



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR POSTAL FINANCIAL SERVICE BUSINESS  
/ICPFSB/

## Post € Fin - Newsletter



### Special points of interest:

- **Free cash access for all in UK post offices**
- **Erste - first mover in lower charges for cross border payments in Central and Eastern Europe**
- **milestones in Postal bank legislation**
- **Postal privatization ahead in Italy and Romania**
- **Poles prefer Post; shun Banks**

### ICPFSB welcomes new members: Posta Moldovei and Posta Romana !

“Two postal operators from the heart of Europe have joined the ICPFSB; a very warm welcome is extended to Posta Romana and Posta Moldovei. Copies of their application letters demonstrate a strong interest in joining our international platform for cooperation in the field of postal financial services and business.

Both Posts play a vital role in the national financial systems. They provide a critical role in delivery and collection of payments, such as salaries, pensions, children's allowances and utility bills for water, energy, taxes. Also, they are active in the field of channeling workers' remittances back home. Partnerships with providers of financial services are a top priority for further development.

The application of the Romanian and Moldovan Posts comes amidst a dynamic period, in which the Danish Post commenced its privatisation, the Dutch and German Posts completed their privatisation process and announcement were circulated for the privatisation of the Italian Post.

The European dynamics represent a global trend, as also in Asia, Posts are reformed, leading to the creation of licensed postal savings banks. Russia's and Poland's Posts also work towards incorporation and expansion of the financial services.

This newsletter represents a selection of reports and messages about developments in the postal financial sector. The newsletter also includes the agenda of international PFS events.

Special newsletters for a Summer Course and the General Assembly of ICPFSB will be released soon.

If you wish to contribute news or opinions to this newsletter, please feel free to submit your report or article to [info@icpfsb.org](mailto:info@icpfsb.org) before 15 August 2005.

Elena Petculescu,  
President ICPFSB



ICPFSB; a very warm welcome is extended to Posta Romana and Posta Moldovei



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Translation from Romanian

**C. N Posta Romana S.A**

Square stamp: Banc Post, Bucharest  
July 18<sup>th</sup> 2005 Entry no. 50/ 23206



In the attention of: **Mrs. ELENA PETCULESCU**  
Honorary President  
President of the International Commission for Financial Postal Services and  
Business  
BANCPOST SA  
Calea Vitan nr. 6-6A, sector3, 031296 Bucharest, Romania

No. 108/ 9090/ GM  
Date: July 13<sup>th</sup> 2005

**Subject: International Commission for Financial Postal Services and Business**

**Mrs. Honorary President,**

We kindly thank you for the information regarding the International Commission for Financial Postal Services and Business as well as for the invitation for C.L. Posta Romana S.A. to become member of this Commission.

We would like to let you know that our institution is interested to become an active member of the International Commission for Financial Postal Services and Business. As you have already mentioned, the development of the financial postal services is part of the documents adopted by the Congress from Bucharest.

You already know that the Board of the Universal Postal Union is chaired by Mr. Gabriel MATEESCU until the next Congress, so the activity of the newly created Commission, UPU limited Union as it is stipulated in the Constitutive Charter, is very interesting for C.N. Posta Romana S.A.

We shall ask for the MCTI approval before starting any procedure to become a CISFPB member, taking into account that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology represents the Romanian postal management in its relations with all the international organizations and that, as we have mentioned above, the International Commission for Financial Postal Services and Business is a limited Union of the Universal Postal Union.

In order to start the formalities after having received the MCTI approval, we kindly ask you to send us the adherence form (which is mentioned in your Letter, but it is not included in the set of documents) and to tell us the value of the yearly contribution that C.N Posta Romana SA must pay.

The person appointed with the activity of the Commission, including the participation at its reunions, is Mr. CEZAR COJOCARIU – Executive Commercial Manager (Phone 300.01.30 / int. 221).

**Dan Mihai TOADER**  
President and General Manager

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Official stamp

**Gabriel Mateescu**  
International Cooperation Manager

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**Cezar Cojocariu**  
Executive Commercial Manager

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Translation from Moldavian

**POSTA MOLDOVEI**

**MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS  
OF THE MOLDAVIAN REPUBLIC**

**“POSTA MOLDOVEI” STATE ENTERPRISE**

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22.06.2005 No. 22

In the attention of: **Mrs. ELENA PETCULESCU**  
*President of the Commission of the European Financial Postal Services*

**Dear Mrs. President,**

*The “Posta Moldovei” State Enterprise hereby informs you that we are very interested in the implementation of the financial bank services through the postal offices. For their promotion and implementation we need the experience of other postal administrations and financial institutions which are operating in this field.*

*Following our participation, as observer, at the General Assembly of the Commission of the European Financial Postal Services, which took place in the period February 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> 2005 and taking as basis the CSFPE State, the “Posta Moldovei” State Enterprise asks for the adherence as member of the Commission of the European Financial Services.*

*Please inform us regarding the necessary formalities for the authentication of this petition.*

*We hope that our collaboration shall give us the possibility to enlarge the rank of our financial services through the postal network.*

*Sincerely yours,*

*General Manager*

**VITALIE PAVLOV**

## Workshop meeting with the representatives of the Postal and Savings banks

### 24<sup>th</sup> May, Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro

#### May 24, 2005 - [ICPFSB's Secretariate]

"In the period of the Annual Reunion of the European Bank Governors for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) being held, which took place in Belgrade in Serbia and Montenegro and of the Businessmen Forum, a workshop meeting of the postal and savings banks representatives who were present in Belgrade was also organized.

At the workshop meeting participated Mrs. Elena Petculescu, President of the International Commission for Financial Postal Services and Business and Honorary President of Bancpost S.A. Romania, Mrs. Jelica Zivkovic, General Manager, Postal Savings Bank, Serbia and Montenegro, Mrs. Maria Sultănoiu, Manager - Secretary General of Bancpost S.A. Romania, Mrs. Jasminka Bosniak, Manager, Postal Savings Bank, Serbia and Montenegro, Mr. Egmont E.W.L. Philips, Vice-president and Regional Manager of ING Bank, Wholesale Bank, Financial Institutions Department, Mr. Herman J. Groeneveld, Manager of Financial Institutions Department, Irina Shavgenin, Programs Manager, Institutional and Governmental Consultancy, Financial Institutions Department ING Bank.

The workshop meeting was chaired by Mrs. Elena Petculescu, who highlighted the good collaboration that was established between the

members of the Commission and presented the main preoccupations and present priorities of ICPFSB. Also, as a result of the things agreed on the occasion of the previous reunion of the Commission that took place in the Hague, in Holland, she wants to put into practice some measures that revitalize and make the activity of the Commission more dynamic, so that it becomes an active factor of promoting the postal-financial and business services, improves the relations between the banking sector and the postal companies.

To this effect, she intends to act so that she attracts into this collaboration a larger number of banking institutions with a network of units (not only postal and savings banks), both from Romania, and from other countries too.

Related to this aspect, even on the occasion of the Businessmen Forum in Belgrade she had some meetings with banks from Romania, Serbia and Montenegro and from Moldavia.

Also, she wants the relation between the banking institutions and postal companies to be consolidated by using more collaboration possibilities, such as:

- creating some mixed companies for products and services sale to customers, with the participation of the savings banks, or of some commercial banks and postal companies;
- privatizing the sale of products by means of third companies;

- perfecting the professional background of the employees from banks and postal companies, both at the decisional level, and of execution, etc.

In this context, the representatives of ING Bank expressed their interest in supporting the activity of the Commission. To the questions of the ING representatives, related to the collaboration future possibilities, Mrs. Elena Petculescu appreciated the support that the ING Bank consultants could provide to the Commission for the improvement and activation of the activity.

Thus, after the identification of the technical assistance needs, it is proposed the development of a cooperation that supports the implementation of new organization models of the financial-postal and business services, of new products and selling techniques, etc. It is well-known the fact that the banks from Holland in general and ING in particular, have an expertise and a reputation that are recognized in the world in this area, and their specialists could contribute to sharing this knowledge with other financial-banking and postal institutions from the member countries.

Practically, Bancpost S.A. Romania offered to house in the summer of the year 2005, refreshment courses of professional training for the banking personnel and of the Romanian Post Company (both at the decisional level, and of execution) in the area of financial and business services and (**cont. to p. 10**)

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## Poles Queue at Post Offices- No Fans of Banks, Shun Advances of Citigroup, UniCredito

June 17, 2005 -  
[Bloomberg]

"Anna Woznicka, who works for a cement company in Kutno in central Poland, stands in line to pay her electricity, gas and phone charges at the post office every month and keeps any spare money at home.

Woznicka is among the 50 percent of Poles yet to open a bank account, take out a loan or use a credit card, compared with about 5 percent of adults in Western Europe, according to GfK Polonia, a market research company in Warsaw. With Poland's jobless rate at 18 percent, the highest in the European Union, the 56-year-old said she's afraid of paying too much for banking and borrowing to buy goods she can't afford.

"My monthly salary is enough just to pay bills and I prefer to keep in my pocket whatever is left," Woznicka said. "For years I haven't needed a bank account so I will survive now too."

**Citigroup Inc., UniCredito Italiano SpA, HVB Group** and four competitors spent more than \$5 billion between 1994 and 2001 to acquire seven of Poland's eight largest lenders, gambling that consumers inevitably will use their services. **PKO Bank Polski SA**, majority owned by the state, is the largest with 36 percent of current accounts and about 17 percent of the industry's assets.

"The main challenge for foreign banks in Poland is to encourage people to open an account, as well as win more consumers from PKO," said Ewa Radkowska, who helps

oversee a 7 billion-zloty (\$2 billion) fund at ING Investment Management in Warsaw and manages stockholdings in the country's biggest banks."

### Growth Forecast

The consumer market will gain at least 12 percent in each of the next five years, according to Slawomir Sikora, chief executive of **Bank Handlowy SA**, Citigroup's Polish unit and the country's fourth-biggest bank.

"The corporate business has matured, but it's a different story with the consumer market," Sikora, 43, said in a June 2 interview at his office in Warsaw's former city hall, now the bank's headquarters. "The pie is still growing."

Financial companies spend an average 56 million zloty a month to promote their services on television, radio and in newspapers, equal to about 6 percent of total marketing costs in Poland, according to Expert Monitor, a Warsaw-based company that tracks advertising.

**ING Bank Slaski SA**, the local unit of ING Groep NV of the Netherlands, hired movie star Marek Konrad for a series of ads on television this year aimed at increasing lending and Internet banking.

### Lucrative Market

**UniCredito**, Italy's second-largest bank, this week agreed to buy **HVB of Germany** for 19.2 billion euros (\$23.3 billion). HVB Chief Executive Dieter Rampl said on a conference call June 13 that Poland will be the "most important" market in Eastern Europe.

**PKO** Chief Executive Officer Andrzej Podsiadlo, 55, said in an April 26 interview he plans to retain market share as home loans "stimulate" growth in retail lending.

The bank has 1,266 branches, including one in the former headquarters of the communist party in Warsaw. That's more than the 1,245 the Polish banks owned by UniCredito and HVB have combined.

The consumer market generated \$4 billion of revenue for Polish banks in 2004, Sikora estimated. Including all sources of revenue, earnings at the top five lenders in Poland were about \$1.3 billion in 2004, exceeding the \$1.2 billion reported by the five biggest in Germany, which have 40 times the assets.

The Polish Banks Association predicts about 80 percent of Poles will have an account by the end of the decade. That's why foreign banks are still expanding in Poland, the group's head, Krzysztof Pietraszkiewicz, said in a May 23 interview.

### Adding Branches

**Bank Handlowy**, which was Poland's biggest corporate banker when it was bought by Citigroup in 2001 for \$1.2 billion, is trying to capture that by investing in branches. The bank, the biggest issuer of credit cards in Poland, plans to expand its network to 250 by the end of 2006 from 172 today, Sikora said.

**Deutsche Bank**, Europe's third-largest bank, also is opening more outlets, doubling branches to 64 in two years as well as increasing its payroll by 50 percent over the next (cont. to p. 11)




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ING  BANK ŚLASKI



## Post Office® announces fee-free ATM partnership with Bank of Ireland



July 18, 2005 - [[Press Release](#)]

“1,000 fee-free ATMs to be installed in Post Office® branches across the UK · Agreement with Bank of Ireland strengthens Post Office®’s position as fastest growing free cash withdrawal outlet in the UK · Post Office® to withdraw from contracts with fee-charging ATM suppliers

The Post Office® has today announced an agreement with the Bank of Ireland that will see the introduction of 1,000 Post Office® branded, free-of-charge automated teller machines (ATMs) across its branch network.

This move comes as the Post Office® announces figures revealing that free cash withdrawals at its branches have trebled over the past year and have now reached almost one million a day.

The deal with Bank of Ireland will add further support to the Post Office®’s position as the fastest growing outlet for free cash withdrawals in the country. The Post Office®’s 14,600 strong branch network offers a free over-the-counter service to customers with basic and current accounts at a wide range of high street banks, as well as for its own Post Office Card Account customers. The new Post Office® ATMs will extend this service by allowing customers of all banks and building societies to access their cash free of charge at 1000 branches.

Roll out of the Post Office® ATMs will commence this Autumn. Over 300 ATMs will be introduced at Post Office®

branches currently not offering an ATM service, with around a further 700 replacing ATMs owned by other banking providers. In support of its drive for free cash access for all, the Post Office® has also confirmed its intention to cease participating in contracts with fee charging ATM suppliers.

The Post Office® ATMs will be provided by Bank of Ireland. The two companies already have a close working relationship through their Financial Services partnership launched in January 2004. Through this joint venture they have launched a wide range of value-for-money services including car and home insurance, personal loans, and savings products such as GEBS, Growth Bonds and a Child Trust Fund offering.

David Mills, Chief Executive of Post Office Ltd, said:

“The Post Office® is not only the biggest single cash network in the UK, it is also one of the most popular – with free cash withdrawals at Post Office® branches having trebled in the past year to almost one million a day. This deal is a significant step towards achieving our vision of free cash access for all, from any type of bank account, at Post Office® branches.

“Our partnership with Bank of Ireland is great news for both the Post Office® and our customers.

It will allow us to extend the free service offered over the counter at our 14,600 branches, with our new Post Office® ATMs providing free access to cash for customers of all banks and building

societies.”

Brian Goggin, Group Chief Executive at Bank of Ireland, added:

“The agreement to provide 1,000 ATMs across the Post Office®’s branch network gives us a great opportunity to build on the relationship developed between our two companies though our financial services joint venture. The Post Office® has the biggest retail network in the UK and our partnership is already presenting exciting growth opportunities for Bank of Ireland. This new agreement augments the existing financial services we provide and we look forward to consolidating our joint efforts further.”

“Bank of Ireland has doubled its ATM network in the last three years and already has an ATM presence in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. This significant deal supports the Bank of Ireland strategy to expand its presence in the UK ATM market”.

Ends

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Notes to editors:

· There are currently 2,500 ATMs in **(cont. to p. 7)**

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**The deal with Bank of Ireland will add further support to the Post Office®’s position as the fastest growing outlet for free cash withdrawals in the country**

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**The Post Office® has the biggest retail network in the UK and our partnership is already presenting exciting growth opportunities for Bank of Ireland**

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## Post Office® announces fee-free ATM partnership with Bank of Ireland



**(cont. from p. 6)** with-  
drawal service.

- 98% of the 23 million cash withdrawals made at Post Office® branches each month are free of charge.

- The Post Office® offers a free cash withdrawal service at the counter for customers of the following high street banks: Barclays, Lloyds TSB, Alliance & Leicester, Co-op Bank, Bank of Ireland, Clydesdale, Cahoot, Smile and First Direct (Scotland only). All have signed contracts with us enabling all of their customers to use our counters for free cash withdrawals.

