



Press Release

Users express regret for delayed liberalisation of postal services by European Parliament

Strasbourg, 11 July 2007 – Today the Free and Fair Post Initiative (FFPI), which represents European users of postal services, expressed its disappointment regarding the further delay of postal liberalisation as agreed by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) at the plenary vote on the first reading of the Postal Directive.

The FFPI believes that the adoption of the Ferber report is a positive step forward for liberalisation of postal services in the EU but considers that the postponement of the final date for eliminating the reserved area regrettably diminishes the ambitions of the original Commission proposal, which provides for ending the postal monopolies by 2009.

Philippe Bodson, FFPI President, commented: *"We are convinced that 2009 is the right time for ending postal monopolies across Europe and we hope that the Council will work, under the Portuguese Presidency, towards an agreement that will be closer to the spirit and the text of the Commission proposal. We also very much appreciated the efforts made by MEP Ferber and some of his colleagues for taking into consideration the concerns of all parties and for gaining broad support for an unconditional final date for liberalisation"*.

Postal users deem that member States are ready to open up their postal markets and that delaying further this long-awaited decision would convey a negative signal to users, consumers and market players alike. The FFPI is of the view that full market opening, as demonstrated by the examples of those countries where liberalisation has already been introduced, will ensure the maintenance of the universal service and that it will bring legal certainty for employees, users, operators, investors, and that it will result in greater choice and quality, innovative services and fair prices for users and consumers. Furthermore, as of 1 January 2008, when Germany and The Netherlands will fully open their postal markets, 60% of the European mail sector will be liberalised. The FFPI believes that other member States should follow this initiative and anticipate the EU timeline for completing liberalisation.

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 that should be in 2009 at the latest and a fair playing field in the postal sector to prevent public postal monopolies to turn into private ones.

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