ADDRESSING AS AN ELEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF POSTAL SERVICES[1]

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Abstract

Improving the interoperability of the global postal network is one of the key elements of the policy of public postal operators, which struggle with the competition on the liberalized postal market. This issue was discussed at the last Congress of the Universal Postal Union, where special attention was devoted to increasing the quality of service, reliability and efficiency of the postal network. A proper addressing of letters is one way of increasing the quality of postal service and improving the interoperability. In this paper, the system of addressing in chosen European countries is analysed.

Keywords – quality; addressing; postal services

INTRODUCTION

Postal system is a complex, unique technical and technological as well as economic and infrastructure system. As an important element of the infrastructure, it provides a high quality (fast and secure) transfer of postal, print and otherwise shaped information, goods and money in domestic and international traffic. With studying the market raises the question of quality of service.The quality of service is the only weapon which transport company can successfully use to face with the challenges of growing competitive and sensitive, a very demanding market and can be defined as the degree to which the user is satisfied with the features services.

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[1] Original scientific paper

At Doha in 2012was held XXV Congress of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Doha Postal Strategy defines four main goals which at the global level represent a UPU's milestone as well as the support of all member countries. These strategic goals, through support programs, act as a guide and starting point for the further development of the region and sub-alliances within the Universal Postal Union. The first of the goals is to improve the interconnectedness of the global postal network: quality, affordable, safe, effective universal postal service. One of the most important objectives of the Union is to facilitate the efficient operation of the three-dimensional postal network: physical, electronic and financial. Interconnection of postal networks of all member states of UPUis important for the integration of the global postal transport chain[1].

From a user perspective, the quality of postal services is defined across multiple parameters. One of them is the quality of transportof postal items which directly depends on the proper addressing of items. Quality addressing and postcode systems are essential for national infrastructure and the socio-economic development of a country. They also form the cornerstone of quality of postal services, facilitating business exchange and hence contributing to a country's economic growth.

The UPU seeks to help member states to develop and improve their addressing and postcode system, with the aim of improving the coverage of the address infrastructure on a global level. The Union provides technical assistance in the field of physical addresses, deals with national standards, postal codes and postal database. Also, the UPU helps member states to develop international standard solutions to facilitate names and address data interoperability, to enable validation of address and provide guidance for the construction and maintenance of infrastructure addresses. This activity is coordinated with other standardization organizations, such as the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) [2].

ADDRESSING OF POSTAL ITEMS

The first postcodes have emerged in the nineteenth century, primarily in large cities and were based on the principle of zoning. With the increasing number of items and the development of postal services there was a need to introduce a system that would explicitly locate the recipient. For this purpose was introduced address system which represents a group of information provided in a precise format, on the basis of which it is possible to accurately locate a city, street, building and apartment of recipient. Technical Committee ISO in the ISO TC 154 prescribed format 'physical address', and UPU is compliant with it adopted the document Regulation of letters (Letter

Post Regulation). The document containsspecification of elements which must be included in the address data.Most member states have adopted a given specification. Also, the ISO is developed standard ISO19160, which is supposed to represent a new concept of addressing the items in accordance with the requirements of modern business, because today many companies use the contact information (eg. banks, mobile operators, utility companies, etc.) [3].

Proper addressing of postal items will provide fast and safe delivery of the item to the recipient. If when addressing user provides complete and accurate address information on the address side of the item and enter additional data, the item will be transferred and delivered to the recipient as soon as possible. The address of recipient must be located in the right lower part of the address side of the item and must be parallel to its longer side.In envelope with transparent part the address may be on the right or the left lower part of the address side of the item. Through the transparent portion may see only the address of the recipient. Items addressed for abroad, should be addressed according to regulations of thedestination country. Address of the recipient should we written in Latin letters and Arabicnumbers, also, it can be written in the alphabet of the destination country, provided that thelast line of the address, the name of the destination country, was written in Latin.The postal operator may refuse to accept items that are not addressed in a manner with acts of the Universal Postal Union, for itemsin international postal traffic[4].

