

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

1995/0221(COD) - 16/09/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

In adopting the recommendation by Mr Brian SIMPSON (PSE, RU), Parliament approved the Council's common position on postal services, in so far as it met all of Parliament's concerns and incorporated its main requests. The common position, was, in fact, based on a gradual approach in liberalizing the market in postal services, as proposed by Parliament. The following were incorporated: - in order to reconcile the opening-up of the postal markets with the aim of protecting these markets from the negative effects of a sudden and uncontrolled liberalization, the public postal operators should ensure that the area reserved was sufficiently large; - the reserved area included direct mail and cross-border mail, whereas the universal service comprises packages up to 10 kg (which could be extended to 20 kg by the public authorities); - all further legislation should be based on Article 100a of the EC Treaty, which guaranteed not only the full participation of Parliament in the process but also that this liberalization would be based on the rule of law and would not be an automatic process. In addition to some technical changes, Parliament also requested the following: - that each Member State ensured that the level of service was guaranteed and that the Commission be notified of the measures taken to satisfy this condition, with particular regard to the identity of the designated postal operator(s) responsible for providing universal service; - that exceptions be permitted to the weight and price limits in favour of blind and partially-sighted persons; - that the application of a uniform tariff did not exclude the right of the universal service provider(s) to conclude individual agreements on prices with customers; - closer consideration of the distribution costs incurred by the universal service provider in the country of destination.