

Russian Postage Rates



A chronological listing

As far as 1967

Compiled by Allan Oliver

Preface

The information contained in this book, has to the best of my knowledge never been presented in this complete manner before. The sourcing of the information was a difficult task that was made somewhat easier by the assistance afforded to me by fellow collectors on the Internet. To all those who supplied information I would like to say thank you for your help and support.

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Introduction

The issue of Russian postage stamps is inexplicably linked with the history of the country's mail service and as such is directly linked to postage rates in force at given times. This means that denominations were issued to meet a public need due to the rates in force at the time rather than just issuing values for the revenue generation. This information is the general starting point for many collectors of Russian postal history and thus is worth repeating here.

It must be stated that this area of philatelic study is outside of my collecting field and as such I have no material with which to check the details presented in this book. The information presented in the following pages has been presented in date order and represents a rewrite of notes I have collected over a period of time, (as I tend to hoard philatelic information which "might be useful").

The dates used are from the two calendar systems used in Russia. All dates upto 1918 use the Julian calendar, this is generally 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar which was adopted in 1918, and the change saw the 31st January followed by the 14th February. All dates from 1918 onwards use the Gregorian calendar.

As far as I can ascertain, Soviet postage rates have not been thoroughly researched in philatelic literature, much only getting passing comments within some other context. This is a very neglected area in which the increases in the face value of the stamps, the numbers printed and the numbers printed are all closely linked with the postage rates of the time. The rates frequently dictated the revaluation of current stamps and gave rise to new postage stamps and various surcharges.

Soviet postal rates for the despatch and delivery of internal mail was changed about thirty times during the period 1918 to 1966 and all those known to this author are listed in the following pages. As a general rule they were brought into use by special decrees of the Government and only in a few cases by the circularised orders of the postal administration, (in effect Post Office Circulars). The rates for international postage were announced by the same National Commissariat of Posts and Telegraphs, later to become the ministry of Communications of the USSR.

10th century

Records record that a postal system was in operation

Letters were carried in a roll with a wax or lead seal
The earliest recorded example is dated 1079

1391

The earliest surviving cover

This was sent from La Tana (now Azov) to Venice

1500

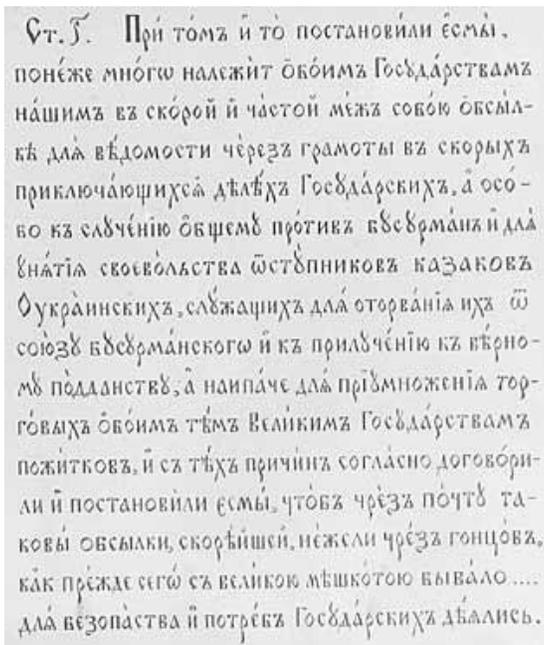
By this time the mail included some 1600 posts and mail took 3 days to travel from Moscow to Novgorod. A post in this sense was in effect no more than a place to exchange horses, drop of mail and receive items for further transmission.

1634

A peace treaty between Russia and Poland established a route to Warsaw, becoming Russia's first regular international service.

1667

Postal treaty between Poland and Moscow



Ст. 5. При томъ и то постановили есмаи,
понеже много належитъ обоимъ Государствамъ
нашимъ въ скорой и частой межъ собою обсмл-
кѣ для вѣдомости черезъ грамоты въ скорыхъ
приключаются дѣлѣхъ Государскихъ, а осо-
бо къ слѣченію обшемъ противъ еберманъ и для
знатія свободѣства ѿстѣпниковъ казакъ
Украинскихъ, слѣжащихъ для оторванія ихъ ѿ
союзу еберманского и къ прилчѣнію къ вѣрно-
мъ подданствѣ, а наипаче для прѣмноженія тор-
говыхъ овсимъ тѣмъ Великимъ Государствамъ
пожитковъ, и съ тѣхъ причинъ согласно догово-
рили и постановили есмаи, что въ чрезъ почтѣ та-
ковы обсмлки, скорѣйшей, нежли чрезъ гонцовъ,
какъ прѣжде сего съ великою мѣшкотою бывало....
для везопасства и потрекъ Государскихъ дѣлалась.

Part of the original postal treaty

This document is in the Minsk
Postal Museum

1716

Peter the Great enacted reforms making the postal system more uniform in its operations, and in 1716 the first post offices opened, in Moscow and Saint Petersburg

1765

The earliest known Russian postmark dates from July 1765; it is a single line reading "ST.PETERSBOVRG" (in Latin letters), but the first official recommendation to use postmarks did not come until 1781

General practice prior to about this time was to record in some form of ledger at the receiving post office details about each letter, where it was going to, and what the amount charged was (based on weight and distance). Sometimes some hand written details would be written on the back of the letter to record these facts, and sometimes not.

1781

Official recommendation to use postmarks

16th August 1781

The first official reference to postmarks occurs on this date in a note from the head of the Riga Post Office that recommends the introduction of postal marks in all post offices as proof that the appropriate fees had been collected

This recommendation was speedily acted on, and in the postal regulations of 1782 is a requirement that each post office will have a postmark that states the name of the town as proof that postal charges have been collected

This original concept of postmarks was based solely on a way of demonstrating that postal charges had been paid, rather than as a way of recording any details about the delivery of the letter

The concept of recording the date that the letter was received by the post office came later, and was slowly introduced between about 1816-1818.

1783

prior to this date, postal rate charges throughout the empire, (where a post existed), were made according to local conditions and the costs that were incurred locally for the maintenance of the postal facilities and the stations.

14th November 1783

By a decree standard postage rates established for the whole of Russia
The main reason for this implementation was to save the government the inconvenience of obtaining payment for delivering and sending letters and also to simplify the accounting system by using one standard weight charge

Letters weighing 1 lot, (½oz), were charged per 100 vorsts distance
Distances are all expressed as vorsts, with 10 vorst being about 7 miles

The reasoning behind all this was to make the rates more accountable on distance. All those rates known are listed below ...

Up to 100 vorsts – 6 kopeks

Between 100 and 1500 vorsts – 2 kopeks per 100 vorsts

Up to 3100 vorsts – 1 kopek per 100 vorst or part of

(We are uncertain if this means 1k per 100v for the entire distance or if the charge was 2k for the first 1500v then 1k thereafter)

Over 3100 vorsts – 50 kopeks

It is reported that 31 scales of charges were laid down in this decree, so more details are required for this entry

1795

Money orders come into use

Registered letters, (with a statement of value), came into use

1799

Around this date there are 458 Post Offices in Russia staffed by more than 5,000 postal officials

1806

Payments renewed to stations for carrying the post.