- The Post Office® intends to initially introduce 1,000 fee-free ATMs. This figure may be increased following feasibility studies across its branch network.

- Customers with basic bank accounts at any high street bank or building society can get their cash out for free over the counter at Post Office® branches.

- The Post Office's aim is for all of its customers to be able to withdraw cash free of charge at the counter in every branch of our 14,600-strong network from accounts for all of the banks and building societies in the UK. It is working hard to gain the agreement of all banks and building societies to allow their customers to do this. Discussions continue.

- Less than ten years ago only customers of one high street bank could access their bank

accounts at a Post Office branch. Today over 40% of our 28 million customers a week can access their bank account using a Post Office counter free of charge. In addition, over 4 million customers holding Post Office Card Accounts can get free access to their benefits at the counter in our branches.

- The Post Office's network is by far the largest financial services network in the UK. There are around 11,500 branches of main banks and building societies combined – the Post Office 14,600-strong network is a third larger.

### About the Post Office®

With 14,600 branches across the country, the Post Office® is the largest retail and financial services chain in the UK. Its network is larger than all of the UK's banks and building societies put together.

Around 94 per cent of the UK population lives within a mile of a Post Office® branch and 28 million customers visit every week.

In conjunction with its partners, the Post Office® offers over 170 products and services including travel and financial services (including personal loans, car and home insurance), banking services, bill payments, lottery products, licence applications, phonecards and mobile phone top-ups, and postal services.

It is the largest supplier of foreign currency in the UK and is a leading provider of travel insurance.

The Post Office® is also the biggest cash handler in the country – with more than J92 billion passing through

its hands each year. 17p in every J1 in circulation goes through a Post Office® branch and around 400 million household bills are paid at Post Office® branches each year.

To find your nearest Post Office® branch, call: 08457-223 344.

More details on the range, and availability of services available at your local Post Office® branch can be found on the web site: [www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk).

About Bank of Ireland's Joint Venture with the Post Office®

Bank of Ireland entered an agreement in 2003 to provide financial services products distributed through the Post Office®. Bank of Ireland will invest up to J125 million in the scheme over the next ten years and currently provides: car insurance, home insurance, personal loans, and savings accounts. Current savings accounts include Child Trust Fund, Guaranteed Equity Bond and Growth Bond deposit accounts.

[www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk)

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**Bank of Ireland entered an agreement in 2003 to provide financial services products distributed through the Post Office®.**

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## British govt to rule out Royal Mail privatisation - report

July 17, 2005 - [[AFX Europe \(Focus\)](#)]

"LONDON (AFX) - The government is set to rule out the privatisation of Royal Mail when it announces the terms of reference for a review of the postal business, the Sunday Telegraph reported.

"He will make it clear that we are not privatising," a colleague of trade and industry

secretary Alan Johnson reportedly told the paper.

Royal Mail's board continues to hope for permission for the transfer of 20 pct of the business into the hands of its employees -- and possibly up to 49 pct, the paper added.

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## Romania plans to privatize postal, national radio communication companies

July 15, 2005 - [[AP Worldstream](#)]

"Romania will privatize its postal and national radio communication companies, the government said Friday.

The radio communication company would be sold by the end of next year, while the postal company would have to be restructured first and could be sold by 2008, Communication and Information Technology Minister

Zsolt Nagy said.

The state is interested in finding a strategic investor to take over the postal company, Nagy said.

The government also intends to list its minority stock in national telephone company Romtelecom on the stock exchange.

The state owns 46 percent in Romtelecom, which is majority owned by Greek company

OTE.

Consultants for the sales would be hired after a public auction, Nagy said.

About 25 percent of the state-owned stock in the Romanian Post and 20 percent of Romtelecom's stock would be transferred to a fund which compensates people whose property was confiscated during the communist regime."



## Netherlands cuts TNT stake to 10 percent

July 13, 2005 - [[Turkish Daily News](#)]

"The Netherlands has cut its stake in mail and logistics company TNT by almost half to about 10 percent, raising some 900 million euros (\$1.1 billion), the Finance Ministry said on Tuesday.

The government sold 43.4 million TNT shares to ABN AMRO and Citigroup, and dealers said the banks were placing the shares in a range of 20.80 to 20.95 euros each. The deal is equivalent to about 30 days' trading vol-

ume.

TNT shares fell 0.4 percent to 20.80 euros in early trade in Amsterdam.

The Finance Ministry said the government had agreed not to sell any additional shares for a period of 360 days.

"The state of the Netherlands will retain its remaining 10 percent stake in TNT N.V. following the share placement until the minister of finance has discussed any further reduction of this stake with Parliament," the ministry said.

Fortis Bank analyst Marten

Bakker said the government's previously announced stance that it would keep a 10 percent stake until the full liberalization of the Dutch postal market should mean that it would not sell more shares until at least 2007.

The government last sold TNT shares in September, when it cut its stake by almost half to 19 percent."

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**The Netherlands has cut its stake in mail and logistics company TNT by almost half to about 10 percent**

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## UK drivers risk holiday head-aches when driving abroad this summer

**July 8, 2005 - [Press Release]**

- A third of UK holiday-makers set to drive to European destinations this summer
- Four out of ten (42%) will travel without checking the terms of their car insurance policy first
- Money matters - 32% are driving to save cash

Four out of ten (42%) UK holidaymakers may be driving to Europe without adequate car insurance this summer, according to new research from Post Office® Car Insurance.

Over a third (8.8 million) of the 23.4 million UK tourists\* set to travel to the continent this summer, will choose to drive - saving time and cash are the two most important factors sited in making this decision. Nearly half (49%) of people questioned said they have chosen to drive because it's the quickest way to get to their holiday destination, with another third (32%) choosing this route because it's the cheapest way to travel.

Worryingly, only a third (32%) will check their car insurance policies to ensure they are fully covered when driving abroad, with four out of ten (42%) saying they have no idea if their policy covers them and that they do not plan to check before departing.

Mike Smith, Head of Car Insurance at the Post Office®, is urging UK travellers to check their insurance policies before driving abroad this summer:

*"Holidaymakers are choosing to drive to the continent to save both time and money, but many may be risking holiday head-aches if they don't check their policies first. Post Office® Car Insurance offers overseas cover for 60 days, but all policies are different, and not all offer full cover when driving abroad. Post Office® advice is to check the terms of your policy before you travel - don't leave it to chance."*

He continued: "Driving to the continent can be a relatively inexpensive way to get to your holiday destination. However, without adequate car insurance it could end up costing you more than you bargained for, with any money saved on air fares lost on costly emergency repairs if something goes wrong during the trip."

The Post Office® holiday driving survey also revealed that seven out of ten (70%) of drivers will be travelling with their partners, with over a quarter (28%) taking their children. Over half expect to drive up to 500 miles, with a further 14% saying they expect to travel more than 1000 miles this summer.

Mike Smith commented: "Holidays are a time for fun and relaxation. But, with so many people driving their families abroad this summer, to have peace of mind, it's important to be prepared for any problems that might occur. That's why the Post Office® also offers Motor Legal Protection that includes 24 hour legal advice just in case the worst happens and a difficult situation arises as a result of a motor accident overseas."

The Post Office® offers a

range of great value services to meet its customers' international holiday needs, whether travelling by road, rail, sea or air. These include:

- E111s for emergency health-care treatment within the European Union
- Annual and single trip travel Insurance – offering kids go free policies for parents, grandparents and aunts and uncles travelling with children under 16.
- Great deals on foreign currency with 0% commission on over 70 currencies
- International Driving Permits, required for many overseas destinations both within and outside the EU, available from selected Post Office® branches.

Customers can find out more about the great deals on offer from Post Office® car insurance by calling 0800 169 6500, or to get information on all other Post Office® services by calling 08457 223344.

Alternatively customers can visit [www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk) or find out more at their local Post Office® branch.

- Ends -

Notes to Editors:

Top four most popular European driving destinations

- France 9% (3,978,000 people)
- Spain 8% (3,536,000 people)
- Italy 2% (884,000 people)
- Switzerland 1% (442,000 people)

Research undertaken by YouGov survey of 2000 adults conducted on 17-20th June 2005

[www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk)

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**Post Office® Car Insurance offers overseas cover for 60 days, but all policies are different, and not all offer full cover when driving abroad**

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## Post Office® urges new parents to make the most of child trust funds as July baby boom approaches



June 27, 2005 - [Press Release]

“Over 55,000 child births expected in July\*  
· 70% of existing eligible parents yet to take advantage of CTF’s

More than 113 million of Child Trust Fund vouchers are due to be issued in the next few weeks, as the UK hits its busiest month for child births. However, if the current trend in take-up of Child Trust Funds (CTF’s) continues, most new parents will still not have invested their child’s voucher in six months’ time, warns the Post Office®. According to the latest figures from HM Treasury, only 30% of eligible parents have invested their child’s J250 Child Trust Fund voucher since accounts went live on 6th April – despite many receiving their vouchers in January.

In view of this Post Office® is urging new parents to make the most of the J250 voucher, to ensure their child is given the best start in life. Mike

Smith, Head of Child Trust Funds at the Post Office®, said: “Too many parents are missing an opportunity. Their J250 voucher could be working for their children’s future instead of sitting in a drawer unused.

“The arrival of a new baby is always a hectic time for parents. But if they leave it too long to choose where to invest their voucher the decision will be made for them and they may end up with a provider they don’t want.” Earlier this year when the Post Office® questioned eligible parents as to why they were delaying investing their Child Trust Fund voucher, 43% revealed that they were still researching the options, with a further 18% saying they just haven’t got round to it yet.

Confusion about the options seems to be a problem with a third (37%) of parents admitting to being undecided about where to invest their voucher and whether cash or equities is the best option. A further 19% had chosen cash because

they didn’t trust the stock market, despite Child Trust Funds being a long-term investment and the possibility that a cash-based account is unlikely to deliver the best returns. Mike Smith added: “We appreciate parents are keen to invest their money safely and be reassured they have made the right decision – that’s why the Post Office® has made the application process for its Child Trust Fund extremely simple. The Post Office® Child Trust Fund is an equity-based stakeholder product, enabling children to receive any gains from the stock market without the cost of active fund management - as charges are capped at 1.5% per annum.”

Customers can request details about the Post Office® Child Trust Fund by calling 0800 169 7500, logging onto [www.postoffice.co.uk/savings](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/savings) or popping into their local Post Office® branch.

Ends

[www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk)

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**The Post Office® Child Trust Fund is an equity-based stakeholder product, enabling children to receive any gains from the stock market without the cost of active fund management - as charges are capped at 1.5% per annum**

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## Workshop meeting with the representatives of the Postal and Savings banks

24<sup>th</sup> May, Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro

(cont. from p. 4) products, with the participation of some consultants from ING Bank. The costs with the organization of such courses will be borne by Bancpost and partially, by the Commission.

On the other hand, it is proposed the creation of some studies and models for the development of these financial-postal and business services (including Small Busi-

ness Banking) that should be flexible and accessible to customers from all the regions and member countries, including the less developed ones.

The ING representatives ensured that they would analyze all the possibilities of collaboration with the International Commission for Financial-Postal and Business Services and would present an offer to the effect of the things discussed.

Also, they expressed their wish to extend collaboration on other planes too with the financial-banking institutions represented within the Commission.

The workshop meeting ended by establishing some future contacts for the purpose of developing this collaboration with ING Bank.”

## The Postcard to become an electronic admission ticket

July 8, 2005 - [[Press release](#)]

**“The Postcard was tested as an electronic admission ticket by PostFinance and the Kudelski Group from January to April 2005. Test persons were able to load access and usage authorizations onto their Postcard via the Internet. Payment was made by debiting the customer’s Yellow Account. After evaluating the test, PostFinance and the Kudelski Group have decided to make the Postcard a permanent electronic admission ticket. Beginning in summer 2006, Yellow Account holders will be able to load access to events marketed by the Kudelski subsidiary Ticketcorner onto their Postcard. This joint initiative exploits the position of the two companies in the debit card market and in modern ticketing solutions, respectively. The first post offices will become Ticketcorner advance sales points in January 2006.**

PostFinance and the Kudelski Group conducted a test from January to April 2005 in which the Postcards of around 1,000 test persons were equipped with an additional chip. The test persons were able to load usage authorizations for ski lifts at 30 resorts and entry tickets to events onto their Postcard via the Internet. These included concerts at the popular Bierhübeli venue in Berne, the SnowpenAir at Kleine Scheidegg and the “Night of the Jumps” motorcycle event in Berne. Payment for the admission and usage authorizations was made by

debiting the cardholder’s Yellow Account. The pilot project tested the range of possibilities of electronic ticketing systems, their technical feasibility and acceptance among users and event organizers.

### Electronic admission ticket as of summer 2006

The feedback from users, ski lift operators and event organizers was positive. The test persons appreciated the simple option of acquiring admission and usage authorizations quickly and at short notice. In addition, users did not have to spend time queueing at the counters. The ski lift operators and concert organizers benefited from lower expenses for ticket issuing and payment. On the basis of the positive feedback, PostFinance and the Kudelski Group have decided to make the Postcard a permanent electronic admission ticket. Beginning in summer 2006, Yellow Account holders will be able to load entry tickets for events marketed by Ticketcorner onto a Postcard with an additional chip. In the initial phase, this will mainly apply to sports events (e.g. ice hockey games) and larger events. A data scanner at the event venue will identify the user and the reserved usage authorization. The Postcard with this additional function will be provided to Yellow Account holders on request and will be free of charge to begin with.

### Sale of tickets at post offices

Larger post offices will already become Ticketcorner advance sales points in January 2006. The number will be expanded till the end of September 2006. Thanks

to the distribution network, customers – and especially those people who do not have private Internet access – will benefit from sales outlets close to them.

The cooperation between PostFinance and Ticketcorner will simplify both the booking and payment processes, enabling them to be settled more cost-effectively in the long term. This joint initiative exploits the possibilities of the two companies in the debit card bound and in modern ticketing solutions, respectively. In the ticketing market, more and more consumers are using electronic media in place of paper tickets.

### Innovative PostFinance

PostFinance’s most important source of business is payment transactions. A number of innovative products have been introduced in the past few years. PostFinance was one of the first providers in Switzerland to offer an e-banking service through yellownet. Today over 620,000 people manage their accounts electronically. With yellowbill, PostFinance was the first company to launch a range of products for electronic invoicing and payments. PostFinance also has a presence in mobile communications. Mobile phone customers can load prepaid cards at Postomats, and the amount is debited directly from their Yellow Account. PostFinance is testing a mobile phone shopping service until the end of this year, the first financial institution in the world to do so.

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Swiss Post Web Site




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**PostFinance’s most important source of business is payment transactions. A number of innovative products have been introduced in the past few years**

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## Payshop at POST-EXPO 2005, Paris

July 7, 2005 - [[Press release](#)]

"Payshop will attend and be part of a series of conferences and technology workgroups, held at **POST-EXPO 2005, in Paris**, between the 3rd and the 5th of October.

**POST-EXPO** is a renowned world postal business forum, organised annually in asso-

ciation with the **Universal Postal Union (UPU)**. It's the largest and most important gathering of postal, parcel and logistics expertise and technology companies.

It will be the second participation for **payshop** in this forum. At the **POST-EXPO 2004**, in Romania, **payshop** was part of a technology

workgroup regarding retail innovation.

This year, the **payshop** intervention will concern **financial solutions through an innovative retail network**.



## Payshop and Alphyra in Portugal

July 2, 2005 -- [[Press release](#)]

"Payshop Portugal has just developed a partnership with **Alphyra, Europe's largest independent payment network**, to promote International Top-Up Services with **payshop** retail network and technology, starting in July.

