

# PostEurop's input to the consultation on the draft ERGP Report Regarding the Future Regulatory Postal Framework





## ABOUT POSTEUROP

POSTEUROP is the association which represents European postal operators since 1993 and is officially recognised as a Restricted Union of the [Universal Postal Union \(UPU\)](#).

It is committed to supporting and developing a sustainable and competitive European postal communication market accessible to all citizens and ensuring a modern and affordable universal service.

Its Members employ **1.6 million people** and deliver billions of items annually to over **295 million homes** and **48 million companies** across Europe.

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## Introduction

PostEurop members welcome the opportunity to provide input into the public consultation on the ERGP draft report outlining the future Regulatory Postal Framework. This topic is at the core of the activities of postal service providers organized within PostEurop, and members appreciate the opportunity to share their views on this important matter.

The ERGP draft report addresses key aspects of the future regulatory framework, which is expected to shape the postal sector for years to come. This is particularly significant given the challenges postal operators are already facing, even though certain trends are foreseeable. In that regard we strongly urge the ERGP in its further work on developing recommendations on the future regulatory framework, to take note of and consider implications of the Draghi report on EU competitiveness (9 September 2024)<sup>1</sup> and the European Council conclusions on competitiveness (20 March 2025)<sup>2</sup> in which the latter clearly calls for a reduction in administrative, regulatory and reporting burdens for businesses and public administrations.

PostEurop members are convinced that a universal postal service, if aligned with evolving user needs, service costs and market environment, will also in the future hold significant value for society, benefiting both individuals and businesses. In this context, we emphasize that ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) requires a comprehensive, multi-faceted

approach. This approach must include several complementary measures that focus on enhancing both the sustainability and efficiency of the USO.

Based on these convictions, PostEurop would like to share its thoughts on the recommendations presented in this report.

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## Key Recommendations



### The Universal Service as the heart of postal regulation

PostEurop believes the basic scope of the regulatory framework on postal services should remain the Universal Service (US), which is intrinsic to social and economic cohesion. We agree with the ERGP's view that a US is still necessary and recognize the importance of guaranteeing all EU citizens access to basic postal services (single piece). In this sense, principles such as reduction of the USO net cost and avoidance of unjustified burden for Universal Service Providers (USPs) vis a vis other operators should be taken into account.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Draghi report on EU competitiveness](#)

<sup>2</sup> [European Council conclusions on competitiveness, European defence and security and migration - Consilium](#)

## Flexibility for Member States in Adapting the Universal Service

PostEurop shares the ERGP's view that it is essential to give Member States (MS) more leeway to adapt the universal mail service to the structural decline in volumes, evolving user needs, and national specificities. We strongly agree with the ERGP recommendation that "the regulatory framework should establish a set of general principles for the provision of US, whilst the choice of scope, conditions and procedure is a matter for the MS, that can choose the best solution to suit their own national circumstances".

In this regard, flexibility and subsidiarity to modify the requirements for mail collection and delivery (e.g., frequency, place of collection/delivery, etc.) as currently defined in the Postal Services Directive would effectively reduce the costs of the universal mail service. Similarly, relaxing quality-of-service standards for intra-Community cross-border mail is necessary, as longer delivery times for domestic mail have been adopted in many Member States to respond to changing usage patterns (with consumers valuing reliability over speed), mitigate environmental impacts, and control USO costs. However, we believe that the proposals in the ERGP draft report do not fully account for the unique challenges faced by different Member States. The geographical<sup>3</sup>, economic, and social diversities of Member States should not be overlooked when establishing a "harmonized minimum" service at EU level. A rigid, standardized approach, not allowing appropriate flexibility to take account of these diversities and market developments, could undermine the

economic sustainability of the service.

## Financial Sustainability of the USO

We are concerned that the ERGP draft report gives no attention to the financial challenges of providing the USO. While the decline in volume is acknowledged, the report does not sufficiently highlight the significant financial pressures faced by postal operators. Ensuring the financial stability of Universal Service provision is crucial for keeping postal services available and affordable for all EU citizens, particularly amidst declining volumes and rising operational costs. Calls for "the protection of postal user rights and needs" and the "guarantee of affordable and sustainable postal service provision to all EU citizens," along with "resilient postal networks and innovative services," should go hand in hand with guaranteeing financial stability for the provision of universal services. A reliable compensation framework will ensure the affordability of the USO for all EU citizens without imposing an unsustainable strain on service providers.

## Competition and Infrastructure Sharing

The ERGP draft report advocates for a competitive postal market and suggests additional monitoring tools and capabilities to foster market competition. While promoting competition and efficiency is important, PostEurop has concerns about the proposal to open postal networks to infrastructure sharing. These measures could lead to higher costs and reduced quality, ultimately harming consumers.

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<sup>3</sup> [Relevant geographical and demographic conditions that should be taken into account are, for example, the existence of sparsely populated areas, rural or remote](#)

[areas; MS should have enough flexibility to establish special delivery conditions for USO provision based on their national specific circumstances.](#)



This is especially concerning in the context of a declining mail market, which makes it less attractive for new operators to enter. We strongly recommend preserving operators' contractual freedom to enter into infrastructure-sharing agreements, provided these agreements comply with competition law.

