



Press Release

The FFPI welcomes the Commission's Report on Postal Services: full liberalisation is the way forward.

Brussels, 29 November 2002 – The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) welcomes the EC Commission's long-awaited report on the situation in the EU postal market. The main evidence from the report is that liberalisation improves consumer choice and the quality of service and that it should be completed as soon as possible.

"We are glad that this Report puts the benefits of liberalisation of postal services for users and the European economy in such a clear light, particularly the positive impact on employment and quality of service while safeguarding the universal service obligation. European decision-makers will have to acknowledge that full liberalisation in 2009 is the only way forward better postal services", said FFPI President, Philippe Bodson.

The Report also underlines the alarming distortions of competition that the FFPI has raised for some time with the Commission. Some Member States still have not established truly independent national postal regulators, four years after the EC Directive entered into force. Moreover, national postal incumbents are increasingly behaving as commercial operators while continuing to benefit from monopolies and state aid. Such behaviours have a negative impact on quality, choice and price as well as on Europe's competitiveness.

"Postal users need strong EU competition authorities that would maintain a level playing field in the postal sector. In particular, they should bring down the number of pending competition cases and ensure full implementation of the decisions taken", added Bodson.

The FFPI considers that the Report is a good starting-point for the future Commission studies on the postal sector that will be coming periodically. However, the FFPI recommends that the future reports include more detailed analysis of the sector. This should cover in particular improved quality measurement criteria for national and cross-border mail services, specifically for the monopolised services, close examination of price structure and barriers to entry in the postal market.

"It is time to go beyond the generally accepted idea that liberalisation of the postal sector would not benefit users and the employment. With an informed debate and regular comprehensive reports on the market evolution, I am convinced that it will be possible to agree on a final date for full liberalisation soon", Philippe Bodson concluded.

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 a final date for full liberalisation of postal services and a fair playing field in the postal sector to prevent public postal monopolies to turn into private ones.

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