



Belgian Institute for Postal Services
and Telecommunications

**Communication of the BIPT Council
of 12 February 2026
regarding a delivery time study for priority and non-
priority letter mail as well as obituary mail as offered by
the universal service provider**

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1. Executive summary

1. The BIPT conducted an audit to verify whether the BELEX measurement system, that monitors the quality provided by bpost (the Belgian universal service provider), complies with the provisions of European standards EN 13850 and EN 14508. As non-conformities were identified during this audit, the BIPT decided to organise its own quality snap shot -i.e. "BIPTlex delivery experiment study"- in order to gain additional insight into the quality achieved by the universal service provider. It was decided to focus on three products, namely priority and non-priority letters (with stamps) and obituary mail. Of each category, 400 items were sent in order to be sure to meet the required sample size. This dispatch of these letters took place between 9th and 25th of September 2025.
2. With regard to priority mail there was a considerable difference compared to the D+1 target of 95%, given that only 73.7% of priority letters were delivered one working day later. When looking at the D+2 target of 97%, the difference was smaller but nonetheless still significant with a result of 92.2%.
3. For obituaries, which must now be brought to the post office and are being processed via a specific procedure, the result was noticeably better.¹ The D+1 target of 95% was nearly obtained with a result of 93.2% of obituaries that arrived the next working day. Nevertheless, this difference was still statistically significant.
4. For the final category, non-priority mail, the target of 95% is on a D+3 delivery, so a delivery within a maximum of 3 working days. This level was clearly not obtained, with a result of 85.7% The D+4 target for this category of 97% was, on the contrary, almost met with 95.5% of the non-priority letters arriving at the latest four working days later. Still, this difference was statistically significant.
5. There are no immediate local differences (either in shipping or receiving) that really stand out. Late or lost deliveries cannot genuinely be attributed to specific areas. At the closure of the study (on November 6, 2025), 17 of the total 1 200 shipments had not yet arrived.

¹ [Send memorial invitations with care | bpost](#)

2. Context

6. The second management contract and postal legislation stipulate that compliance with delivery times is measured, under the supervision of the BIPT, in accordance with CEN standard EN 138502 for priority items on the one hand and CEN standard EN 145083 for non-priority items on the other. The measurement system is managed by the external research agency Spectos GmbH. This measurement system is called the BELEX measurement system and works by sending test letters through survey panel. These test letters must be representative of bpost's actual mail flows. These test letters are used to calculate how many items are delivered on time, i.e. one day after the letter was posted before the last collection time for priority letters and three days for non-priority letters. The BIPT then conducted an audit to verify whether the BELEX measurement system complies with the provisions of European standards EN 13850 and EN 14508.
7. The audit identified items where bpost's processes are not fully compliant with the requirements defined in the European standards or the protocol. The BIPT has asked bpost to draw up an action plan based on the non-conformities identified by the audit.² In addition, the BIPT decided to organise its own quality snap shot -i.e. "BIPTlex delivery experiment study"- in order to gain additional insight into the quality achieved by the universal service provider. It was decided to focus on three products, namely **priority and non-priority letter mail** (with stamps) and **obituary mail**. For the design and analysis of this study, the BIPT consulted Analysys Mason for review, which had also carried out the audit on the BELEX measurement system.

² [Communication of 3 October 2025 on the audit of the internal and external monitoring systems of bpost for monitoring the delivery times | BIPT](#)

3. Design of the experiment

3.1. Sample size

8. Bpost states that it delivered around 5,800,000 letters per working day.³ Even for the prior (12,3% of the total volume in 2023⁴), this means more than half a million pieces. To test that postal items arrive within $\pm 5\%$ of their expected delivery time with 95% confidence, a sample of 385 pieces is required.⁵ Even viewed over two weeks (thus x 10), this would not affect the required sample size. Given that the sample size of 385 is based on infinite population, so considering a one-day population or a for instance 6-10 days population makes no difference.
9. In order to build in a safety margin, the sample size was therefore rounded up to 400 items, and this applies to both priority and non-priority letters as obituary mail. Meaning that the total amount of letters would be 1 200.
10. This sample size is also in line with recent BELEX work for specific categories⁶:
§30 'Moreover, in accordance with the protocol, bpost charges an independent research firm with carrying out tests on a sample of at least 310 registered mail items.'
§40 'In accordance with the protocol, bpost instructs an independent research agency to conduct tests on a sample of at least 400 postal packages.'
11. Also, as seen in Section 5, as the measurements gave us enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis, it suggests the sample size was large enough to be meaningful

3.2. Geographical distribution

3.2.1. Dispatch

12. Given that a random distribution across the country is desirable, the priority and non-priority letters were sent in bundles of 5 items via 160 (i.e. 800 divided by five) randomly selected red letter boxes belonging to the universal service provider.
13. The proces with regard to sending out obituary mail has been revised by bpost earlier this year.⁷ These items must now be handed over at the postal office counter -or to the funeral director- and will be put in a red bag so they can follow a specific -tracked- circuit. This made it difficult to send these obituaries in bundles of 5 items without attracting attention, so it was decided to distribute the 400 items randomly across ten post offices in Belgium (one in each province - except Walloon Brabant- and Brussels).
14. The randomly selected locations, both the 160 letter boxes (in blue) as the 10 postal offices (in red) can be found below in Figure 1.

