

# **Postal services: common rules for the development of the services and improvement of quality of service**

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The rapporteur, Mr SIMPSON (PSE, UK), focused mainly on the social role of the postal services, pointing out that this was the reason why it was essential to provide a postal service for all users, no matter whether they lived in the outlying regions or in the major cities. With a view to ensuring the proper functioning of the universal service, it was necessary to identify those services that had to be maintained in the reserved sector. Fearing that the proposal in question would have disastrous consequences for the more remote regions, the rapporteur expressed his opposition to the privatisation of this sector, since people were anxious to protect the public postal service. In his address Commissioner Bangemann pointed out that the Commission was not against the public service. For the Commission, the introduction of competition was not an objective in itself but rather a means for improving the quality of the service provided. With this in mind, the Commission planned to adopt a prudent approach that would follow a middle line between harmonisation and deregulation in order to achieve a state of controlled liberalisation. He concluded by citing the examples of Sweden and Finland, where deregulation had helped improve the quality of the public service.