This partnership will provide an electronic transaction

capability to enable **payshop's** Retail Network (more than 2000 retailers and 1000 post offices) to **accept pre-payments for mobile telephones from customers of several foreign mobile operators whilst they are visiting Portugal**.

For the second year, **payshop** allows this Top Up Services in Portugal. **12 operators from 7 countries will have now the opportu-**

**nity to provide Top Up services to their customers in Portugal:**

**Orange (UK, France and Belgium (Mobistar))**  
**O2 (UK)**  
**Virgin (UK)**  
**T-mobile (UK, Germany, Netherlands)**  
**KPN (2 brands "Hi" and "KPN")**



## Rede4 through payshop

July 1, 2005 - [[Press release](#)]

"As the number of mobile operators in Portugal grows, **payshop** grows with them.

Since the 28th of June that all **payshop** agents can top up **Rede4** mobile phones.

**Rede4** is defined as a discount mobile operator.

It offers a single price plan to all its clients with the same price charge per minute to all calls that their clients make. It's a simple mobile operator for all those people that want just it: to use their mobile

phones only to phone! For **payshop**, being able to provide the service to **Rede4** clients since it's beginning, it's something to be proud of."



## Portugal's large retail chain Modelo with payshop

May 26, 2005 - [[Press release](#)]

"One of the most known supermarket chains in Portugal, **Modelo is now a payshop agent**.

As part of **Sonae Distribution**, a market leader in the food retail sector in Portugal

for several years, the **Modelo** chain has developed a **new concept** with the purpose to **offer a superior service** to their clients.

This new concept allows the **Modelo** clients the opportunity to **top up their mobiles, pay bills, and buy the newspapers or the lottery while having coffee or lunch, before or**

**after the usual shopping**. The **payshop** service is already present in the first store, in the north of Portugal and will accompany the development of this **Sonae** stores network.

Once more... where clients look for convenience and quality of service, they find **payshop!**"



## Poles Queue at Post Offices - No Fans of Banks, Shun Advances of Citigroup, UniCredito

**(cont. from p.3)** three years, said Marek Kulczycki, 57, who heads Deutsche Bank's consumer bank in Poland, in a May 11 interview in Warsaw. The Frankfurt-based company has been an also-ran in Poland, said Marcin Jablczynski, an analyst at CA-IB. It bought Bank Wspolpracy Regionalnej SA in the southern Polish city of Krakow for about \$13 million in 1999 and still isn't one of the 20 largest banks in Poland.

Deutsche Bank said it had 0.38 percent of the Polish market based on assets in 2004. Citigroup's Bank Handlowy had 6.3 percent of the market, based on data from the central bank. In Poland, Deutsche Bank "has been a huge disappointment,"

said Jablczynski, who works in Warsaw. "They have to decide whether to expand more or quit the market."

### Convincing People

Success or failure hinges on potential customers such as Woznicka, according to Sikora at Handlowy.

Woznicka still pays 2.50 zloty for each of her three bills at the post office, Poczta Polska. She says there are too many hidden fees at banks, which typically charge between 6 zloty and 17 zloty a month for holding your account. Citigroup in Poland gets 45 percent of its revenue from consumer banking, up from 15 percent four years ago. Within three years, that may reach more than 50 percent,

said Sikora, who has been in the job two years. Bank Handlowy has reported total profit of 1.6 billion zloty since the takeover by Citigroup, the world's largest bank, according to Bloomberg calculations.

"We will convince people that credit cards, accounts and loans are much better than keeping cash at home," Sikora said.

To contact the reporter on this story:

Last Updated: June 16, 2005 19:07 EDT

## An Post Pilot Scheme to Computerise Ten Rural Post Offices

July 7, 200 - [[Press Release](#)]

"An Post is to invest in state of the art computer systems for 10 rural Post Offices as part of a pilot scheme to analyse the effect of automation on business volumes at each office.

The Post Offices chosen to participate in the pilot scheme are:

1. Ballyforan, Co Roscommon;
2. Newcastle, Co Tipperary;
3. Crinkle, Co Offaly;
4. Goleen, Co Cork;
5. Kilmeena, Co Mayo;
6. Kilmogany, Co Kilkenny;
7. Three Mile House, Co Monaghan;
8. Ballygawley, Co Sligo;
9. Meenaneary, Co Donegal;
10. Carrickboy, Co Longford

Installation of automated counter technology will enable customers to avail of the full range of Post Office services including AIB banking services, BillPay; National and International Phone top ups and full Post Office Savings Bank facilities.

The initiative was announced by An Post Chief Executive, Mr Donal Curtin earlier this year and the installation of computers will be completed at all ten offices by late Summer.

The ten offices are representative of the geographical spread and varying business volumes across An Post's network of 450 non-automated post offices.

This network currently accounts for approximately four per cent of Post Office business.

The pilot scheme will be supported by a comprehensive marketing programme incorporating advertising, merchandising and direct mail in an effort to assist the Postmaster/Postmistresses to maximise transactions at each of the post offices. Local customers will be encouraged to trial new services and to increase their usage of the local Post Office.

Contact [the Press Office](#) for further information




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**An Post is to invest in state of the art computer systems for 10 rural Post Offices as part of a pilot scheme to analyse the effect of automation on business volumes at each office**

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## VII International Forum and Exhibition Pochtovaya Troika 2005 closed



### 29 June, 2005 - [Press Release]

"Full of interesting presentations and events that stimulated open discussion", said Gabriel Mateescu, Chairman of the UPU Council of Administration, when asked about Pochtovaya Troika 2005 Forum during the round table held at the end of the second day.

During the two days 11 sessions took place. Speakers from almost every participating country made presentations.

After some good discussion participants came up with specific suggestions on the main line of development of the world post: reform of the postal infrastructure and the future of UPU, development of the direct-mail market, the use of information technologies and on-line sales, and on the better economic strategy of the postal operators.

During the Forum two documents that are crucial for the Russian Post have been signed - Memorandum of Intent with Siemens AG and a contract with Gilat (Israel). During the exhibition, that was part of the forum, corporations and postal admini-

strations, clients and partners, customers and manufacturers could meet each other.

"I think such meetings come very useful", said James P. Wade, Chairman of the UPU Postal Operations Council.

He continued to say, "It is not too often that we meet to discuss our cooperation and interaction.

I am sure that starting from now we will all together move towards a clearer strategy of development of the post, and by the time we meet in Nairobi we will have not a declaration but a strategy that will become an efficient instrument to satisfy our clients."

Edourad Dayan, Director



General of UPU, agreed with his colleagues and said he was very pleased to take part in Pochtovaya Troika, that he considered an important international forum.

"During the Forum we had an interesting and meaningful discussion of the experience of world postal administrations and top corporations. We could see that though we work in different countries, different regions and in varying conditions we are facing similar problems: quality control, terms of service, being a client-oriented organizations", said Igor Syrtsov, Director General of FSUE "Russian Post".




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**Full of interesting presentations and events that stimulated open discussion", said Gabriel Mateescu, Chairman of the UPU Council of Administration, when asked about Pochtovaya Troika 2005 Forum during the round table held at the end of the second day**

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## 2nd day of VII International Forum and Exhibition "Pochtovaya Troika – 2005" began with discussions concerning postal service availability and economic aspects



**June 29, 2005 - [Press Release]**

*"The delegates considered, in particular, development of postal financial services in Russian Post's network and international experience.*

*The forum pointed out that among 190 UPU member-countries, 160 postal administrations provide financial services. Japanese Post Savings Service is the largest financial institution in the world. Universal postal ser-*

*vice is one of the largest providers of such services as pensions and social benefits payment; in many countries cash turnover through postal networks accounts for 50% of their national cash traffic.*

*There are now all prerequisites for postal banking services development in Russian Post's network. They include the extensive network of post offices covering all the country' localities, complete absence or insufficient availability of banks in rural localities and inaccessible districts, people's trust as well as mutual interest of Russian Post and banks in postal banking services development in view of the opportunity to increase customer base and income.*

*Post offices provide such services as payment of pensions and other social benefits, collection of utilities and payments to mobile networks operators, domestic and international money orders, cash payment on bank cards,*

*repayment of customer credits. Pensions and social benefits payment turnover was over USD 23 billion and utilities collection turnover was USD 3 billion in 2004. Russian Post collaborates with banks in collection and delivery of physical persons' savings in 35 regions. This service turnover amounts to USD 13 million per month. Russian Post accepts bank cards of over 30 banks.*

*Providing financial services in post offices is necessary for maintenance and development of postal service in Russia. Having in mind that the revenue generated by financial services made up over one third of Russian Post's total revenue in 2004, development of postal banking services and cooperation with commercial banks is our priority."*



### Money across the border - by Post

**June 30, 2005 - [Press Release]**

*"Every year more and more money is sent from Russia to abroad with postal money orders. For the past year the volume number increased with 12 %. Today, there are two possible ways for sending money through the postal system. As we have been informed by FGPU (Federal state unitary enterprise) - Russian Post, these are - the "paper based" money orders and the "electronic money orders".*

*The "paper based" option - well known with its standard form, which has to be filled at the post office, and after that be transported and delivered by using the traditional postal routes to every town and place. The second "electronic" option is through the electronic system "Cyber money". The system allows the payment advice to be sent electronically to the country of destination. From the choice of one of those options in fact, the time of delivery depends. In the first case - this will take one to two weeks, in the second case - one to two days.*

*In Russia, all post offices operate a "hybrid technology", namely combining both modes of delivery. It is not enough only to send a message, you have to be sure that it will be delivered to the addressee. Imagine what will happen, if the post office is located in a small remote village, and this office is open one or two days per week. The payment advice, in spite of having been sent electronically, will not be delivered in time. What about the terms of delivery. According to the existing regulation, the maximum time allowed for delivery of (cont. to p. 16)*

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**National postal service is one of the largest providers of such services as pensions and social benefits payment; in many countries cash turnover through postal networks accounts for 50% of their national cash traffic**

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## Money across the border - by Post



**(cont. from p. 15)** an outgoing international money order is one month. So you have to wait at least a month and then make a complaint if your money order has not been received and paid. If the money order has been "captured" somewhere for more than month you have to ring the alarm. And it doesn't matter where you have send the money to - Peru or Belarus. But as we have been informed by the postal clerks, it happens very occasionally and in the most cases - due to wrongly written address of the receiver.

Over the entire territory of the Russia, transfers for abroad are accepted only in rubles, but at the countries of destination, the money will be paid in their national currency. As a rule the deposited sum in rubles will be recalculated in the currency in which the international accounting with the receiving country is made. In Belarus and Kazakhstan the rubles from Russia are sent without recalculation. With these coun-

tries a specific contract has been signed, in accordance with which the currency choice for out payment of the respective sum is determined by the receiving country.

The head of Commercial operations' Directorate of FGPU Russian Post Igor Mandrikin, stated that the biggest part of the money order volumes are sent from Russia to Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. The values sent, as a rule do not exceeds 3000 rubles (approx USD 100 ). This sum is not so big. And this means that people send money for satisfying some basic needs - for medicaments for example and for some extraordinary expenditures - for meal, weddings, for making presents each others etc..

The tariff for sending a money order is fixed - 12 % from the sum to be transferred. The technical modernization and computerization of the post offices in Russia, has allowed a reduction in the labor of the operations, and as a result, has led to a

tree times decreasing in the prices of the domestic money orders. In the next one - two months, the prices of the international postal money orders will be decreased, and this will concern mainly the transfers of sums over 100 USD. "Where to address and whom to complain, in case that there's no money for out payment of the money orders received"? - we have asked Mr. Igor Mandrikin. Here is his answer. "In such case, in Russia it could take several hours, the sum to be paid if a big amount of money has to be paid. As far as the other countries are concerned, the complaints must be made there. Furthermore, the biggest share of the outgoing money flows are intended to be paid to beneficiaries in the CIS countries, we will pay a certain percent to those who accept our convertible rubles. This will simplify the operational procedures and will improve the efficiency."

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**In the next one - two months, the prices of the international money transfers will be decreased, and this more substantially will concern the transfers of sums over 100 USD**

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## The incorporation of Russian Post (FGPU) is planned for 2007

**June 28, 2005 - [Press Release]**

"The news has been announced by Mr. Igor Syrtsov - the FGPU Director, at a press conference during the "VII International Forum and Exhibition - Pochtovaja Troyka", which is held in Sankt Petersburg. He specified that at present, under a planned reform, a united national operator is created. Following this development, the question for its incorporation will be tackled later, but under the sole condition, that the State will own 100 %

of the shares capital. Answering a question of RBK, I.Syrtsov emphasized, that "the question about the company's privatization does not stand at present, at least for the mid-term period". Moreover, I.Syrtsov confidently gave a forecast, that the privatization FGUP "mail of Russia" can take place not earlier than in 2010. At the end of the conference, Mr. Syrtsov shared his views about the state and dynamics of the Company's development indicators for 2005. He expects that the company's income will be increased with about 30 % compared with the previous year 2004. The

expected growth is thanks to the fast development in the volume of the company's money transfers business. He pointed that due to a recent introduction of a system for bar coding of the letter mail items, posted by the company's big corporate clients the volumes of this kind of mail mal items is expected to decrease dramatically.

Igor Syrtsov stated, that the incomes of Russian Posts for 2004 has amounted 27,9 billion rubl. Together with this he explained, that the costs for salaries for all companies' personnel (360 thousands people) **(cont. to p. 17)**

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**Today the Russian Post has signed an Agreement for the construction of a new automated sorting center in Sankt Petersburg with total investments of 40 mil. EUR, wit the German Company Siemens.**

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## The incorporation of Russian Post (FGPU) is planned for 2007

(cont. from p. 16) represents about 60 % of all expenditures of Russian Post.

Igor Syrtsov confirmed that until the end of 2005, the salary of the personnel will

be increased with 19 %.

He also mentioned that today Russian Post signed an Agreement for the construction of a new automated sorting center in Sankt Peters-

burg with total investments of 40 mil. EUR, with the German Company Siemens. The centre will be build and come into operation for about 20 months."



## Payment terminals at Russian post offices for loan installments

June 28, 2005 - [Press Release]

"During the international Forum in Sankt Petersburg the leading Russian manufacturer of cash-control technique, the Company "Iskra", has presented its new payment terminals designed to be used in the post offices. These terminals allow customers to perform simple self services payments transactions for some services, and this way reduce the customers waiting time and improve the postal staff efficiency.

Through these terminals the customers will have an opportunity to check and pay their cellular phones bills, and make installments on their loans. Most of the customers prefer to make payments on their loans via post (which in comparison with

the banks takes lower commissions - 1% against 4%). These data have been confirmed by crediting banks, e.g. Home Credit. The presence of many of bank representatives during the Forum, tells about the great importance the credit institutions pay to the post as organization.

Due to the mass distribution in Russia, of the practice for purchasing goods on credit, the scope of work of the postal counter's staff has increased very fast, and sometimes long queues appear. The Iskra's payment terminals are intended to solve to a certain extent this problem.

With a sensor screen, and simple menu the user can perform by itself the payment. The device accepts different notes, and coins. An

integrated money checker device of the company Wincor Nixdorf verifies the validity of the Russian notes and rejects the counterfeited. At this stage there's no option for cash returns, if the inserted sum exceeds the values of the bill. The difference is registered in favor of the respected customer on its personal account.

As deputy head of the Iskra's marketing Dep. Mr. Maxim Kovcheznikov explained, the integration of such costly additional device will increase dramatically the price of the terminal itself. From this point of view it has been decided to skip these functions in order to make the terminals affordable for Russian Post."