³ <https://bnode.com/who-we-are/our-business-units/bpost/bpost-belgium> (consulted on 19th of January 2026)

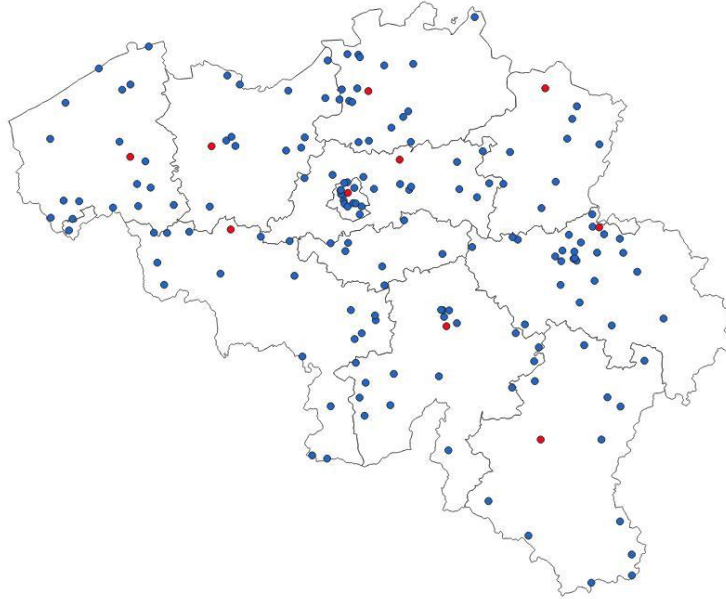
⁴ [Decision of 3 July 2025 on the monitoring of mail delivery times for the year 2023 | BIPT](#)

⁵ The design effect (DEFF) was not calculated for this study, but it could have been estimated from the intra-cluster correlation among letters within the same letter box and across communes, in order to refine the effective sample size.

⁶ [Decision of 3 July 2025 on the monitoring of mail delivery times for the year 2023 | BIPT](#)

⁷ [bpost reforms death announcement mailing process](#)

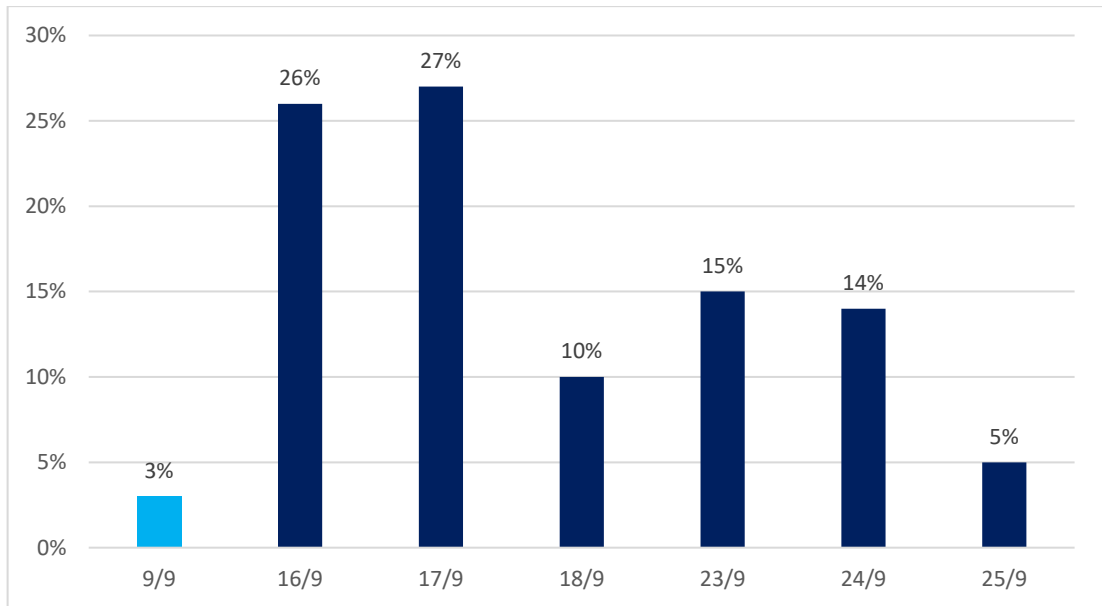
Figure 1: Selected dispatch locations – 160 letter boxes (blue) and 10 postal offices (red)



