

3.1 LETTERS - FOREIGN RATES - 1850 - 1918

3.1.1 Introduction

From the 1700s letters to other countries were subject to complex charges. Mostly, they had to be prepaid to the Empire border, and the remainder of the charges were then paid by the addressee. These could accumulate to sizable sums if several further borders were crossed, or a sea voyage was involved. It is a complex area, and not a subject to be covered here in any detail. In the mid-19th century, bilateral postal agreements set individual rates, starting with the German-Austrian postal accord of 1850. For detailed information the reader is referred to the tables given in Dr Ulrich Ferchenbauer's handbook [1], which also applied to mail from Hungary.

When the UPU was established the postal rates became more unified, but there remained differences that were not finally eliminated until 01.07.1892. A detailed analysis by Dénes Czirók as to how Hungary applied the so-called 'Sea-Post Surcharge' for distant countries involving passage by boat has been published [2]. See also Article 3.5.

[1] Ferchenbauer, U., *Austria 1850-1918: Handbook and special catalogue*, self-published, Vienna. (Various editions, the latest in two volumes.)

[2] Czirók, D., 'The sea post surcharge, 1875 – 1892', *Stamps of Hungary*, No. 175, March 2009, pp.15-30

3.1.2 Data table

From 1869 the basic rates are as follows:

Table 1: Letters - foreign rates - 1869-1918

Date introduced	Weight steps	Standard rate per step	Concessions
01.07.1869 [1] Zone 1 Zone 2	each 1 <i>Loth</i>	5 <i>kr</i> 7 <i>kr</i>	Serbia
01.07.1873 [2], [3], [4]	each 15 g	10 <i>kr</i>	
01.04.1879	<i>Introduction of unified rates in two worldwide groups - Sea-Post Surcharges</i>		
01.01.1883	each 15 g [5]	10 <i>kr</i>	
01.07.1892 [6]	each 15 g	10 <i>kr</i>	[6]
01.01.1900	each 15 g to 45 g each 25 g above 45 g	25 <i>f</i> 25 <i>f</i>	15 <i>f</i> [7]
01.10.1907 [8]	first 20 g each additional 20 g	25 <i>f</i> 15 <i>f</i>	Serbia, Montenegro, 10 <i>f</i> per 20 g
01.10.1916 [9]	each 20 g each additional 20 g	25 <i>f</i> 15 <i>f</i>	

[1] **RGB 147, 14.12.1868.** Austro-Serbian accord. Two postal zones established: Zone 1; Hungary, Siebenbürgen, Croatia, Slavonia and the Military Border, Zone 2: Rest of the Empire.

[2] **PTRT 10, 03.03.1873.** Austro-German accord: letter rate 5 *kr* per 15 g, 10 *kr* for greater weights.

[3] **PTRT 36, 16.10.1873.** Charge to Sweden reduced from 15 *kr* to 13 *kr*; unfranked letter remains at 25 *kr* per 15 g.

[4] **PTRT 31, 14.09.1882** states that letters to Australia and New Zealand via Italy are now 50 *kr* per 15 g, printed papers are 10 *kr* per 50 g, samples are 11 *kr* per 50 g, minimum 12 *kr*. Postcards and business papers not permitted. Registration fee (letters only) 10 *kr*.

[5] To Germany first weight step is 15 g, second at 250 g, other foreign countries including B&H and Novi Bazar at 15 g steps (**PTRT 49, 30.12.1882**).

[6] **PTRT 34, 18.06.1892**. Rates for countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Cape of Good Hope, East Indies, Japan, Australia, *etc.*, reduced to standard rate shown. Concession for Germany, Serbia, Romania and Montenegro.

[7] **PTRT 45, 01.12.1899**. Discretionary rate from 0.01.1900 to Austria, Germany, Bosnia & Hercegovina (excluding the Pashalik of Novi Bazar), Serbia, and Montenegro, and from the Hungarian border tariff zone to Romania – same as internal rate.

[8] **PTRT 39, 14.09.1907**: Austria, Bosnia & Hercegovina and Germany remain unchanged (domestic rates).

[9] From 15.06.1918 letters to the convention countries were charged an additional 5 *f* as a war tax, 2 *f* for postal stationery cards.