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

1995/0221(COD) - 28/03/1996 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Committee is pleased that the Commission has decided to postpone adoption of the Notice so that its implementation coincides with the entry into force of the Directive, and that the Commission has submitted it for an Opinion. The ESC thinks it particularly necessary that the content and terminology of the Directive and the Notice should match. The ESC welcomes the creation of a universal service at affordable prices for all European citizens, and expects this to lead to higher quality standards which will benefit all users, consumers and firms. At the same time, the Committee feels that the Commission should pay constant attention to the social effects. These particularly include the effects of extensive liberalisation of the postal services on income and working conditions in the sector. Before any further moves towards liberalisation there should therefore be a thorough investigation into the effects on wages and working conditions. This investigation should include a look at the danger of social dumping or a massive upsurge in the number of "bad jobs", and also point out possibilities of protecting or improving minimum social standards for employed persons at European level. The Committee asks the Commission to begin or carry out the necessary steps here in close consultation with the Economic and Social Committee and the Joint Committee for the Postal Services. Should adoption of the Directive be delayed, the ESC advocates a four-year time limit for the trial period and the scheduled interim review and decision. The Committee trusts that the ESC will also be consulted before the decision is taken.