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*During the international Forum in Sankt Petersburg the leading Russian manufacturer of cash-control technique, the Company "Iskra", has presented its new payment terminals designed to be used in the post offices*

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## Bank Pocztowy - New Chairman, New Strategy

July 18, 2005 - [Polish News Bulletin]

"Bank Pocztowy (BP) earned ZL15m net in the first six months of this year. That is 60 percent more than forecast says **Alfred Biec, BP's new chairman**. He adds that if the pace of development continues, then the year should end with at least ZL25m net profit. It will be difficult to continue the trend

in 2006, when the new strategy stipulates more investments.

These will include adapting the outlets of Poczta Polska (PP) national postal service, BP's main shareholder, to service BP products. Investments next year may take up ZL43m.

The result should be a 2008 net profit of ZL46m. Assets are supposed to increase 2.5

times to ZL6bn. By 2008, ROE should grow from 13.4 to 22.2 percent. Meanwhile, the costs vs. profit indicator should fall from 74 to 67 percent.

The strategy is based on close co-operation with PP. Biec wants BP to be among the top ten banks in terms of assets in the next five years."



## Shining New Fleet

July 18, 2005 - [[Polish News Bulletin](#)]

**“A brand new fleet of vans bearing the Poczta Polska (Polish National Post Office) logo will soon be driving onto our roads. The deal is said to be worth a huge ZL40bn.**

PP has made the bold step of freshening up its image with this new leasing deal. Most will be lorries used for trans-

porting heavy mail loads to post offices around the country. Some of them, however, will be smaller vans and cars says Marcin Anaszewicz, a PP spokesman. It is a big deal and a huge order for the company to be placing and will by no means go unnoticed.

If the order concerns the basic kind of lorry, which costs around ZL100,000, then we would be looking at an order

of 400 lorries.

It is not surprising then that there should be many interested parties for the 3.5-year leasing deal. The current fleet owned by the company amounts to around 3,200 vehicles and this includes both lorries and smaller cars and vans.

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## Dawn of Great Monopolists Has Not Come.. Yet

July 14, 2005 - [[Polish News Bulletin](#)]

**“Four years ago, when the Office for Telecom and Post Regulation (URTiP) was established in grand style, administration officers assured the public of the dawn of monopolists preying on the most strategic sectors of the Polish economy ? logistics, telecoms and energy.**

**Today, the same URTiP is hunting for an entrepreneur to set up a post office competitive to the Polish Post Office, Poczta Polska (PP).**

Does it not prove that the Polish state still favours monopolists, asks Newsweek. The statistics of the anti-monopoly regulator UOKiK confirm this fact.

The UOKiK ran 354 proceedings concerning practices limiting competition, a jump from 2004, when there were 289 such cases.

The targets of the charges are still the same ? large companies with a dominant role on the market, inherited after

post-communist giants, such as Polish telecom operator TPSA, national grid PSE, fuel company PKN Orlen and the Polish state railways PKP.

Usually, these are state-controlled companies. It is in the state's interest that the company generate record profits to later pay out generous dividends and privatisation bonuses to patch the budget whole.

“When the public interest clashes with the state interest, it is the state who wins,” says CASE economist Michal Gorzynski.

The area of state monopolies is receding as slowly as a glacier and whenever some space appears, a private venture tries to settle down. TPSA has already noticed rivals and is gradually making its offer more attractive.

However, consumers will have to wait for the right to choose an energy supplier until 2007 and two years longer for post office services liberalisation.

This guarantees the giants powerful positions for the next couple of years.

Last year, PP, a company

dating back to the 16th century, earned more than ZL96m, nearly five times more than two years earlier.

However, it is the legal umbrella that protects the company. Its competitors are not entitled to deliver invoices, which accounts for the company's 85 percent of annual revenues. By the end of the year, the company will also enjoy a privileged position in delivering packages of up to 350 grams.

Every other company willing to run such a service would have to charge three times the amount. Private logistics services would be able to force the state-owned giant to improve the quality of services and reduce prices.

However, even privatisation of state-owned giants does not solve the problem of their excessive influence on the market.

Companies which officially lost the status of monopolists, in practice still make a running on the market, taking advantage of the protection umbrella unfolded by the state.

Such is the case with telecom operator (**cont. to p. 19**)




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**Today, the same URTiP is hunting for an entrepreneur to set up a post office competitive to the Polish Post Office, Poczta Polska (PP). Does it not prove that the Polish state still favours monopolists, asks Newsweek**

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## Dawn of Great Monopolists Has Not Come.. Yet

**(cont. from p. 18)** TPSA, which was purchased by France Telecom along with 10m subscribers five years ago.

Under the French investor, TPSA underwent a thorough metamorphosis and launched a market offensive.

As a result, it still controls 96 percent of the local phone connections market and 78 percent of the long-distance calls market and still disregards smaller rivals and frequently even customers.

Small telecom operator Medi-

atel has been battling with TPSA for three years over Internet services with which the company wants to provide TPSA clients under conditions set by the URTiP. To no avail? TPSA ignores the URTiP's decisions and refuses to arrange its infrastructure to enable co-operation with Mediatel. The case will be solved with time, but a solution may be more difficult to find in the case of local monopolists.

Local authorities in the southern town of Zywiec offered local railway firm CTL Maczki? Bor passenger

transport on a route that Polish state railways PKP planned to liquidate.

The monopolist found the route unprofitable and the private company grasped the idea. It soon turned out, though, that it was difficult to deal with requirements set by the railway law written for the needs of the monopolist.

Unfortunately, much time will probably have to pass before private firms are able to compete with monopolists on an equal basis."

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## Prokom IT Infrastructure for Poczta Polska

**July 12, 2005 - [Polish News Bulletin]**

**"For years Poczta Polska (PP) national postal service has been one of the five crucial clients of Prokom, netting the IT company several dozen million zlotys annually.**

For several months now, Prokom has been showing signs that it is close to winning new orders from PP. The lack of

such orders was presented in last year's annual report as one of the reasons for the company's poor results.

Based on the new contract, Prokom will now build a solution to support and service the PP sales network. Over three years, the company will receive ZL72.4m.

However, this amount is not the only payment. It does not include the delivery of neces-

sary equipment, which will raise the value of the transaction by tens of millions of zlotys.

Furthermore, the contract stipulates initiating the system in only 1,500 outlets, while PP has a network of over 6,000. This means that the scope of work may be enlarged in the future."

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## Poczta Polska on Warsaw Stock Exchange in 2007?

**July 05, 2005 - [Polish News Bulletin]**

**"Poczta Polska (PP) national postal service forecasts that the earliest possible time for its debut on the Warsaw Stock Exchange is 2007, announced PP Director General Tadeusz Bartkowiak.**

Before it goes public, PP will need to undergo commercialisation. Bartkowiak be-

lieves that changing the legal status to a joint stock company will be possible in 2006.

In his opinion, commercialisation will broaden the company's access to sources of financing. PP is currently carrying out an amended development strategy adopted in 2004.

It wants to differentiate its revenues, increasing the number of financial services and products, as well as express and courier parcels.

The investment plan envisages spending around ZL3.5bn for IT infrastructure by the end of 2008. PP has a network of 8,300 outlets and employs over 100,000 people.

In 2004 its revenue increased to ZL6.4bn, from ZL6.2bn in 2003. Net profits increased during that time to ZL100m, from ZL91m.



**Poczta Polska (PP) national postal service forecasts that the earliest possible time for its debut on the Warsaw Stock Exchange is 2007, announced PP Director General Tadeusz Bartkowiak**

## CVC acquires stake in Post Danmark

July, 2005 - [[Press Release](#)]

*“The sale of a 25 per cent stake in Post Danmark has now been finalised. CVC Capital Partners and the Danish Ministry of Transport and Energy have signed a share purchase agreement, subject only to approvals from the financial committee of the Danish Parliament and from the EU’s competition authorities.*

*A 25 per cent stake in Post Danmark will come under new ownership. That is the outcome of a share purchase agreement just finalised between the Danish Ministry of Transport and Energy and CVC Capital Partners. Under the agreement, CVC will acquire a 22 per cent stake of Post Danmark, while 2.5 per cent of the shares will be held for an employee share programme for almost 22,000 employees of Post Danmark. An additional 0.5 per cent will be reserved for an incentive programme for senior staff of Post Danmark.*

*The agreement is the result of more than two months of exclusive negotiations between the Ministry and CVC Capital Partners.*

*“I’m very pleased with the outcome of the sales process. I’m confident that CVC Capital Partners will add extra momentum to Post Danmark’s development as an international operator. Such momentum is essential if Post Danmark is to retain maximum independence over the next few years as the European postal sector goes through deregulation. Having no other ties in the postal sector, CVC as a shareholder will provide Post Danmark with the necessary flexibility.*

*I am also confident that as a competent shareholder CVC will contribute to the further development of the company so that Post Danmark can continue to provide high-quality postal services in Denmark”, says Minister for Transport and Energy Flemming Hansen.*

*CVC Capital Partners is paying DKK 1.27bn for the 22 per cent stake in Post Danmark, valuing the entire company at an enterprise value of DKK 8.4bn on a debt-free basis. The transaction is subject to approvals by the financial committee of the Danish Parliament and the EU Competition Council. These approvals are expected within approximately one month.*

*At an extraordinary general meeting at Post Danmark, Peter Törnquist, Senior Managing Director, responsible for CVC’s Nordic business, and Søren Vestergaard-Poulsen, Managing Director of CVC Capital Partners Denmark will join the company’s Board of Directors.*

*“Our negotiations with the Ministry of Transport and Energy were held in a very constructive atmosphere. We’re now looking forward to an equally constructive collaboration with Post Danmark’s management. We intend to leverage our extensive experience in international business development and our comprehensive European business network to give Post Danmark access to specific know-how and expertise regarding general strategic and operational issues. We’re very much looking forward to getting started”, says Peter Törnquist.*

*The increase in the number of shareholders will have no immediate effect on Post*

*Danmark’s day-to-day operations.*

*“I am pleased that the sales process has now been finalised”, says Fritz H. Schur, chairman of the Board of Directors of Post Danmark A/S. “CVC will make an outstanding partner with us, and I am looking forward to working together with them on the further development of Post Danmark, so that we can create an even better company than we have today. Furthermore, I am very pleased with the outcome from discussions held with CVC on the future of the company and the cooperation between Post Danmark, the Minister and the Ministry during the sales process”, he adds.*

*“We welcome our new shareholder”, says Post Danmark CEO Helge Israelsen. “CVC have given their full backing to our existing business plan, including our plans for our future customer services. I believe that CVC will be a key contributor in defining Post Danmark’s long-term plans and that they will be a key professional player in the further development of our international strategy”, he adds.*

*Post Danmark’s employees also take a positive view of the company’s prospects after the arrival of CVC as a shareholder.*

*“During the negotiations, the employees obviously focused on how the new ownership structure would affect their jobs, but I don’t see any cause for concern. I’ve had no indication that CVC’s agenda for the employees and the working environment is any different than the one Post Danmark has been pursuing. On the other hand, we’re very pleased (cont. to p. 21)*




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***A 25 per cent stake in Post Danmark will come under new ownership. That is the outcome of a share purchase agreement just finalised between the Danish Ministry of Transport and Energy and CVC Capital Partners***

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## CVC acquires stake in Post Danmark



**(cont. from p. 20)** that Post Danmark will retain its independence and be able to select its future international business partners”, says Isa Rogild, employee-selected member of the Board of Post Danmark and chairperson of the HK/Post & Kommunikation chapter of the Union of Commercial and Clerical Employees in Denmark.

Employee-selected member of the Board, Jens Bendtsen, Bargaining Secretary of 3F, says: “It’s no secret that I had expected the new minority shareholder to be an industrial partner. That has proved not to be the case, but I welcome CVC and look forward to working with them.

I’m also pleased to note that 3 per cent of the shares will be reserved for the employees, which means that the Minister for Transport and Energy has kept his promise.”

Together, the State of Denmark and CVC will work towards realising the business potential of Post Danmark in the years ahead.

# # #

For further information in relation to this press release please contact:

- Michael Birch, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, **Ministry of Transport and Energy**, +45 33 92 38 96

- Fritz H. Schur, Chairman of the Board of Directors, **Post Danmark**, +45 33 96 00 83

- Helge Israelsen, CEO, **Post Danmark**, +45 33 75 40 00

- Peter Törnquist, Senior Managing Director, **CVC Capital Partners**, +44 7785 770 709 “

## ING acquires leading Slovak private pension provider



**June 6, 2005 - [Press Release]**

“ING Group has today reached an agreement with TBIH Financial Services Group N.V. on the acquisition of VSP Tetry Sympatia, the management company of the leading private pension fund in the Slovak Republic. The value of the transaction is approximately EUR 35 million.

TBIH is a private equity group focused on financial services in several CEE countries. It is part of the Kardan Group, which is listed on the stock exchanges in Israel and the Netherlands.

Tetry Sympatia is market leader for managing voluntary private pensions in the Slovak Republic, serving over 300,000 clients. Its assets under management total EUR 181 million and its market share is 44%.

The acquisition of Tetry Sympatia considerably strengthens ING’s position in the Slovak Republic, where it currently has 200,000 clients in life insurance and mandatory pensions.

Tetry Sympatia gives ING the required scale to build a strong and sustainable position in the field of pensions in the Slovak Republic.

“The transaction is in line with ING’s strategy of pursuing carefully selected add-on acquisitions that strengthen ING’s position in key growth markets”, said Jan Nijssen, CEO Insurance Central Europe and Global Head Pensions of ING Group.

“Retirement services/pensions and emerging markets are two of ING’s principal growth areas. So, the addition of Tetry Sympatia fits perfectly into ING’s growth strategy.”

ING is a leading life insurance and pension provider in

Central Europe.

Final conclusion of the transaction is subject to the required regulatory approvals.

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+31 6 150 63 913, frank.van.der.voort@ing.com

ING is a global financial institution of Dutch origin offering banking, insurance and asset management to over 60 million private, corporate and institutional clients in more than 50 countries.

With a diverse workforce of over 113,000 people, ING comprises a broad spectrum of prominent companies that increasingly serve their clients under the ING brand.”

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**ING Group has today reached an agreement with TBIH Financial Services Group N.V. on the acquisition of VSP Tetry Sympatia, the management company of the leading private pension fund in the Slovak Republic**

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## Slovenská sporiteľňa was awarded The Best Bank in Slovakia

July 12, 2005 - [[Press release](#)]

**“According to Euro-money, the prestigious economic magazine, Slovenská sporiteľňa is the best bank in Slovakia.** The bank was awarded the Euromoney's award in this year's Euromoney's Awards for Excellence. Evaluated were both qualitative and quantitative criteria such as the market share, the market position, new products development, the progress made in the last twelve months, the managerial system, the equity and other indicators, but significant growth of consumer loans and asset management of Slovenská sporiteľňa were appreciated most by the Awarding Committee. Ac-

cording to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), the total year-on-year net income of Slovenská sporiteľňa increased by 19% at the end of 2004. The Award will be presented to Peter Krutil, a member of the Board of Directors and Deputy General Manager of Slovenská sporiteľňa in London this Thursday. The Euromoney Award for Excellence was created in 1991 by Sir Patrick Sergeant, the founder of the Euromoney Publications, and by Padriac Fallon, the Chairman and Chief editor of the Euromoney Magazine with the aim to provide a survey of the best banks in various sectors of the global capital market. The Euromoney's Award is a respected international award

for quality. At the end of December 2004, in terms of the balance sheet, the market share of Slovenská sporiteľňa accounted for 20.2%. The bank's share in mortgage loans reached 21.8%. The total volume of loans went up by 14% y-o-y, to SKK 62.6 billion. Compared to December 2003, loans to retail customers increased by 38%, to SKK 27.0 billion. Most significant growth was seen in consumer loans (by 42%) whilst the most dynamic growth was recorded in overdrafts (by 86%). At the end of December, the loans provided to legal entities reached SKK 35.6 billion, and the loans to small and medium-sized enterprises accounted for SKK 12.1 billion (a year-on-year increase by 70.3 or SKK 5 billion).

