

Tender Specifications:

The postal sector: an inclusive  
employer for a more inclusive  
society

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## 1. Background

The European Social Dialogue Committee (SDC) for the postal sector (<http://www.postsocialdialog.eu>) was established in 1999. Its main missions are to advise the European Commission on initiatives relative to social policy and on the developments in European policy that could have a social impact on the postal sector, to encourage and promote social dialogue within the sector in order to contribute to the development of jobs and the improvement of working conditions.

The Committee is composed of representatives designated in the 27 EU Member States by the social partners' organizations recognised at European level: PostEurop for the postal operators; UNI Europa and CESI for the trade unions. It constitutes a solid network platform where the social partners discuss issues such as the evolution of the postal sector, innovative training schemes, skills' needs in the future, occupational safety and corporate social responsibility issues and impact of digitalisation. The great contribution of the Committee is linked to the strong cooperation within the social partners in the postal sector.

This new project builds on the previous projects conducted by the SDC as regards main evolutions in the sector. While the 2 last foresight projects were more transversal, this new project will focus on a more specific issue. The postal sector as a major employer in most EU member states and as a labour-intensive industry, it has a particular responsibility of being representative of society and to ensure an inclusive work environment for its employees. Historically in many countries, postal operators enabled their employees who had long careers to climb the social ladder throughout their professional path. In some countries, in Eastern Europe in particular, there is historically a predominance of women employment in all postal functions and a high proportion of female employees in relation to total workforce. Postal operators have evolved together with the evolutions of the society and embraced these societal evolutions by implementing several policies to support the development of a more inclusive workforce. The project will consider these different policies in term of support to specific groups but also to the whole workforce.

The project aims at deepening the knowledge of European social partners on the inclusiveness policies developed by postal companies together with trade unions and considers both the internal and external aspects. The focus areas that the project aims to cover are related in particular to disability and ageing. The aim is to better understand how postal companies can ensure an inclusive working environment, provide equal opportunities for all in every phase of their working life (recruitment, selection, promotion, training, retention) and enable them a full and effective participation in working life on an equal basis with others. The project's objective is to collect and analyze the initiatives taken by postal companies, in cooperation with trade unions, to promote equal opportunities for all employees at the different moment of their professional path (recruitment, training, mobility...), in addition to national legal obligations regarding equal opportunities legislation. It will in particular focus on the role of social dialogue in that framework by making a cartography of the collective labour agreements covering the topics of disability and ageing. The objective is to identify good practices but also to understand the levers and obstacles to develop these policies. In that framework in order to broaden the scope of analysis, a benchmark of other companies in sectors which have comparable characteristics (e.g.: labour-intensive, comparable activities, service-oriented...) to the postal sector will be conducted. This benchmark will concern mainly internal policies but it will also feed all four aspects (internal policies, impact on employer's brand, impact on labour market,

competitive advantage towards clients) covered by the project in terms of internal and external impact of policies related to disability and ageing.

On that basis, the project will investigate policies on ageing and disability as well as their further indirect external impacts. It will consider how they contribute to making the postal sector a more attractive employer as well as how they have a wider impact on the labour market and on society as a whole. Postal operators have indeed always had a particular role towards the society in terms of cohesion and territorial presence as well as constituting a link between citizens. Lastly, the project will consider how policies on disability and ageing can bring a competitive advantage to postal operators but also how they can positively influence customers' behaviours to enable them to make more responsible consumption choices. In that regards products and services answering the evolving needs of the (ageing) population will also be under consideration. It is also important to understand how the historic stance of inclusive postal operators where employees could climb the social ladder has had an impact on society while also analyzing how postal operators are able to adapt to the current and future trends in the society, in particular as regards demographic evolutions. As such predictive analysis on how postal operators' role in view of future societal trends will be a whole part of the project. The project will consider current and future evolutions in the postal sector while constantly making the link between internal policies and the wider environment.

## 2. Description of the project

The project aims at deepening the knowledge of European social partners on the inclusiveness policies developed by postal companies together with trade unions as well as at grasping how this inclusive positioning of the sector can have an external impact.

From a content perspective, the project will consist in a four-step analysis:

- Better understanding the policies on disability and ageing developed by postal companies, the role of social dialogue in this and the different levers and obstacles to the adoption of these policies, while also considering good practices from other companies which could resonate in the sector,
- Consider how these policies can contribute to make the postal sector a more attractive employer,
- Explore the wider impact of the postal sector in terms of inclusion on the labour market and the society,
- Analyse how this inclusive stance can bring a competitive advantage to postal operators towards clients, how it can positively influence consumers to have them make more responsible consumption choices, where postal delivery options exist.

