



PRESS RELEASE

The FFPI disappointed in European Parliament snail speed approach to postal liberalisation.

Brussels, 13 December 2000

Following the European Parliament's debate on the proposal for a new postal Directive today and in view of the EC Institution's vote tomorrow, the President of the FFPI, Philippe Bodson made the following statement.

"The European Parliament seems to be about to propose a market opening of the postal sector that is futile and that, if adopted, in reality will mean bringing the sector backwards, since the market will not have the means or the room to flourish.

This development is in sharp contradiction to what the EU leaders agreed in Lisbon earlier this year where a unanimous decision was taken to speed up liberalisation of the postal sector. I fear that the European Parliament, in adopting the rapporteur's report, will fail in their task to contribute to the fulfilment of the commitment that was made to the EU citizens in Lisbon.

I regret that the debate in the European Parliament still remains in the hands of the anti-liberalisation groups and their arguments. For instance, I am saddened every time I hear the huge misconception repeated that it should be necessary to maintain letter monopolies in order to guarantee a universal postal service. This is wrong. The universal letter service can be upheld without letter monopolies; this has been done successfully in other industries".

I have written to all Members of the European Parliament and I have explained to them that if EC liberalisation of the postal sector continues at snail's speed, both regulators and postal operators soon will be overtaken by market developments. In a scenario where the regulated liberalisation is too slow, market changes will provoke an accelerated transition that, eventually, will be brutal. It would not be, as intended, a gradual and controlled transition, since the rules that regulate the market will be out of tune with reality. This is to a certain degree already the case. There is no doubt in my mind that the losers in such a scenario would be consumers and users of postal services in Europe."

The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) is a pan-European initiative of users of postal services who have come together to promote the liberalisation and a level playing field in the postal sector. The FFPI has the support of several companies, trade and professional associations in Europe, such as direct marketers, publishers, retailers, express couriers, etc.

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