

Postal services: further opening to competition

2000/0139(COD) - 10/06/2002 - Final act

PURPOSE : to continue to open up the Community postal services to competition. **COMMUNITY MEASURE** : Directive 2002/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 97/67/EC with regard to the further opening to competition of Community postal services. **CONTENT** : the Council adopted the present modification after having approved the amendments adopted by the European Parliament at second reading. The delegation from the Netherlands voting against it. This Directive will push forward the gradual and controlled implementation of the Internal Market for postal services, therefore combining more competition with maintaining a universal service and is expected to lead to improved postal services and lower prices. The new Postal Services Directive requires Member States to open up substantial additional sections of the market to competition from 2003 and 2006 and defines further steps to be taken towards the completion of the Internal Market for postal services. More specifically, under the new Directive, Member States will have to open up to competition the following market segments: - from 2003: - delivery of letters weighting more than 100gr (or costing more than three times the price of a standard letter); - all outgoing cross-border mail (but Member States which need the revenue from this market segment to enable them to continue to provide their universal service could reserve it) - from 2006: - delivery of letters weighing more than 50gr (or costing more than two and a half times the price of a standard letter). The new Postal Services Directive requires the Commission to complete, in the course of 2006, a study assessing, for each Member State, the impact on universal service of full accomplishment of the Internal Market for postal services in 2009. On the basis of the results of that study, the Commission would make a proposal to the European Parliament and Council confirming, if appropriate, full accomplishment of the internal market for postal services in 2009 or determine any other step. To the extent necessary to ensure the maintenance of universal service, Member States may continue to reserve services to universal service provider(s). Those services shall be limited to the clearance, sorting, transport and delivery of items of domestic correspondence and incoming cross-border correspondence, whether by accelerated delivery or not, within both of the following weight and price limits. The weight limit shall be 100 grams from 1 January 2003 and 50 grams from 1 January 2006. These weight limits shall not apply as from 1 January 2003 if the price is equal to, or more than, three times the public tariff for an item of correspondence in the first weight step of the fastest category, and, as from 1 January 2006, if the price is equal to, or more than, two and a half times this tariff. In the case of the free postal service for blind and partially sighted persons, exceptions to the weight and price restrictions may be permitted. To the extent necessary to ensure the provision of universal service, direct mail may continue to be reserved within the same weight and price limits. To the extent necessary to ensure the provision of universal service, for example when certain sectors of postal activity have already been liberalised or because of the specific characteristics particular to the postal services in a Member State, outgoing cross-border mail may continue to be reserved within the same weight and price limits. The Commission shall finalise a prospective study which will assess, for each Member State, the impact on universal service of the full accomplishment of the postal internal market in 2009. Based on the study's conclusions, the Commission shall submit by 31 December 2006 a report to the European Parliament and the Council accompanied by a proposal confirming, if appropriate, the date of 2009 for the full accomplishment of the postal internal market or determining any other step in the light of the study's conclusions every two years, on the first occasion no later than 31 December 2004, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council on the application of this Directive, including the appropriate information about developments in the sector, particularly concerning economic, social, employment and technological aspects, as well as about quality of service. The report shall be accompanied where appropriate by proposals to the European Parliament and the Council. **ENTRY INTO FORCE** : 05/07/2002. **IMPLEMENTATION** : 31/12/2002.