Source: bpost/editing BIPT

15. The 1 200 letters were prepared by BIPT postal team. The dispatch of the letters on the other hand, was carried out by the EquiTel control team of the BIPT. For dispatch via the red letter boxes, the latest collection time was taken into account, which is usually 10 a.m., so that we could be sure that the letter would be collected that same day and that we knew exactly when the process of collection, sorting and distribution would begin. The control team had to communicate the day and time of dispatch for each bundle (location) via Microsoft Forms. A photo of this event was taken as well, so that the metadata (time, data and location) could help encode the shipment in case there would be doubt.
16. Timing wise, September was chosen to carry out the experiment given that this period was both off-peak and not during holidays, so that the results would be distorted as little as possible by undercapacity or more general a shortage of staff. Since EquiTel staff are on the road on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, these days were chosen. As shown in Figure 2, 9 September served as a test day with the dispatch of some test bundles. This was done so that any problems or suboptimal operations could be detected and corrected before the bulk of the shipments were sent. The final bundles were sent out on 25 September.

Figure 2: Percentage of bundle shipment per day in September 2025



Source: BIPT

3.2.2. Reception

17. BIPT staff were asked to volunteer for this experiment and receive letters at their home address. This resulted in a reasonable spread of 55 locations, both urban and rural. Figure 3 displays these locations. During the study period, colleagues were asked to check their letterbox every working day and report the day of receipt of a letter via Microsoft Forms.

Figure 3: 55 receiving locations



Source: BIPT

4. Data cleaning

18. Validity checks were carried out on both the data with regard to dispatch as well as reception of the letters. For instance, checks whether drop-offs at letter boxes took place before the last collection time as well as questioning recipients about anomalies such as items not yet submitted and inconsistent responses. This resulted in 17 letters that were not yet received (as of 6 November 2025), so considered lost, and 9 items for which there may be doubt about the exact time of receipt.

19. These 9 letters, which were subject to doubt, were not included in the analysis. Because the sample size was large enough (i.e. 400 items instead of the 385 required), this did not cause any problems. 395 priority, 399 non-priority items and 397 obituaries were retained.

5. Results

5.1. Targets

20. In accordance with Article 5 of the universal service management contract and Article 46, § 1 of the Royal Decree of 14 March 2022, bpost undertakes to comply with the delivery times specified below (for the items within our scope):

- Domestic priority letter post (D+1):
 - D+1 (next working day): 95% (+ obituary)
 - D+2 (within two working days): 97%
- Domestic non-priority letter post (D+3):
 - D+3 (within three working days): 95%
 - D+4 (within four working days): 97%

5.2. Data analysis

21. To verify whether these ratios of 95% or 97% were met, a proportion test was used (to test if the statistic falls in the critical region), namely the 'Critical Value Approach'⁸:

$$z = \frac{\hat{p} - p_0}{\sqrt{\frac{p_0(1-p_0)}{n}}}$$

where p_0 is the null hypothesized proportion i.e., when $H_0 : p = p_0$
(with H_0 being the null hypothesis and H_A being the alternative hypothesis)

5.3. Priority stamp

22. Of the sample of 400 priority items sent, 5 were excluded because there was uncertainty about the exact day of arrival. Of the remaining 395 items, 291, or 73.7%, were received the next working day as indicated by figure 4. This is well below the D+1 target of 95%, which the proportion of test in tabel 1 also indicates. On the second working day 73 additional letters were received, bringing the total number to 364 or 92.2%. Although a considerable improvement, this still differs significantly from the 97% D+2 target as indicated in table 1.

23. 31 items arrived even later, of which 8 had not been received by the closure of the study on 6 November 2025 and are therefore considered lost. The average delivery time of 2.12 working days⁹ also differed significantly (T-test result: $7.31522E-06 < 0.05$) from D+1 as a result.¹⁰

