



Press Release

The FFPI welcomes call for Dutch postal market opening by Selekt Mail Nederland (SMN)

Brussels, 5 November 2004 – The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) today welcomed the call launched by Selekt Mail Nederland (SMN), a subsidiary of Deutsche Post World Net, for a swift opening of the postal market in the Netherlands.

SMN argues for lowering the postal monopoly area earlier than the EU timeline. In particular, the mail operator promotes the idea of a further reduction of TPG's reserved area to 50 grams to take place not in 2006, as per the provisions of the EU Postal Directive, but rather on 1 January 2005. Furthermore, SMN wishes 2007 to be secured as final date for full liberalisation of the Dutch postal market, irrespective of postal policy in other countries. SMN believes that this model would lead to better prices (20% below TPG prices), more jobs in the sector, flexible working time, and increased innovation and investment.

The FFPI, which has often times encouraged EU Member States to take individual action to speed up the liberalisation process, considers SMN's plea as a signal that markets need more competition for postal services in Europe.

FFPI President Philippe Bodson emphasized the need for national authorities to pay attention to business-driven requests to open their postal market. "The gradual development of competition in the Dutch letter mail market highlights the opportunities for further market opening, not only in the Netherlands but also in other countries. The positive model that the UK has courageously initiated and is now developing should be adopted by other countries, as in Germany, where more choice, better quality of service and more affordable tariffs for users are needed", commented Mr Bodson.

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's key objectives are to secure a final date for full liberalisation of postal services at the latest in 2009 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 Web site www.freefairpost.com or contact Valeria Fagone.
Tel: 32-2-777.05.35. Fax: 32-2-777.05.36. E-mail: info@freefairpost.com.