

POSTAL SERVICES: NEW STUDY REVEALS DISPARITIES IN STAMP PRICES ACROSS EU

The pro-postal liberalisation Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) has highlighted the significant disparities that remain in stamp prices across the EU. The FFPI maintains that these differences are not justified by elements such as population density, but rather demonstrate the non-competitive nature of the EU's postal markets. For example, Germany is one of the most densely populated Member States, yet the price of stamp for an intra-EU 20g letter is relatively high at Euro 0.56. By contrast, in Spain, which has a much lower population density, it costs just Euro 0.24 to

send the same letter. FFPI President Philippe Bodson argues that prices will only be driven downwards if the postal markets are fully liberalised. He also urges the European Commission to take action against any anti-competitive practices. The Council of Ministers in October 2001 agreed to open to competition the market segments for letters weighing more than 100g from 2003 and 50g from 2006 (currently national monopolies are allowed on letter mail below 350g). The European Parliament will have to agree to this deal if it is to take effect.

Stamp prices in EU for letters (max 20 grams)

EIS gr. n° 482EN

Country	Population density per square km	Stamp price in euro
Austria	96	0.51
Belgium	334	0.42
Denmark	123	0.50
Finland	15	0.61
France	106	0.46
Germany	230	0.56
Greece	80	0.38
Ireland	52	0.38
Italy	191	0.41
Luxembourg	161	0.45
Portugal	107	0.26
Spain	78	0.24
Sweden	20	0.43
The Netherlands	376	0.39
The United Kingdom	240	0.31