### **The Parcel Sector and Unfair Competition**

The ERGP draft report highlights the risks of unfair competition between delivery operators and e-commerce platforms, some of which have acquired significant market and negotiating power or deployed strategies of vertical integration in the logistics sector. While these risks pose a serious threat to postal operators, extending the scope of the Postal Services Directive or modifying certain definitions (e.g., mailing, sorting, etc.) is not the appropriate approach. Furthermore, PostEurop members consider that the proposed introduction of ex-ante intervention from NRAs and Significant Market Power (SMP) regulation are not justified. There is no evidence that existing competition law would be insufficient to address potential competition problems in the postal sector, especially considering that the parcel segment is highly dynamic and competitive, nor evidence of entry barriers that hinder other players from

entering the market and competing in the provision of letter or parcel services. The effective application of competition law and existing regulations on Digital Markets and Digital Services would be more appropriate for establishing a true "level playing field" while keeping the regulatory pressure and administrative burden as low as possible, in line with the EU Council conclusions on competitiveness (20 March 2025).

### **Cross-Border Tariffs and Administrative Burden**

PostEurop agrees with ERGP's view that the current data collection under the Cross-border Parcels Regulation (CBPR) leads to an administrative burden for postal operators, especially when the data is less relevant or too detailed, as recognized by ERGP, and the outcome of this data collection (EU parcel tariff database) has not fulfilled its objectives in terms of user engagement and usefulness. However, the ERGP calls for further tools to assess cross-border tariffs. PostEurop does not see a need for this. Rather, PostEurop believes that the cross-border parcel delivery market is already highly competitive, resulting in tariffs that are both affordable and cost-oriented. The ERGP draft report does not identify any market failures regarding cross-border tariffs that would justify granting additional powers to National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs). Thus, there is no need for any additional tools to assess tariffs in the cross-border markets.

### **Strengthening User Rights**

The ERGP suggests that the role of the recipient should be strengthened further. However, the report does not indicate that the current regulatory framework, whether postal or



horizontal consumer rights legislation, fails to guarantee the rights of the recipient. PostEurop members support a balanced and fair approach to handling complaints and compensations. However, it is important to note that postal service operators generally do not have a contractual agreement with the recipient. Complaints are regularly handled in close cooperation with senders, and changes to the framework, if deemed necessary, should avoid additional bureaucratic regulations and confusion among consumers, sellers, and service providers. Moreover, double compensations should be avoided.

### **Vulnerable Users**

The ERGP calls for the inclusion of vulnerable users in the future regulatory framework. PostEurop members, in their role as universal service providers serving all groups of persons, will play a vital role in serving vulnerable users too. Preserving the universal character of the postal service is essential if it is to remain a tool for inclusion and cohesion for the benefit of all. Moreover, since the identification of vulnerable users varies across Member States it should not be defined at EU level. It is crucial that flexibility is provided for Member States to define these groups in line with their local needs and circumstances.

### **Horizontal issues: environmental sustainability and working conditions**

PostEurop members agree with the ERGP that horizontal issues, such as working conditions and environmental sustainability, should be addressed in horizontal legislation.

The ERGP suggests that there is still a need for standardized environmental data to align postal operations with EU sustainability goals, due to the rapid growth of parcel deliveries. We do not subscribe to this view, as postal operators under the obligations of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) will already be subject to report extensive sets of environmental sustainability data, including on emissions. PostEurop believes there is no evidence of gaps in horizontal legislation on environmental sustainability that would justify a sector-specific “gap-filling” approach for the postal sector. Furthermore, the European Commission recently published a proposal to reduce administrative burdens for all companies, created by the CSRD, CSDDD and EU Taxonomy (Omnibus I Package). The ERGP’s call for additional data is therefore contrary to the Commission's proposal, as well as contradicting the EU Council conclusions on competitiveness, that call for a general reduction of administrative burdens for EU companies in order not to hinder their competitiveness. Instead of creating more reporting obligations which would have limited benefits, the sector can be supported by further boosting green investments.

### **A Robust and Adaptable Regulatory Framework**

The ERGP calls for "a robust and adaptable regulatory framework" and

advocates for "a simple and flexible authorization regime that welcomes innovation while ensuring proper oversight." PostEurop members support this general call but believe that it does not require the introduction of additional monitoring powers for NRAs. More to the opposite, we would like to urge the ERGP to identify ways to reduce the sector-specific administrative burden on businesses and regulators in the postal sector.

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## Conclusion

PostEurop remains committed to engaging in constructive dialogue with the ERGP to shape a regulatory framework that supports the continued evolution of the postal sector in Europe.

We believe that a balanced, flexible, and sustainable approach to regulation is key to ensuring the sector's resilience in the face of ongoing changes.

Our commitment to maintaining a robust, universal postal service, while fostering innovation, digitalization, and environmental sustainability, remains unwavering.

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