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Budgetary allocation by the union government of India for the operation of post offices.

Quality requirements

Is there a mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation: No

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

No

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Postage stamps under section 4(1) of the Post Office Act, 2023

Price regulations

Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: No

Pricing decisions are made within the framework of government policies and statutory authority:

– Statutory authority – The Director General is authorized to set postage rates, subject to prior approval by the union government.
– Unique power-sharing model – The union government (as the rule-making authority) and the statutory authority (with operational powers) share responsibilities to ensure effective governance.

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Type of tax applicable to postal products and services: Goods and services tax (18%)
– Exceptions to the taxation structure: Postcards, inland letter cards and letters weighing less than 10 grammes.

Indonesia

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Law No. 38 of 2009 on the Post

– Year of enactment: 2009

– Year of last amendment:

– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: jdih.kominfo.go.id/produk_hukum/view/id/155/t/undangundang+nomor+38+tahun+2009+tanggal+14+oktober+2009

– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)

  - Government Regulation No. 15 of 2013 on the implementation of Law No. 38 of 2009 on the Post
  - Ministerial Regulation No. 4 of 2021 on postal operations
  - Ministerial Decree No. 222 of 2022 on universal postal service rates
  - Ministerial Decree No. 216 of 2023 on guidelines for the calculation, supervision and payment of an operational subsidy for universal postal services
  - Ministerial Regulation No. 3 of 2023 on other official postal service operations

  The government is currently formulating a new regulation on commercial postal services.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency:

  - The Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs
  - The Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs

– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

– Website:

  - The Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs: www.polkam.go.id
  - The Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs: www.ekon.go.id

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Ministry of Communications and Informatics, Directorate of Posts, Directorate General of Posts and Informatics Operations.

– Covered areas: Carries out the formulation and implementation of policies and the preparation of norms, standards, procedures and associated criteria; provides technical guidance and supervision; monitors, evaluates and reports in the fields of service and technical quality standardization, licensing services, postal accessibility and connectivity; and supervises the application of non-state revenue operating tax in the field of postal operating permits in accordance with the provisions of statutory regulations.

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Communications and Informatics

– Types of Licences: Public postal licence; courier and express parcel licence

– The process of applying for licences/registration:

  1 Access www.oss.go.id;

  2 Create an account;

  3 Log in with username and password;

4 Add KBLI 53201;

5 Fill in the business plan activity;

6 Save business plan;

7 Choose fulfillment of commitments;

8 Choose type of activity;

9 Fill out a business proposal for the next five years;

10 Receive non-tax state revenue payment notification (PNBP);

11 Make non-tax state revenue payment (PNBP) via ID Billing using bank payment channels;

12 Receive notification of issuance of licence;

13 Access www.oss.go.id;

14 Select KBLI 53201; and

15 Select "print licence".

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes
– Letters, postcards, printed papers and small packets (letters containing goods) up to 2 kg;
– Items for the blind up to 7 kg;
– Printed papers delivered in special bags addressed to recipients at the same address up to 30 kg (M bags); Parcels up to 20 kg.
– Prescribed number of post offices: No
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: PT Pos Indonesia
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

– Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes
– How does the government support the universal service provider in your country: By allocating a government subsidy.

Quality requirements

Postal service providers shall implement the service standards determined by the ministry. These service standards cover the following aspects:

a service access availability;

b service regularity;

c human resources competence;

d speed and reliability;

e security and confidentiality;

f complaints, suggestions and input handling;

g customer satisfaction; and

h service tariffs.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

a Round-the-clock mail bus serving the delivery of letters, postcards and printed papers in respect of the universal postal service. Items are collected and emptied from the mail bus at least once a day.

b Postal box serving round-the-clock collection of universal postal items.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Grievance redressal should be designated to work units and/or functions within postal operators that handle and settle complaints submitted by postal service users.

Price regulations

– Name of the body: Ministry of Communications and Informatics

– Scope of such price regulation: Applies only to postal products and services under the universal obligation.

Taxation

Are postal products and services liable for taxation: No

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes

– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Ministry of Finance (Customs)
  - Ministry of Trade (e-commerce)
  - Ministry of Transportation
  - Quarantine Agency
  - National Narcotics Board
  - Ministry of Environment and Forestry

– Threshold value regarding import duties: 3 USD

– Threshold value regarding VAT: The current VAT threshold in Indonesia is 11%

– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: Yes

Iran (Islamic Rep.)

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

- Name of the act/law/rule: The Constitution of the National Post Company of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- Year of enactment: 2016

Coordinating body for postal policies

- Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
- Level (Ministry or other): ministry
- “Postal sector” defined in official government documents: Legal activists with a postal services licence provide all or part of the postal processes directly and use their facilities in parts of the country.

Regulatory authority

- Name of the coordinating regulator: Communications Regulatory authority
- Covered areas:
  - Issuance of operating licence for the provision of any kind of telecommunications, postal and information technology services, including the associated conditions, criteria and indemnification procedure for losses incurred for non-performance thereof within the framework of the Commission’s approvals.
  - Codification of national standards related to communications and information technology and proposal thereof to competent authority.
  - Application of standards, related criteria and quality control systems in respect of the provision of services, and development and operation of telecommunications, postal and information technology networks nationwide.
  - Codification and presentation of proposals regarding unauthorized telecommunication, postal and information technology operations, fixing and levying penalties in each particular case within the framework of laws and regulations (when a legal process is undertaken).
  - Codification and proposing of directives to the Commission and application of approvals in the following cases:
    - a Framework of service level agreement (SLA) for clarification of quality, in balance with expenditures in postal, telecommunications and IT networks;
    - b Domain names, numbering and codes in postal, telecommunications and IT networks;
    - c Protection of customer rights in the field of postal and telecommunications services and continuous supervision to ensure their sound operation;
    - d Codification and proposing of necessary directives in order to adjust the relations among postal, telecommunications and information technology service providers;
    - e Presentation of proposals on the amendment and reformation of the sector to the Commission;
    - f Supporting of increased presence and partnerships with non-governmental sector in the development of postal, telecommunications and information technology activities and continuous supervision of the proper exercise thereof;
    - g Proposing of amendments to the postal, telecommunications and communications regulations to the competent legal authorities.
  - Drawing up and publication of a periodical report regarding the status and quality of the provision of telecommunications, postal and information technology services throughout the country, together with a regional and international comparative assessment.