1,500,000 rubles cash remaining from earlier appropriated expenses was taken away from the Post Office budgeting. The law also stipulated that in future all profits would be contributed to the State treasury for the State itself to use

1819

The Postal Board comes under the control of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Enlightenment. Prior to this it had been under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs

1830

Postal rates in force at this time
(10 vorst = approximately 7 miles)

100 to 200 vorsts	20 kopeks
300 to 600 v	30k
600 to 800 v	40k
800 to 1100 v	50k
1100 to 1300 v	60k
1300 to 1600 v	70k
1600 to 1800 v	80k
1800 to 2100 v	90k
2100 to 2300 v	94k
2300 to 2600 v	96k
2600 to 2800 v	98k
2800v and above	100k

1843

A new system for payment in advance for letters is introduced

1845

Postal stationery made its first appearance in the form of envelopes that paid the 5-kopeck fee for local mail in St. Petersburg and Moscow. The idea worked well, and was extended throughout Russia on the 1st December 1848.

1st December 1848

The local mail system adopted in Moscow and St Petersburg in 1845 was extended to the whole of Russia. No details on the fee are known and it is assumed to have remained the same

1850

Preparatory work for the introduction of postage stamps begins.
This is mainly under the influence of the pioneer Alexei Prokhorovich Charukovsky, the head of railway transportation in Russia

September 1856

The Russian authorities decide to adopt postage stamps

21st October 1856

A pen and ink sketch is produced for the proposed first issue of postage stamps. This is dated and has a notation attributing it to the designer Franz Keppler of the Russian printing office



The Franz Keppler sketch of 1856

10th December 1857

First postage stamps go on sale
These were not valid for use until the 1st January 1858

For a letter weighing up to 1 lot (approx 12.8 grams or 1/2oz) – 10 Kopeck

This rate was probably in force from an earlier date but details are unknown

1st January 1858

Postage stamps available for use from this date

10th January 1858

20 and 30-kopeck stamps issued

These were probably to pay double and triple weight letters.

It is assumed that these double and triple rates were in force from an earlier date and that these specific rates came into force at the same time as the 10-kopeck single rate

It is also possible that the 10-kopeck rate from the 10th December 1857 was for local mail and thus the 20-kopeck stamp may have been for intercity mail as well as double weight and possibly the registrations fee (if this was in place at this time). The 30 kopecks would then be used for triple weight letters or local delivery registered. More details on this are required

1863

A 5k stamp for local postage introduced

This shows that the local rate postage adopted in 1845 and extended throughout Russia on the 1st December 1848 was still in force

This was in effect a lowering of the letter rate as the 5k rate was originally applied to postal stationary.

10th July 1864

A new common design of stamp, with the arms in an oval, was introduced for 1k, 3k, and 5k values. These were issued to make up complicated rates for international mail, which had previously required cash payments at the post office.

I am uncertain if by this time the local rate had been abolished or if the 5k value had a dual purpose. It was probably the later

The Postal Department decided to allow international mail also to be paid using stamps, and so they needed to introduce some smaller value stamps so as to be able to make up the various irregular fees for international postage.

September 1865

The Shlisselburg district became the first zemstvo offices to issue stamps
Shlisselburg is in the St Petersburg district

The system was not officially organised until the 27th August 1870

13th August 1870

The Zemstvo system was officially organized by a decree of this date

1874

Russia became one of the original 22 countries forming the General Postal Union (later the Universal Postal Union).

1904

The first semi-postal issue of stamps

Four values were issued and each was sold at 3k over the face value to provide for orphans of casualties in the Russo-Japanese War.

20th December 1912

Russia's first series of commemorative stamps issued to mark the 300th anniversary of the Romanov dynasty

The 17 stamps featured portraits of the various Tsars, as well as views of the Kremlin, Winter Palace, and Romanov Castle.

26th September 1913

The Russian Postal Service converts to metrics and the use of "lots" as a measure of weight is replaced by multiples of 15grams (just over half an ounce - 0.53oz).

1915 – 1916

As the government disintegrated under the pressures of World War I, several of the designs were printed on cardboard and used as paper money.

7k and 14k stamps were also surcharged 10k and 20k due to shortages.

This postal guide classified different types of mailings as follows and also provided additional information of use in the study of this area

Domestic postal services are divided into the following categories

Letters

Postcards

Mail sent under wrappers, commercial papers, samples of goods and printed matter

Letters with a declared value

Packages

International postal services cover the categories of

Letters

Postcards

Postal wrappers (as above)

Letters with a declared value

Light packages and parcels

Where postal services are carried out

I. Postal operations of all types including the above mentioned services are carried out at main post offices, all postal and telegraph offices and branches, together with the following special services

Domestic operation – money transfers by post or telegraph; receipt and delivery to destination of COD sendings and the delivery of periodicals to subscribers within the empire

International operation – the transfer of money by post and the receipt of subscriptions for foreign periodicals

The only exceptions are some postal agencies at railroad stations, where the postal services are restricted to the receipt and delivery of ordinary and registered correspondence and the sale of postage stamps

- II. In the Volost (district) and Stanitsa (Cossack village) administrations, rural and “Gmina” (village headman) centres, where auxiliary postal facilities are provided such as
- (a) Sale of postage stamps
 - (b) Receipt and delivery of domestic and international ordinary and registered mail, letters, postcards, postal wrappers and also the delivery of periodicals
 - (c) Acceptance of domestic open letters with declared value not exceeding 200 rubles consisting only of the enclosure of valid currency of the Empire and also of packages with or without declared value
 - (d) Delivery of domestic open and sealed letters with declared value, and of packages

Note 1. In the Volost (district) administrations, on private, fully franked letters, postcards, postal wrappers, notifications and periodicals will be accepted. For delivery of the above categories of mail, the Volost administrations have the right to collect the following fees from the addressee

- (a) Not more than 3 kopecks for each letter or postcard
- (b) Not more than 1 kopeck for each postal wrapper
- (c) Not more than 60 kopecks per year or 5 kopecks per month for periodicals

Note 2. In the Volost administration, the above-mentioned categories of mail will only be delivered if addressed to peasants or other persons within the jurisdiction of that particular administration. Mail addressed to persons of other status will be given out by the Volost administrations only on written declaration by such persons of their wish to receive mail in the Volost administrations. Such declarations should be deposited at the post office nearest the Volost administration

Note 3. Mail at reduced rates (letter and postcard categories only) will be accepted and given out in the Volost administration only if the organisation and the persons under their jurisdiction will submit to the nearest post and telegraph office desire to receive such reduced rate mail from the Volost administrations. Mail at reduced rates will be given out free of charge.

Only the sale of postage stamps, on the basis of the above mentioned regulations

- III. At railroad stations without post and telegraph facilities, special auxiliary postal stations will be established and will handle the following services ...

