

PostEurop's statement on UPU's opening ahead of UPU high-level forum on Feb 13, 2020

DETAILED EXAMINATION IS NEEDED BEFORE ANY FURTHER STEPS ON UPU'S OPENING ARE TAKEN

As a Restricted Union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), PostEurop through its 52 members has always been active in shaping global postal affairs. PostEurop recognizes the importance of keeping UPU relevant and takes this opportunity to contribute to the ongoing discussion on wider postal sector engagement.

Ahead of the UPU's high-level forum on Feb 13, 2020, many PostEurop members have answered the UPU questionnaire "Consultation on opening the UPU to wider postal sector players". This questionnaire raised certain critical questions and concerns which PostEurop members, leveraging their broad expertise in postal matters, wish to bring to **the highest attention of all UPU stakeholders and to have these comments included in the wider debate within the UPU taskforce on opening up the Union.**

- UPU is an inter-governmental organization and membership in a legal sense is restricted to sovereign states. This concept appears to be undisputed and the discussion could only be about participation of other players in certain UPU services and programs. However, no clear and detailed description of possible models has been shared yet;
- The ultimate purpose and principles of opening are not clear and need to be defined as a basis for further considerations on wider participation. This could alter the fundamental principles of the UPU by which the Union is governed;
- Multiple UPU platforms for engaging wider postal sector players are already established within the Union. There are various options for them to participate in UPU activities: as observers, by joining working groups and user-funded bodies, and by participating in the Consultative Committee. Prior to taking any new steps in respect to opening, sufficiency and efficiency of the existing mechanisms need to be analysed and, if applicable, improved;
- Type, scope and role of wider postal sector players that could join in UPU activities as a result of opening are unclear and need to be clearly outlined;
- Fair balance of rights and obligations is required in order to avoid "cherry picking" and related market distortions. Each proposal should come with a cost/benefit analysis;
- Investments and contributions already undertaken by the Designated Operators to the Union need to be recognized as well as the principle of reciprocity.

Referring to the scope of critical open questions, **PostEurop members advise to take a balanced and well thought-through approach.** PostEurop members would recall again that multiple options for wider postal sector engagement in the UPU activities already exist.

In order to facilitate a proper analysis as a basis for any further decisions on the matter, PostEurop members encourage the **UPU Abidjan Congress to set up a Task Force to encompass various UPU stakeholders' views, with a clear mandate and a roadmap to conduct thorough preparatory work, clearly define the objectives of potential opening and carefully weigh alternative models and their implications.**

Any further actions should only be considered based on the results produced by the aforementioned Task Force.