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency:
  1 Communications Regulatory Authority
  2 Communications Regulatory Commission
– The process of applying for licences/registration:
  1 Registration on the regulator's portal and receipt of a user name and registration link;
  2 Registration of the application in the postal services licensing system;
  3 Sending of the request to the regulator;
  4 Examination and approval of the application by the regulator;
  5 Payment of royalties and preparation of guarantee by the applicant;
  6 Receipt and review of the draft agreement sent by the organization to the applicant;
  7 Review and approval of the agreement by the organization;
  8 Issuance of the licence for the provision of postal services.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes
– Prescribed number of post offices: No
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No
– Exceptions to universal service obligations:
– Letter post, books, newspapers, periodicals, items for the blind and small packets (weighing more than 2 kg)
– Parcels (weighing more than 2 kg)
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Iran Post
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

– Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes
– How does the government support the Universal Service Provider in your country:
  1 Identifying requirements of the DO;
  2 Notifying the requirements to the Ministry of ICT;
  3 Assessing requirements in the special department; and
  4 Financing the DO in various forms (payment or purchase of equipment, etc.).

Quality requirements

Quality requirements have been defined by the Communications Regulatory Commission by approving an SLA for different types of postal services, which includes setting out delivery standards for various categories of postal services and determining compensation for damaged or lost items

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

a Daily collection/delivery in urban areas;
b Collection at least three days a week in rural areas.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

1 Communications Regulatory authority: Complaints related to the postal sector can be submitted and addressed either by phone (number 195) or via the organization's portal.

2 The National Post Company of Iran (Iran Post): Complaints related to Iran Post can be submitted and addressed through the call centre (phone number 193) or via the relevant portal at the following address: www.eop.post.ir.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

The issuance of stamps and provision of postcode services are exclusive privileges for the designated operator of Iran (Islamic Rep.).

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body:
  - Communications Regulatory authority
  - Communications Regulatory Commission
– Scope of such price regulations:
  - Domestic postal service tariff
  - International mail services tariff
  - Supplementary service tariff

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Are there any exceptions to this taxation structure: Publications and items for the blind

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Customs authorities
  - Aviation authorities
  - Security agencies
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 50 USD
– Threshold value regarding VAT: 10%
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No

Japan

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

- Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Act
  - Year of enactment: 1947
  - Year of last amendment: 2023
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/322AC0000000165
- Name of the act/law/rule: Act on New Year's Postcards, etc. with Lottery
  - Year of enactment: 1949
  - Year of last amendment: 2012
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/324AC0000000224
- Name of the act/law/rule: Act on Control of Imitation, etc. of Postal Stamps, etc.
  - Year of enactment: 1972
  - Year of last amendment: 2022
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/347AC0000000050
- Name of the act/law/rule: Act on Shops for Postal Stamps, etc.
  - Year of enactment: 1949
  - Year of last amendment: 2012
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/324AC0000000091
- Name of the act/law/rule: Post Office Branch Act
  - Year of enactment: 1949
  - Year of last amendment: 2024
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/324AC0000000213
- Name of the act/law/rule: Act on Japan Post Holdings Co., Ltd.
  - Year of enactment: 2005
  - Year of last amendment: 2022
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/417AC0000000098
- Name of the act/law/rule: Act on Japan Post Co., Ltd.
  - Year of enactment: 2005
  - Year of last amendment: 2022
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/417AC0000000100
- Name of the act/law/rule: Act on Consignment of Mail Shipping
  - Year of enactment: 1949
  - Year of last amendment: 2022
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: laws.e-gov.go.jp/law/324AC0000000284
- All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.): Postal Act
  - Act on New Year's Postcards, etc. with Lottery
  - Act on Control of Imitation, etc. of Postal Stamps, etc.
  - Act on Shops for Postal Stamps, etc.

- Post Office Branch Act
- Act on Japan Post Holdings Co., Ltd.
- Act on Japan Post Co., Ltd.
- Act on Consignment of Mail Shipping

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.soumu.go.jp/english/index.html

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)
– Covered areas:
  - Functions relating to postal operations
  - Specifically, the MIC supervises Japan Post Co., Ltd. based on legislation, including the Postal Act, the purpose of which is to promote public welfare by providing postal services at costs that are as low as practicable on a universal and impartial basis.

Licensing body

– Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: Yes
– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency:
  - Licensing body: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)
  - Advisory body: Information and Communications and Posts Administrative Council

It is provided by law that Japan Post Co., Ltd. shall provide postal services. There is no licensing or registration system for engaging in postal services (article 2 of the Postal Act).

On the other hand, there is a licensing system for the correspondence delivery business of private business operators. It is provided by law that any person who intends to conduct correspondence delivery business (excluding Japan Post Co., Ltd.) shall obtain a licence from the MIC (Act on Correspondence Delivery by Private Business Operators).

The process of applying for licences/registration

A licence is granted following the examination of application documents, including the business plan and statement of prospective income and expenditure, and consultation with the council.

Approval is required for the conditions governing the provision of correspondence delivery services and for correspondence delivery administrative regulations (regarding the method of administration of the correspondence delivery business for the purpose of protecting the privacy of correspondence items).

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes

  Japan Post Holdings Co., Ltd. and Japan Post Co., Ltd. assume duties to ensure that postal services, services for easy deposits, remittances, the settlement of claims and obligations, and life insurance services are made available in a user-oriented manner at post offices integrally and universally on a nationwide basis.

– Prescribed number of post offices:

  Japan Post Co., Ltd. must establish at least one post office in each municipality, according to the following standards:

  i post offices are established so that they can meet demand from local residents appropriately;

  ii post offices are established at locations where local residents can easily use them in consideration of traffic, geographical and other conditions;

  iii in underpopulated areas, post offices are established with a view to maintaining the level of the post office network that existed at the time when the Act Partially Amending the Postal Service Privatization Act came into effect (October 2012).

– Prescribed number of letter boxes:

  Mailboxes are installed with a view to maintaining the number of mailboxes that were installed nationwide as of April 2003, when the public corporation was established for postal services, and in accordance with the following standards:

  i install mailboxes evenly across each municipality and each special ward;

  ii install mailboxes on public roads, at places facing public roads, and at other places accessible at any time, or at places clearly visible to the public in facilities that are easily accessible to the public, such as stations and retail stores.

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: When it is necessary in the interest of protecting the handling of important postal items following a natural disaster or due to other unavoidable grounds, Japan Post Co., Ltd. may restrict the utilization of postal services or suspend part of the provision thereof.

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Japan Post Co., Ltd.

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Private company

Any other relevant information

Delivery of parcels is not included in the scope of “postal services” provided in Japan.

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

In accordance with Japan’s postal service administrative regulations, Japan Post Co., Ltd. must ensure that:

– Mailboxes are installed in a manner that postal items can be posted easily at any time;

– Postal items are delivered five days or more per week (from Monday to Friday) and once or more per day;

– Postal items are delivered within four days from their posting date (except for remote islands);

– Postal items are delivered to the places to which they are addressed, except for those addressed to areas to which postal items cannot be delivered by an ordinary method).