Receipt and giving out of mail of all categories, with some restrictions based on the law of 24th January 1900 as follows ...

- (a) The sale of postage stamps
- (b) Receipt and giving out of domestic and international ordinary and registered mail, such as letters, postcards and postal wrappers and also the handing out of periodicals
- (c) Acceptance of domestic open letters with declared value not exceeding 200 rubles, containing only money that has circulation in the Empire, as well as packages with or without declared value
- (d) The giving out of domestic open and sealed letters and packages with declared value

Note – Postal and telegraph money orders, addressed to persons living in a district served by a railroad station, will be sent to the postal and telegraph office nearest the station concerned. The postal and telegraph office will send the money to the station for the addressee in a sealed letter with declared value. If the money order is sent by postal means, a receipt voucher will be mailed together with the money.

The receipt and giving out of ordinary and registered mail and the sale of postage stamps, on the basis of regulations, confirmed by the ministry of internal affairs on 19th September 1901

Note – The stationmaster will collect a fee of 3 kopecks for each piece of registered mail.

The receipt and giving out of ordinary mail

Note – The stationmaster will collect a fee of 3 kopecks for each letter or postcard. Reduced rate mail, newspapers and other periodicals will be given out free of charge

Business Hours for Postal Operations

Postal services of every category will take place as follows ...

At the GPO's in Petrograd and Moscow from 9am to 4pm

At all other offices including branches in each town from 8am to 2pm

In addition to the above mentioned hours, the receipt and giving out of ordinary and registered mail, as well as the sale of postage stamps, will also take place in the evening for not less than two hours, in accordance with local conditions, after having been confirmed by the chief postmaster of each town. However, for post offices below the rank of third class, the decision for the establishment of evening hours will be made by the postmaster of the local post office, in accordance with local conditions.

At post offices with restricted services on railroad stations, such operations will take place in accordance with the train timetable, but in any case the office will be open one hour before the departure of the train carrying the mail

In all postal and telegraph office where telegrams are accepted, postal operations will take place during the entire period that telegrams are accepted, but no later than 10pm. On railroad stations without postal facilities, operations will take place from 8am to 11am and from 4pm to 6pm. If the arrival of mail trains does not coincide with these times, postal services will also take place one hour before the arrival of each mail train.

In Volost administrations, postal operations will be carried out from 8am to 2pm.

Postal services will not take place on the following days ...

- 1) New years day (1st January)
- 2) The first day of Easter
- 3) The Annunciation of the Virgin Mary (25th March)
- 4) Name day of the Tsar (6th December)
- 5) First day of Christmas (25th December)

Postal services will take place for two hours only on the following days ...

- 1) Epiphany (6th January)
- 2) Candlemass Day (2nd February)
- 3) Trinity Day
- 4) Day of the removal of the Reliquies of St Nicholas, the worker of miracles (9th May)
- 5) The day of the Blessed Coronation of their Imperial Highnesses (14th May)
- 6) St Peter and St Paul's day (29th June)
- 7) Day of the transfiguration (6th August)
- 8) Assumption of the Holy Virgin (15th August)
- 9) The beheading of St John the Baptist (29th August)
- 10) Birthday of Mary (8th September)
- 11) The movement of the Cross (14th September)
- 12) Day of St John the Divine (26th September)
- 13) Feast of the intercession of the Holy Virgin (1st October)
- 14) Feast day of the virgin Kazaan (22nd October)
- 15) The leading of the virgin to the temple (21st November)

- 16) The second and third days of Christmas (26th & 27th December)
- 17) Saturday of Shrovetide
- 18) Friday and Saturday of Passion week
- 19) Second day of Easter
- 20) Ascension of the Saviour
- 21) Whit Monday
- 22) Name day of her Imperial Highness Alexandra Fedorovna (22nd June)
- 23) Birthday of the Emperor (6th May)
- 24) Birthday of Empress Alexandra Fedorovna (25th March)
- 25) Name day of her Imperial Highness Maria Fedorovna (22nd June)
- 26) Birthday of the Crown Prince (30th June)
- 27) Name day of the Crown Prince (5th October)
- 28) Accession to the throne of his Imperial Highness (21st October)
- 29) Birthday of her Imperial Highness Maria Fedorovna (14th November)
- 30) All Sundays

The designation of the specific hours for postal services on the days enumerated above is left to the discretion of the management of the city post offices.

1917

The Provisional Government reprinted the old Tsarist designs, but sold them imperforate

15th August 1917 Postal & Telegraphic journal 1917
 Postal & Telegraphic journal 1918
 Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of
 Posts & Telegraphs 1920

For the dispatch and delivery of postcards
 Local and intercity – 5 kopeck

For the dispatch and delivery of ordinary letters
 Up to 30g (1oz) – 10 kopeck
 Each additional 30g or part of an additional 10 kopeck

For the dispatch of registered mail
 20 kopeck per item in addition to all other rates

For unpaid or underpaid items the recipient shall be charged with double the deficiency on each item

These rates remained in force for a short time following the October revolution. Details of the extended periods of use are unknown

24th October 1917

With the support of the armed forces, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin seized power in Petrograd. Elections a couple of weeks later showed them to be in a minority position, and the country rapidly fell into civil war for the next several years, with various alternate groups fighting against the Bolsheviks.

The civil war was essentially over by late 1920, to be replaced by a period of hyperinflation, settling down again in 1923.

What was formerly Imperial Russia now became known as the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (abbreviated RSFSR).

This is a dreadfully confusing (or amazingly interesting - depending on your point of view) period of Russian postal history. Many of the breakaway groups issued their own stamps, all manner of different surcharges were applied to pre-existing stamps, and confusion and chaos generally reigned supreme!

All dates upto this point use the Julian calendar
This is generally 13-14 days behind the Gregorian calendar which was adopted in 1918. The change saw the 31st January followed by the 14th February

1918

The first stamps of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic appeared as two values depicting a sword cutting a chain. While great quantities of these stamps survive, they saw little use, and used copies are worth more than mint

10th – 18th January 1918

The third all-Russian congress of soviets was held and proclaimed the state as the “Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic”, (RSFSR).