## Across Central and Eastern Europe, faster and cheaper payment transfers within Erste Bank Group

July 1, 2005 - [[Press release](#)]

**“Erste Bank and its subsidiaries in Central Europe offer improved terms for cross-border payments from July 1, 2005.** FIT-Payment (FIT = Fast Intragroup Transfer) has been introduced to allow speedier processing of payment transactions in euros within Erste Bank Group by 1 or 2 days. At the same time, the group reduces fees for cross-border payment transactions in euros and improves the availability for withdrawal from the beneficiary's account.

*FIT-Payment allows reduction in the transfer time of payment transactions among Erste Bank, Česká sporiteľňa, Slovenská sporiteľňa, Erste*

*Bank Hungary and Erste Bank Croatia from two to three banking days to one banking day. These improved terms apply to all transactions among specified banks in euros with no limit on the amount that can be transferred.*

*"After introducing improved terms for withdrawals from intragroup ATMs, we are happy that we can now offer our customers an improvement in international payment transactions as well. This is a further step towards the integration of services within Erste Bank Group, which we intend to gradually increase for the benefit of our customers", says David Saleh, Head of Payments in Slovenská sporiteľňa. Slovenská sporiteľňa applies improved terms for payment transfers within the group not only to euro transactions, but to all*

*payments regardless of currency and the amount transferred. The bank also improves availability of payments transferred from the Erste Bank Group members for withdrawal from the beneficiary's account on the same day, i.e. a day sooner than from other banks.*

*Clients of Slovenská sporiteľňa will pay SKK 200 for cross-border payment transactions to partner accounts within Erste Bank Group regardless of currency and the amount transferred. Up until now, the bank charged the fee of SKK 200 to SKK 1 600 depending on the way of transfer (electronically or in the branch) and the amount transferred. A special fee of SKK 200 applied to clients transferring payments to the customer account held with Česká sporiteľňa."*




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***FIT-Payment allows reduction in the transfer time of payment transactions among Erste Bank, Česká sporiteľňa, Slovenská sporiteľňa, Erste Bank Hungary and Erste Bank Croatia from two to three banking days to one banking day***

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## Strong rise in the value of Norway Post

**June 14, 2005** - [[Press Release](#)]

**“Norway Post Group is worth NOK 12.8 billion and is among the world’s most efficient postal enterprises,** according to a valuation carried out by Enskilda Securities. This represents an increase of 52 per cent from last year, making Norway Post two and a half times as valuable as it was five years ago.

“This development in value shows Norway Post is making great progress. One of our main objectives is a competitive growth in value, and we are pleased that this objective is being met,” says Kaare Frydenberg, Norway Post’s chief executive.

“An important condition for achieving this goal has been our targeted focus on integrated communications and logistics services, combining electronic information with physical distribution,” he says.

### **Profitable and competitive**

According to Kaare Frydenberg, this progress can be explained by the fact that Norway Post has become a profitable and competitive company in recent years. Revenues have grown as a result of acquisitions and product and service developments, giving Norway Post additional and sound sources of income.

Enskilda Securities estimates the total enterprise value of the Norway Post Group to be NOK 12.8 billion. The value of the parent company, Posten Norge AS, is estimated at NOK 8.1 billion. The corresponding value estimate of

ErgoGroup AS, which is Norway Post’s largest subsidiary, is NOK 2.15 billion. The enterprise value of Nor-Cargo is estimated at NOK 1.25 billion, while the total value of the remaining subsidiaries is estimated at NOK 1.3 billion.

### **Positive development**

Norway Post is now worth two and a half times its estimated value five years ago. In 2000, Norway Post’s total equity was estimated at NOK 4.8 billion. Since June 2004, the value of the Group has increased by NOK 4.4 billion, or 52 per cent.

Enskilda Securities concludes that Norway Post enjoys a leading position in the market, a strong brand and a potential for improved profitability. The company’s pursuit of a selective growth strategy and its Nordic ambitions in selected niches strengthens Norway Post’s position as a leading communications and logistics company.

In addition, Enskilda Securities points out that Norway Post has “demonstrated a sound ability to implement cost-saving measures, and is among the world’s most efficient postal enterprises”.

The following valuations of Norway Post have been carried out in recent years:

- 2000: NOK 4.8 billion (total equity) – carried out by DnB Markets and PWC in June 2000

- 2002: NOK 6.3 billion (total equity) – carried out by DnB Markets and PWC in March 2002

- 2003: NOK 5.5 billion (total equity) – carried out by DnB Markets and PWC in February/March 2003

- 2004: NOK 8.4 billion (enterprise value) – carried out by Enskilda Securities in June 2004

- 2005: NOK 12.8 billion (enterprise value) – carried out by Enskilda Securities in June 2005

Enskilda Securities chosen after competitive tendering

The valuation of Norway Post in 2005 takes the form of an updating of last year’s valuation, which Enskilda Securities carried out after a process of open tendering. The valuations carried out in 2000, 2002 and 2003 were made at the request of the Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications.

For additional information from Norway Post, please contact:

- Elisabeth H. Gjolme, Senior Vice President Information, tel. +47 901 40 449  
 - Birgitte Lund Nakken, Press Officer, tel. +47 908 88 284  
 - Norway Post’s 24-hour media contact, +47 23 14 80 00.




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**Norway Post Group is worth NOK 12.8 billion and is among the world’s most efficient postal enterprises**

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## The Eurogiro users' meeting took place at Lisbon, Portugal June 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>

June 29, 2005 - [[Banco Post](#)]

“Among the attendees there were members of Eurogiro Managing Board, representatives and consultants from different international organizations and banks (World Savings Banks Institute-WSBI, European Savings Banks Group-ESBG, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, Boston Consulting Group-BCG, VOCA-UK) and 95 Eurogiro members from 42 countries. At present, Eurogiro provides services for 48 members from 42 countries.

The main purposes of the meeting were:

- The presentation of Eurogiro activity, products and strategy;
- The presentation of Eurogiro Managing Board, and also the description, the modality and the applied strategy for each member country of the committee with the purpose of sustaining and promoting Eurogiro as a successful, simple, low cost and plenty of opportunities product – Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Holland;
- The presentation of the new Eurogiro strategies from the IT and Operations standpoint, whose purposes are:
  - (IT) new software versions, flexibility to the present and future requirements of the present and future members, their standardization, the interfacing and implementation of strategic products for 2003-2008 with new alliances created by similar financial organizations, for the penetration and the support of geographical expansion,

as well as for the increase of the traffic.

- (Operational) the assurance of a high performance at a network and operational level, support in sustaining and meeting the agreement levels within Eurogiro community, adding of value to the services, their uniqueness in comparison with SWIFT, also reaching the STP standards with the purpose of increased quality and development of “cross border” payments, especially SEPA (Single Euro Payment Area) with the activity of EU commission, also providing a collaboration and development with SWIFT, FED, UPU, Card gateway, by the integration and actualization of agreement levels at the stage of each organization.

- Club „CrossPay” – as initiative of ING-Holland, PostFinance-Switzerland, Bawag-PSK-Austria, Postbank-Germany for the handling of “cross border” payments as a SE-CUG (Swift-Eurogiro Closed User Group) business pattern for the assurance of the future Eurogiro, the increase of credit transfers and of “mass payment” handling with costs effectiveness;

- The presentation of international payments (cash/credit) from the standpoint of Postbank =Germany and Postfinance-Switzerland, as countries which experience the highest amount in Europe, according with enforce EU legislation;

- The presentation of COD (Cash-on-delivery) via Eurogiro, as an old fashioned system with special necessities in EU and the dissatisfaction concerning sensible data according to the vision of the

greatest users as PostBank-Germany and Postfinance-Switzerland;

- The presentation of UPU action plans concerning the collaboration with Eurogiro, represented by JapanPost, using EG services and products;

- The presentation of TMO (Tele Money Orders) by the vision and development experience with the organization of CTT-Portugal, pilot member in the project;

- Short presentation of Eurogiro representatives, focused on:

- Promotion campaigns in September within Sibos, campaigns and seminars, highlighting the quality of the services and products (on types and categories) given while monitoring and testing of different groups, ESSP (Eurogiro Single Settlement Point), denomination at least in EURO, for the benefit of all the members,

- The new COC (Code-of-Conduct), which facilitates the transfer exchanges among EG members, concerning the display –according with the new policy- of the commissions used for each product on EG site, of the financial information, the adhesion of all members to

- the success experienced after the accord concluded with top organizations, like Western Union, FED, SWIDFT, UPU, Visa(Direct);

- The presentation of the new EU legislative framework – FATF vers 6 and NLF (New Legal Framework, by which the 5.0 version will be amended in the autumn of 2005, with **(cont. to p. 25)**




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**Club „CrossPay” – as initiative of ING-Holland, PostFinance-Switzerland, Bawag-PSK-Austria, Postbank-Germany for the handling of “cross border” payments as a SE-CUG (Swift-Eurogiro Closed User Group) business pattern for the assurance of the future Eurogiro, the increase of credit transfers and of “mass payment” handling with costs effectiveness**

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## The Eurogiro users' meeting took place at Lisbon, Portugal June 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>



**(cont. from p. 24)** applicability in December 2006, which stipulates the applicability and the transparency of all payments suppliers (without post giro institutions) for sending/receiving within EU in the vision of Postbank-Germany;

- Multiple banking connections solutions at EG network, applied by ING-Holland;

- The strengthening of USD and Euro clearing, as challenge and solution in Deutsche Bank-US approaching tactic, concerning Europe vicinity;

- Incursion in payments systems from USA ( checks, ACH, credit card, debit card, RTGS), using the experience of Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta representative;

- SEPA (Single Euro Payment Area) -its 2005-2010 objective- the building up and the consolidation of the payments in the internal market in the EU vision, stipulation and legislation, as seen by WSBI and ESBG representative;

- The future strategy concerning payments global perspectives, as pressure among banks, pressure from

the stipulations, the expansion of the partnerships, as seen by BCG;

- The consolidation of services supplier in UK, partnerships and alliances for electronic payment system, in VOCA conception;

- Discussions, group suggestions concerning the above;

- Bilateral discussions with the attendants, according with the options of the representatives.”

Gabriel Cucu

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**SEPA**  
**(Single Euro Payment Area)**  
**-its 2005-2010 objective- the building up and the consolidation of the payments in the internal market in the EU vision, stipulation and legislation, as seen by WSBI and ESBG representative**

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## A new housing loan

**June 1, 2005 - [Press release]**

“Today, June 1st, 2005, Bancpost is launching a new housing loan, a product offering numerous advantages to customers.

Thus, the interest rate is 7.5 % per year for the loans in euro, fixed in the first year and variable afterwards, while for the loans in ROL the interest rate is 10.9% per year, fixed in the first five years and then variable. The loan repayment period may extend from 5 to 25 years.

The minimum funded amount is EUR 3,000 and the maximum lending value depends exclusively upon the applicant's repayment capacity.

The property which the loan is applied for is the very security for that loan.

The maximum amount of Bancpost loan can cover up to 80% of the market value of

the property which the loan is applied for.

The customer should no longer worry about the life and building insurances because they are free. Also free of charge is the loan file review (no fee is charged despite the final answer), and last but not least financial consultancy is at no cost. To establish the loan repayment capacity, Bancpost can take into account several sources of income, that is salaries, dividends, independent activities, rentals and it can even cumulate family incomes (spouse, parents).

Pre-approval of the loan takes only 48 hours.

Bancpost's nationwide network of units offers the customers the benefit of a higher, time-saving accessibility.

Each Bancpost unit has an employee dedicated to housing loans, who can make recommendations to customers related to the best funding solution and offer assistance

over the entire loan application period. In order to give more information about this housing loan, Bancpost set up a hot line: 021/408.00.00. Information can be also obtained at [www.bancpost.ro](http://www.bancpost.ro) For a better exemplification of the benefits of this new product, we give you further an example of monthly instalments for various repayment deadlines.

Monthly instalment in euro, computed for a fixed interest rate of 7.5% in the first year, variable subsequently



Amount of the loan in euro	25 years	20 years	15 years	10 years
10,000	74	81	93	119
15,000	111	121	139	178
20,000	148	161	185	237
25,000	185	201	232	297
30,000	222	242	278	356
40,000	296	322	371	475
50,000	369	403	464	594

## Eurobank merged with absorption with The Greek Progress Fund (2)



**June 10, 2005 - [Press release]**

“Given the announced intention of the management teams of the Greek Progress Fund closed-end investment company and of EFG Eurobank Ergasias (EFG Eurobank) to merge, the Board of Directors of the Greek Progress Fund will publish in the press (on Monday 13 June 2005) the invitation to the General Assembly, which proposes a share capital increase of €130 million.

As was announced today, Friday 10.6.2005:

1. Each shareholder of the Greek Progress Fund who currently holds 2 shares will hold 5 shares following the share capital increase. Accordingly, each shareholder of the Greek Progress Fund who currently holds 10 shares will hold 25 shares following the share capital increase, having contributed €40.32.

2. The proposed share exchange ratio between shares of the Greek Progress Fund, following the share capital increase, and EFG Eurobank is 7.9 to 1.

3. Each shareholder of the Greek Progress Fund who currently holds 10 shares, after subscribing to the share capital increase, will obtain 3.16 shares of EFG Eurobank, following completion of merger.

4. Based on yesterday's (9.6.2005) share closing price of EFG Eurobank (€25.28), the proposed share exchange ratio values the shares of the Greek Progress Fund at €3.97, a valuation that represents a premium of 15% on yesterday's share closing price of the Greek Progress Fund and a discount of 6% on its NAV.

For process reasons, which do not alter the essence of the share capital increase, it was

decided – as is described in the published invitation to the General Assembly – that the shareholder who will subscribe to share capital increase will be called to contribute the already announced amount, which for the trading unit of 10 shares in the Athens Stock Exchange is €40.32.

However, this amount will correspond to 14 shares (with €2.88 contributed for each share) and in total the shareholder, along with the issuance of one bonus (free) share which he will have received in the meantime, will hold 25 shares for each 10 shares currently held.

These new shares will form the basis for the share exchange of the Greek Progress Fund shares to EFG Eurobank shares at a share exchange ratio of 7.9 to 1.”

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**These new shares will form the basis for the share exchange of the Greek Progress Fund shares to EFG Eurobank shares at a share exchange ratio of 7.9 to 1.**

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## Postbank Opens Its New Branch in Burgas

**July 12, 2005 - [Press release]**

“Today Postbank inaugurates its new office in Burgas. The new branch is located in the center of the town in 135, Alexandrovska Str. The event is to be attended by Mrs. Maria Tsenova, Deputy Municipal Governor, Mr. Valentin Stoyanov, Branch Manager, Mr. Alexander Vitalis, Head of Postbank Branch Network Division, clients and other official guests.

“The new branch is built in compliance with the new corporate standards of Post-

bank – open spaces, functional and modern equipment, which in combination with the wide range of products and excellent service are to offer our clients European quality”, commented Mr. Valentin Stoyanov, Manager of the new branch in Burgas.

Postbank will provide special discounts and offers at the new office till August 31, reported by the credit institution.

Till the end of August, Postbank Fast Loan is to be offered without an application fee and Postbank House Loan – without an application fee and at 50% discount on the management fee. Clients can

obtain American Express credit card with 6-month free of charge membership and free EuroLine credit card. Clients can also take advantage of the Bank's summer credits, as well as of the newest deposit product – Active Money payment account with profitability of up to 7% yearly interest rate in BGN.