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services: No

– Frequency of delivery of postal services: Postal items are to be delivered five days per week (from Monday to Friday, except on national holidays and 2 January) and once or more per day.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No. As the postal service provider Japan Post Co., Ltd. is a private company, it addresses complaints about its services.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

No.

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)
– Scope of such price regulations:

i Japan Post Co. Ltd. must notify the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of the postage fees (excluding 2 and 3). The postage fees must meet the following requirements:

- The fees must be sufficient sums to compensate for reasonable costs for the efficient management of postal services and to further secure reasonable profit;
- The fees for first and second class postal items must not vary by destination;
- The fees for first class postal items that are standard-sized postal items (postal items that meet the requirements concerning shape and size as specified by enforcement order and that weigh up to a maximum of 25 g) must not exceed 110 JPY;
- The fees for postal letters and ordinary postcards must be less than the lowest postage fees for standard-sized postal items;
- The fees for international postal services must conform to the provisions of postal conventions;
- The fees must be clearly determined based on a flat rate or fixed discount system;
- The fees must not be intended to treat any particular person in an unfair or discriminatory manner (article 67, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Postal Act).

ii Japan Post Co. Ltd. must obtain approval from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications for the postage fees for third and fourth class postal items. The postage fees must meet the following requirements:

- The fees must not vary by destination;
- The fees must be less than those of first class postal items of the same weight;
- The fees must be clearly determined based on a flat rate or fixed discount system;
- The fees must not be intended to treat any particular person in an unfair or discriminatory manner (article 67, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Postal Act).

iii Japan Post Co. Ltd. must notify the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of the postage fees for special handling (fees that have minor influence on the income from postal services as specified by enforcement order), in advance or without delay after adopting them. The postage fees must meet the following requirements:

- The fees for international postal services must conform to the provisions of postal conventions;
- The fees must be clearly determined based on a flat rate or fixed discount system;
- The fees must not intended to treat any particular person in an unfair or discriminatory manner (article 67, paragraphs 5 and 6 of the Postal Act).

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

  Consumption tax is imposed on fees for postal products and services, except for the sale of postage stamps at postage stamp shops, etc.

– Are there any exceptions to this taxation structure: No

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: No

– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:

  - Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC)
  - Ministry of Finance

Lao People's Dem. Rep.

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Law on Postal Services
– Year of last amendment: 25 December 2013 (second amendment)
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):
  - Postal licensing agreement;
  - Postal penalty agreement;
  - Postal prohibited articles agreement;
  - Postal products and quality of service standard agreement;
  - Postal service location standard agreement.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Department of Post of the Ministry of Technology and Communications
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

Licensing body

– Agency/authority responsible for issuing postal service operation licences to postal service operators:
  - The Department of Post of the Ministry of Technology and Communications issues licences for international and nationwide post services.
  - The Provincial Department of Technology and Communications issues licences for postal services within the province (messenger and local delivery services).
– Types of licence required:
  - Postal services licence;
  - Courier, express and parcel licence.

Universal service obligations

Products and services covered by universal service obligation: A universal service obligation (USO) is yet to be formally established, although there are plans to provide for one in 2025.

Price regulations

Currently, postal service prices are not regulated and are determined by market mechanisms. However, a plan is in place to introduce price regulation in 2026.

Taxation

Some postal services/products are tax-exempt, while others (especially commercial goods) require compliance with tax regulations.

Cross-border regulations

Threshold value regarding import duties: 50 USD

Malaysia

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Services Act (PSA) 2012
– Year of enactment: 2012
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.mcmc.gov.my/en/legal/acts
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
  1 Postal Services (Universal Service) Regulations 2015
  2 Postal Services (Universal Service) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
  3 Postal Services (Licensing) Regulations 2015
  4 Postal Services (Postage Rates) Regulations 2020
  5 Postal Services (Post Office Rules, 1947) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
  6 Postal Services (Compounding of Offences) Regulations 2024

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Communications
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.komunikasi.gov.my/en/

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC)
– Covered areas:
  1 Broadband
  2 Mobile services
  3 Fixed services
  4 Satellite
  5 Broadcasting
  6 Postal and courier services
  7 Digital signature
  8 Strategic trade
  9 Universal service provision

Licensing body

Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Malaysia (MCMC)

The table below sets out the categories of universal and non-universal postal service providers in Malaysia:

Type of licence	*Licensable activities*
Universal service licence	Non-universal service licence
Licence A	Provision of international inbound and outbound courier services and domestic courier services in Malaysia

Type of licence	Licensable activities
Licence B	Provision of international inbound courier services and domestic courier services in Malaysia
Licence C	Provision of intra-state domestic courier services in Malaysia

The process of applying for licences/registration

Applicants wishing to apply for a non-universal service licence must submit all the necessary documents indicated in the Licensing Guidebook to the MCMC, including their business and corporate information, proposed business plan and three-year rollout plan. The registration application fee is 100 Malaysian ringgit (MYR).

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes
– A universal service licensee shall provide basic postal services, as follows:
  a collection, transmission and delivery by ordinary post within Malaysia of letters and postcards weighing less than two kilogrammes per letter and per postcard;
  b collection and transmission by ordinary post of letters and postcards to any places outside Malaysia; and
  c collection, transmission and delivery of letters by registered post.
– Prescribed number of post offices and prescribed number of letter boxes: A universal service licensee shall provide and maintain at least one thousand post offices throughout the country, which may consist of permanent or mobile post offices, as well as a reasonable number of posting boxes throughout the country for the collection of postal articles.
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: The designated operator has the exclusive right to transmit letters weighing less than 500 g via ordinary post with a charge of less than 5 MYR per letter.
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Pos Malaysia Berhad
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Public Listed Company

Any other relevant information

Pos Malaysia was listed on Bursa Malaysia Berhad (formerly known as Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange) in September 2001.

Financing of universal service obligations

– Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No
  • Currently, no well-defined procedure exists for financing the universal service provider (USP) in Malaysia.
  • However, Section 98(1) of the Postal Services Act of 2012 (PSA 2012) establishes the Postal Service Fund (PS Fund), one of the purposes of which is to facilitate the universal service obligations.
– Funding mechanisms:
  • Reserved area (economies of scale): Revenue from 5 MYR fees for letters below 500 g.
  • Special privileges: Additional funding sources include:
    – Stamp issuance rights;
    – UPU network benefits;
    – Trade name usage; and
    – Postal land and assets.

Quality requirements

Quality requirements are documented under Performance Standards for Basic Postal Services (Domestic Letter Service) for the postal sector.

Annual service performance target for domestic letter service:

Objective	*Target*
Speed	89.0%
Reliability	99.97%

Description:

– "Speed" objective means the percentage of the total sample letter that complies with the delivery standard.