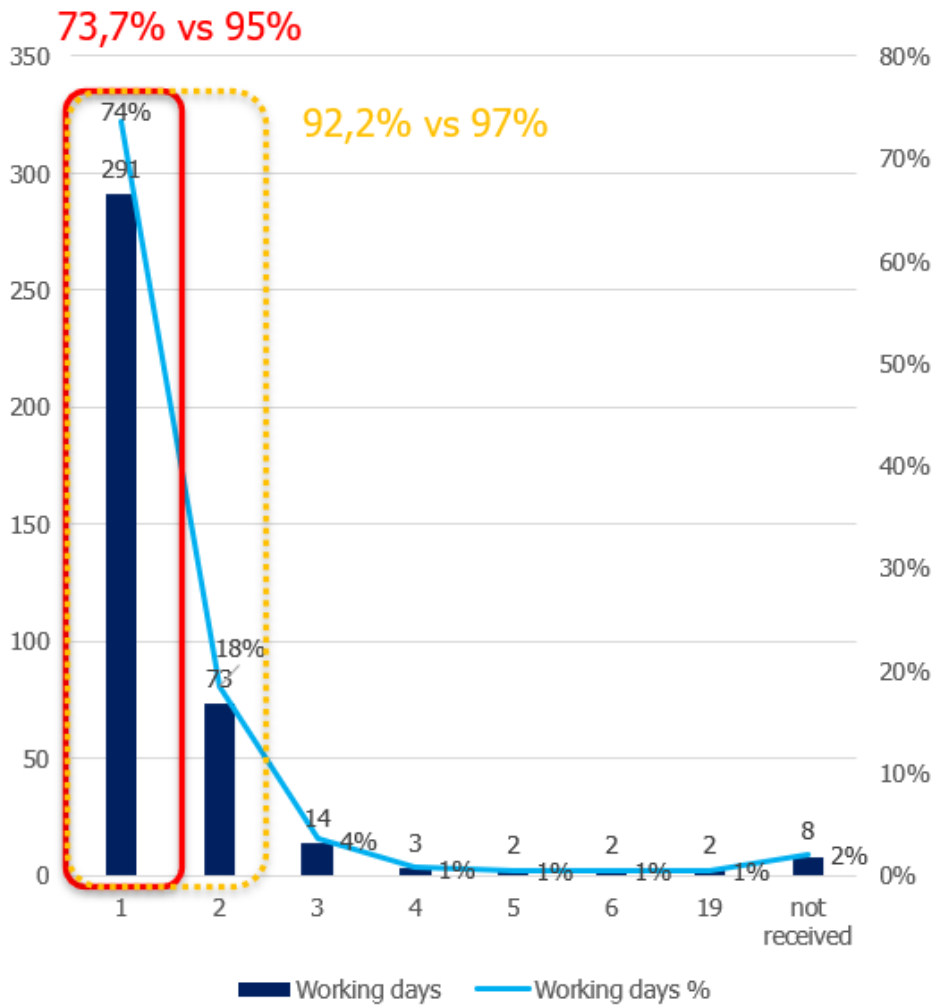
⁸ [S.6 Test of Proportion | STAT ONLINE](#)

⁹ However, for 'lost' items, that had not been received by 6 November, the date of 6 November was used to calculate the average delivery time. This same logic was also used for the obituaries and non-priority letters.

¹⁰ Even without taking into account the 'lost' items, the obtained average of 1.42 working days still differs significantly (T-test result: $1.00173E-08 < 0.05$) from D+1.

24. There are not yet results from the BELEX measurement system for 2025 to compare with. The results for 2023 on the other hand, has been published by means of a BIPT decision.¹¹ For 2023, a result of 93.8% was obtained. While this also falls below the 95% target, and indicates a clear downward trend, it is nonetheless well above the 73.7% that was obtained through the present survey conducted in September 2025. For D+2 the result was 98.1% via the BELEX measurement.

Figure 4: priority stamp results



Source: BIPT

¹¹ [Decision of 3 July 2025 on the monitoring of mail delivery times for the year 2023 | BIPT](#)

Tabel 1: Critical Value Approach for priority stamps

$H_0: p = 0.95$ or $p = 0.97$ $H_A: p < 0.95$ or $p < 0.97$ Reject if $Z < -1.645$
1. D+1 target = 95% D+1 observed ratio = 73.7% => reject: $-19.45022174 < -1.645$
2. D+2 target = 97% D+2 observed ratio = 92.2% => reject: $-5.648377781 < -1.645$

