



*The Free and Fair Post Initiative's
Stamp Price Survey 2008*



USERS CALL FOR MORE TRANSPARENCY AND CONTROL ON TARIFF SETTING BY NATIONAL POSTAL REGULATORS

Annual survey shows that postal liberalisation outlook helps reducing stamp price increases in 2008

Brussels, 15 December 2008 – The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) issued today its 8th survey on stamp prices in the European Union (EU). The analysis shows that in 2008 stamp prices for basic domestic letters have increased at a lower pace and in less countries than in the past years. Although the number of member States in which tariffs have been augmented is still high, postal users welcome the positive signal given by the fixation of a final date for full postal liberalisation at EU level.

The annual survey reveals that an increase in the price of stamps for basic domestic letters took place in 10 member States: Portugal, Spain, Slovenia, Belgium, Hungary, Greece, France, Denmark, UK and Bulgaria. The biggest growth was registered in Denmark, France and Greece, all countries where postal markets are still not fully opened to competition.

The FFPI also noted that prices did not change during the course of this year in member States where postal services markets are already liberalised: Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Germany. In addition, in these markets stamps cost less than in non-liberalised markets, such as Denmark and Italy, where prices remain the highest in the EU.

In the UK, where the cost of a stamp slightly increased in April 2008, the raise is justified by the need to gear price to costs and the price structure applied (letters up to 100 grams compared with the other EU countries where the maximum weight for the basic price is normally 20 grams). The FFPI was pleased to see that Postcomm, the UK regulator, carefully analysed the request for Royal Mail's price increase to ensure that customers' needs and wishes are not ignored.

National regulators have to play a key role in ensuring the maintenance of the universal service and adequate cost-based tariff setting. Postal users are deeply concerned that, as signaled in the ECORYS study on the main developments in the postal sector¹, in some member States the authorities responsible to control postal markets are not independent, do not apply adequate cost analysis for the universal service and do not review or approve price changes, as required by the postal Directives.

Philippe Bodson, President of the FFPI, commented: "*The 2008 survey confirms the FFPI's belief that full market opening, accompanied by the attentive and responsible activity of National Regulatory Authorities, is the only way to guarantee that prices are affordable, cost-oriented, transparent and non-discriminatory*". He also added: "*We have to remain vigilant and ensure that consumers do not pay the bill for delayed or incomplete implementation of the Postal Directives. The sooner member States will open their market, the sooner consumer will benefit of fairer prices*".

¹ ECORYS Study, [Main developments in the postal sector \(2006-2008\)](#), September 2008.



Countries	2007 Price	2008 Price	2008 Price in EUR	Letter Weight
Denmark	4.5 DKK	5 DKK	0.67	50 g
Italy	0.6 EUR	0.6 EUR	0.60	50 g
Austria	0.55 EUR	0.55 EUR	0.55	20 g
Germany	0.55 EUR	0.55 EUR	0.55	20 g
France	0.49 EUR	0.55 EUR	0.55	50 g
Ireland	0.55 EUR	0.55 EUR	0.55	20 g
Belgium	0.52 EUR	0.54 EUR	0.54	50 g
Finland	0.53 EUR	0.53 EUR	0.53	50 g
Greece	0.47 EUR	0.51 EUR	0.51	20 g
Luxembourg	0.50 EUR	0.50 EUR	0.50	20 g
Netherlands	0.44 EUR	0.44 EUR	0.44	20 g
Bulgaria	0.55 BGN	0.80 BGN	0.41	20 g
Poland	1.45 PLN	1.45 PLN	0.40	50 g
Lithuania	1.35 LTL	1.35 LTL	0.39	20 g
Czech Republic	10 CZK	10 CZK	0.38	50 g
Sweden	4 SEK	4 SEK	0.36	20 g
Estonia	5.50 EEK	5.50 EEK	0.35	50 g
Cyprus	0.34 EUR	0.34 EUR	0.34	20 g
Slovakia	10 SKK	10 SKK	0.33	20 g
Latvia	0.22 LVL	0.22 LVL	0.31	20 g
Portugal	0.30 EUR	0.31 EUR	0.31	20 g
Spain	0.30 EUR	0.31 EUR	0.31	100 g
United Kingdom*	0.24 £	0.27 £	0.31	20 g
Romania	1 RON	1 RON	0.27	20 g
Hungary	60 HUF	70 HUF	0.27	30 g
Slovenia	0.20 EUR	0.23 EUR	0.23	20 g
Malta	0.19 EUR	0.19 EUR	0.19	50 g

