



Press Release

The FFPI hails the proposed final date for the liberalisation of the postal sector in the UK as a victory for postal users

Brussels, 5 February 2002 – The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI) welcomes the proposals made last week by PostComm, the British postal regulator, to open the UK postal market for bulk mail as of April 2002 and for all postal services by 31 March 2006. Postal users in the UK will rapidly benefit from these proposals while, under EU plans, most of the Europeans will continue to suffer from the lack of liberalisation.

“We are happy to note that, at last, the voice of postal users has been heard in the debate and that the costs of non-competition for the users of postal services have been fully taken into account. By setting up a final date for the liberalisation of the postal sector, PostComm provides for a clear legal framework that will allow competitors of Consignia to invest in this sector. This, in turn, will bring benefits to postal users who will enjoy more choice and quality of services at better prices”, said Philippe Bodson, President of the FFPI.

These proposals are the result of the first ever in-depth analysis of the postal services in a member State of the EU. The large consultation undertaken by PostComm has allowed all stakeholders to share their views on the problems facing the British postal services and on their expectations. This exercise has enabled PostComm to expose myths, such as the incompatibility of the universal service with a competitive market, and to respond to the challenges faced by the postal sector today.

“At a time when a new postal Directive that provides for the opening of less than 25% of the postal market is being discussed, PostComm proposals set the cat among the pigeons. What we see is that due to a lack of sensible and prospective debate at EU level, the future European Postal Directive is already out of tune with reality”, concluded Philippe 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 the 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 from turning into private ones.

For more information, visit the FFPI Web site www.freefairpost.com or contact Axel Rindborg or David Thual
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