26th January 1918 Postal & Telegraphic journal 1917
Postal & Telegraphic journal 1918
Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of
Posts & Telegraphs 1920

The National commissariat of Posts & Telegraphs advised of new rates coming into force on the 28th February 1918

28th February 1918 Postal & Telegraphic journal 1917
Postal & Telegraphic journal 1918
Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of
Posts & Telegraphs 1920

For the dispatch and delivery of postcards
Local and intercity – 20 kopeck

For the dispatch and delivery of ordinary local letters
Up to 3oz – 30 kopeck
Each additional ½oz or part of an additional 5 kopeck

For the dispatch and delivery of ordinary intercity letters
Up to ½oz – 35 kopeck
Each additional ½oz or part of an additional 35 kopeck

For the dispatch of registered mail
70 kopeck per item in addition to all other rates

No details on unpaid or underpaid mail is known – assumed to be as before

15th September 1918 Postal & Telegraphic journal 1917
Postal & Telegraphic journal 1918
Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of
Posts & Telegraphs 1920

For the dispatch and delivery of postcards
Local and intercity – 10 kopeck

For the dispatch and delivery of ordinary local letters
Up to ½oz – 15 kopeck
Each additional ½oz or part of an additional 15 kopeck

For the dispatch and delivery of ordinary intercity letters
Up to ½oz – 25 kopeck
Each additional ½oz or part of an additional 25 kopeck

For the dispatch of registered mail
25 kopeck per item in addition to all other rates

Not details on unpaid or underpaid mail is known – assumed to be as before

24th December 1918

A special decree of the council of National Commissioners of the RSFSR is published in the "News of the V T s I K", (all Russian executive committee) as follows

"The council of National commissioners, considering that more regular and widespread exchange of correspondence between working people in the cities and poor peasants would serve to strengthen the already great bond of unity between them, deems it necessary to simplify and facilitate the handling of postal correspondence. With these aims in view the council of the National Commissioners orders that

- (1) There be established in Soviet Russia beginning from 1 Jan 1919 the free despatch of postcards and ordinary letters weighing no more than 15 grams (½oz)
- (2) Ordinary letters weighing more than 15 grams and registered postal sendings, are to be paid for on the usual basis of the total weight of the letter, as well as the fee for registration
- (3) The free despatch of postcards and letters is to be extended also to mail arriving at the borders of Soviet Russia from other countries

Simultaneously with this, the national commissariat of posts and telegraphs is directed to bring to the notice of working people of all foreign states through the commissariat of foreign affairs their right to send to Russia ordinary cards and letters without prepayment by stamps"

1st January 1919

Free postage introduced in Russia
(See 24th December 1918)

1st November 1919 Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of Posts & Telegraphs 1920

New postage rates come into force in Moscow and Petrograd

Free despatch of postcards and ordinary letters up to 15g (½oz) in weight

For the despatch and delivery of ordinary letters over 15g in weight as well as for registered letters – 1 ruble per 15g and the same fee again for every additional 15g or part of

For registration an additional 3 rubles per item in addition to all other fees

For the despatch and delivery of registered postcards an all inclusive fee of 3r

5th November 1919 Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of Posts & Telegraphs 1920

The rates of the 1st November 1919 come into force in all other regions of the republic. The reason for the delay is unknown but may have been to ensure that all the information was received at the local offices prior to implementing the changes.

An interesting feature of these rates is the abolishment of the different categories where letters were divided into local and intercity classes. This would have greatly simplified the processing of letters and newspaper wrappers in the mail.

These new rates meant that supplies of the ruble stamps were soon impossible to obtain in many post offices in the country. The receipt of cash payments for registered mail was therefore temporarily permitted, (particularly in the Ukraine, Vologda Province and such places), and a corresponding notation was placed on these covers reading "For the want of stamps the rate of ___ rubles ___ kop has been collected in cash". The use of this method was so widespread and standard that it would seem to indicate a general policy.

10th March 1920 Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of Posts & Telegraphs 1920

New postal rates come into force in Moscow and Petrograd

Free despatch and delivery for postcards and ordinary letters up to 15 grams

For letters over 15 grams and for registered letters a fee of 5 rubles per 15 grams and an additional 5 rubles for every additional 15 grams or part of

For registered letters a fee of 5 rubles in addition to all other rates

For the despatch and delivery of registered postcards an all inclusive fee of 10r

Note – At this time the pre-revolutionary definitive stamps (arms type) with values from 1 to 20 kopecks were placed on sale at 100 times their face value. Effectively these were sold as ruble values but the stamps had no surcharge applied. Some post offices however supplied the re-valued stamps surcharged with manuscript or hand-stamps

20th March 1920 Manual of regulations & orders of the National commissariat of Posts & Telegraphs 1920

The new postal rates of the 10th March 1920 come into force across Russia

2nd April 1921

Published in the “News of the V Ts I K”, (all Russian executive committee) under the heading ‘Reform of Postal Operations’ as follows

“A special commission has been formed at the commissariat of posts and telegraphs to study the overhaul and simplification of postal work. The following measures were taken into consideration:

- (1) The total abolition of payment for all classes of correspondence, thus permitting the concentration of attention and effort on the technical processing of the mails.
- (2) Changes in the classes of postal sending, so as to simplify their despatch, and the removal of all unnecessary formalities, which have complicated the utilisation of the mails by the broad masses of workers and peasants.
- (3) The removal in differences in general transmission between ordinary mail, which was in most widespread use, and registered correspondence

The abolition of the limitation on free despatch of letters weighing not more than 15 grams (½oz), as it was not needed in this period of paper shortage and required the effectuation of exact weighing, even in the simplest postal agencies”

After many series of deliberations, in which many postal districts of the country participated, this plan was not accepted.

10th August 1921

A new series of postage stamps of the RSFSR is issued to meet the needs of the rates introduced on the 10th March 1920. It will be noted from the table below that shows the quantities produced that the 5r value had the biggest production in line with the rates in force

1 ruble	399,400 stamps produced
2 rubles	398,450
5 rubles	543,330
20 rubles	289,760
40 rubles	174,980

On the 15th August 1921 the postage rates were again changed and it was decided to take this issue off sale, (after a period of only 5 days).

15th August 1921 “News of the V Ts I K” of the 5th August 1921
 “News of the V Ts I K” of the 9th February 1922
 “News of the V Ts I K” of the 25th April 1922

The free despatch of ordinary mail during the most strenuous period of foreign intervention and the civil war, to all intents and purposes, played a positive role.

With the end of the civil war, the commissariat of posts and telegraphs re-introduced on this date the idea of payment for all postal items and modified various privileges in the utilisation of postal services, which had existed in the period of strife. On this date, in accordance with a decree by the council of commissioners of the RSFSR a new schedule of Soviet postal rates was drawn up as follows –

Postcards	100 rubles
Local letters	100 rubles per 2oz with an additional 100 rubles for each additional 2oz or part of
Intercity letters	250 rubles per 15 grams ($\frac{1}{2}$ oz) with an additional 250 rubles for each additional 15 grams or part of
Registration	1000 rubles in addition to all other fees

These three rates, (100, 250 and 1000 rubles), formed the basis for choosing the face values for subsequent postage stamps. However the new values were not ready by the 15th August and the national commissariat of posts and telegraphs solved the problem by putting on sale savings stamps and control stamps of pre-revolutionary Russia at a flat rate of 250 rubles per copy, regardless of the face value. The payment in cash of the registration fee was also permitted and often a postage due mark was applied to the cover with the amount applied in manuscript by hand prior to despatching the letter.

