



Press Release

FFPI survey on euro cost for stamps unveils disturbing price differentials in the EU

Brussels, 20 December 2001 – How many EU consumers are paying too much for their stamps? The Free and Fair Post Initiative, FFPI, today released a study on stamp price differentials between Member States in the EU. The FFPI survey compares the cost in euro of a stamp for a 20 gram letter and takes into account the population density of each EU Member State.

The result of the FFPI study is that there exist remarkable differences in prices that are not justified by elements such as population density. The significant differences in stamp prices in the EU clearly indicate that consumers in certain Member States are being overcharged.

“Differences of stamp prices in the EU are striking and exceed those that the EU has identified for other consumer products and services. For instance, German citizens have to pay 0,56 euro, which is more than 2,33 times the price that the Spanish consumers pay in their country” commented FFPI President Philippe Bodson. *“Without real competition between postal operators in the EU, it is impossible for consumers to assess if what they are paying for basic postal services is justifiable. In this respect, it is of crucial importance that the European Commission watches closely the functioning of the markets and takes action where necessary”*, added Bodson.

The FFPI is convinced that, as long as national postal monopolies are allowed to have free reign over their home markets, market mechanisms will be prevented from creating downward pressure on prices for basic postal services. Without liberalisation of the postal markets, users and consumers will be bound to one provider only and, hence, they will risk suffering from limited choice, poor quality and excessive prices.

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 that should be in 2007 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 Web site www.freefairpost.com or contact Axel Rindborg. Tel: 32-2-777.05.35. Fax: 32-2-777.05.36. E-mail : info@freefairpost.com.



Stamp prices in the EU for letters (max 20 grams) 20 December 2001

Country	Population density per square km ¹	Stamp price in euro	Comments
Austria	96	0,51	
Belgium	334	0,42	
Denmark	123	0,50	0,54 euro for priority mail
Finland	15	0,61	Same price for letters of up to 50 gr. The rather high price is partly due to the very low population density
France	106	0,46	
Germany	230	0,56	
Greece	80	0,38	
Ireland	52	0,38	For letters max 25 gr.
Italy	191	0,41	
Luxembourg	161	0,45	
Portugal	107	0,26	
Spain	78	0,24	
Sweden	20	0,43	This is the price excluding 25% VAT 0,54 euro is the price of a stamp in Sweden including 25% VAT
The Netherlands	376	0,39	
United Kingdom	240	0,31	Price for Second Class letter

¹ Source: Infonation, UN publication 1997.