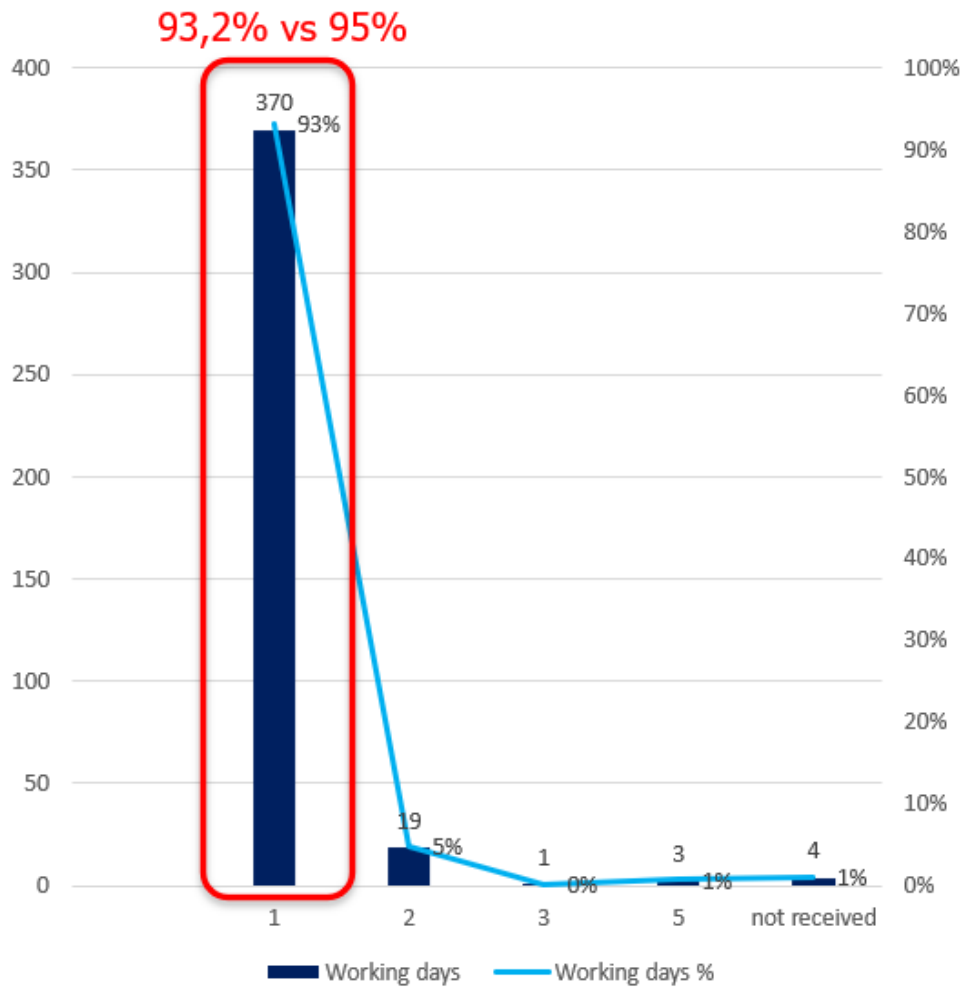
Source: BIPT

5.4. Obituary

25. In the case of obituaries, 400 items were also sent. In this case 3 letters were excluded because there was uncertainty about the exact day of arrival. Of the remaining 397 items, 370, or 93.2%, were received the next working day as indicated by figure 5. This being just -but nonetheless significantly- below the D+1 target of 95%, which the proportion of test in tabel 2 also indicates.
26. The clear difference with the score for the priority stamp (i.e. almost +20 percentage points for the same D+1 target level) indicates that the new system for dispatching obituaries at post office counters and the individual process are nevertheless bearing fruit.
27. Nonetheless, this still means that 27 items didn't arrive on time. But most of these (i.e. 19) arrived in D+2. 4 letters had not been received by the closure of the study on 6 November 2025 and are therefore considered lost. The average delivery time of 1.45 working days also differed significantly (T-test result: $0.0072 < 0.05$) from D+1 as a result.¹²
28. Within the BELEX study, there is no specific measurement for obituary mail.

¹² Even without taking into account the 'lost' items, the obtained average of 1.08 working days still differs significantly (T-test result: $3.94239E-05 < 0.05$) from D+1.

Figure 5: obituary results



Source: BIPT

Tabel 2: Critical Value Approach for obituary

$H_0: p = 0.95$ $H_A: p < 0.95$ Reject if $Z < -1,645$
D+1 target = 95% D+1 observed ratio = 93.2% => reject: $-1.646508525 < -1.645$