End August 1921

New postage stamps are issued to meet the rates set on the 15th August 1921

The quantities shown in the table below are taken from the catalogue of Russian Postage Stamps (1923 edition). This appears to be the only reference to the numbers produced but I would suggest that these are incorrect and require further research

100 rubles	44,391,900 copies produced
250 rubles	78,929,150
1000 rubles	53,869,950

At this time new international rates were also set

Postcards	400 rubles
Letters	1000 rubles per 20 grams ($\frac{3}{4}$ oz) with an additional 1000 rubles for every additional 20 grams or part of
Registration	1000 rubles in addition to all other fees

October 1921

New stamps with denominations of 200, 300 and 500 rubles placed on sale to meet the needs of the international rates of August 1921

21st November 1921

New international rates introduced

Postcards	2000 rubles
Ordinary letters	5000 rubles
Registration	5000 rubles in addition to all other fees

The term ordinary letter here is assumed to be the same as that imposed at the end of August 1921 with the same scale of increments for additional weight

Note – As these rates were all in multiples of 1000 rubles, no new specific stamps were required to meet these rates

1922

The 1921 issue was being surcharged due to increased inflation

Values up to 100,000 rubles were produced

1st February 1922

By a directive of the national council of commissioners of the RSFSR a new schedule of postage rates was introduced. This was dated the 31st January 1922 to come into effect the following day.

In contrast to all previous tariffs the rates were expressed on the basis of the gold ruble and the national council of commissioners of posts and telegraphs was obliged to advise their rates of exchange every quarter for their equivalent in Soviet banknotes.

The new rates were as follows –

Postcards	2 gold kopecks (3000 rubles paper money)
Local letters	3 gold kopecks (approx 5000 rubles paper money) per 50 grams (1¾oz) with an additional 3 gold kopecks for each additional 50 grams or part of
Intercity letters	5 gold kopecks (7500 rubles paper money) per 15 grams (½oz) with an additional 5 gold kopecks for each additional 15 grams or part of
Registration	10 gold kopecks (15000 rubles paper money) per letter in addition to all other fees

22nd February 1922

New international rates

Postcards	6000 rubles
Ordinary letters	15000 rubles
Registration	15000 rubles

No details for ordinary letters are given but we suspect this was a weight limit of 15 grams. The registration rate was in addition to all other fees

March 1922

Postcards	4000 rubles
Local letters	6000 rubles
Intercity letters	10000 rubles
Registration	20000 rubles

No details of weight limits etc are given and it is assumed that these were the same as those in force with the rates of the 1st February 1922

1st April 1922

New international rates

Postcards	18000 rubles
Ordinary letters	30000 rubles
Registration	30000 rubles

No details for ordinary letters are given but we suspect this was a weight limit of 15 grams. The registration rate was in addition to all other fees

15th April 1922

By an order of the national council of commissioners of the RSFSR dated the 12th April 1922 a new scale of postal charges was to be introduced on the 15th April 1922 as follows –

Postcards	20000 rubles
Local letters	30000 rubles per 50 grams (1¾oz) with an additional 30000 rubles for each additional 50 grams or part of
Intercity letters	50000 rubles per 15 grams (½oz) with an additional 50000 rubles for each additional 15 grams or part of
Registration	100000 rubles per item in addition to all other fees

30th April 1922

New international rates

Postcards	120000 rubles
Ordinary letters	200000 rubles
Registration	200000 rubles

Again, no details are given to scales of weight, but it is assumed that the 15 gram limit was for the single rate and that the registration, (as always) was additional to all other fees

1922

A currency reform in this year exchanged money at a 10,000-to-1 rate enabled new stamps in the 5r to 200r range, including a set marking the 5th anniversary of the October Revolution, Tsarist stamps surcharged with a five-pointed star containing a hammer and sickle. Stamps with portraits of a worker, peasant and soldier also appeared this year; variations on these portrait designs would continue to be issued throughout the 1920s.

4th June 1922

From this date, the public mail could be sent via airmail. Letters had been sent using aircraft prior to this date, but this was confined to official administrative mail, but now airmail correspondence was being accepted from the public.

The first soviet airmail rates were published in the “News of the V Ts I K” on the 31st May 1922 as follows

For airmail an additional charge of 20 rubles per 20 grams with an additional 20 rubles for each additional 20 grams or part of

1st August 1922

New international rates as follows

Postcards	27 rubles
Ordinary letters	45 rubles
Registration	45 rubles in addition to all other fees
Airmail	45 rubles in addition to all other fees

The ordinary letter weight is again unspecified and assumed to be 15 grams

8th September 1922 Government directive

“In order to establish uniformity in the circulation of money, the council of national commissioners decrees that ...

- (1) It is forbidden to place in circulation any kind of issue of paper money which had been in use prior to the autumn series of 1922
- (2) The acceptance of previous issues of paper money be permitted until 1 Oct 1922

These details were published in the “News of the V Ts I K” dated the 4th September 1922

1st October 1922

The national commissariat of posts and telegraphs took out of circulation all the soviet postage stamps issued up to this date in accordance with the government directive of the 8th September 1922

1st October 1922

New postage rates – published in the “News of the V Ts I K” dated the 20th September 1922 by a decree of the national commissariat of the RSFSR

Postcards	5 rubles
Ordinary local letters	5 rubles per 20 grams with an additional 5 rubles for each additional 20 grams or part of
Ordinary intercity letters	10 rubles per 20 grams with an additional 10 rubles for each additional 20 grams or part of
Registration	15 rubles per item in addition to all other fees

25th October 1922

New international rates introduced

Postcards	45 rubles
Ordinary letters	75 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	75 rubles in addition to all other fees
Airmail	75 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st November 1922 Post Office circular 11/1344

“For information and guidance, and also for quick enlightenment of local offices, it is announced that from the 1st of this present month of November, a new postage stamp in the value of 100,000 rubles, or 10 rubles in 1922 paper money, was placed on issue by the national commissariat of posts and telegraphs”

1st November 1922

By decree of the national commissariat of the RSFSR dated the 25th October 1922 new postage rates are to be introduced on the 1st November. This information was published in the “News of the V Ts I K” dated the 28th October 1922

Postcards	10 rubles
Ordinary local letters	10 rubles per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	20 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	30 rubles per item in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st November 1922

New international rates introduced

Postcards	90 rubles
Ordinary letters	150 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	150 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

No mention of airmail fees was made but this was probably 150 rubles in addition to all other fees

The reason for the omission of the airmail fees was due to the suspension of the USSR-Germany airline for the winter season soon after these rates came into effect

1st December 1922

By decree of the national commissariat of the RSFSR dated the 24th November 1922 new postage rates came into force on the 1st December. This information was published in the "News of the V Ts I K" dated the 3rd December 1922.

Postcards	20 Rubles
Ordinary local letters	20 rubles per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	40 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	40 rubles per item in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st December 1922

New international rates

Postcards	150 rubles
Ordinary letters	250 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	250 rubles per item in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

Note – There is evidence to support the contention that these new rates never went into effect. This is in the form of covers dated from the 1st December 1922 to the 9th January 1923 that show the rates from the 1st November 1922. No covers bearing these new rates have been located by this author.