From a project management perspective, the project will be divided into 4 main phases:

### **Stage 1: Preparatory phase**

The preparatory work will enable to select the consultant to support the project's implementation as well as to align with this selected consultant on the main steps, milestones and calendar of the project. More specifically, it will be implemented through 3 main steps:

- Draft and publish the consultant's call for tenders

- Select the most appropriate consultant
- Kick-off meeting between project team and consultant

## **Stage 2: Collection of data**

This is a core part of the project as it will enable to gather all the data necessary for the workshops and for the project's main outputs. This collection of data will be done through several means to be able to access both publically available and first-hand data. It will be mainly collected by the external consultant with the support of the steering committee and will rely on the contributions of the social partners. This data collection will enable to elaborate key material to be presented at the different events and to feed the final report. It will in particular consist of:

- Collection of data from European social partners through extensive desk research, a dedicated questionnaire (if necessary) and complementary interviews,
- Collection and analysis of collective agreements signed within the SDC members on disability and ageing, in addition to national legal obligations.
- Selection of good practices from other companies and sectors for the elaboration of a benchmark

Part of stages 2 and 3 of the project will be run in parallel.

## **Stage 3: Staging of the workshops and final conference**

This work package is the one that will last for the longer period. It aims to share and build on the outputs of the questionnaires, interviews, desk research as well as identified best practices during the 4 workshops. Exercises of collective intelligence will also be carried out, especially during the three last workshops in order to bring in new ideas and consider how the topic of supporting disabled and ageing workforce can also have an external impact and how it will evolve in the future according to the evolutions of the society and of the workforce.

More specifically each workshop will cover one of the four aspects (internal policies, impact on employer's brand, impact on labour market, competitive advantage towards clients) under focus in the project and will build on each other. All these workshops will be organized in a spirit of free and open expression to consider all possible issues at stake in a disruptive manner. The objective is to have interactive workshops where different exercises of co-creation, supported if needed by AI, will be used to engage the participants. The objective is to gather a representative mix of European social partners from different countries and companies. While ensuring a proper representativeness of several parts of the EU, the size of the groups should remain rather limited in order to enable sufficient interactions. It is also important that the core of the participants can take part to the majority of meetings to ensure the continuity between each stage of the reflection as this was the case for the former project.

The final conference which aims at presenting and discussing the project main outputs will gather a broader audience including European social partners high-level representatives, wider representatives from postal operators and trade unions as well as representatives from the European Commission. Its objective will be to put into perspective the project's outcomes with the main issues at stake in the sector. It will therefore mainly consist in the presentation of the project's outputs by the consultant and interventions from high-lever sector's representatives to discuss these outputs.

The Project Steering Group will be closely associated to the organisation and staging of the Seminars and the Final Conference to enable the projects results reach the immediate target audience of European postal social partners as well as engaging with wider postal stakeholders such as European policy-makers in the postal industry.

#### **Stage 4: Final Reporting, dissemination and communication of project results**

The Project Steering Group is tasked for the overall wider dissemination of the project results and the drafting of the Final Report, with the direct support of the consultant. In order to maximize the Communication and Dissemination activities of the Project several materials will be published. These materials will be produced in the form of reproductions and publications such as leaflets, videos, banners, brochures. A provider, that PostEurop is used to work with, will be in charge of the producing this material from a technical perspective while the content will be provided by the SDC with the support of the consultant.

The final report with the detailed results of the project will be widely published in all EU postal operators and trade unions of the sector by PostEurop, UNI Europa Post & Logistics and CESI. On top of the detailed final report, the communication and dissemination toolkit will be produced. The main objective of the dissemination toolkit is to ensure the multiplier effect of the project by supporting the dissemination of the results within each national organization. This toolkit aims at being synthetic and user-friendly with in particular documents like the summary of the project outputs, the visuals elaborated thanks to the graphic facilitation but also guidelines for running a dissemination event. This toolkit will enable to make the project's outputs more usable and therefore ensure a concrete use of the deliverables at national level.

The SDC website: [www.postsocialdialog.eu](http://www.postsocialdialog.eu) will be used to publish the project's outputs.

In order to maximize the communications and dissemination efforts, the services of an external expert will be used to produce videos. Besides, the project videos, the expert will design leaflets, banners, promotional materials to be used throughout the project for external communication, in particular on social media. The communication and dissemination efforts carried out by the steering committee using this communication material will help showcase the Project outputs at maximum level while also enabling interactions on the project's content in order to ensure the sustainability of the Project. The clear share of work between this external expert and the consultant selected through this tender is to be determined with the consultant, also based on its expertise, before the project starts.