– "Reliability" objective means the percentage of the total sample letter.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services: Minimum of one collection per working day from the access points.

– Frequency of delivery of postal services: Minimum of one delivery per working day.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Yes. The MCMC has designated a "Postal Forum" to look into any matters concerning the interests of postal service consumers (provided for under section 49 of the PSA of 2012).

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Under USO Regulations 2015 – Exclusive right to transmit letters below 500 g. The Ministry shall give the universal service licensee the exclusive right to:

a collect, transmit and deliver by ordinary post within Malaysia letters weighing less than 500 g with a charge of less than 5 MYR per letter (excluding tax);

b collect and transmit by ordinary post to any places outside Malaysia letters weighing less than 500 g with a charge of less than 5 MYR per letter (excluding tax).

Price regulations

– Body regulating postal service prices: Malaysian government

– Scope of such price regulations: Under Postage Rates Regulations 2020, first schedule – Postage Rates for Transmission within Malaysia, the scope of the price regulation provides for the following postal service categories:

  1 Standard mail (commercial consumers);

  2 Standard mail (non-commercial consumers);

  3 Non-standard mail (commercial consumers);

  4 Non-standard mail (non-commercial consumers);

  5 MelRakyat; and

  6 Postcards (non-commercial consumers only).

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

– Sales and service tax: Courier services are subject to 6% service tax if:

  i The service provider is licensed under section 10, PSA 2012;

  ii It is a domestic courier service;

  iii The service provider is registered under the Service Tax Act 2018 (STA 2018).

– Are there any exceptions to this taxation structure: Postal services (including bulk mailings) and associated franking machines provided by the universal service provider for the sending of letters requiring postage stamps are not subject to service tax.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes

– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges: Royal Malaysian Customs Department

– Threshold value regarding import duties: 500 MYR

– Threshold value regarding VAT: Sales tax of 10%

– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: Sales Tax Act (Amendments) 2022

Maldives

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Maldives Postal Services Act 2006

– Year of enactment: 2006

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology

– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Communications Authority of Maldives (CAM)

– Covered areas:

  - Licensing of any entity providing a postal service.
  - Monitoring the national postal operator’s performance with respect to its fulfilment of the universal service obligation;
  - Arrangements for the opening and examination of articles, and of the contents thereof, carried by the national postal operator and private postal operators;
  - Arrangements with respect to undeliverable articles and the forfeiture and destruction of articles carried by the national postal operator and private postal operators.

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Communications Authority of Maldives

– Types of licenses required: Not yet implemented as the exiting postal law is currently under discussion with a view to updating it.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes

– The universal service obligation (USO) in the Maldives ensures that all citizens have access to basic postal services at an affordable price, ensuring accessibility to all.

– Prescribed number of post offices and prescribed number of letter boxes: Not defined yet

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: not defined yet

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Maldives Post Limited

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

No mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Communications Authority of Maldives

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Stamps

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Communications Authority of Maldives
– Scope of such price regulations: Affordable, quality services.

Taxation

Postal services provided by the state are exempt from GST. This includes basic postal services but does not extend to courier services.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges: Maldives Customs Services
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 10,000 MVR (approximately 650 USD)
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross border transfer of items: No

Mongolia

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Communications Law
  - Year of enactment: 2001
  - Year of last amendment: 2024
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: legalinfo.mn/en
– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Law
  - Year of enactment: 2003
  - Year of last amendment: 2019
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: legalinfo.mn/en
– Name of the act/law/rule: Permits Law
  - Year of enactment: 2022
  - Year of last amendment: 2024
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: legalinfo.mn/en

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Communications
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: mddc.gov.mn/eng

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Communications Regulatory Commission
– Key objectives:
  - Equitable and accessible communication network and infrastructure;
  - Optimal choice of technology, favourable market environment;
  - Quality service, skilled customers.
– Website: www.crc.gov.mn/home/en

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Communications Regulatory Commission
– The process of applying for licences/registration: The postal service provides customers with the following domestic and international parcels services through the postal network, in accordance with the applicable laws, regulations and agreements:
  - Basic;
  - Express;
  - International parcel services; and
  - Optional additional services.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation:
  - The USO provides for the acceptance and delivery of standard letters up to 70 g, ensuring a basic standard of postal accessibility.
  - Nationwide postal delivery: The USO ensures postal services are available to all citizens, businesses and organizations, regardless of location.
  - Delivery time frame: Postal items should be delivered within nine days across Mongolia.
  - Regulatory basis: These provisions are based on article 12.1 of the Law of Mongolia on Communications.

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Mongol Post

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

The USO fund in Mongolia is financed through:

– Donations, loans and grants – External contributions to sustain postal services.

– Income from the special fund’s own activities – revenue generated by the fund itself.

– Three percent of the net profit after tax from licensees in the communication sector – a regulatory levy on telecommunications or postal operators to support the universal service.

Quality requirements

Quality requirements are set by postal service requirements standard MNS 6776:2019 and by the conditions and requirements of special licences for domestic and international postal services.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services: Once a day

– Frequency of delivery of postal services: in city: Once every two days

Price regulations

– Name of the body: Communications Regulatory Commission

– Scope of such price regulations:
  - The CRC oversees the regulation of postal service prices.
  - The CRC ensures that postal service prices are fair and transparent, particularly for market-dominant operators, and develops pricing regulation methodologies.

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

  Postal products and services are subject to VAT at a standard rate of 10%, applied to both domestic and international services provided by postal operators.

– Are there any exceptions to this taxation structure: International postal parcels sent to an individual in Mongolia are exempt from VAT if they contain no more than two identical goods and have a value not exceeding:
  - 10 times the minimum monthly wage; or
  - 30 times the minimum wage for laptops.

– Additional exemptions may apply under international treaties or zero-rated exports, as outlined in the VAT and customs procedures for international mail shipments.

– Threshold value regarding import duties and VAT: All imported goods are subject to customs duties and VAT, regardless of their value, except for qualifying international postal parcels that meet exemption criteria.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes

– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges: Mongolian Customs.

Myanmar

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Myanmar Post Office Act
  - Year of enactment: 1898
  - Year of last amendment: 1989 (A new postal law is being drafted to replace the old one, and consultations with relevant stakeholders are ongoing)
  - Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.mlis.gov.mm

– Key Features of the Draft Law
  - Partial liberalization of the postal sector.
  - Classification of basic postal services.
  - Licensing for different categories of postal service provider.
  - Technical and quality of service (QoS) provisions.

– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC)

– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

– Website: www.motc.gov.mm

Regulatory authority

Name of the coordinating regulator: Posts and Telecommunications Department

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Cabinet
  - Procedures to be defined in the new postal service law.
  - Key focus:
    – Promote fair competition in the postal sector;
    – Establish clear guidelines and compliance requirements for service providers.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Yes

– Ordinary letters up to 20 g, Registered letters up to 20 g with tracking. Key focus:
  - Ensure affordable, accessible and reliable postal services for all;
  - Target geographic inclusivity, covering urban and rural areas.

– Prescribed number of post offices and prescribed number of letter boxes: No

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Myanmar Post

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

No mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Department of Consumer Affairs

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Price regulations

- Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: No
- To be defined in the new postal service law. Key focus:
    - Ensure affordability and transparency in service pricing;
    - Aim for fair competition and consumer protection.

Taxation

Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

Twenty-two percent of profit has to be paid for profit tax.

Cross-border regulations

- Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
- List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
    - Myanmar Customs
    - Ministry of Commerce
- Threshold value regarding import duties: 50 USD
- VAT rate:
    - Transit duty: 2.5%;
    - Transit fee: 2.5%
- Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for the cross-border transfer of items: No

Nepal

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Act
– Year of enactment: 1963
– Year of last amendment: 2019
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: lawcommission.gov.np/content/13385/postal-act--2019/
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):
    - Postal Act,1963
    - Postal Regulation,1964
    - Additional Postal Office Regulation,1977

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: mocit.gov.np/

Regulatory authority

Name of the coordinating regulator: Department of Postal Service

Licensing body

Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: No

Universal service obligations

– Prescribed number of post offices: One post office per local body
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Nepal Post
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

No mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

No

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Post offices

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Price regulations

Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes

Name of the body: Ministry of Communication and Information Technology

Taxation

Are postal products and services liable for taxation: No

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges: Customs office
– Threshold value regarding import duties:
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No

New Zealand

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Services Act 1998
– Year of enactment: 1998
– Year of last amendment: 2022
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):
  - Deed of Understanding – an agreement between NZ Post and the New Zealand government
  - Postal Services (Information Disclosure) Regulations 1998
  - Postal Services (Fees) Regulations 1998

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
– Functions: To ensure that the regulatory environment, including competition in postal services, supports an efficient postal market in New Zealand.
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.mbie.govt.nz

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE): Communications Policy
– Area covered: New Zealand's postal market was opened to full competition in 1998. The MBIE is responsible for laws and regulations relating to postal services. The focus of New Zealand's postal policy is to ensure that the regulatory environment, including competition in postal services, supports an efficient postal market in New Zealand.

Licensing body

Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment: Communications Policy

The Postal Services Act 1998 states that: "No person may commence or carry on business as a postal operator unless that person is registered under this Act."

Universal service obligations

The products/services covered under the universal service obligation:

– Standard letter, item that does not exceed:
  i 260 mm in height; or
  ii 385 mm in length; or
  iii 20 mm in thickness; or
  iv 1 kg in weight.

– Prescribed number of post offices: The Deed of Understanding stipulates that:

  - New Zealand Post shall maintain throughout New Zealand a network of at least 880 service points at which consumers can purchase basic postal services including, but not limited to, the purchase of postage for, and the acceptance of basic postal items, excluding bulk mail services.
  - The network of service points may be made up of a combination of outlets owned by New Zealand Post, service points hosted in other businesses and electronic self-service kiosks provided that the conversion of service points to self-service kiosks, and the deployment of self-service kiosks, shall not occur in rural and/or provincial areas at a rate that is disproportionate to the rate of conversion and/or deployment throughout the rest of New Zealand.
  - New Zealand Post shall, within the network referred to in clause 12 of this deed, maintain at least 240 service points where personal assistance is available to consumers for the purchase of Additional Postal Services. These points must be visually distinct and easily identifiable to consumers as New Zealand Post service points where personal assistance is available for additional postal services and bill payment services to the extent offered by New Zealand Post.

– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: New Zealand Post Limited, trading as NZ Post

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

NZ Post, as a state-owned-enterprise, is expected to be a fully self-funding business.

Quality requirements

No mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services: No

– Frequency of delivery of postal services:

  - Not less than three days per week to 99.88% of delivery points.
  - One day per week to the remainder of delivery points.
  - Five days per week to rural delivery points.
  - Five days per week to post office box and private bag delivery points.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No. In New Zealand, customers of registered postal operators may employ national legislation such as the Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 and the Fair-Trading Act 1986.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Price regulations

Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: No

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Type of tax applicable to postal products and services: GST
– Rate of tax: 15%
– Exceptions to this tax structure: international inbound direct access mail may be exempt, depending on the location of the sender and whether the sender has representation in New Zealand's market.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
    - Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
    - New Zealand Customs Services (Customs) for border control for duties and taxes and physical security
    - Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) for border control for biosecurity
    - Inland Revenue Department (IRD) for taxation purposes
    - Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) for UPU treaty ratification and FTA negotiation
    - Ministry of Health
    - Civil Aviation Authority (including AVSEC Aviation Security)
    - Ministry of Transport
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 1,000 NZD, excluding tobacco (noting that tobacco is prohibited in the postal channel) and alcohol.
– Threshold value regarding VAT: Refer to the following web page for extensive information: www.ird.govt.nz/gst/gst-for-overseas-businesses/gst-on-low-value-imported-goods/when-to-charge-gst-on-low-value-imported-goods
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No. However, as the designated operator for New Zealand, NZ Post is bound by an MoU with the New Zealand Customs Service.

Pakistan

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

- Name of the act/law/rule: Post Office Act 1898, Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (PPSMB) Ordinance 2002
- Year of enactment: 1898, 2002
- Year of last amendment: 2017 and 2024, respectively
- Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.pakpost.gov.pk/office_manuals.php
- All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):
    - Post Office Act 1898
    - Post Office Rules 1961
    - Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (PPSMB) Ordinance 2002
    - Post Office Manuals (Volume I – IX), website link: www.pakpost.gov.pk/office_manuals.php

Coordinating body for postal policies

- Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Communications
- Level (Ministry or other): ministry
- Website: communication.gov.pk/
- Pakistan Postal Services Management Board 2002, which is mandated to:
    - Manage, maintain and operate Pakistan Post Office Department;
    - Frame overall market-oriented postal policies and introduce a flexible tariff regime;
    - Manage postage rates for ordinary postal articles;
    - Make such provisions appropriate for advancing the skills of its human resources;
    - Conduct research and experiments for improved postal services; and
    - Advise Federal Government on matters related to postal and other services.

Regulatory authority

Is there an agency/authority that regulates the postal operations: No

Pakistan Courier and Logistic Regulatory authority Bill is under consideration in Parliament.

