

Sector Postal and Telecommunications services

EMPLOYMENT

The world postal network in 2004-2008 was based on around 660,000 post offices and 5.5 million postal employees (one-third women and 25 per cent part-time) providing postal services throughout the world. There are around 8 million postal workers overall (including private and informal services, and parts of courier services). The total workforce in telecommunications services is estimated to be about 6 million, of whom 20 per cent are women. About 4.5 million workers from the postal and telecommunications services sector are affiliated to global union federations. Major trends include rapid technological developments, deregulation and privatization, and the proliferation of new high-value services. This is leading to a reconfiguration of the sector, and significant alteration of the employment outlook for communication workers.

Telecommunications is one of the fastest-growing industries in the world economy. The revenues of telecommunications services and equipment at the global level were around US\$1,210 billion in 2000 and US\$1,425 billion in 2003, equivalent to around 4% of the world's gross domestic product. By 2005, global telecom revenue for services alone had reached US\$1,419 billion*. As multimedia convergence accelerates, telecommunications services enterprises have been evolving from simple carriers into a multifaceted industry that offers not only conventional telephony services but also value-added services such as mobile communications, fax and data transmission, Internet access, cable television, and satellite operations.

Unlike telecommunications, in which the introduction of new technologies has been followed by a series of drastic changes in the world of work, the labour-intensive nature of postal services remains unchanged in many countries, in which some labour-saving techniques are gradually being adopted. Both the postal and the telecommunications industries have been profoundly affected by the development of the Internet and electronic mail, as well as by cellular phone technologies and other innovations. Services have evolved to adapt to the changing market environment, as well as to respond to the development of competing services, such as Internet Service Providers, multinational private express delivery services, and so on.

Useful links/resources

- World Employment Report – <http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/lang--en/index.htm>
- Business and Social Initiatives Database (BASI) - <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/basi/VpiSearch.Main> from the postal and other communications

sector which seek to address labour and social conditions in workplaces and communities of operation.

- Key Global Telecom Indicators for the World Telecommunication Service Sector
[:www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at_glance/KeyTelecom99.html](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at_glance/KeyTelecom99.html)
- Employment and other statistics for the postal sector
www.upu.int/pls/ap/spp_report.main?p_language=AN&p_choice=AGGREG