1st January 1923

With the beginning of the New Year the transition to the second scale of currency started. This re-valued the 100 rubles of the 1922 currency at 1 ruble

New postage rates come into force by decree of the national commissariat of the RSFSR dated the 30th December 1922. This information was published in the "News of the V Ts I K" dated the 10th January 1923.

Postcards	50 kopecks
Ordinary local letters	50 kopecks per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	1 ruble per 20 grams
Registration	1 ruble in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

11th January 1923

New international rates

Postcards	2r 10k
Ordinary letters	3r 50k per 20 grams
Registration	3r 50k per item in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

March 1923

A decree by the national commissariat of the RSFSR dated the 6th March 1923 introduced new internal rates. This information was published in the "News of the V Ts I K" dated the 10th March 1923. The date these new rates came into effect in not stated but it was probably the 7th March and may have been from the 1st March 1923

Postcards	75 kopecks
Ordinary local letters	75 kopecks per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	1r 50k per 20 grams
Registration	1r 50k in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

Mid March 1923

New international rates introduced

It has not been possible to establish an exact date

Postcards	3 rubles
Ordinary letters	5 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	5 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st May 1923

A decree by the national commissariat of the RSFSR the details of which appear in the "Bulletin of the national commissariat of posts and telegraphs" dated 1923. Effective this date

Postcards	1 ruble
Ordinary local letters	1 ruble per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	2 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	2 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st May 1923

In conjunction with the reopening of the airmail service between USSR and Germany, new international rates were also advised

By airmail – 5 rubles in addition to all other rates

8th May 1923

New international rates

Postcards	6 rubles
Ordinary letters	10 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	10 rubles in addition to all other fees
Airmail	5 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

20th May 1923

A decree by the government dated the 14th May 1923 the details of which appear in the News of the V Ts I K” dated the 17th May 1923. Effective this date

Postcards	1r 50k
Ordinary local letters	1r 50k per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	3 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	3 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

25th May 1923

New rates for international airmail established
(In addition to those already in force)

Postcards	5 rubles
(This was a reduction of the 8 th May rate)	
Letters to Latvia	6 rubles per 20 grams
Letters to Germany and other European countries	10 rubles per 20 grams

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

31st May 1923

An air route linking Moscow with Kharkov, Rostov-on-Don, Novorossiisk, Batum, (Batumi), and Tiflis, (Tbilisi), opened – this being an intermediate stage of the Sweden to Persia (Iran) airline.

A notation reading “Letpochta” meaning Airmail was placed on the covers

The first Soviet internal airmail rate was announced on the 10th June 1923

10th June 1923

A decree by the council of commissars dated the 6th June 1923 the details of which appear in the News of the V Ts I K” dated the 9th June 1923. Effective this date

Postcards	2 rubles
Ordinary local letter	2 rubles per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letter	4 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	4 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

Soviet internal airmail rates announced

An additional fee of 10 rubles per 50 grams in addition to all other fees

14th June 1923

The airmail fee to Latvia increased to 10 rubles

We are uncertain if the 20 gram limit established on the 25th May was retained or if the limit was increased to 50 grams as per the internal rate of the 10th June. We suspect that the former remained in place.

5th July 1923

A decree by the council of national commissars dated the 29th June 1923 the details of which appear in the News of the V Ts I K” dated the 3rd July 1923. Effective this date

Postcards	3 rubles
Ordinary local letters	3 rubles per 20 grams
Ordinary intercity letters	6 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	6 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

20th August 1923

A decree by the council of national commissars dated the 14th August 1923 the details of which appear in the News of the V Ts I K” dated the 22nd August 1923. Effective this date

Postcards	4 gold kopecks
Ordinary local letters in Moscow and Petrograd (Leningrad)	5 gold kopecks
Ordinary local letters in other cities	4 gold kopecks
Ordinary intercity letters	6 gold kopecks
Registration	6 gold kopecks

The weight limit for these fees remained at 20 grams
Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of
The registration rate was in addition to all other fees

However – since all the stamps of the RSFSR in circulation at that time had their values expressed in the previous currency units, the coefficient for converting gold kopecks into paper rubles was announced from that time onwards and whenever the postal rates were changed.

For this series of rates the coefficient of conversion was fixed at 130 on this date. Thus the rates were as follows ...

Postcards	5 paper rubles
Ordinary local letters in Moscow and Petrograd (Leningrad)	6r 50k
Ordinary local letters in other cities	5r
Ordinary intercity letters	8r
Registration	8r

New international rates were also set as follows

Postcards	9 paper rubles
Ordinary letters	15 paper rubles per 20 grams
Registration	15 paper rubles in addition to all other fees

The usual increases applied to letters over the 20-gram limit

1st September 1923

The coefficient of conversion was fixed at 200 on this date and new rates were introduced as follows ...

Postcards	8 paper rubles
Ordinary local letters in Moscow and Petrograd (Leningrad)	10r
Ordinary local letters in other cities	8r
Ordinary intercity letters	12r
Registration	12r

The weight limit for these fees remained at 20 grams
Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of
The registration rate was in addition to all other fees

4th September 1923

New international rates come into effect
The conversion rate used is the same as for the 1st September

Postcards	12 paper rubles
Ordinary letters	20r per 20 grams
Registration	20r per item in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

15th September 1923

The coefficient of conversion was fixed at 330 on this date and new rates were introduced as follows ...

Postcards	13 paper rubles
Ordinary local letters in Moscow and Petrograd (Leningrad)	16r 50k
Ordinary local letters in other cities	13r
Ordinary intercity letters	20r
Registration	20r

The weight limit for these fees remained at 20 grams
Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of
The registration rate was in addition to all other fees

17th September 1923

New international rates come into effect

The conversion rate used is the same as for the 15th September

Postcards	18 paper rubles
Ordinary letters	30r per 20 grams
Registration	30r per item in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

The USSR period – 1923 onwards

The postal rates for the USSR for the period from 1923 onwards, were changed ten times up to 1967. Before continuing to detail the rates, it is felt that this would be a good point to draw the readers' attention to some of the features.

By tradition, as was the case with the RSFSR rates, a special supplementary rates was designated for registration and this was added to the normal postage charge to obtain the final rate for sending the letter. In Soviet postal history, this procedure was followed for more than thirty years, and it was not until 1948 that a specific rate was established for registered mail.

From 1923 to 1938 special classes of mail were instituted, which were paid for at higher rates. These were as follows ...

1. "Especially important" letters and packets

these were letters or packets containing confidential or other important documents. The covers of such letters were made from thick paper or paper glued to cloth

2. "Express" postal sendings

express correspondence (Special Delivery Mail) was accepted out of turn and sent by the first train and delivered quickly to the addressee at the destination. A notation was written on the item "Speshno" meaning urgent. This type of mail was paid for on the basis of registered mail with a supplementary fee for the special delivery. If there were air routes along the way, this type of mail would be sent in that way without any additional charge.