The accuracy of address information is often ignored by sender and because of that the items are dispatched with incomplete or incorrect address. In the past few decades, the postal sector, mainly in industrialized countries, has been very innovative in the use of advanced technologies. One of the best examples is the investment in Optical Character Recognition (OCR) systems. Since then, the OCR systems for sorting of items made an unprecedented breakthrough in the field of reading quality with a huge percentage of recognition accuracy of machine printed and hand-printed addresses. Modern OCR systems not only read multiple addresses with a higher accuracy but modern technology also successfully 'read' those elements of the addresses that previously could not be read [5].

ADDRESS DATA

Each postal item must contain a legible and clear indication of first and last names of the addressee/recipient, full address or address code of the addressee, or an indication unambiguously denoting the addressee.Address block of the addressee is normally situated in the right lower corner of the address side of the letter.Address block of the sender is normally situated in

the left upper corner of the address side of the letter, i.e. at the back of the letter, on its folded part.Stamp or the franking machine impression is placed in the right upper corner of the address side of the letter.The left lower corner of the letter address side represents the part of the letter designated for the application of special labels containing identification number of the specific type of letterpost item, its weight, or other technological indication [4].
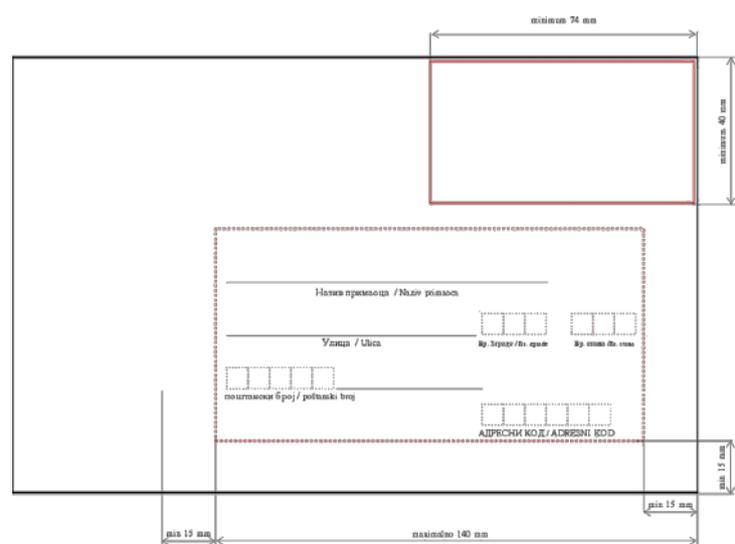

Fig. 1. Address side format of letter item

Postal item may have only one sender address and a recipient address. The information that the sender when addressing shipments obliged to state, must be indicated under each other in the following order [4] :

- title, name and surname or name recipient,
- street, subheading, apartment number or post office box number, or the number and name of the military post or the word 'general delivery' / 'general delivery',
- the name of settlement (destination),
- postal code and the name of the destination post office,
- the name of the country of destination, in international postal traffic.

EXAMPLES OF ADDRESSING

For sendingpostal items in Serbia in domestic traffic it is necessary to write postal address code (PAK). Exact written or printed postal address code (PAK) on the item is the key for rapid and accurate routing.The use of

PAK allows delivery of items within the prescribed period independent of the frequent changes of street names and the existence of a street with the same name in the same city or municipality. PAK is a series of 6 digits, unlike the five-digit postal code that identifies a specific post office, unambiguously defines the smallest indivisible part of the territory for which the item was addressed. Six-digit address code reaches the level part of the road, while in densely populated parts of the territory, going up to the individual object, which unambiguously defines the municipality, town and street, or an individual object in the street. The plan is to gradually replace PAK postcodes [4].