The new branch offers wide range of products and services both for companies and physical persons – house and fast loans, credit cards, overdraft, deposits, e-banking, fast money transactions, credits for small and medium enterprises, etc. “




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**The Credit Institution Is to Offer Special Promotions for Clients**

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## Postbank Issues BGN 30m Bonds

**July 12, 2005 - [PARI Daily - Bulgaria]**

"BULGARIAN Postbank sold its biggest floating-interest corporate bond issue in early July, the institution said. The transaction was managed by Raiffeisenbank Bulgaria and ING Bank Bulgaria.

The issue totals BGN 30 million and consists of three-year bonds with a par value

of BGN 1,000 each. The securities yield a floating coupon equalling the three-month SOFIBOR plus 120 b.p. The issue will be offered for secondary trade on the Bulgarian Stock Exchange.

**The loan will be used for financing new products and initiatives.** Postbank's good financial results and the support of its main shareholder, Greece's EFG Euro-

bank, helped the placement of the issue.

So far Raiffeisenbank Bulgaria has sold ten issues of corporate, mortgage and municipal bonds worth a total of EUR 55 million. For ING Bank Bulgaria this is the third issue placed."



## Postbank Extends Its House Loan Promotion

**June 29, 2005 - [Press release]**

"Postbank extends its House Loan promotion due to great interest in the product, reported by the financial institution. Till the end of August, clients can take advantage of reduced fees – 50% discount on the management fee and no application fee.

The attractive House Loan has been offered since April 2005 at one of the lowest interest rates on the market –

5, 75% in EURO and 6, 3% in BGN. The interest is fixed and is valid for the first year of the credit, as for the rest of the time it is 8, 3% for credits both in BGN and EURO.

The procedure is simplified and every client receives a preliminary approval within 2 days. House loan experts at every Postbank office consult clients on all application requirements and offer the most convenient alternatives.

Postbank finances up to 100%

of the value of the deal, 25 years maturity and an opportunity for interest free period - up to 24 months.

The credit is designed for purchase of estate properties, repairs and renovations, building and finishing work or re-finance of house loans drawn from other banks.

Clients have also the opportunity to draw extra consumer loans on favorable terms. "



## POSTAL BANKS - GERMANY: Many happy returns at Postbank

**June 30, 2005 - [European Banker]**

One year on from its less-than-perfect initial public offering, Deutsche Postbank is riding high. Germany's largest retail bank has recruited a record number of customers, lifted its return on equity by 2.1 percentage points to 13.8 percent and looks set to expand its market presence with the acquisition of German mortgage bank BHW. Jessica Skelly reports from Germany Twelve months after its initial public offering (IPO), Germany's

'yellow giant' has much to feel confident about. Thanks in part to the barrage of free publicity surrounding Germany's first big IPO in more than three years, Deutsche Postbank signed up a record 900,000 new customers in 2004, and an additional 190,000 in the first quarter of 2005, bringing the bank's customer base up to 12.1 million and underlining its position as Germany's leading retail bank.

But Wulf von Schimmelmann, Postbank's hard-driving CEO, has said that organic growth alone cannot launch Postbank into the top tier of Europe's best banks, and has publicly

stated that, going forward, acquisitions are likely to be made. He is positioning the company as a lean bank with standardised products and competitive pricing, but key profitability benchmarks are yet to be achieved.

"The challenge is not proving that Postbank is more efficient than the major German private or public sector banks, rather that it is more efficient than the best global players: Citibank, Royal Bank of Scotland, ING Direct and GE Bank," said Guido Hoymann of Metzler Bank in Frankfurt. These banks are immensely profitable and efficient, **(cont. to p. 28)**



**Deutsche Postbank signed up a record 900,000 new customers in 2004, and an additional 190,000 in the first quarter of 2005**

## POSTAL BANKS - GERMANY: Many happy returns at Postbank



**(cont. from p. 27)** and count among the darlings of the stock market, he added.

The flotation of a minority stake in Postbank in June 2004 was wracked with mayhem and bad blood. Deutsche Bank, one of two co-lead managers along with Morgan Stanley, leaked a memorandum suggesting that shares could be worth one-tenth less than the minimum asking price. To add insult to injury, German politicians then jumped in and attempted to strong-arm Postbank into merging with Deutsche Bank instead of floating.

"We asserted ourselves in a difficult environment," said von Schimmelmann in a statement. "As a listed company, what was particularly important to us is that we delivered what we promised. We even gained ground in our core business, retail banking. What is important in 2005 is to continue this development. And strategic preparations have been made for this." In March, Postbank won loud applause from investors and analysts when it snapped up a 9.2 percent stake in BHW Bank, a mortgage bank, from German insurer ERGO Versicherung (see EB 236). Now the question remains whether Postbank will buy it entirely.

BHW - which specialises in building savings contracts, life insurance, investment funds and mortgages - is 39 percent owned by the trade union group Gewerkschaftsholding BGAG and 37 percent owned by the German civil servants' association Deutsche Beamtenwirtschaftsbund.

A potential stumbling block is Allgemeine Hypothekenbank Rheinboden (AHBR), the troubled German mortgage lender jointly owned by Gewerkschaftsholding BGAG and BHW, which last year was ordered by German financial services regulator BaFin to lift its provisions by E383 million.

"A potential acquisition would require not only agreement with the major BHW shareholders but also a solution in respect to Allgemeine Hypothekenbank Rheinboden, in whose acquisition we have no interest," said von Schimmelmann, who has also publicly stated that BGAG's price for the unit, E3 billion, is "not realistic".

As EB went to press sources close to the situation said that Postbank was keen on forming a consortium with Cerberus. The US private equity firm is interested only in acquiring AHBR, which could provide it with a long-desired German banking licence to launch a distressed debt business in the market (see page 3).

Postbank and Cerberus declined to comment on the matter, but von Schimmelmann has said over the past few weeks that he hopes to make a final decision in the third quarter of this year on a possible takeover of BHW.

If Postbank gets BHW for an attractive price, analysts will be more than satisfied. "We see five drivers for Deutsche Postbank in the coming years: core business growth; deposit overhang reduction; DSL portfolio run-off [DSL Bank was acquired by Postbank in 2000]; interest rate changes; and a potential BHW acquisition," said an analyst with Deutsche Bank. In the absence of a deal with BHW Bank, the analyst believes that Postbank

will deliver only on the first three of those five profit drivers.

Analyst Metehan Sen of Sal. Oppenheim concurs. "The main focus for Postbank is BHW. A deal would push Postbank into a new dimension with financial advisers and 1 million customers," he said. Analysts estimate that the 9.2 percent stake taken in BHW is likely to increase the company's surplus of deposits by about E7 billion.

Against a backdrop of UniCredito Italiano's proposed purchase of HypoVereinsbank (HVB), analysts say that von Schimmelmann is likely to play hardball for BHW Bank. "We are extremely careful when calculating the value a target holds for us," von Schimmelmann said, commenting on the discussions surrounding the planned sale of BHW.

The former McKinsey executive emphasised that both business models could be a good match - in terms of both the product focus, as a provider of building loans, and the strong customer base and salesforce.

Aside from a domestic acquisition to beef up its retail operations, von Schimmelmann cited third-party distribution of home savings contracts as an important growth area. With DSL Privatkredit, which has 5,500 agents who work under the DSL Bank brand, Postbank developed a product tailored to the requirements of third-party distribution.

Last year it gained its first sales partners which include Germany's leading independent financial advisers AWD, MLP and Wustenrot. Additionally, **(cont. to p. 25)**

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**Aside from a domestic acquisition to beef up its retail operations, von Schimmelmann cited third-party distribution of home savings contracts as an important growth area. With DSL Privatkredit, which has 5,500 agents who work under the DSL Bank brand, Postbank developed a product tailored to the requirements of third-party distribution**

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## POSTAL BANKS - GERMANY: Many happy returns at Postbank



**(cont. from p. 24)** Postbank expects to grow its asset management advisory network, a mobile sales arm of 370 commercial agents with around 12,000 customers. By year-end, the bank will have at least 500 agents selling higher yield products such as unit trusts, life insurance and pension products.

In the first quarter of 2005, Deutsche Postbank increased its profit before tax to E165 million, an increase of 15.4 percent over the previous year. Pre-tax return on equity (RoE) rose by 2.1 percentage points to 13.8 percent. Of Postbank's 12.1 million customers, 4.4 million have their main current account with Postbank. A key

target is to increase that figure to 5 million by the end of this year.

"It helps that Postbank consistently ranks higher than other German banks in customer satisfaction surveys," said von Schimmelmann. He added that the marketing department is in full throttle - Deutsche Postbank is a main sponsor for next year's football World Cup, to be held in Germany.

In the bank's other area of strong performance - transaction banking, in which the bank has 16 percent market share - the integration of the payment transaction units of Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank has gone entirely ac-

ording to plan.

In 2004, Postbank recorded a 38.9 percent increase in net fee and commission income to E175 million, primarily from its transaction banking business. Other initiatives include Postbank's acquisition in January 2005 of ING BHF Bank's activities in London, which introduced commercial real estate finance to its loan portfolio. Postbank has also taken on the settlement for cross-border euro payments for the Eurogiro network. Postbank, which had initially assumed this function on a trial basis in 2004, was given a contract in January, which runs until 2008.

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**Postbank has also taken on the settlement for cross-border euro payments for the Eurogiro network**

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## Non European experience and PFS development practice

### Selected news from Africa, ME and Asia

#### Asia

### **Postal services announce joint U.S.-Asia express delivery network**

**July 25, 2005 - [AP Worldstream]**

"The postal services of the U.S., Australia, Japan, China, South Korea and Hong Kong announced Monday they are setting up a joint Asian express delivery network.

The network boasts more than 261 million delivery

points, about 1.6 million employees and 142,000 retail locations, Hong Kong Postmaster General Allan Chiang said in a statement issued by the Hong Kong government.

"This kind of presence is unmatched by any delivery company today and gives us a unique platform for providing extensive express service coverage for our customers," Chiang said.

The new network offers overnight delivery between select Asian locations, three-day delivery from Asia to the U.S. and five days in the other direction.

Pricing wasn't immediately available."

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**The postal services of the U.S., Australia, Japan, China, South Korea and Hong Kong announced Monday they are setting up a joint Asian express delivery network**

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## Chinese State Council adopts in principle plan for reforming postal system

**July 22, 2005 - [BBC Monitoring Service - United Kingdom]**

*"Text of report by official Chinese news agency Xinhua (New China News Agency)*

*"Beijing, 20 July: Premier Wen Jiabao chaired an executive meeting of the State Council on 20 July. The meeting heard a report on the supervision and inspection of central enterprises, discussed and adopted in principle a "Plan for Reforming the Postal System." The meeting heard a report by the State Assets Management Commission on the supervision and inspection of central enterprises by the board of supervisors in 2004, as well as the work arrangements for 2005. The meeting concluded that in 2004 the board of supervisors of key and large enterprises did a lot of work in supervising state assets and played an important role in safeguarding the security and preventing the loss of state assets.*

*By conscientiously implementing a series of policies and measures of the party Central Committee and the State Council on deepening the reform of state-owned enterprises and on macroeconomic regulation and control, vigorously pushing forward structural adjustments, energetically opening up the market, working hard to reduce costs, and tightening financial management, the central enterprises have markedly improved their economic results, thus making positive contributions to the steady and relatively rapid development of the national economy. The meeting stressed that the board of supervisors should conscientiously*

*ously carry out the duties given by the "Interim Regulations of the Board of Supervisors of State-Owned Enterprises," vigorously explore an effective form for the supervision of state-owned enterprises, work hard to improve its capabilities and standards in supervising state assets, and promote the reform and development of central enterprises and the preservation and increase of the value of state assets. The central enterprises should attach great importance to the questions and suggestions put forward by the board of supervisors after the inspection. It is especially necessary to satisfactorily solve various problems, such as poor assets quality, extensive style of management, and imperfect internal control mechanism, promptly rectify violations of the law, discipline, and regulations, and seriously deal with those responsible. The meeting approved in principle the general idea and arrangements of the board of supervisors for work in 2005.*

*The meeting heard a report by the State Reform and Development Commission on the plan for reforming the postal system. The meeting concluded that the postal service is an important public service and that the postal network is a major telecommunication infrastructure of the state. For a long time, the postal service has played a very important role in promoting the development of China's national economy and society and guaranteeing citizens' basic communication rights and other aspects. But, with the constant deepening of economic restructuring, the existing management system of China's postal service can no longer suit the need of the market economy, and further deepening reform of the postal system has become an important*

*and urgent task at the moment.*

*The meeting adopted a plan for reforming the postal system. The basic idea of the postal system reform is to separate the administrative functions from the enterprises, strengthen governmental supervision, improve the market mechanism, guarantee general services and special services, and ensure postal security, and to reform the main lines of postal service and the postal savings management system to promote development in the direction of a modern postal service. It is necessary to re-establish the State Post Administration as the state's postal supervision organ, set up the China Postal Group Corporation to deal with all kinds of postal services, and accelerate the establishment of a postal depository bank to standardize financial services in postal area. It is necessary to establish, through reform, a postal system under which the government exercises supervision according to law and the enterprises manage their business on their own, and further promote the sound development of China's postal undertaking. The meeting stressed that as reform of the postal system involves a wide range of areas, it is necessary to implement the principle of being energetic and safe, strengthen leadership, do careful organizational work, carry it out step by step, and push ahead in a coordinated manner in order to promote the smooth progress of the reform.*

*Source: Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing, in Chinese 1018 gmt 20 Jul 05*

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**The State Council approved in principle the reform of the Postal system**

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**For a long time, the postal service has played a very important role in promoting the development of China's national economy and society and guaranteeing citizens' basic communication rights and other aspects**

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## China's Postal Savings Bank to be split from Mail



**July 22, 2005 - [Asia Pulse]**

"Reform of the country's postal system, which has been in the pipeline for a couple of years, was finally approved on Wednesday by the State Council, China's cabinet.

The scheme focuses on splitting the government's administration of the industry away from the postal business. Savings banks will also be established.

According to the scheme, the State Postal Bureau will be restructured into a regulator that will supervise the sector, responsible for making rules and setting standards. It will be independent of the business operation. Meanwhile, China Post Group Corp will be set up to run various postal services.

Currently, the State Post Bureau combines the functions of industry regulator and profit-making company. Also, postal saving services, which contribute approximately 39 per cent of the total revenue of China's postal system, will be separated and a new bank will be formed.

Postal savings in China are estimated at 800 billion yuan (US\$96.4 billion).

That huge amount is in the People's Bank of China, the nation's central bank. These savings differ from commercial bank savings in that the State Post Bureau only offers savings accounts and never offers loans.

The new bank, however, will be responsible for all potential risks and will provide regulated financial services

just like other commercial bank. "The approval has been revealed much earlier than expected," said Wang Yongjiang, professor with Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications.

Usually laws guide such reforms, but the Postal Law is still under revision at the moment.

"The reform practices carried out under the scheme will help pave the way for new legislation," he said.

Insiders believe that a key factor that facilitated the changes is the business's profitability.

Reforming the postal system has been on the government's agenda since 1998 when telecom services were split from postal services.

The central government gradually reduced its subsidies to the State Post Bureau from 1999, expecting the system to make a profit by 2003.

That goal has been achieved.

Some aspects of the new scheme have not yet been made clear.

One is how the current postal business, involving both basic services and competitive services, will be split up.

"Splitting mixed services into independently operating businesses is crucial to the reform," Liu Jianxin, secretary-general of the Express Delivery Committee of China International Freight Forwarders Association, told China Daily.

The present postal service is classified into basic services and competitive services.

Basic services refer to sending

letters and newspaper subscriptions, as well as stamp printing and circulation, which have been core areas of the postal system in the past.