Licensing body

Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: No

Universal service obligations

- Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Pakistan Post
- Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

No mandate to maintain a minimum quality of service as per the national legislation.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No. No separate body has been assigned/designated for grievance redressal. Every unit officer has separate staff to deal with complaints. At Circle and Directorate-General level, dedicated branches deal with complaint handling.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Letter post and the issuance of postage stamps are the exclusive privilege of Pakistan Post.

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (PPSMB)
– Scope of such price regulations
– Determination of prices of all postal products

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Type of tax applicable over postal products and services: GST is levied on the booking of Express Post articles.
– Exceptions to this tax structure: As a government organization, Pakistan Post is exempted from income tax.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Pakistan Customs
  - Ministry of Commerce
  - Anti-Narcotics Force
– Threshold value regarding import duties: 5,000 Pakistani rupees (PKR) (17.9 USD)
– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No

Philippines

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Service Act of 1992 or Republic Act No. 7354 creating the Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost)

– Year of enactment and amendments: Bureau of Post under the Department of Trade – RA 426 (5 September 1902); Postal Service Office under EO 125 DOTC 1987; Philippine Postal Corporation RA 7354 (1992)

– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)

1 Republic Act No. 1412 – Providing for the transmission, free of charge within the Philippines, of mail matter and telegrams of the Office of the President of the Philippines, enacted in 1956.

2 Republic Act No. 2066 – allows the Bureau of Posts to use up to 20% of its annual postage stamp sales revenue to improve the postal system.

3 Postal Service Act of 1992 – gives the postal service the power to conduct searches, issue warrants, make arrests and seizures, and offer rewards for information services related to postal offences.

4 Freedom of Information (FOI) Programme (23 July 2016) – Access to information, official records, public records/documents to be used as a basis for policy development.

5 Memorandum of Association (MOA) with the Bureau of Customs in the handling, examination, assessment, appraisal and collection of duties on letter post, parcel post and express mail items.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) ensures compliance with postal service reform, particularly with regard to the USO and market regulations.

– The Commission on Audit (COA) monitors and audits financial activities to ensure transparency in PHLPost's operations.

– The Governance Commission for GOCC (GCG) oversees PHLPost to ensure that reforms align with good governance principles and operational targets

Regulatory body

– Name of the regulatory body/ministry/committee/agency: Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT)

– Level (Ministry or other): Ministerial-level agency

– Website: www.dict.gov.ph

– Key responsibilities: responsible for the planning, development and promotion of the country's information and communications technology (ICT) agenda in support of national development.

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency:

  - The DICT regulates postal and courier operations in the Philippines and oversees the entry of new delivery service providers.

  - PHLPost issues permits and licences to operate private postal stations/local government units (LGUs)/Brgy Postal Station under its authority as the designated postal operator.

– Types of licences required – licence to operate a postal station.

Universal service obligations

– Products and services covered by universal service obligation: The delivery of letters, parcels and other mail matter is a basic and strategic public utility, which the state (the Government of the Philippines) shall provide (directly and indirectly) through and/or with other duly authorized entities or persons.
– The universal postal service includes the following services:
    - letters;
    - parcels.
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Philippine Postal Corporation (PHLPost)
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government-owned and controlled

Pricing regulations

PHLPost, through its Pricing and Costing Committee, is responsible for regulating postal service prices under RA 7354, which is known as the Postal Service Act of 1992.

Scope of price regulations:

– All domestic and foreign mails/parcels/logistics/bulk mails/special rate or discounted mails/express mails;
– Warehousing/rental space;
– PHLPost ensures that rates are economical, reliable and secure while also promoting international cooperation and understanding through the exchange of postal matters.

Taxation

All postal products and services are subject to VAT under PHLPost Circular No.16-02 dated 12 January 2016.

Cross-border regulations

Threshold value regarding import duties: 10,000 Philippine pesos (PHP) (approximately 173 USD)

Singapore

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Services Act 1999
– Year of enactment: 1999
– Year of last amendment: 2021
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.imda.gov.sg/regulations-and-licensing-listing/postal-services-act--cap--237a
– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):
  - Postal Services Regulations 2008 (S 231/2008)
  - Postal Services (Class Licence) Regulations 2005 (S 481/2005), amended by Postal Services (Class Licence) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 (S 233/2008)
  - Postal Services (Composition of Offences) Regulations 2022 (S 876/2022)
  - Postal Services (Control of Designated Postal Licensees) Regulations 2012 (S 213/2012)

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Digital Development and Information (MDDI)
– Functions: The MDDI drives Singapore's digital development in four key domains – the economy, government, security and society. The MDDI oversees the development of infocomm technology, cybersecurity and media sectors; the government's digitalization initiatives; and the national library, national archives and public libraries. The MDDI is also responsible for effective public communications, and the government's information and public communication policies.
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry
– Website: www.mddi.gov.sg/

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)
– Area covered: Telecoms, media and post

Licensing body

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)
  - Postal Services Operations (PSO) Licence – For the conveyance of letters weighing up to 500 g and/or the provision of mailroom services.
  - A PSO licensee may be designated as a Public Postal Licensee (PPL) and be required to fulfil a set of universal service obligations. Currently, only SingPost is designated as the PPL in Singapore.
  - Express Letter Service Class Licence – For the conveyance of express letters weighing up to 500 g.
  - iris.imda.gov.sg/guide/postal-services-licensing-guide

Universal service obligations

– The products/services covered under the universal service obligation: Letter mail weighing up to 500 g.

– Prescribed number of post offices: The PPL is required to comply with the distribution criteria set by the IMDA when deploying its postal infrastructure, including post offices. This is to ensure that postal services are easily accessible to the public.

– Prescribed number of letter boxes: This is not part of the USO. Under the Postal Services Act 1999, it is the responsibility of building developers/management corporation/owners to provide one letter box for each lot within a building.

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: SINGAPORE POST LIMITED (SingPost)

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Private

The USO requires the PPL to provide postal services, which include the collection and delivery of letters, to any person in Singapore requesting such services, and to provide and maintain posting boxes and post offices throughout Singapore.

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: NA. The Government does not fund the USO.

The IMDA allows SingPost to adjust its postage rates from time to time to sustain the USO. The IMDA also reviews its regulatory requirements, including the USO, to ensure that they remain relevant as the postal landscape changes.

Quality requirements

The IMDA requires the PPL to comply with the following quality of service (QoS) standards for regulated letters weighing up to 500 g:

– Delivery of local basic letters – 98% of mail delivered by next working day[1]

– Outgoing basic letters dispatched – 100% of outgoing mail processed and connected to departing flights by next working day[1] (subject to availability of flights)

– Incoming basic letters received – 98% of mail received by 15.00 at Singapore Post Centre delivered by next working day[1]

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services:
  - Collection cut-off time for mail items posted in posting boxes:
    - Within the Central Business District (CBD): Mondays to Thursdays: 19.00; Fridays: 20.00;
    - Outside the CBD: Mondays to Thursdays: 17.00; Fridays: 18.00.
  - The collection cut-off time for the registered service (Singapore) at the post office is 13.00 on Mondays to Fridays. Registered items posted after 13.00 will be collected the next working day.