In 2010 Postal address code (PAK) Post of Serbia was included in the Universal Postal Data base UPU as an example for other postal administrations in order to address how application of the code can improve the quality of transfer of postal items in domestic and international traffic.
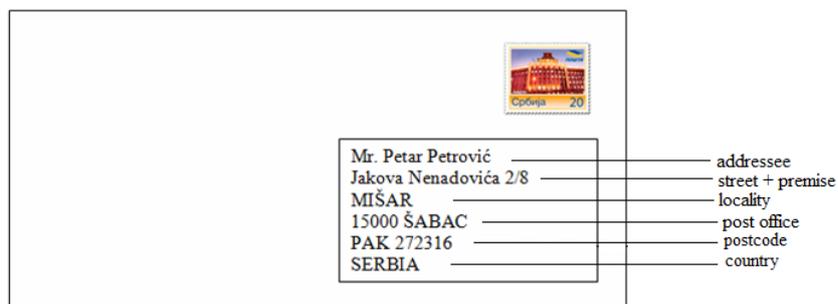

Fig. 2. Example of addressing letters in Serbia

Postcode type and position -6 digits in separate line, below the number and the name of the delivery post office
PAK Coding method:
27 - region
23 - delivery zone
16 - delivery point
Address format
Post Serbia has introduced a new six-digit postcode -"postal address code" (PAK) which goes down to the street level. To address a mail item properly to Serbia, the PAK shall be included in the address below the number and the name of the delivery post office. For items that are addressed to P.O box, "poste restante" or for military address, the PAK is not needed in the address. For rural address with no official street name assigned, a blank line is left between the addressee and locality details [2].

563

Fig. 3. Finding PAK on the website of Serbia

STREET NAME, - OLD NAME	STREET NUMBER AND SUB-NUMBER	SETTLEMENT, MUNICIPALITY, CITY	NUMBER AND NAME OF DELIVERY POST OFFICE	PAK	MAP
JAKOVA NENADOVIĆA	2	MIŠAR, ŠABAC, ŠABAC	15000 ŠABAC 1	272316	

Fig. 4. Search results address code

Fig. 5. Find a PAK – MAP

Address code unambiguously captures address coordinates of each natural or legal person, and comprises six numeric characters, with additional, but non-mandatory (alpha)numeric characters denoting entrance number (building number) and flat number. First six digits of the address

564

code contain information about the Delivery Post Office and delivery area. Use of address codes enables sorting of items up to delivery areas, i.e. PACs. Address code structure:

- first pair of digits denotes a region territory,
- second pair of digits represents a delivery area,
- third pair of digits, in hierarchial order represents a street segment, unnamed unsurfaced road, facility,
- a number of these segments constitutes a delivery area,
- following six (non-mandatory) digits capture information about a building number or entrance number, and flat number.

Address register contains all links between PC address data and postal oganizational levels (postal centre, delivery post office, delivery area, scheduled mailmen's routes). Address register information is updated daily, according to on-site changes. Direct interface between the machine-based software and server containing data entered in the Address register needs to be provided. At the moment, in our postal processing, two-tier system of item addressing is in use - postal code and/or address code (first six numeric characters). Bar code is used for recorded items. Bar code mark i.e. item reception number structure is a 13-alphanumeric character sequence (VV123456789RS). It unambiguously denotes the item it is allocated to, and also represents a basis for capturing the item's „history" from the moment of collection to delivery. In PE of PTT „Srbija", bar code 39 (Code 39), or bar code 128 (Code 128) is in use [4].
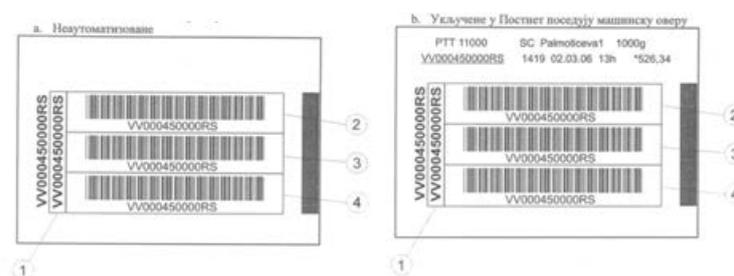

Fig. 6. Bar code label layout

Bar code label parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be subsequently separated, for the purpose of further manipulation.