### **3. Purpose of the Contract**

The aim of this contract is to help the Postal Sector Evolution working group of the Committee to achieve the stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the project. The external support required is split into two shares which can either be managed by one consultant team or by two different ones. In the latter case, we expect to have a lead consultant who will coordinate the overall project and subcontract the second share to another consultant. In that case, the proposal should be made in the framework of a partnership. Partnerships including companies from different countries will be highly appreciated.

Share 1 of the contract consists in the collection, analysis and presentation of data.



Share 2 of the contract consists in the facilitation of the workshops, supported by design-thinking.

#### 4. Tasks to be performed by the Contractor

##### a. Description of tasks

##### ► Share 1: Collection, analysis and presentation of data

- Ensure the collection and analysis of data, share the main findings at the workshops and final conference through presentation material and reports

##### Stage 1:

###### Tasks:

- At the kick-off meeting, present the methodology proposed by the consultant to collect the relevant information on policies on disability and ageing within the postal sector and its external impact
- Define the objectives of the study in agreement with the project team
- Define a clear framework for the study implementation according to the suggested methodology, the calendar, the aims of the project and the (specific) social dialogue framework
- Suggest other companies to be used for the benchmark on disability and ageing policies

###### *Results:*

1. **A clear and easily understandable presentation of the data collection methodology at the kick-off meeting**
2. **A written summary of the method, calendar, main steps and objectives of the study**
3. **A list of potential companies to be used for the benchmark**

##### Stage 2:

###### Tasks:

- Draft the questionnaires to be addressed to postal companies and trade unions (innovative ways to collect data would be particularly appreciated)
- Identify the relevant experts, prepare the surveys for the complementary interviews and conduct the interviews (around 10)
- Identify the relevant companies, outside from the postal sector, which have put in place mature and innovative policies on disability and ageing

###### *Results:*

1. **Selected tools, including questionnaires (if deemed necessary), for the data collection**
2. **Tools for the predictive analysis of the external impacts (including AI)**
3. **Conductor for the interviews**
4. **A benchmark of effective practices on disability and ageing put in place by other companies**

##### Stage 3:

###### Tasks:

- Contribute to the preparation of the 4 workshops' agenda
- Present the main outputs of the data collection and analysis at each workshop
- Between each workshop contribute to the drafting of interim reports and gather the inputs from the workshops
- Present the main outputs of the project during the final conference

#### *Results:*

1. **Drafting of the workshops' agenda together with the project team**
2. **Material to be presented at each workshop and to feed the final report**
3. **Integration of the participants' inputs' from the workshops**
4. **Drafting of interim reports (4) between each workshop**
5. **Contribution to the drafting of the final conference's agenda together with the project team**
6. **Presentation of the study's main outputs at the final conference**

#### Stage 4

##### *Tasks:*

- Contribute to the drafting of project's outputs for the final report
- Propose ideas and contribute to the elaboration of the dissemination material

##### *Results:*

1. **A report on the project main outputs a to be included in the final report**
2. **Support to the drafting of the dissemination toolkit (content and proposals for adequate tools)**

**Transversal results:** For stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the project, the consultant in charge of the share 1 of the project will ensure the coordination of the consultants' work and of all the events.

- **Share 2:** Facilitate the workshops and the final conference in an effective and innovative manner with the support of design-thinking

#### Stage 1:

##### *Tasks:*

- At the kick-off meeting, present the proposed facilitation methodology in terms of exercises to be used for the workshops
- Define the objectives of the workshops' facilitation in agreement with the project team
- Present the way design-thinking will be used to support the implementation of each project's event

##### *Results:*

1. **A clear and easily understandable presentation of the facilitation methodology (methods, number of consultants' involved, tools, languages) and of its added value at the kick-off meeting**
2. **A clear presentation of the foreseen design-thinking work**

#### Stage 2:

*Tasks: No particular contribution is foreseen under this share for stage 2*

#### Stage 3

##### *Tasks:*



- Facilitate each event (workshops and final conference) through innovative and creative exercises
- Trigger the discussions between the European social partners during the events and including with high-level representatives
- Time-keeper role during the events
- Support the discussions and the elaboration of outputs through design-thinking all along the workshops and the final conference
- Enable all participants to feel the innovativeness of the project