– Frequency of delivery of postal services: The IMDA requires the PPL to deliver regulated letters weighing up to 500g in accordance with the QoS standards.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)

[1] Working days refer to Mondays to Fridays, excluding public holidays.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

As the PPL, the IMDA has granted SingPost the following:

– Master door access to letter boxes in public housing;

– Responsibility for the delivery of UPU inbound letter mail;

– The right to issue national stamps; and

– Responsibility for the administration and maintenance of the national postcode system.

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes

– Name of the body: Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)

– Scope of price regulations: The PPL is subject to price regulation solely for regulated letters weighing up to 500 g.

– Process of price approval: The PPL must submit its request to the IMDA and seek its prior approval before any changes to the postage rates for regulated letters can take effect.

– Are there any products or services outside the scope of such price regulations: EMS; parcels; letter mail weighing more than 500 g; books, catalogues, newspapers, periodicals and direct mail (e.g. advertising, marketing or publicity material).

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

– Type of tax applicable to postal products and services: GST is applicable on the import of goods and nearly all supplies of goods and services in Singapore. This includes postal products and services offered by postal operators.

– Rate of tax: 9%

– Exceptions to this tax structure: GST exemptions apply to the provision of most financial services, the sale and lease of residential properties, and the importation and local supply of investment precious metals. Exported goods and international services are zero-rated and exempted from GST.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes

– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:

  - Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)
  - Singapore Customs
  - Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore

– Threshold value regarding import duties:

  - Goods imported by post or courier services are subject to the payment of GST and/or duty.
  - Customs duty is duty levied on goods imported into Singapore, excluding excise duty. Excise duty is duty levied on goods manufactured in, or imported into, Singapore.
  - The duties are based on ad valorem or specific rates. An ad valorem rate is a percentage of the goods' customs value (for example, 20% of the customs value). A specific rate is a specified amount per unit of weight or other quantity (for example, 446 Singapore dollars (SGDs) per kilogramme).
  - There are four categories of dutiable goods: Intoxicating liquors; tobacco products; motor vehicles, and petroleum products and biodiesel blends.

– Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No

Thailand

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Act B.E. 2477 (1934)

– Year of enactment: 1934

– Year of last amendment: 1940

– A public hearing seminar on amending the Postal Act B.E. 2477 was held on 29 November 2024.

– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):

  - Postal Act B.E. 2477
  - The Royal Decree B.E. 2546 Determining the Authorities, Rights and Benefits of Thailand Post
  - Postal Directive B.E. 2566

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES)

– Functions: Conduct a comprehensive analysis of postal affairs to develop and propose appropriate policies and strategies

– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

– Website: www.mdes.go.th

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: The Postal Commission under the MDES

– Area covered: Empowered to authorize, determine and promulgate various regulations pertaining to postal affairs. Authorized to formulate postal communications, negotiate international agreements, and issue postal directives in accordance with the Postal Act B.E. 2477.

Licensing body

– Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: No

  - At present, there is no specific agency that issues licences exclusively for the postal industry.
  - However, providers of courier and express delivery services must comply with various legal requirements and obtain permits based on the nature of their operations. For example, transport licences (Land Transport Act B.E. 2522), business registrations (Commercial Regulations) and other relevant laws. Depending on the specific services offered, operators may need to comply with laws related to customs clearance, data protection, consumer protection, etc.

Universal service obligations

– Basic postal services (letter mail, parcels, postcards, reading devices for the visually impaired).

– Under the USO, basic postal services must be available to all citizens, including in remote areas, at affordable prices.

– Prescribed number of post offices: No

– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Thailand Post Co., Ltd.

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

Quality requirements

Thailand Post follows the quality requirements of relevant postal organizations, such the UPU, APPU, KPG and PRIME.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services: 7 days/week in big cities and business areas.
– Frequency of delivery of postal services: 7 days/week.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Yes. Thailand Post Contact Centre (Customer Services Department)

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Thailand Post holds an exclusive privilege for the provision of postal services for letter post, stamps and postcards.

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Ministry of Digital Economy and Society
– Scope of price regulations:
  - The government determines the pricing for essential domestic postal services (standard letter mail, postcards, printed materials, parcels up to a specified weight limit, special provisions for materials for the visually impaired)
  - Market-driven pricing: While the government regulates basic postal services, there is generally more flexibility for the pricing of premium or specialized services, such as express delivery, courier services and value-added options. These prices may be subject to market forces and competition.
– Are there any products or services outside the scope of such price regulations: All parcels and products weighing more than 2 kg

Taxation

– Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
– Type of tax applicable over postal products and services: VAT, import tax/duty, excise tax
– Rate of tax: VAT = 7%. Rates for import tax/excise tax depend on the type and the amount of products.

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Thai Customs Department
  - Food and Drug Administration
  - Plant Quarantine
  - Animal Quarantine

- Threshold value regarding import duties: All imported items with a value of 1,501 or more Thai baht (THB), CIF (cost, insurance and freight) cost, are subject to duties.
- Threshold value regarding VAT: All imported items with a value of 1 or more THB (CIF cost) are subject to VAT.
- Is there any national legislation mandating Electronic Advance Data for cross-border transfer of items: No

Tonga

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Services Act 2006
– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: ago.gov.to/cms/

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Ministry of Public Enterprises
– Functions:
  - Board of Directors appointed to oversee the management and running of the company, including the annual assessment of Tonga Post's business plan, annual report and budget.
  - CEO appointed with the Board's approval.
– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

Regulatory authority

– Name of the coordinating regulator: Ministry of Public Enterprises
– Area covered: Oversee the business plan, annual report, appointment of the CEO and management.

Universal service obligations

– Tonga Post has agreed to fulfil social obligations in the scope below, although these obligations are not formally defined in the Postal Services Act 2007 or otherwise:
  - Provide all the inhabitants of Tonga with a universal letter service;
  - Deliver standard letters within Tonga at a uniform price;
  - Ensure that the postal service is accessible on an equitable basis to all the inhabitants of Tonga.
– Prescribed number of post offices: No
– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No
– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No
– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Tonga Post Limited
– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider

No

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

No

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Board of Directors, Tonga Post

Taxation

- Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
- Type of tax applicable to postal products and services:
  - All imports are taxable and subject to customs duty.
  - A 15% consumption tax is levied on all income generated.
- Rate of tax:
  - A 15% customs tax is levied on all income generated.
  - At the end of the year, the profit is taxable at 25%.