But express delivery and logistics services, as well as postal savings, fall into the category of competitive businesses, areas that are open to non-postal companies.

"The government may continue to allocate subsidies to basic postal services, as in many other countries, but it has to know exactly where the money is going," said Liu.

Profitable businesses, including logistics and express delivery services, are currently mixed with money-losing basic services, and it is impossible to tell the real profitability of each segment, he explained.

Meanwhile, regulations concerning post-exclusive business, a highly-disputed item in the Postal Law currently being revised, remains untouched in the new scheme.

Often post-exclusive business refers only to private letters and official documents, with commercial letters open to both postal and non-postal service providers.

(XIC)"

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**Splitting mixed services into independently operating businesses is crucial to the reform," Liu Jianxin, secretary-general of the Express Delivery Committee of China International Freight Forwarders Association, told China Daily**

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**The new Postal bank will provide regulated financial services in competition with commercial banks and has to achieve profit**

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## China approves postal system restructuring plan - report

July 21, 2005 - [[AFX Asia \(Focus\)](#)]

"BEIJING (AFX) - China's State Council has approved the restructuring of the postal system aimed at creating a postal savings bank,

state media reported.

Under the restructuring plan, the postal system will be divided into three parts - one to supervise the postal system, one to operate the postal services and the other to manage

postal savings, the Shanghai Securities News reported.

The paper did not give a timeframe for the reform.

[bjburo@xinhuafinance.com](mailto:bjburo@xinhuafinance.com)



## China's state postal bureau reportedly to restructure

July 6, 2005 -- [[BEIJING \(Market Watch\)](#)]

"The China State Post Bureau has submitted its restructuring plan to the State Council and is waiting for its approval, The 21st Century Business Herald reports.

The restructuring of China Post and the drafting of a new postal law have been contentious issues for international express mail companies, including TNT, DHL Worldwide Express Inc. (DHL.XX), FedEx Corp. (FDX), and United Parcel

Service Inc. (UPS). China Post is currently the postal regulator as well as the sole domestic postal service provider in China, and foreign express mail firms would like to see those roles separated.

A China Post spokesman declined to give further details on the restructuring plan, the paper says.

According to experts cited by the paper, the bureau will be split into two different divisions to separate the core postal business from the administrative and regulatory

functions.

One division will be called China Post Group Company, while the second one will be named Post Management Bureau, the report says. The China Post Group Company will be structured into several units such as the logistics and savings units."

Newspaper Web site: <http://www.nanfangdaily.com.cn>

- Edited by Sharon Buan  
- Contact: 201-938-5400

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**The China State Post Bureau has submitted its restructuring plan to the State Council and is waiting for its approval**

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## Japan Post should compete with rivals 'equally' after privatization - Fukui

July 21, 2005 - [[AFX Asia \(Focus\)](#)]

"TOKYO (AFX) - Bank of Japan governor Toshihiko Fukui said a privatised Japan Post should stand fairly and equally in competing with other financial institutions in the private sector.

"Privatization of postal services is now under scrutiny on the Diet but as I pointed out previously, it is very important to ensure equal foot-

ing (of postal services after privatization) in competition with rivals in the private sector," Fukui said in a speech in Tokyo.

"Local post offices can be a key channel for distributing various (retail) financial products...as they have sold government bonds for retail clients already," he added.

Fukui noted that consumer finance companies and public lenders, such as state-backed

housing loan lenders, occupy a major part of the retail banking sector in Japan.

"Consumer lenders have a comparative advantage against major commercial banks as they have expertise in screening individual customers' creditworthiness and (have access to) a vast database," he said."

[nozomi.toyama@xfn.com](mailto:nozomi.toyama@xfn.com)

nt/mb

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**Local post offices can be a key channel for distributing various (retail) financial products...as they have sold government bonds for retail clients already**

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## Japan Post to boost security of ATMs

July 14, 2005 - [[Asahi Shimbun](#)]

"The Asahi Shimbun Japan Post, at risk of losing alliances with international credit card companies, will spend hundreds of millions of yen to up-

grade security measures at its 26,000 ATMs around the country, sources said

The upgrades (see p.33)

## **Japan Post to boost security of ATMs**

*(cont from p.32) are expected to include sophisticated encryption and be completed by the end of 2006*

*MasterCard International Inc. and Visa International Inc. have requested since last year that Japan Post improve security at its ATMs if it wants to continue the agreement that allows foreign visitors to Japan to withdraw cash from those machines using credit cards issued overseas*

*The credit card companies said ATMs in the United States and Europe are equipped with high-tech encryption to prevent theft of personal identification numbers that cardholders enter*

*into the machines*

*The companies said that security features of Japan Post's ATMs are inadequate*

*The public postal corporation, which was established in April 2003, "has promised to upgrade the ATMs so that the alliances can continue," an official said*

*In June 2000, the former Posts and Telecommunications Ministry, which then operated the state-run postal services, entered agreements with Visa's Plus cashing network and MasterCard's Cirrus network*

*The alliances were made in time for the Group of Eight*

*summit that Japan hosted in Okinawa that year*

*Japan Post has since expanded ATMs that accept international credit cards, but computer systems experts have warned that security measures should be upgraded*

*Japan Post's 26,000 ATMs currently handle about 70,000 transactions a month by holders of overseas cards"*

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**Japan Post's 26,000 ATMs currently handle about 70,000 transactions a month by holders of overseas cards**

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## Africa

### **NIPOST Battles Competition With ICT**

**July 21, 2005 - [Daily Champion (Lagos) NEWS]**

Posted to the web July 21, 2005

By Okwor Nicholas  
Lagos

*"INFORMATION and Communication Technology (ICT) has become an integral part of today's modern society.*

*Without doubt this technological innovation is fast spreading across the globe, thereby shrinking the world into the global village foretold many years ago by Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan, famous for gnostic utterances such as "the user is the content". He foresaw an information millennium in which print was obsolete and we all lived - apparently quite happily - in a global village. McLuhan delighted in paradox and the substitution of aphorism for argument.*

*Much of his thought is ahistorical and reflects his interest in mediaeval idealist philosophy. His harsher critics have dismissed it as simply nonsense Marshall McLuhan died in 1980, but lives on through his axioms, in advertising taglines, the forecasts of corporate futurists, and the received truths of cyber-culture.*

*Much of what McLuhan had to say makes a good deal more sense today than it did in 1964 because he was way ahead of his time Mcluhan remains the preeminent theoretician of the Information Age, the first public intellectual to proclaim that electronic technologies would*

*transform the world into post . Interestingly, one of the several parts upon which this new technology is built is said to be the postal service.*

*It is a very vital component because of its advantage in terms of wider reach, reaching far across the rural settlements. Unfortunately very little priority is attached to this component because a lot of people erroneously believe that information and communication technology is the direct replacement of the postal service. As a matter of fact, industry analysts are of the opinion that the post over the years has suffered a good measure of damage as a result of the emergence of new information and communications technologies and they are right*

*With a touch of a button for instance one could access, analyze and store information as well as chat on the net. The world has indeed become a global village like McLuhan had foretold .*

*It was no surprise therefore that the Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST) ran into muddy waters when the world began to adjust the burgeoning wind of technology revolution. This is despite the fact that the history of the Post in Nigeria dates back to 19th century. NIPOST problems were compounded by bureaucracy, poor staff and snail like speed in getting mails across from one destination to another just a good number were unaccounted for.*

*As a matter of fact NIPOST in the outskirts of the digital village and operated in the Dark Age. The growing concern of the postal service was borne out of the importance of postal communication.*

*In contemporary Nigeria, postal service is still the most affordable means of communication to a greater percentage of our population. It has continued to play the role of an important medium of communication that can not be ignored.*

*It took the enigmatic leadership of Alhaji Abubakar Musa Argungu, the Postmaster of the Federation to turn around the fortunes of the post when he assumed office five years.*

*NIPOST has since began to see that it can even wax stronger and absorb the potentials of new technology into its array of services.*

*Despite increasing threat of modern technology in the areas of telecommunications, the Internet, the Post no doubt remains a constant factor in the league of communication options available to the people.*

*Obviously, the faith of a lot of Nigerians on the Nigerian Postal Service has been restored and this is evident in the reappointment of Alhaji Argungu for another 5 years term recently.*

*NIPOST management led by him has been signposted by, among other services:*

*\* Expedited Mail Services (EMS). Headed by a Senior Assistant Postmaster General (SAPMG), it was reorganised with automation from UPU assisted track and trace computerized network. Now, it has offices all over the federation and has a turnover estimated at N1 billion*

*\* Bulkmail Bureau, which is headed by a SAPMG, and designed to (cont. to p. 35)*




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**Despite increasing threat of modern technology in the areas of telecommunications, the Internet, the Post no doubt remains a constant factor in the league of communication options available to the people**

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## NIPOST Battles Competition With ICT

**(cont. from p. 34)** solely handle corporate mails, including share certificates, professional mails, annual general meeting (AGM) notices to members, religious materials. Its annual turn over estimate is put at about N500 million.

\* Courier Regulatory Department; headed by SAPMG, it was reorganized to sanitize the courier industry under the Act establishing NIPOST. Within two years of coming on stream, it has registered more than 80 courier companies. Its turn over per annum is estimated at N500 million.

\* Philately: Reorganized to promote stamps collation. Targets international philatelists like Europe, Asia and USA. Estimate annual turn over N300 million.

\* Postcode: A publication of NIPOST breaking the towns, cities and rural areas into postal coded numbers for easy tracing of mails. To be reviewed periodically. Revenue estimate is N100 million.

\* Electronic Mail Services/ Cyber Cafe: Reorganized to serve as Internet browsing and e-mail services centres to members of the public. To be propelled by a very small aperture satellite (V-SAT). Lagos and Abuja as take off areas.

The seeming concern about the post and information technology has brought together stakeholders in various fora where they all agree on one point - technology's obvious teledensity is not a means to the demise of the post but major driver of change in the postal industry.

On the occasion of the administrative council meeting of the Pan African Postal Union

(PAPU) and 3rd Technopost Africa Exhibition which the Postmaster General hosted recently in Abuja.

Major players in the industry all took cognizance of the fundamental role the new technology of information and communication should play in the future development of Africa Postal activities. **That all important conference tagged Technopost Africa had in attendance about 50 delegates from 21 African countries as well as international observers from the Universal Postal Union (UPU) with the theme Meeting the Challenges of Postal Technology and Networking.**

Also at the occasion the Honourable Minister of Communication, Chief Cornelius Adebayo assured that Nigeria is committed to integrating information and communication technology into the operations of the Nigerian Postal Service. Chief Adebayo announced the Federal Government's decision to equip NIPOST with facilities to provide infonet based services to the public, like the e-post, e-commerce, e-cash transfer amongst others to its customers.

The cardinal objective of Technopost Africa is the need to encourage research into the production of indigenous postal technology. And it is worthy of note that the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP), a sponsored research project of NIPOST exhibited some locally produced postal equipment during the conference. In another very important forum, the World Telecommunication Development Conference African Regional Preparatory meeting hosted by the Nigerian Communications Commission in Abuja last week, the Minister of Communications Chief Cor-

nelius Adebayo in his opening speech said the technological revolution is throwing up a great lot of opportunities and challenges in the communication industry.

Hence he observed, information and communication technology should be vigorously pursued for the purpose of development, which should include the activities of the Nigerian Postal Service. Former Minister of Information, Chief Chukwue-meka Chikelu in a keynote address read by the director of ITC in the ministry Dr. Ibokun Odushotun, said bridging the seeming digital divide ought to be the greatest challenge for all stakeholders in the industry.

All said and done, the need for the postal sector to stay afloat and hence maintain its relevance should not be misplaced. So much depends on the new information and communication technology for any meaningful impact in the nearest future. As Bill Gates, the world's renowned computer icon puts it "going digital puts one on the leading edge of a shock wave of change that will shatter the old ways of doing business." For NIPOST to make any meaningful impact therefore, it must rise up to the occasion by taking its rightful place in the competitive world of information technology.

Nigeria on its part needs a well formulated and articulated ICT policy that would encourage and set the tone for industry players to benefit from the opportunities available via the information super highway. The concern for all should be to maintain the commitment already shown, then forge ahead to strengthen and give support to the developmental stride of the Nigerian Postal Service. "




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**Nigeria is committed to integrating information and communication technology into the operations of the Nigerian Postal Service**

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## New Rules Needed to Raise Quality of Postal Services in Kenya

July 19, 2005 - [[The Nation \(Kenya\)](#)]

Pauline Wangui

*“New rules may need to be drawn up for the postal sector to jolt it into the 21st century. Competition and deregulation has increased considerably in Kenya’s telecoms industry, thanks largely to the innovation brought in by mobile phone service providers. But a trully competitive postal services market remains a mirage, and with the advent of e-mail and the internet, the industry is increasingly looking stone-age.*

*Letter delivery is a lucrative business. **The Postal Corporation of Kenya**, popularly referred to as Posta, remains the dominant force and monopoly in Kenya’s postal market. However, in courier services and express parcels there is stiff competition with the major local and international players such as FedEx, UPS, DHL and Nation Courier.*

*Postal services differ from other physical delivery services because of volume, nature of letters and other goods delivered through the post. The large and vertically integrated Posta benefits from various competitive advantages not shared by private competitors. However, as a monopoly, it also suffers from competitive disadvantages, such as the need to comply with Civil-Service labour rules. Despite enjoying economies of scale in the final delivery of letter, the presence of close substitutes for standard letter mail like couriers and express mail services, suggests that effective competition would develop in a completely liberal-*

*ized postal sector. However, more important are the provisions, and the time frame schedule for the much needed liberalisation in the sector. I believe that underlying market trends, which seem to gain speed, will further accelerate liberalisation. Despite more deregulation initiatives in other sectors in Kenya, key postal services continue to be provided under the protection of a statutory monopoly by Posta Corporation. While significant progress in terms of reform has been made in other telecommunication service sectors, **the postal service is still in the old order.***

*In the telecoms sector, we are being faced with the question of how to create effective competition. But for Posta, the real issues of the industry it operates in are yet to emerge. The agenda now should be to open the market for other firms in the near future. This would encourage effective competition, innovation and market development, and secure universal service. The postal services industry must be brought at par with the other sub-sectors in the telecommunications industry. The ongoing deregulation and liberalisation in other network-based industries, has demonstrated the benefits of competition as a means of enhancing quality, efficiency, innovation and lowering prices to consumers.*

*Competition can further be enhanced through regulatory interventions, now commonly found in other network industries. Particularly, structural separation of the monopoly service and the implementation of an access regime. In other words, regulatory restrictions on competition in the postal sector should be eliminated. The elimination of regulatory restrictions on competition does not, however, eliminate competition*

*concerns. An incumbent may be able to anti-competitively undercut an entrant as long as it has access to a source of funds such as monopoly rents or state subsidies. Eliminating this will typically require further regulation, such as privatisation or structural separation.*

*A fully liberalised postal services industry would certainly provide some form of service in all areas of a country. **Just as other businesses move into rural areas to serve the various needs of rural customers, postal operators could also be expected to do so.** Furthermore, it is not even necessarily the case that the price in rural areas would be higher than in urban areas. In a liberalised market, the decision to adopt a single national price is a product and marketing decision, which may be profitable on strictly commercial grounds such as brand recognition or reducing the transactions costs for customers.*

*These benefits may outweigh the costs of providing some services at a loss. The evidence for this is that private firms can and do provide universal access. The advantages of opening up postal services can be seen in the success of similar measures in developed countries, particularly Sweden and New Zealand. Such a move would bring in new ideas from other operators, reduce pricing for consumers, and lower costs for business. It would also force Posta modernise at a faster pace than it is doing at present.*

*The author is a telecom strategy analyst.*

*Distributed by AllAfrica Global Media. (allafrica.com)*

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***Despite more deregulation initiatives in other sectors in Kenya, key postal services continue to be provided under the protection of a statutory monopoly by Posta Corporation***

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## KCB in Major Partnership With Deacons, Postal Corporation

July 19, 2005 - [[The Nation \(Kenya\)](#)]

**"A leading bank has entered into a major partnership for the usage of the bank's credit cards."**

Kenya Commercial Bank's link-up with Deacons Kenya Limited and the Postal Corporation of Kenya (PCK) will facilitate efficient and faster business transactions.