It is interesting to note that if any delay along the route of an urgent letter was due to the postal service, the additional fee for the special delivery was reimbursed to the sender.

3. “Special messenger”

This was for mail delivery to addresses more than 25km, (16 miles), from the nearest post office. The fee for this service was charged on the basis of 15 kop per km, and postage stamps to this value were affixed the item of mail.

An additional fee was designated in the rates for sending by air. In 1932 special inclusive rates were fixed for internal airmail and in 1939 the same idea was applied to international airmail. Special rates were sometimes designated for special flights and it should be noted that the international airmail rates were normally for the summer season. From 1936, the airmail rates apply to regular operations all year round.

Underpaid internal mail was charged at the rate it would be underpaid had it been registered. This was as the item had to be recorded, it in effect became a registered item. Underpaid international mail was charged double the deficient postage.

All “ordinary” letters are up to 20 grams with a letter weighing between 20 and 40 grams being charged double rates, 40 to 60 grams, treble rates and so forth.

25th September 1923

A decree by the council of national commissars of the USSR set out the postage rates to be introduced on the 1st October 1923. It also expressed that the units of currency had to be expressed in gold kopecks of the chervonets

1st October 1923

(See also Special Circular dated the 6th February 1924)

Postcards	4 gold kopecks
Ordinary local letters in Moscow and Petrograd (Leningrad)	5 gold kopecks
Ordinary local letters in other cities	4 gold kopecks
Ordinary intercity letters	6 gold kopecks
Registration	6 gold kopecks

Express minimum fee of 90 gold kopecks

The weight limit for these fees remained at 20 grams

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

The registration rate was in addition to all other fees

Note – The re-calculation of these rates into the paper money of 1923, which remained in circulation along with the stamps of the old RSFSR until the 1st December 1923, was done on the basis of the gold ruble. What this means in reality, is that the postage rates, (in terms of the stamps required and applied to mail), changed daily during October and November 1923.

1st October 1923

New international rates come into effect

These are expressed in the 1923 paper money currency

Postcards	27 rubles
Ordinary letter	45 rubles per 20 grams
Registration	45 rubles in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

11th October 1923

Postage stamps of the USSR in the gold currency appear in circulation

16th October 1923

After the appearance of the gold standard stamps, the international rates were fixed in this currency as follows ...

Postcards	12 gold kopecks
Ordinary letter	20 gold kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	20 gold kopecks in addition to all other fees
Airmail	10 gold kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st December 1923

It becomes obligatory to use the new stamps (issued 11th October), in the entire territory of the USSR

15th December 1923

Reduction in the postcard rate

Postcards 3 gold kopecks

6th February 1924 Special circular

This stated that the new issue of stamp corresponded with the October rates and thus the details as listed were probably in force from the 1st October 1923. The circular was headed "Regarding the economic utilisation of Postage Stamps". Details of its contents are as follows ...

- (a) Stamps to the value of 1 kopeck should be exclusively used for the prepayment of the minimum rate based on weight for local wrappers containing printed matter
- (b) Stamps with a value of 2 kopecks for intercity wrappers
- (c) Stamps with a value of 3 kopecks for the payment of internal local and intercity postcards
- (d) Stamps with a value of 4 kopecks for ordinary local letters
- (e) Stamps with a value of 5 kopecks for local letters within Moscow or Leningrad
- (f) Stamps with the value of 6 kopecks for ordinary intercity letters or registered intercity letters (two stamps)
- (g) Stamps with the value of 10 kopecks for the payment of local registered letters
- (h) Stamps with the value of 20 kopecks for the payment of ordinary international letters or registered international letters (two stamps)
- (i) Stamps with the values of 50 kopecks and 1 ruble for the prepayment of weighty sendings ... and moreover the 50 kopeck denomination in combination with two 20 kopeck stamps for the minimum rate based on weight for express letters

1st May 1924

The (by now) regular international airline service established between Moscow and Germany resumed operation

Airmail rate set at 20 gold kopecks per item in addition to all other fees

5th May 1924

Special airmail stamps appear

These are surcharged 5, 10, 15 and 20 gold kopecks on the un-issued 1923 set
These were at first exclusively for the payment of the additional fee for the transmission of mail by air. On the 6th September 1926 this ruling was relaxed

1st September 1924

A decree by the council of national commissars of the USSR revised some postage rates effective from this date.

Ordinary intercity letter	7 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	7 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

September 1924

The minimum fee for the express service lowered

Minimum rate now set at 70 kopecks

1st May 1925

New airmail postage rates were fixed on this date.

However, correspondence by air was now not only to Germany, (as before), but also to France and England. Letters, packets and wrappers were also accepted addressed to all parts of the world.

Such airmail was delivered to Berlin and onward from there by train and steamer. Due to this expansion two new rates were brought into effect

To Germany and thence to other countries 30 kopecks

To France and England 40 kopecks

These rates were additional to all other fees

1st October 1925

New international rates set

Postcards	7 kopecks
Ordinary letters	14 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	14 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st February 1926

By a decision of the council of national commissars of the USSR dated the 19th January 1926 – new rates for sending certain mails

Ordinary intercity letter	8 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	10 kopecks in addition to all other fees

All other rates remained as before.

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

11th February 1926

Soviet airmail tariffs established for internal mail. These remained in force until May 1930. Up to that time the despatch of airmail within the country, (i.e. on the Moscow – Smolensk route), was only carried out on the basis of international rates. In accordance with the new tariffs the supplementary fee for the internal airmail was listed as follows ...

Postcards	10 kopeck
Letters	15 kopeck per 20 grams

These rates were in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st May 1926

The international Moscow – Berlin airline opened

On this date new airmail rates came into force

To Germany and other countries by airmail to Berlin and then by train or steamer on to the destination 30 kopecks

To England, France and Holland 40 kopecks

These rates in addition to all other fees

6th September 1926

The surcharged air stamps of the 5th May 1924 can now be used as prepayment on all types of mail

21st December 1926

The rates for urgent mail lowered. This was done to popularise the service with the public

Special delivery rate now 50 kopecks

In the case of special delivery items being despatched by air, the airmail rates in force were also applied.

1st May 1927

The airmail rates for international mail lowered in anticipation of the summer season as follows ...

Postcards to Germany and other countries	10 kopecks
Letters to Germany and other countries	16 kopecks
Postcards to England and France	15 kopecks
Letters to England and France	26 kopecks

1st May 1928

Rates set for the summer season, which traditionally started on the 1st May, so these rates may have been in effect from that date, but this is unconfirmed

Additional fee (in addition to all other rates) for air despatch from Moscow

Postcards to ...

Danzig, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania 10 kopecks

Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and also other countries via Germany 20 kopecks

Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Romania, Spain and Yugoslavia 30 kopecks

Turkey 40 kopecks

Letters to ...

Danzig, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania 20 kopecks

Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, and also other countries via Germany 30 kopecks

Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Romania, Spain and Yugoslavia 40 kopecks

Turkey 50 kopecks

July 1928

The supplementary rate for special delivery remained as before at 50 kopecks, but now these items could be despatched by air without additional charge.

