

SWISS Official Stamps for the UNEO and International Agencies

The Swiss Post, Telephone & Telegraph (PTT) provided some of its issues, overprinted, to be used as official service stamps by the United Nations European Office (UNEO) and some of its special agencies in Switzerland. This continued a service provided for the League of Nations. Starting with the October 24, 1955 issue for the UNEO the Swiss PTT created distinct un-overprinted stamps for the UNEO and its agencies.

OBJECTIVE

This traditional exhibit (of the survey style) presents the official service stamps, both overprinted Swiss issues and special issues, produced for the UNEO and associated agencies with headquarters in Switzerland.

SCOPE

The timeframe begins with the start of the operations of the UNEO in August 1946 and continues through the issues of 1969 (though uses after 1969 may be shown for some agencies). In 1969 the Swiss PTT ceased issuing stamps for the UNEO when the UN began issuing its own postage stamps, and the International Education Bureau (IEB) merged with UNESCO, ending that series, as well. Stamps issued before the existence of the UN (for the League of Nations) are included when they were used by the UNEO or affiliated agencies. The agencies for which service stamps were issued and which are covered in this exhibit are:

UNEO - United Nations European Office * *L'Office Europeen des Nations Unies - UNO*
ILO - International Labor Organization * *Le Bureau International du Travail - BIT*
IEB - International Education Bureau * *Le Bureau International d'Education - BIE*
WHO - World Health Organization * *L'Organisation Mondiale de la Sante - OMS*
IRO - International Refugee Organization * *L'Organisation Internationale pour les Refugies - OIR*
WMO - World Meteorological Organization * *L'Organisation Meteorologique Mondiale - OMM*
UPU - Universal Postal Union * *Le Bureau de L'Union Postale Universelle - UPU*
ITU - International Telecommunications Union * *L'Union Internationale des Telecommunications - UIT*

ORGANIZATION

Following the traditional format, the emphasis of this exhibit is on the stamps: their production, varieties, and use. Each international agency is treated in a separate "chapter", with the stamps of that agency presented in a chronological order, by issue or logical grouping of issues (e.g. where stamps show a common design theme). Following the section for the UNEO, each agency is presented in order by the date of the first issue of its service stamps. For each issue or grouping of issues, first the stamps are shown, then varieties followed by examples of usage.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The key to any collection/exhibit of this material is the coil strips of the 1955/59 UNEO issue. This exhibit includes one of the two reported sets of coil strips. Examples of the UNEO coil stamps are shown on cover.
- Usage of all eight IRO stamps on service covers, including use of 1F and 2F values on airmail cover to USA
- High-value usages: a pair of the 3F UNEO issue of 1950 on cover; a large cover franked with 3F, 5F, and 10F (pair) of 1944 ILO issue; a strip of 3 of the 1948 WHO on a parcel card; WHO 1950 3F on cover to China
- Plate varieties exist for various overprinted stamps. Included in this exhibit are overprint varieties of the 1950 issues for the UNEO, the ILO, the IRO and the IEB. Only 908 sets of each of the IEB varieties are possible. A number of the plate varieties are shown used on cover, as well.
- The discovery copies of the "Footed N" overprint variety of the 3F and 10F 1950 WHO issue, first reported by this exhibitor, are shown. Plate varieties first reported by this exhibitor are also shown for the IRO issue and the 1950 IEB issue.
- The plate blocks for the low value IRO issues of 1950 for which only 480 sets are possible are shown.
- Used as postage due: 50c of UNEO 1959 issue; WHO issues of 1957 & 1960; ITU issues of 1956 & 1960

Key items are highlighted with a blue border.