With the new pact in place, customers can use any KCB credit or debit card at any point of sale within the Deacons and PCK business premises.

### Better services

KCB's divisional director for retail Banking, Ms Catherine

Njoroge signed on behalf of the bank, while Mr Wahome Muchiri and Ms Sally Wainaina signed for Deacons Ltd. and PCK respectively. Mr Muchiri is the managing director of Deacons Ltd. while Ms Wainaina is the general manager for strategy and business development at PCK. **"Through this partnership, KCB intends to make business transactions easier by use of the cards.** This will greatly improve our services and ensure that our customers are satisfied," said Ms Njoroge.

KCB's four major cards are; KCB Gold, KCB International Classic, KCB Visa Classic and KCB Quick Serve, which is a debit card. During the brief signing ceremony held at Ken-

com House in Nairobi, Mr Muchiri said that Deacons would give a 10 per cent discount to customers using any of the KCB cards at its outlets.

Ms Njoroge said that other than the use of Visa Card or MasterCard, for the first time Quick Serve cards would be accepted at any point of sale as debit card.

Ms Wainaina noted that most of PCK's transactions like sending of parcels, EMS services and buying of stamps are conducted on a cash basis, a thing she said was cumbersome and insecure to customers.

Distributed by AllAfrica Global Media. ([allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com))

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**Kenya Commercial Bank's link-up with Deacons Kenya Limited and the Postal Corporation of Kenya (PCK) will facilitate efficient and faster business transactions**

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## Postbank of Kenya to Host 100 Firms

June 23, 2005 - [[The Nation \(Nairobi\) NEWS](#)]

"Postbank will next week host over 100 savings and retail banks from 85 countries from Monday next week.

The seminar, to be held in Mombasa between June 27 and July 1, will discuss the challenges facing the micro-finance industry, and is sponsored by the World Savings Banks Institute.

Postbank's (Post Office Savings Bank's) acting managing director, Nyambura Koigi, said yesterday that it is a key forum for the banks to share information and experiences.

The institute provides members with technical assistance in development of viable banking structures for the

members. 'Allow us to start lending' Ms Koigi said Postbank customers can start borrowing from the institution once it completes talks with the Government.

The bank is wholly owned by the Government and its management reports to the Finance minister.

She told reporters at her office in Nairobi that the negotiations were on progress to amend the law to allow the bank start lending.

"Government has to change the law to allow us start lending," Ms Koigi said.

However, she said the bank wants to concentrate on mobilising savings throughout the country.

Posted to the web June 23, 2005  
Nairobi

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**The bank is wholly owned by the Government and its management reports to the Finance minister**

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## No Date Yet for Change of Postbank Mandate

**June 23, 2005 - [The East African Standard (Nairobi) NEWS]**

By Noel Wandera  
Nairobi

"The Government has not set a date for the planned conversion of Kenya Post Office and Savings Bank (Postbank) into a commercial bank. The Managing Director, Ms Nyambura Koigi, said yesterday discussions were on to amend the relevant Act to facilitate the change. "Until the Act is changed, we cannot talk about this matter," she said.

Postbank was incorporated in 1978 to mobilise savings for national development.

It offers a wide range of services, including ordinary savings, premium bonds, save as you earn, fixed deposit savings, premium savings, money transfer and visa credit services.

The bank has a network of 67 branches and more than 400 post office agency operated outlets. Nyambura was responding to questions from journalists in her boardroom where she announced Postbank will host the 11th World Savings Bank Institute (WSBI) Africa regional group meeting at Mombasa's Whitesands Hotel. The meeting opens on Monday and will run concurrently with another one organized by the association of savings banks of East Africa.

Both workshops will close on July 1.

The African group of WSBI comprises 29 countries, including Botswana, Gabon, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Senegal. Koigi said Postbank would present a paper on challenges of the sector that is dominated by women.

Posted to the web June 23, 2005




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**The bank has a network of 67 branches and more than 400 post office agency operated outlets**

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## Cameroon: Journalist imprisoned for reporting on postal savings corruption

**July 14, 2005 - [BBC Monitoring Service - United Kingdom]**

"Text of press release by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) on 11 July."

"The editor-in-chief of the private weekly *Le Front* has been imprisoned since 6 July. CPJ sources said a prosecutor ordered that Joseph Bessala Ahanda was jailed indefinitely, pending the results of a judicial investigation into defamation allegations against him.

The case stems from a series of reports in *Le Front* alleging that the former director of the Cameroon Postal Services and the publication director of a private newspaper collaborated in embezzling state funds, local

sources said.

Peter William Mandio, *Le Front*'s publication director, said Ahanda is being held at the Kodengui prison in the capital, Yaounde. It is unclear whether Ahanda will face trial, and he could be detained indefinitely while the investigation is taking place, Mandio told CPJ.

*Le Front* is based in the southern commercial city of Douala, but is distributed throughout the country.

"We are disturbed that Cameroonian authorities have seen fit to imprison a journalist for his work," said Ann Cooper, CPJ's executive director. "Joseph Bessala Ahanda should be released immediately and unconditionally."

Criminal defamation laws have been used frequently against journalists in Camer-

oon, according to CPJ research. In January 2005, Jules Koum Koum of the private weekly *Le Jeune Observateur* was sentenced to six months in jail for alleged defamation; the journalist was granted a provisional release in February.

In March 2005, Eric Wirkwa Tayu, a journalist based in the western town of Kumbo, was released after serving eight months in jail for defamation.

Source: Committee to Protect Journalists press release, New York, in English 11 Jul 05

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**The case stems from a series of reports in *Le Front* alleging that the former director of the Cameroon Postal Services and the publication director of a private newspaper collaborated in embezzling postal savings state funds**

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## Post Office Bank Crisis in Cameroon: Customers Fear Auditing is a Sham

July 5, 2005 - [The Post (Buea) NEWS]

Posted to the web July 5, 2005

By Francis Tim Mbom & Olive Ejang Tebug

"Most of the customers of the Post Office Savings Bank have expressed misgivings towards the on-going audit exercise authorised by the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, to evaluate how much the bank owes its customers.

"The exercise can end up with us being paid.

Barrister Awasume was speaking to The Post on Wednesday, June 29, the day the audit commission was in Limbe to carry out its work.

He disclosed that he was being owed a quarter of a million. "I have been a customer with the bank since 1995," he added.

Another customer, Joseph Oben, a final year student of the Faculty of Education in the University of Buea, was also in Limbe to have his account audited. He said they have held to FCFA 1 million in the bank. Oben said his family was far off in Mamfe and the said money was to cater for his school needs and those of his siblings who are schooling in Buea.

"Last October, when I left Buea to Limbe to withdraw FCFA 120,000 to take care of our rents for this academic year, I was given FCFA 20,000," Oben said.

### Ploy To Delay Payment

Meanwhile, customers in

Kumba described the auditing as a government ploy to delay payment.

Thousands of customers who turned up for the exercise at the Kumba Urban Council Hall questioned the absence of the administration.

Ismael Misodi, one of the customers who has been leading the protest, said they were uncomfortable with the three days given for the auditing.

He said Meme Division was quite broad and most people live in the suburbs without radios or telephones. He said they pleaded with the Divisional Officer, DO, Kumba Central, David Kouam, to authorise the circulation of tracts in the suburbs and the three-day extension so that customers could be reached.

Misodi said they told the DO that something should be done for those customers who have only receipts because the audit team has been working only with people who have passbooks, whereas there are people with millions on their receipts.

Most customers sought to know if only the names of people present at the census would be presented to the World Bank during payments. They further questioned why a census should be carried out when the Post Office has records.

Customers saw the act as a means of delaying the payment of their money because credible statistics would not be got. A customer, Abel Lependu, with passbook number 364406, saw the census as a sham.

He said after his name and passbook number was written by one of the delegates, they

later opened a page in his passbook and wrote FCFA 1 million, whereas his net balance is FCFA 3,600,000. He said when he questioned the delegate; he replied that all was all right.

"If a wrong amount is written, then how would government know the actual amount owed us? This is a trick the government is using to make us open the Post Office."

The Post also met many customers with receipts, which were rejected by the commission. Isaac Alah with FCFA 600,000 on his receipt fumed: "I will see how my money would not be paid on the day of payment. I am prepared to lose my life for FCFA 600,000."

### World Bank To Pay Customers

In a speech delivered by one of the delegates before the auditing started, he said the World Bank wants to pay money owed to Post Office customers in Cameroon.

He explained that the World Bank has instructed the government to conduct the auditing to know the actual amount owed customers.

The delegate assured the customers that a complete list would be forwarded to the **General Manager of Cameroon Postal Service** who will then forward it to the World Bank for eventual payment.

As to what the auditors were out for, one of the commission members in Limbe, Georgette Mouelle, told The Post that their role was to have the customers' accounts books (passbooks) cross-checked **Cont. to p. 40**

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**Most of the customers of the Post Office Savings Bank have expressed misgivings towards the on-going audit exercise authorised by the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, to evaluate how much the bank owes its customers**

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## Post Office Bank Crisis in Cameroon: Customers Fear Auditing is a Sham

**(cont. from p. 39)** for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 and compare them with figures they had got from the records of the Post Office, to see if they tally.

Mrs. Mouelle said the whole exercise was to enable the government know exactly how much it owes the customers. But it will no longer leave me with the kind of confidence I used to have in the Post Office Savings Bank," said one of the Bank's customers, Barrister Sylvester Awasume. Asked what happened to money calcu-

lated in billions, Mouelle said she knew nothing about it. She, however, said the customers might finally be paid before the year runs out.

Some officials of the bank intimated that government borrowed some of the money to carry out some of its activities. It is also alleged that some big guns apparently know how some of the cash disappeared. Mouelle said those who failed to do the exercise in Limbe, would have to go over to Douala at Immeuble AMACAM in Akwa, where the commission

will continue the exercise. She added that they were at no risk of not having their money at the end except their accounts do not tally with the records of the Post Office.

The auditing, which Mrs. Mouelle said went on simultaneously from Wednesday, June 29, in Limbe, Buea, Tiko and Kumba for the Southwest, ended on Saturday, July 2. At midday on Saturday, Mouelle said they had received only 800 customers. "

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**But it will no longer leave me with the kind of confidence I used to have in the Post Office Savings Bank," said one of the Bank's customers, Barrister Sylvester Awasume**

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## Ghana Post to Rehabilitate Postal Savings Bank in partnership with Ecobank

[Posted to the web July 12, 2005](#)

By G. D. Zaney  
Accra

**"The Ghana Postal services company limited (GP) has plans to partner with the District Assemblies to service all post offices in the rural areas.**

In addition, the Letter Box base of the company will also undergo a major expansion throughout the country.

The EMS postal system will also be reorganized as a separate courier business

within the Ghana postal services company under a General Manager, and a new savings Banks system reintroduced in Partnership with Ecobank.

The managing director of the company, made these known when the parliamentary select committee on communication paid a working visit to the offices of the GP in Accra last Wednesday to acquaint the committee with the operations of the company.

In an intervention during a meeting with the managing Director, Hon. John Mahama, a member of the com-

mittee called on the company to obtain a license from the National Communications Authority to facilitate the provision of connectivity to the internet market.

The Ghana Postal services company limited was part of the former posts and telecommunications corporation but became a company in 1995, operating under the companies code.

In year 2001, 2002 and 2003 GP paid dividends of ₵400 million, ₵450 million and ₵300 million respectively to the government."

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**a new savings Banks system reintroduced in Partnership with Ecobank**

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## Competitors in ICT Worry Postal Bosses

**June 29, 2005 - [The Monitor (Kampala) NEWS]**

Posted to the web June 30, 2005

By Elias Biryabarema  
Kampala

"POSTAL managers from the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (Comesa) member countries have started deliberations on how to transform the region's postal services into a robust and viable sector.

The discussions being held in Lusaka, Zambia are also to draw strategies to respond

effectively to the emerging technological developments that are making the traditional postal services irrelevant and also try to identify the best practices for national regulatory structures.

Addressing managers recently, Comesa's acting Secretary **(cont. to p. 41)**

## Competitors in ICT Worry Postal Bosses

**(cont. from p. 40)** General, Mr Sindso Ngwenya, said the future of postal services depends on the power of the managers to harness and exploit information and communication technologies (ICTs) developments that are rapidly changing the business environment.

Such an effort will perhaps involve rethinking the way postal entities have been conducting their business and expanding the portfolio of activities with a particular emphasis on those that utilise ICTs to compensate for the loss caused by the introduction of cell phones and email services.

Postal companies have progressively registered less turnovers as mobile and email use penetrates deeper almost eliminating the traditional letter writing.

### **Adapt or die**

Posta Uganda, which was created after the government's unbundling of Uganda Posts and Telecom-

munications Limited (UP&T) has started in earnest to adapt to a rapidly changing environment, responding to the evolving technological challenges with airtime retail partnerships with mobile phone companies.

Upon realisation of the growing preference for electronic messaging, it also quickly ventured into the Internet business, starting up a café. These have both partly filled the financial void caused by the declining business of letter writing. With the liberalisation of the sector and subsequent proliferation of the private carriers, Posta also reorganised and increased the speed of parcel processing and delivery.

Ngwenya said postal organisations must transform their vast resource (labour, capital, materials and information) accumulated before the onset of ICTs into products and services that meet the needs of a value-added obsessed modern market.

Zambia's Deputy Minister of

Communications, Mr C.E Kasukumya, who officiated at the opening of the meeting, contended that the provision of postal services under monopolistic conditions should be discouraged.

"Competition brings vigour, commitment to quality, spurs innovation and should be encouraged in all African economies," he said. "

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**POSTAL managers from the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (Comesa) member countries have started deliberations on how to transform the region's postal services into a robust and viable sector**

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## **From the Statute of ICPFSB—2005 Brasov's meeting**

### **"The ICPFB has the following objectives:**

- to contribute to the realisation of the strategy of the UPU in the business field;
- to collaborate with the UPU to rejoin the common objectives and to improve the relations between the member countries and between them, the UPU and the other international organizations;
- to represent and support at the UPU and other international organizations the demands of the different members to establish collaboration relations and development on the business basis;
- to facilitate the exchange of experience and the best practice among members;
- to take into account needs of the customers and of the markets from the business and marketing field; "

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### **The coming Agenda:**

**22 - 29 August, 2005 - Slanic Moldova**

**International Commission for Postal Financial Service Business**  
*"Summer College"*

**6 September, 2005 - Tashkent**

**RCC Workshop**  
*"Unification and integration of postal and information technologies"*

**12 - 13 September, 2005 - Rome**

*SAP Postal Executive Event*

**23 September 2005, - Paris**

**European and International Postal Prospective Group**

**25 September, 2005 - Washington, D.C.**

**Annual Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund**

**3-4-5 October, 2005 - Paris**

*The 9<sup>th</sup> International Postal Technology Exhibition and Congress*  
**Post - Expo 2005**

**5 - 6 October, 2005 - Riga**

**International Commission for Postal Financial Service Business**  
*General Assembly*

**19 October, 2005 - Bern**

*UPU' Postal Operations Council (POC) Postal Financial Services Group (PFSG)' meeting*

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