



**EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR THE POSTAL SECTOR
POSTAL SECTOR EVOLUTION WORKING GROUP**

**JOINT STATEMENT
ON POSTAL SECTOR EVOLUTION**

1. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector discussed the evolution of European postal services in the light of the further proposed liberalisation. A workshop was held with the support of the European Commission (EC) on 2 April 2007 in Brussels entitled "Postal Sector Evolution within a changing communication market". The subjects of Regulation, Social impact, Change management were dealt with in detail. The workshop built on the work conducted over many years by the Training/CSR Working Group of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector and the Joint Declaration on Training and Skills Development signed in June 2006.
2. According to its Rules of Procedure, the Committee aims to advise the Commission on initiatives relative to social policy and on the developments in European policy which could have a social impact on the postal and allied services sector.
Despite the large difference of views regarding the liberalisation process, the members of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector want to address the important issue of the social impact of the Postal Sector Evolution.
3. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector emphasise that the postal sector is one of the largest employers in Europe (1.8 million workers). It also represents an essential historical role in the economic and social life of Europe.
4. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector take into account the competitive nature of the sector (including electronic substitution) and the perspective of proposed full market opening.
5. The significance of universal service is emphasised in this context. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector are mindful that the EC recognise that good quality affordable and sustainable postal services are essential for economic and geographical development and social cohesion in the European Union (EU) as vital infrastructure services in the communication sector as a whole. They agree that the regulatory framework in the EU shall ensure by

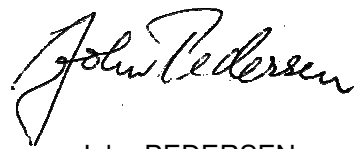
adequate measures the continued provision of universal postal services in each Member State.

6. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee are convinced that the proposed future market opening must go hand in hand with socially acceptable employment conditions. The postal sector is and will remain highly labour intensive and competition must not be based on wage dumping and worst working conditions.
7. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee for the Postal Sector therefore recommend that under the third Postal Services Directive Member States are invited to take measures in the mail market by encouraging collective bargaining or by regulation in compliance with Community law in order to prevent wage dumping and worst working conditions. Competition should occur on the quality of services in particular. Fair competition in the postal sector can only be successful if appropriate employment conditions are ensured and negative structural trends are prevented.
8. The members of the Social Dialogue Committee give mandate to the Postal Sector Evolution Working Group with the support of the European Commission:
 - a) to collect and share practices of social regulation at national level,
 - b) to analyse the evolution of working organizations and skills development policies,
 - c) to discuss with the European Commission all the possible actions (including Social Funds use) aiming at facilitating and supporting the change management of the Universal Service Providers,
 - d) to monitor the continued provision of universal postal services in each Member State.

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Dominique BAILLY
President SDC Postal Sector



John PEDERSEN
Vice-President SDC Postal Sector