**Revision of the PSD – Save our Post in Europe**

Communication is an essential right for all people in Europe. Postal services guarantee affordable and accessible communication and ensure social, territorial, and economic cohesion, whilst ensuring the transport of parcels and goods cross-border and enabling e-commerce for all. All this is embedded in the universal service obligation (USO). The USO is the core of the Postal Services Directive (PSD) (97/67/EC, amended by Directives 2002/39/EC and 2008/6/EC). This is the requirement that letters and parcels should be delivered to each home or business premises, on 5 days each week, throughout each EU country (with exemptions) [[1]](#footnote-1).

One of the PSD’s objectives was the opening of the postal market to competition and the abolition of the reserved areas. Since 2008, postal services were completely liberalized within the EU. Postal trade unions observe that postal liberalization led to higher prices, lower quality, massive job-losses, and a worsening of working conditions. The PSD mainly addressed letter mail. Letter mail volumes have declined since due to several factors such as changing user needs and the advent of e-Commerce which transformed the way we use postal services. In this context, the European Commission considers revising the outdated legislation as postal markets and economic trends have changed.

Postal trade unions, having faced the negative consequences of postal liberalisation, are key stakeholders and will engage with the European Commission in this revision exercise to ameliorate the future PSD. In order to meet the future needs of people within the EU, and to adapt the PSD to the context of the current political objectives of the EU, postal trade unions lobby on the ‘Save Our Post’ Campaign.

**1. Invest in the future of post:**

People in Europe are confronted with downsizing infrastructure, limited accessibility to banking and financial services, ailing training facilities and other essential services, and as they get older, they need regular care and support. Such essential services could be provided by posts. For this to occur, postal trade unions call on legislators to provide incentives to strengthen the postal networks and to find innovative products. We call for the maintenance and enhancement of the scope and the quality of universal postal networks. We call on legislators to enable the diversification and modernisation of the postal networks in a democratic manner. In many parts of Europe, notably rural areas, postal services are the only means of communication and social inclusion. We call on the legislators to uphold the crucial role of posts in promoting social and territorial cohesion. A network of more than 1.8 million workers visiting every address and with more than 138.000 postal outlets, could provide a vast range of essential services such as financial or social services. We need to invest in the existing infrastructure and the people rather than dismantling the postal networks.

**2. Build on the existing USO to reflect parcel growth.**

Market dynamics in Europe have changed. People have smartphones, use digital services and shop online. SME’s today, depend on e-Commerce and the ability to send their products to every corner of the world. Without challenging the importance of letters, witnessing the continued growth of e-Commerce, parcels are of crucial importance for national economies and are a way to support SMEs’ growth in the regions. In order to enable national economies’ growth and strengthen economic and territorial cohesion, postal trade unions call on the legislators to enact a full citizen right to regular and affordable parcel delivery at uniform prices in a national territory, to send and receive parcels. For this we demand a strong e-Commerce market regulation that guarantees good working conditions, decent wages, and high quality of service. In order to reflect the importance and crucial role parcels play in our modern economies, postal trade unions demand the update of the USO definitions and its scope[[2]](#footnote-2). To this end and to counter the continuous increase in precarious forms of employment in the e-commerce market, primarily through the use of subcontractors in the parcel industry, postal trade unions call on the legislators to enact a ban on the use of outsourced personnel and on subcontractor chains for the transport (including the loading of parcels) and delivery of parcels.

**3. Include social and environmental standards in minimum standards**

All companies providing services under the USO, report to the National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs). Postal trade unions demand that NRAs uphold and safeguard social and environmental standards. The NRAs ought to enforce corrective mechanisms in case of non-respect of established standards and national legislation to impede instances of unfair competition and social dumping by upholding fair practices in terms of employment conditions, environmental performance and quality of service. For this to happen, the revision of the PSD must in the same time, lead to the strong regulation of the e-Commerce sector and all actors involved in the value chain, notably the added reporting requirements of the EU Green Deal and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive.

**4. Guarantee a sustainable financing of the USO**

The new PSD must guarantee the sustainable financing of the USO. We call on the legislators to review the current system of postal compensatory funds. All market players involved in the postal value chain must contribute to the USO financing whilst guaranteeing a high quality of service at uniform and affordable prices. Companies must not be able to cherry-pick only profitable areas. They should not be authorised to operate if they practice social dumping in a national market through instances of unfair competition.

**5. Uphold minimum USO requirements**

Current definitions of the USO in terms of quality, affordability, accessibility, delivery time and frequency standards must be upheld and/or maintained as defined in each national context. The PSD as it currently stands does not address the observed market distortions in e-Commerce parcel delivery. Non-regulated e-Commerce players business models use free delivery advertisements that create market distortions and put pressure on prices and wages. Citizens should be able to make an informed choice between operators in a free market. The revision of the PSD needs to be accompanied by strong regulation of the e-Commerce market, by social cohesion measures that guarantee decent wages and working conditions for all market players involved in the postal supply chain, as well as environmental standards.

**We need you - Help us to save our post by supporting our pledge! Please record a short message of support and send it to:** Contact point of trade union

For more information and background documents:

<https://www.uni-europa.org/news/save-our-post-european-postal-workers-campaign/>

1. <https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/postal-services/legislation-implementation-and-enforcement_en> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/44044> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)