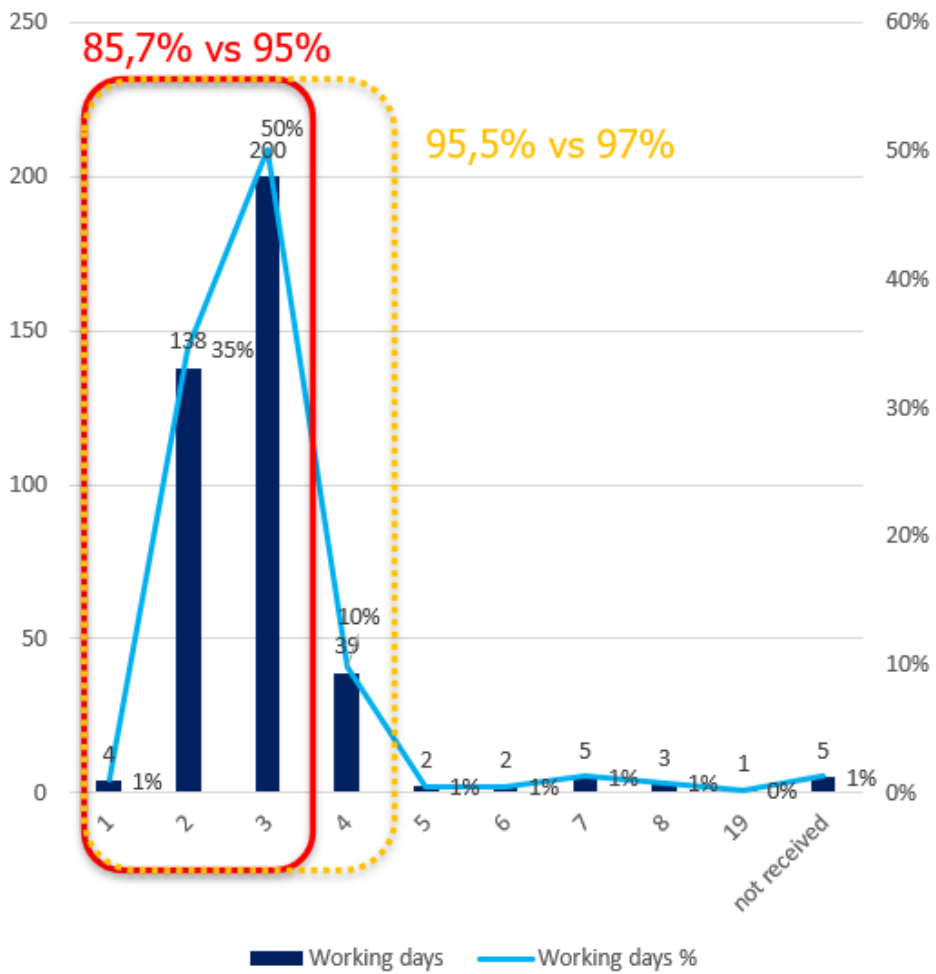
Source: BIPT

5.5. Non-priority stamp

29. Among the 1 200 test mailings, there were also 400 non-priority letters. In this case just 1 item was excluded because there was uncertainty about the exact day of arrival. Of the remaining 399 items, 4 were even received the next working day -and therefor received a D+1 treatment- as indicated by figure 6. An additional 138, or 35%, were received in D+2, so also faster as the D+3 target for non priority mail. 200 items, or 50%, were received on D+3, so that a total of 342 letters arrived no later as D+3. The resulting percentage of 85.7% being nonetheless clearly below the D+3 target of 95%, which the test of proportion in tabel 3 also indicates. On the fourth working day 39 additional letters were received, bringing the total number to 381 or 95.5%. Although a considerable improvement, this still differs significantly from the 97% D+4 target as indicated in table 3.
30. Nonetheless, this still means that 18 items didn't arrive on time. 5 letters had not been received by the closure of the study on 6 November 2025 and are therefore considered lost. Helped by items that were received after just one or two working days, the average delivery time of 3.22 working days did not differ significantly (T-test result: $0.087 > 0.05$) from D+3 as a result.¹³
31. The BELEX measurement indicated for 2023 higher results, with 97.4% for D+3 and 98.7% for D+4, thus achieving the thresholds of 95% and 97%. For non-priority letter mail, 2023 marked a turning point in a downward trend in the BELEX study. It will be interesting to see what the results for 2025 will be.

¹³ Without taking into account the 'lost' items, the obtained average drops to 2.88 working days (and therefore still presents no significant difference (T-test result: $0.966606888 < 0.05$) from D+3).

Figure 6: non-priority stamp results



Source: BIPT

Table 3: Critical Value Approach for non-priority stamps

$H_0: p = 0.95$ or $p = 0.97$ $H_A: p < 0.95$ or $p < 0.97$ Reject if $Z < -1,645$
1. D+1 target = 95% D+1 observed ratio = 85.7% => reject: $-8.510497719 < -1.645$
2. D+2 target = 97% D+2 observed ratio = 95.5% => reject: $-1.769637732 < -1.645$

