



Press Release

Postal users welcome the adoption of the third Postal Directive

Brussels, 31 January 2008 – The Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI), which represents users of postal services and mail market players in Europe, welcomes today's decision of the European Parliament to approve the Council Common Position on the third Directive on postal services.

The FFPI is glad that at last decision-makers have overcome their reluctance and have responded to the needs and wishes of users and operators by accepting to fully and unconditionally scrap their national monopoly by December 2010.

European postal users are convinced that a final date for liberalisation, coupled with adequate controls by national Regulators, will provide the necessary legal certainty to ensure free and fair competition in the market, which will improve choice and quality of service for users and consumers, and will encourage innovation and dynamism in the sector.

The FFPI also highlights that the Directive is a minimum framework and does not impede that member States anticipate the EU deadlines, by following the example of countries like Sweden, and the UK that have already fully opened their postal market successfully. These countries' experience demonstrates that competition in the mail sector has brought a number of advantages and has allowed for the maintenance of the universal service.

The President of the FFPI, Philippe Bodson, commented: *"Today's vote is historical, but is not the end of the story. The success of postal liberalisation will in fact depend on how member States will implement the Directive. Backstage manoeuvres to introduce barriers and protectionist rules that risk hampering access to new entrants in the market have to be avoided. Competition must be considered as an opportunity rather than a challenge by postal operators as a level playing field will finally be created where all can benefit from"*.

The FFPI intends to continue its work in support of liberalisation and of well functioning postal markets and will be working in the future to ensure that potential cases of delayed or partial market opening and regulatory requirements set up by the Member States that create significant barriers to entry are exposed.

Note to the editor:

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. The FFPI key objectives are to secure 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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