At the Congress of the Universal Postal Council in Doha president of the Universal Postal Union presented the Serbian Post 'Gold Certificate' for quality management - the recognition of the fastest growing service quality in Southeast Europe. Out of a possible 2,000 points Serbia Post won the

1,965 and consultants is most impressed by the commitment to improving the quality of services.

To send items to Croatia, in addition to the above mentioned addressing of postal items, it is necessary that a user types the name or abbreviation of the state for items in international traffic. It is preferably before postcode enroll the ISO country code.

Fig. 7. Example of addressing letter in Croatia

Postcode type and position - 5 digits to the left of the locality name and preceded by "HR"
Coding method
10 - postal centre
000 - post office

Table 1. ISO codes for sending consignments abroad for selected countries

ISO Country Code	English name	Franch name
MK	Macedonia	Macedonie
RS	Serbia (Rep)	Serbie (Rep)
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnie-Herzegovine

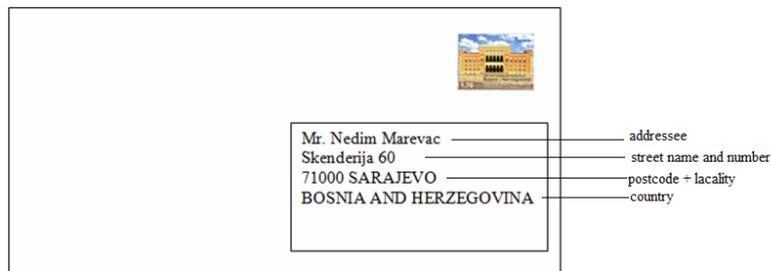Post of Bosnia and Herzegovina has a five-digit address number and Post of Macedonia has four figures.

Fig. 8. Example of addressing letters in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Postcode type and position - 5 digits to the left of the locality name
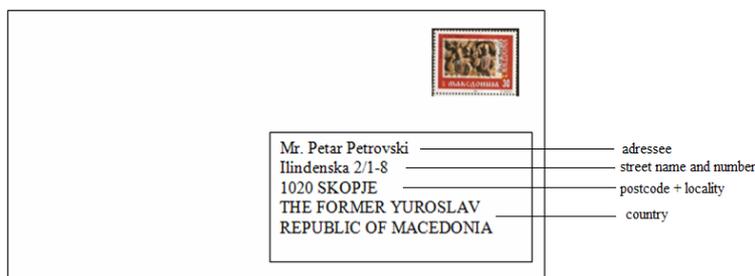**Coding method**
71 - postal region
000 - post office

Fig. 9. Example of addressing of letters in Macedonia

Postcode type and position - 4 digits to the left of the locality name
Coding method
1 – postal centre (sorting office)
020 - post office

CONCLUSION

The quality of postal services or some of its parameters can be determined by measuring (observing the problem or surveying users). Development in the quality of postal services is today obvious, but still there is a growing dissatisfaction, which is due to man's need for the services of a higher quality.This means that the postal administrations became aware that quality has a great impact on the increase in the volume of postal services, to survival in real terms and to the need that quality development should be aimed at meeting the needs of the user. Proper addressing increases

transmission speed and accuracy of delivery of postal items and thus the quality and satisfaction of the users.

The strategy of the last Congress of the UPU strongly emphasizes the importance of improving the quality of service delivery and the use of modern information and communication technologies. A satisfactory level of quality and a higher quality of service with modern information and communication technologies will keep the confidence of existing and attract new customers. All this will allow the postal operators to cope with competition and survive in the postal service.

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