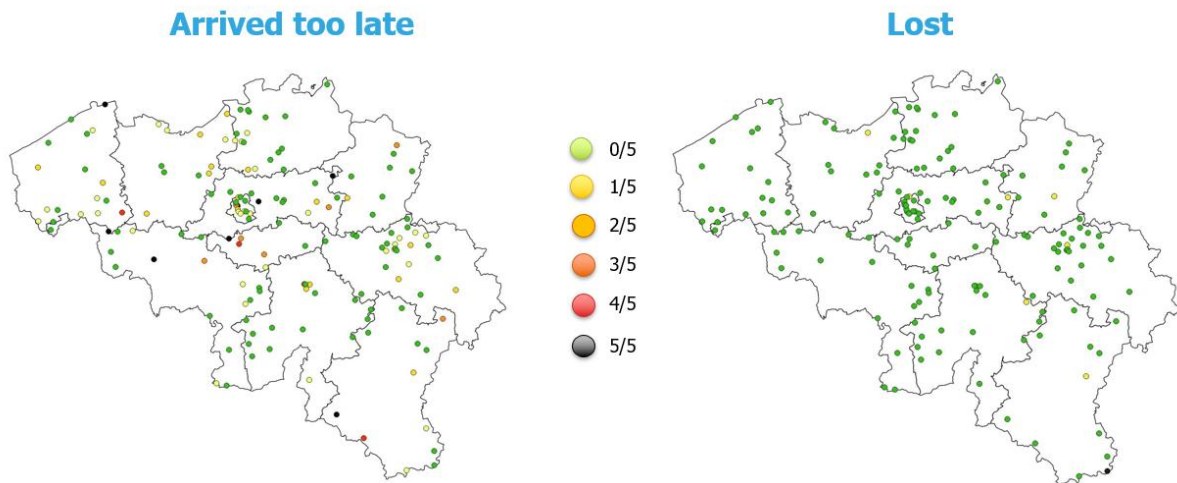
Source: BIPT

5.6. Problematic shipments in detail

5.6.1. Dispatch: letter boxes

32. Figure 7 provides an overview of the number of shipments that arrived late or are presumed lost (not yet received on 6 November 2025) per (red) letterbox of bpost. As indicated, 800 letters -being 400 priority and 400 non-priority shipments- were sent via 160 randomly selected red letterboxes, in bundles of 5 letters per letterbox. The colours from green to black indicate how many letters from a bundle were not received on time or were not received at all. Green, for example, indicates that there was no problem and that all items reached their destination on time. Black indicates a clear problem for all shipments via a specific red letterbox. For example, we see one specific letterbox in Athus, near the French and Luxembourg border, marked in black in the 'lost' category, where none of the 5 items were ultimately delivered. In general, there is a spread of problematic items, which means that we cannot attribute poor results to specific regions/locations.

Figure 7: Number of items (0 to 5) per letterbox that arrived late or were even considered lost

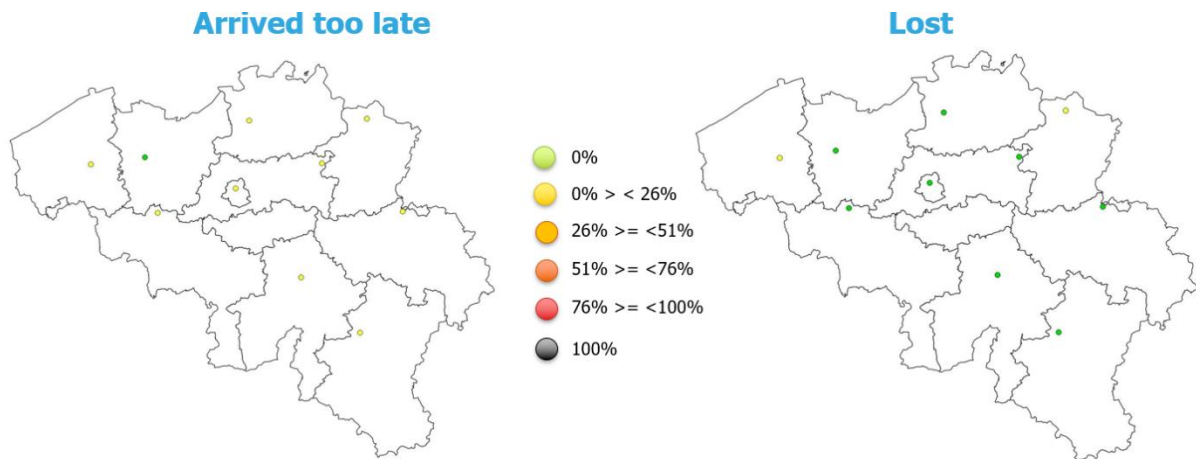


Source: BIPT

5.6.2. Dispatch: postal offices

33. A similar figure can be drawn up for the 10 selected postal offices and the 400 obituaries sent in this way. Given that bundles of 40 letters were used in each case, we use classes with percentages for items that were received late or marked as lost. Here too, there are no specific regions to which we can attribute poorer results. For example, 9 out of 10 post offices are in the 'light yellow' class where up to (and including) 25% of items arrived late. Only the selected postal office in East Flanders, namely Sint-Martens-Latem, achieved a 'green' score of 100% (with all 40 death notices delivered the next working day).

