



Press Release

The FFPI welcomes the outcome of the EC Public Consultation on Postal Services

Brussels, 19 June 2006 - On 13 June 2006, the European Commission released the results of the public consultation on Postal services carried out by Directorate General Internal Market and Services. The FFPI has welcomed the results of the consultation and has expressed its satisfaction with the fact that a consistent number of stakeholders in the postal sector share its views as regards the completion of the liberalisation process.

According to the results of the analysis the vast majority of postal users perceive that the cost of sending mail is the least satisfactory element in the provision of postal services, a view which confirms the trend the FFPI had identified in several stamp price surveys over the past four years.

Respondents to the Commission consultation have confirmed the need to modernise the universal service definition to reflect the needs of consumers and, in line with the FFPI's position, the majority of stakeholders concluded that the reserved area is either not sustainable or could be better served in a market open to competition.

The FFPI shares the opinion of most respondents regarding the insufficient level of transparency in the discharge of NRA's current responsibilities regarding *ex ante* review of cost accounting, cost allocation and special tariffs, having always advocated for greater transparency and a cost accounting methodology founded on the 'price geared to cost' principle.

In the context of the discussions on the benefits of liberalisation most respondents, including the FFPI, consider that liberalisation will be beneficial for the postal sector resulting in greater choice of services and providers, a decrease in prices, improved quality of services and greater innovation. It also appears that a broad consensus has been reached around the idea that the economic benefits of free competitive market will outweigh the social disadvantages created by the restructuring of the postal sector after market opening.

Following the publication of the results, the President of the FFPI, Philippe Bodson, commented: *"The FFPI welcomes the Commission's consultation which has served as a vehicle for postal users and all stakeholders to express their views during the on going preparations for the next Postal Directive. I am confident that the EU institutions will take into account the opinion of the majority of stakeholders which, like us, believe that liberalisation will bring a positive spin to the postal sector and that 2009 should be maintained as a final date for postal liberalisation"*.

Note to the editor:

The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) is a unique European initiative that brings together users and competitors of the public postal operators who strongly believe in the benefit of a liberalised and more competitive postal market. Through its membership, the FFPI currently represents more than 7,1 million companies. The FFPI key objectives are to secure full liberalisation of postal services that should be in 2009 at the latest and a fair playing field in the postal sector to prevent public postal monopolies to turn into private ones.

For more information, visit the FFPI website www.freefairpost.com or contact Valeria Fagone.
Tel: 32-2-777.05.35. Fax: 32-2-777.05.36. E-mail: info@freefairpost.com.

To read to full results of the EC consultation please visit:
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/post/consultations_en.htm