15th July 1928

By a decree of the council of national commissars of the USSR dated the 19th June 1928 – new rates for sending certain mails

This was noted in the decree as “Drawing attention to the low scale of postage rates and to the necessity of increasing the postal income” and these rates would come into effect on this date

Intercity postcards 5 kopecks

Intercity letters 10 kopecks per 20 grams

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st May 1929

Similar scale of rates as listed for 1st May 1928 for air despatch from Moscow

1st May 1930

Similar scale of rates as listed for 1st May 1928 for air despatch from Moscow

1st May 1930

Internal airmail fees set as follows ...

Postcards	10 kopeck
Ordinary letters	20 kopecks

These rates in addition to all other fees

For the transmission of airmail correspondence from the European to the Asiatic sectors, (or visa versa), the fees were doubled. This greatly complicated the workings of the airmail service and the system was abolished in 1932

1st July 1930

New rates for international mail

Postcards	10 kopecks
Ordinary letters	15 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	20 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

10th September 1930

Flight by the German airship "Graf Zeppelin" from Moscow to Germany

Letters for despatch by this flight were accepted only at the Moscow GPO and only for a few hours before take off

Additional fees were imposed and special stamps that were issued paid these. These fees were in addition to all other normal fees.

Postcards	40 kopecks (Blue stamp)
Letters	80 kopecks (Red stamp)

It was not permitted to affix both stamps to a single item of mail

1st May 1931

Similar scale of rates as listed for 1st May 1928 for air despatch from Moscow

1st June 1931

By a decree of the council of national commissars of the USSR dated the 27th May 1931 – new postal rates came into effect on this date

Local postcards	3 kopecks
Intercity postcards	10 kopecks
Local letters	5 kopecks per 20 grams
Intercity letters	15 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	15 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

Note – With these new rates the local letter fee specifically for Moscow and Leningrad was abolished.

Mid 1931

The airship “Graf Zeppelin” once again flew into the USSR

Again special rates were employed

Postcards	1 ruble
Letters	2 rubles

These rates covered the international registered airmail fee and were in addition to the 30 kopecks postage on postcards and 35 kopecks postage on letters. These higher rates for postcards and letters, (compared to the normal rates in force), would appear to have been employed especially for this flight

1932

The double rates for the internal airmail between the European and the Asiatic sectors, (or visa versa), is abolished

1st May 1932

The unwieldy system of airmail tariffs used for international correspondence up to this date was simplified somewhat and the new classifications that came into effect on this date consisted of the following ...

For Afghanistan, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia etc

The rate for postcards – 20 kopecks

The rate for letters - 40 kopecks per 20 grams

For Austria, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Holland, Ireland, Japan etc

The rate for postcards – 30 kopecks

The rate for letters - 50 kopecks per 20 grams

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

15th May 1932

Internal airmail rates

At this date new classes of mail called “express” and “air express” were introduced to replace the “urgent” and “special airmail” categories

The following express rates were put into force

Postcards 50 kopecks

Letters 80 kopecks

Despite this new set of service names and rates, the “express” and “air express” service continued in certain areas until February 1938

25th February 1933

By a decree of the council of national commissars of the USSR dated the 10th February 1933 – new postal rates came into effect on this date for the transmission of internal mail

Local postcards 5 kopecks

Intercity postcards 15 kopecks

Local letters 10 kopecks per 20 grams

Intercity letters 20 kopecks per 20 grams

Registration 20 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st May 1933

International airmail rates – the same as for 1st May 1932

1st May 1934

International airmail rates – the same as for 1st May 1932

1st May 1935

International airmail rates – the same as for 1st May 1932

1st May 1936

All rates for international mail were increased as follows ...

Postcards	30 kopecks
Letters	50 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	80 kopecks in addition to all other fees
Supplementary fee for transmission by air	1 ruble

(This was additional to all other fees and covered all destinations)

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

16th February 1938

By a decree number 112 of the national council of commissars of the USSR dated the 2nd February 1938 – new charges and rates were introduced to improve communications. The changes were the same rates as those of the 25th February 1933 ...

Local postcards	5 kopecks
Intercity postcards	15 kopecks
Local letters	10 kopecks per 20 grams
Intercity letters	20 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	20 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

One designation was however changed, the term “express mail” was abolished and “airmail” or “aviapochta” was reinstated. It was also possible to frank the mail with any available postage stamps, regardless of whether they bore the inscription ‘air mail’ or not.

6th February 1939

In accordance with decree number 152 of the national council of commissars of the USSR dated the 1st February 1939 – the following tariffs were established on this date ...

Local postcards	10 kopecks
Intercity postcards	20 kopecks
Local letters	15 kopecks per 20 grams
Intercity letters	30 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	30 kopecks in addition to all other fees

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1940

International airmail rates altered as follows

Postcards	60 kopecks
Letters	1 ruble per 20 grams

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

Note – the absence of the registration fee from the tariffs. This was due to the fact that it was considered that all airmail would be forwarded with full registration rights automatically

16th September 1948

New postal rates were introduced on this date and they are notable in that the divisions of mail into local and intercity categories were abolished, as this simplified the workings of the postal service. Also the additional fee for registration was no longer specified, except for airmail.

The new rates are as follows ...

Postcards	25 kopecks
Letters	40 kopecks up to 20 grams
Registered letter or postcard	1 ruble – this being all inclusive

A new heading was also included

Illustrated postcards	40 kopecks
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This last rate was probably for the stamped postcards which the ministry of communications of the USSR began to issue at this time

For airmail registration a fee of 1 ruble was charged – this being in addition to all other fees and rates in force at the time

10th June 1950

The rates for international mail reduced

Postcards	25 kopecks
Registered postcards	95 kopecks – all-inclusive
Letters	40 kopecks per 20 grams
Registered letters	1 ruble 10 kopecks – all-inclusive
Airmail	1 ruble – this was an additional fee to be added to all other applicable rates

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

1st September 1957

The tariffs for international correspondence altered as follows ...

Postcards	40 kopecks
Letters	60 kopecks per 20 grams
Registration	1 ruble in addition to all other fees
Airmail	1 ruble in addition to all other fees

1960

Domestic airmail rates lowered

Postcards and letters, (up to 20 grams), at an all inclusive rate of 60 kopecks

This was a temporary reduction in order to get people to use the service.
It is unknown how long it remained in force

1st January 1961

Scale of charges changed with 1 new ruble being made equal to 10 old rubles.

19th January 1961

In accordance with decree number 470 of the council of ministers of the USSR dated the 4th May 1960 – the following tariffs were established on this date ...

Postcards	3 kopecks
Registered postcards	10 kopecks – all inclusive
Letters	4 kopecks up to 20 grams
Registered letters	10 kopeck – all inclusive

Letters above the 20-gram limit charged one rate for every 20 grams or part of

These rates remained in force until at least the start of 1967