Figure 8: Percentage of items per postal office that arrived late or were even considered lost

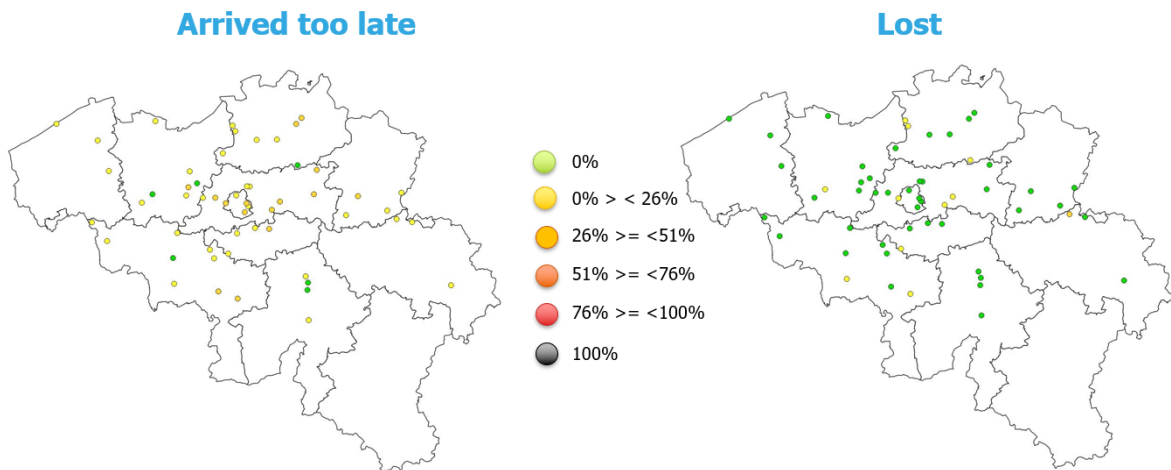


Source: BIPT

5.6.3. Receipt

34. Quality can also be assessed regionally based on delivery locations. This allows us to see whether issues arise at the end of the chain (from collection, sorting centre, distribution centre and final delivery) rather than at the start. This was done for all 1 200 shipments in figure 9 below. However, here too, there was an almost nationwide proportional distribution of problematic shipments. Most receiving locations fell into the 'light yellow' category of up to (and including) 25% of shipments arriving late.

Figure 9: Percentage of items per recipient location that arrived late or were even considered lost



Source: BIPT

6. Specific elements

35. During the course of this study, the BIPT control staff also made a number of observations that are worth sharing. It appears that the new -and specific- procedure for obituaries, while bearing fruit, is still experiencing some teething problems. With IT system failures indicated at the postal offices of Saint-Hubert (on the 17th of September 2025) and Haacht (on the 24th of September 2025). In the first case the control team moved on to the postal office of Nassogne, while in the second case they resorted to the postal office of Diest. At the postal office of Sint-Martens-Latem on the other hand, the control team had to insist on using the new procedure for the dispatch of obituaries.
36. With regard to the (red) letter boxes for sending mail, there was in some cases a difference noted between the last collection time indicated on the letter box and the one communicated by bpost on their website. This involved, a red letter box Evere with 13:00 indicated on the letter box compared to 10:00 on the website of bpost (as established on the 16th of September 2025), as well as a letter box in Sint-Gillis with 14:30 indicated instead of 10:00 (17th of September 2025) and finally a letter box in Sint-Jans-Molenbeek where no last collection time was indicated (23th of September 2025).

7. Conclusion

37. This quality snap shot -i.e. "BIPTlex delivery experiment study"- with regard to delivery time performed by BIPT presents interesting results with quality standards that were almost achieved on the one hand and not achieved at all on the other.
38. With regard to **priority letter mail** there was a considerable difference compared to the D+1 target of 95%, given that only 73,7% of priority letters were delivered one working day later. When looking at the D+2 target of 97% for these items, the difference was smaller but nonetheless still significant with a result of 92.2%. For **obituaries**, which must now be brought to the post office and are being processed via a new, specific procedure, the result was noticeably better. The D+1 target of 95% was nearly obtained with a result of 93,2% of obituaries that arrived the next working day. Nevertheless, this difference was still statistically significant, but the new procedure does seem to be bearing fruit. For the final category, **non-priority letter mail**, the target of 95% is on a D+3 delivery, so a delivery within a maximum of 3 working days. This level was clearly not obtained, with a result of 85.7%. The D+4 target for this category of 97% was, on the contrary, almost met with 95.5% of the non-priority letters arriving at the latest four working days later. Still, this difference was statistically significant.
39. There are no immediate geographical differences (either in shipping or receiving) that really stand out. Late or lost deliveries cannot genuinely be attributed to specific areas. At the closure of the study (on November 6, 2025), 17 of the total 1 200 shipments had not yet arrived.

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