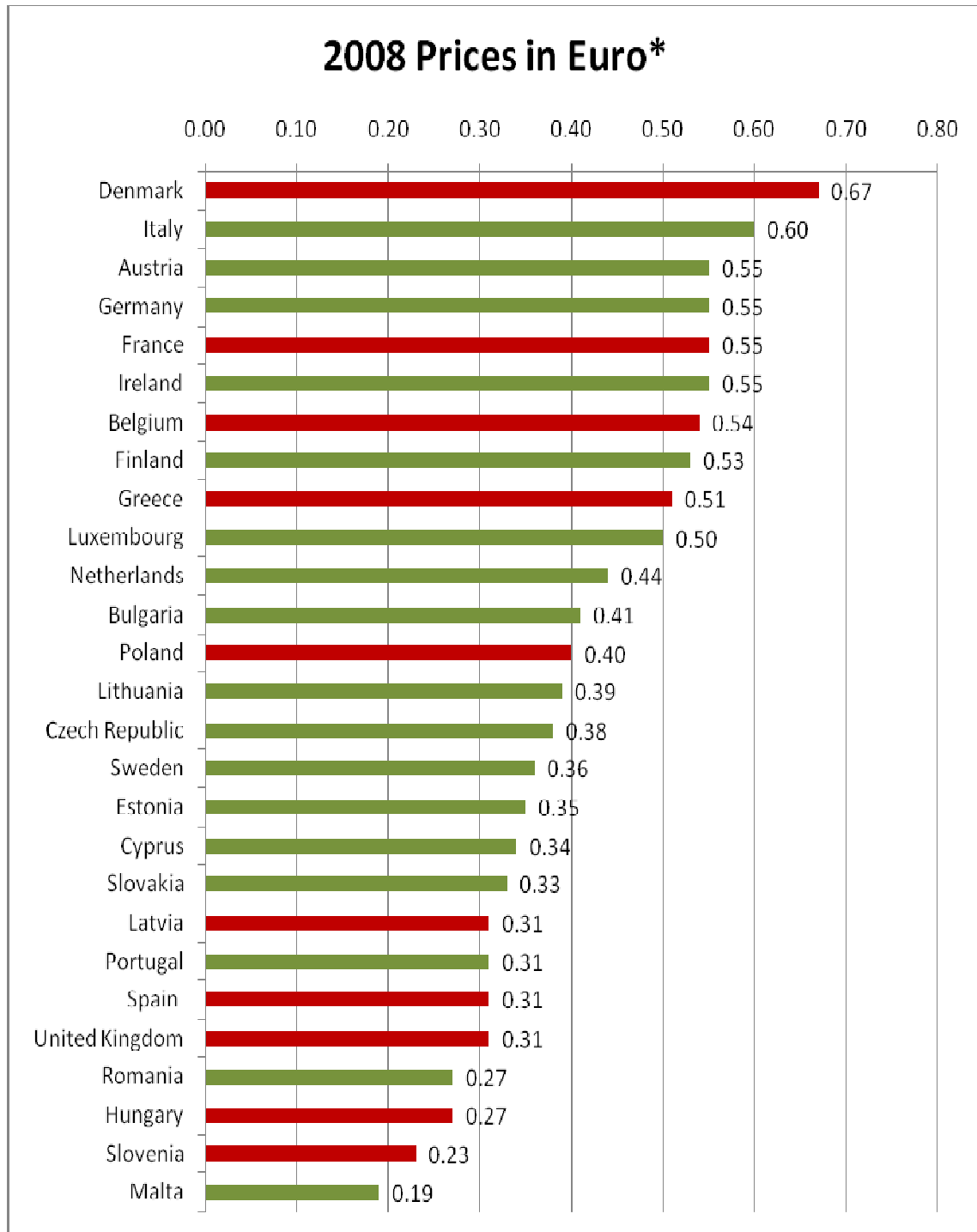
Countries in Green = Countries where postal market is fully liberalised

Countries in Red = Countries where stamp prices increased

Prices do not include VAT

Exchange rates calculated on 2 December 2008 at 12.03 GMT for 2008 prices.

<http://finance.yahoo.com/currency>



* Prices are indicated in euro excluding VAT
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