Cross-border regulations

Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: No

Viet Nam

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

– Name of the act/law/rule: Postal Law

– Year of enactment: 2010

– Year of last amendment:

– Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.moj.gov.vn/vbpq/en/lists/vn%20bn%20php%20lut/view_detail.aspx?itemid=10480

– All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.):

  - Government Decree No. 47/2011/ND-CP of 17 June 2011 on detailed regulations for implementing some content of the Postal Law;
  - Government Decree No. 25/2022/ND-CP of 12 April 2022 on the amendment of the Government Decree No. 47/2011/ND-CP of 17 June 2011;
  - Prime Minister's Decision No. 41/2011/QD-TTg of 3 August 2011 on designating a postal operator to manage the public postal network and to provide public and international postal services;
  - Prime Minister's Decision No. 45/2015/QD-TTg of 24 September 2015 on the provision of public postal services and public service in the delivery of press;
  - Prime Minister's Decision No. 45/2016/QD-TTg of 19 October 2016 on the receipt and delivery of public service documents via public postal services;
  - Prime Minister's Decision No. 37/2021/QD-TTg of 18 December 2021 on the dedicated postal network for government agencies;
  - Other guidance circulars.

Coordinating body for postal policies

– Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Department of Posts, Ministry of Science and Technology

– Functions:

  - Drafting the legal documents, policies, strategies and plans for the management and development of the postal sector in Viet Nam.
  - Managing universal postal services: scope, price, quality of service, reserved area, etc.
  - Managing non-universal postal services: licensing, price, quality of service, fair competition, etc.
  - Participating in international postal services within the framework of UPU international treaties.
  - Managing postage stamps.

– Level (Ministry or other): ministry

– Website: www.most.gov.vn/vn/Pages/Trangchu.aspx

Regulatory authority

– Is there an agency/authority that regulates postal operations: No

– Name of the coordinating regulator:

Licensing body

– Name of the agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators:
  - The Ministry of Science and Technology issues licences and acknowledgements of notification (authorized or declared) for inter-provincial and international scopes.
  - The Provincial Department of Science and Technology issues licences and acknowledgements of notification (authorized or declared) for intra-provincial scopes.

Licensing/Registration:

– Article 21, Viet Nam Postal Law. Conditions on the granting of postal service business licences: Any letter service provider that has a recipient's address for a single letter weighing up to 2 kg must possess a postal service business licence (referred to below as a "postal licence") granted by a competent state agency in charge of the post.

– Article 25, Viet Nam Postal Law. Notification of postal activities

  The following postal activities shall be notified in writing to a state-competent agency in charge of the post:

  a Provision of letter services for single unaddressed letters weighing up to 2 kg;

  b Provision of letter services for single letters weighing over 2 kg;

  c Provision of parcel services;

  d Acting as an agent for a foreign postal service provider;

  e Undertaking a commercial franchise in the post sector from abroad into Viet Nam;

  f Acting as a representative for a foreign postal service provider;

  g Acting as a branch or representative office of a postal service provider established under Vietnamese law;

  h Acting as a representative office of a foreign postal service provider.

Universal service obligations

– Universal postal service: basic letter-mail service, with a receiving address, for single items weighing up to 2 kg, including:

  a Basic domestic letter-mail services;

  b Basic letter-mail services from Viet Nam to other countries;

  c Basic letter-mail services from other countries to Viet Nam.

– Prescribed number of post offices: No, but we have some conditions:
  - Number of service points in a commune: at least one service point
  - Average service radius per service point: a maximum of 3 km.

– Prescribed number of letter boxes: No.

– Exceptions to universal service obligations: No

– Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Vietnam Post

– Status of the universal service provider providing USO: SOE

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: No

There is no direct cash support mechanism but there are other support mechanisms such as dedicated services, priority to allow the provision of document delivery services of state agencies.

Quality requirements

– Applies only to the public postal service and not to other freely competitive postal services.
– The applicable regulation in respect of the universal postal service is as follows (the universal postal service is part of the public postal service):
– Total transit time for intra-provincial letter mail: maximum J+2; the compliance rate is 70% of the total number of letter mails.
– Total transit time for inter-provincial letter mail: maximum J+6; the compliance rate is 70% of the total number of letter mails.
– Domestic processing time for international outgoing letter mail: maximum J+5; the compliance rate is 70% of the total number of letter mails.
– Domestic processing time for international incoming letter mail: maximum six working days; the compliance rate is 70% of the total number of mails.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

– Frequency of collection of postal services: Yes, applies only to the public postal service and not to other freely competitive postal services.
  - The applicable regulation in respect of the universal postal service is as follows (the universal postal service is part of the public postal service):
    – In areas not listed in the list of areas with special geographical conditions: at least once per working day; the compliance rate is 97% of the total number of service points.
    – In areas with special geographical conditions: the Ministry of Science and Technology stipulates the list and minimum frequency of collection and delivery; the compliance rate is 97% of the total number of service points.
– Frequency of delivery of postal services: Yes, applies only to the public postal service and not to other freely competitive postal services.
  - The applicable regulation in respect of the universal postal service is as follows (the universal postal service is part of the public postal service):
    – Service time at the provincial central transaction post office: at least eight hours per working day; the compliance rate is 100% of the total number of post offices.
    – Service time at other service points: at least four hours per working day; the compliance rate is 100% of the total number of service points.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Yes. Postal operators: If necessary, complaints can be sent to the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Provincial Department of Science and Technology (however, the number of complaints remains low).

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

The scope of the reserved area includes the provision of letter-mail services with a recipient's address, with a single weight of up to 2 kg at a lower postage rate:

– 8,000 Vietnamese dollars (VND) per item for domestic letter-mail services and for mail services received from abroad for transportation and delivery in Viet Nam;
– 150,000 VND per item for international letter mail services accepted by Viet Nam for transportation and delivery abroad.

Price regulations

– Is there a body that regulates the price of postal products and services in the country: Yes
– Name of the body: Ministry of Science and Technology
– Scope of price regulations: Applies only to the public postal service and not to other freely competitive postal services. However, the price of competitive services must comply with the provisions of the Law on Prices and the Law on Competition.
– Process of price approval:
  - Public postal service: The DO (Vietnam Post) proposes the price level applicable to public postal services and the Ministry of Information and Communications issues a circular regulating the maximum price level applicable to public postal services based on the proposal of Vietnam Post.
  - Competitive postal services: Self-issued and applied. However, the Ministry of Science and Technology must be notified of the prices prior to their application. The prices notified will be the basis for subsequent comparison and inspection of the application of the price list of enterprises.

Taxation

Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes

Cross-border regulations

– Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
– List the authorities that are stakeholders in cross-border postal exchanges:
  - Customs;
  - Tax authority;
  - Other specialized agencies.