#### *Results:*

1. **Innovative exercises for the workshops and the final conference to foster interactions, creativity and disruptive thinking**
2. **Creative methods to wider the discussion and further open the participants' minds**
3. **Visual material (number to be defined) produced through design-thinking for each workshop and for the final conference**

#### Stage 4:

##### *Tasks:*

#### *Results:*

1. **Inclusion of the visual outputs of the design-thinking work in the final report and the dissemination material**
2. **Support the elaboration, from a content and visual perspective, of the dissemination toolkit**

## b. Guidance and indications on tasks execution and methodology

The suggested methodology is indicative and aims at providing a general understanding of the exercise. The consultant team has room for manoeuvre (within the limit of the project framework) in order to define the working methodology that fit the best to the objectives of the project. This should be done according to the expectations of the European social partners, the budget, the timing and the limited number of seminars, the specific social dialogue and postal sector situation as well as to its own experience.

The work to be done under shares 1 and 2 is complementary. The consultant team can suggest reallocating the tasks outlined within the 2 shares in a slightly adapted way depending on their expertise and relevant experiences.

## 5. Time scheduled

It is to be taken into consideration that supporting social partners in a European context can be time-consuming in view of the need to reach compromise between diverse representatives; the effective time management of the consultant's work will be essential and is of the responsibility of the consultant that should allocate the right resources to each task.

### **Overview of the time schedule for the whole project**

Phase	Responsible	Task
<b>► Stage 1</b> <b>July-September 2025</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team</li> <li><b>Externals consultant (shares 1 and 2)</b></li> <li>PSE working group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kick-off meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main outcomes: establishing the framework of the project; aligning on the project framework, main steps, calendar and methodology</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>► Stage 2</b> <b>Sept. 2025-February 2026</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team</li> <li><b>External consultant (share 1)</b></li> <li>SDC companies' &amp; unions' members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collection of data through desk research, questionnaires, interviews</li> </ul>
<b>► Stage 3</b> <b>March 2026-January 2027</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team</li> <li><b>External consultant (shares 1 and 2)</b></li> <li>SDC companies' &amp; unions' members</li> <li>External experts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisation of 4 workshops</li> <li>Conduction of workshops with design-thinking</li> <li>Preparation and conduction of the final conference</li> </ul>
<b>► Stage 4</b> <b>December 2026-March 2027</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team</li> <li><b>External consultant (methodology and work process)</b></li> <li>PSE working group</li> <li>SDC companies' &amp; unions' members</li> <li>External stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drafting of final report and dissemination material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main outcome: drafting and sharing conclusions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 6. Expertise required

For share 1 of the contract, the consultant should be an expert of disability and ageing topics with a proven experience of supporting different companies ideally from diverse countries and sectors, to develop and implement such policies. Due to the particular context of the project, the team should in particular have already done that with participants from different backgrounds, ideally with both employers' and trade unions' representatives.

For share 2 of the contract, the consultant should be an expert of the workshops' facilitation with a proven experience of conducting brainstorming exercises and strong design-thinking competences.

For shares 1 and 2, the external contractors should have a good understanding of social issues and sufficient knowledge about European structures. They should have a particular sensitivity to Human Resources and industrial relations issues.

Knowledge of the postal sector would be an asset but is not mandatory.

## 7. Selection criteria

The following criteria will be taken into account to make a selection among external contractors:

- The presentation of the bid has to be clear, well-constructed, personalized and responding to the demand;
- The clarity and innovativeness of the presented data collection methodology would be of high importance;
- The innovativeness and added-value of the presented facilitation exercises and methods will particularly be taken into consideration;
- Concrete examples from the consultant's experience, in particular as regards outputs of design-thinking, should be provided;
- In case of a partnership between a lead consultant and a sub-contracted one, a clear work organization and allocation should be presented;
- A team of international consultants would be an important asset;
- The suggestion of companies to benchmark with, of external speakers and/or domains to be investigated would be of added-value;
- The presentation of additional ideas would be appreciated;
- The price, regarding services proposed, will be determinant;
- The bid should be sent both in electronic and paper versions.

## 8. Costs' details

The costs related to travel and accommodation of the consultant team should not be included in the overall offer. They will be covered within the framework of the project.

The costs related to specific tools coming in support of the consultant's work like digital solutions as well as the facilitation tools should be included in the overall offer.

**The tender is to be sent before 19 June 2025 EOB to Antonino Scribellito, [antonino.scribellito@posteurop.org](mailto:antonino.scribellito@posteurop.org), and Waqas Ahsen, [europeanprojects@posteurop.org](mailto:europeanprojects@posteurop.org)**