

Switzerland: Who will benefit from the Liberalisation of the postal sector?

In an interview by La Poste Magazine, regarding the future law on the liberalization of the postal sector, Ulrich Gygi, Head of Swiss Post mentioned that liberalization would be beneficial to commercial clients, whereas private customers could benefit from competition from a qualitative point of view but not necessarily through a reduction of prices. Furthermore, a study ordered by the Swiss Department for the environment, transport, energy and communication, entitled "Consequences of the liberalization of the postal sector in 2011" mentioned that only a decrease in wages could lead to price reduction.

UNI Post & Logistics' Swiss affiliate, Syndicat de la Communication reacted with a press release to Economiesuisse' (the largest umbrella organization representing the Swiss employers) support to the Swiss government's will to quickly liberalise the Swiss postal market. According to economiesuisse, more competition in the postal market will bring about more choice for consumers, better quality of service and lower process. However, as the Syndicat de la Communication points out, this was not the case in the UK liberalised postal market as suggested by the Hooper review. Furthermore, says the Syndicat de la Communication, the big losers of the postal liberalisation are the postal employees themselves, through job cuts and worsening working conditions, especially in new entrants in the market. In a further press release of 17 June, the Syndicat de la Communication reiterated its clear rejection of postal liberalisation. It criticizes the Swiss government's will to follow the EU liberalisation process, without taking into account the economic and social consequences, nor the repercussions on the quality, the scope and the price of the universal service. For the Syndicat de la Communication, there is no clear reason why to completely liberalise the postal market, examples in the UK and Sweden are there to prove it. Liberalisation would be a threat to quality of the universal service as well as working conditions in the postal sector. The Syndicat de la communication said it would closely follow the political debate in order that changes be made to the future postal law.



More information on the liberalisation of the postal market in Switzerland at:

<http://www.gewerkschaftkom.ch/index.aspx?PID=1.2.0.188.0.0.0.188.0.N.0.N.0.0.0.0>

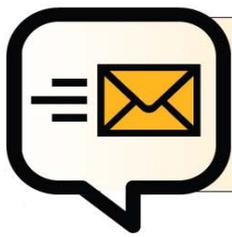
<http://www.uvek.admin.ch/dokumentation/00655/00895/01458/index.html?lang=fr>

The interview of Ulrich Gygi may be found at: http://cms.itsposta.ch/VPS/fr/06_08/

Postal liberalisation: Germany's Deutsche Post files complaint with the European Commission

On 11 June 2008 Deutsche Post filed a complaint with the Commission against the Dutch government's decision to delay the opening of its mail market. According to the statement from Deutsche Post, the Dutch government's decision not to end the existing mail monopoly as planned on 1 July 2008, but to extend it "indefinitely" creates a "competitive advantage for Post TNT of the Netherlands". Under the EU's newly adopted Third Postal Directive, Member States are only required to carry out full liberalization as of 1 January 2011. But Deutsche Post argues that "under the European law, a member state may reserve the national postal market exclusively for one provider only if this approach plays an essential role in financing the universal service" – i.e. the obligation for postal operators to provide each and every citizen with mail collection and delivery services at least once a day, five days a week.

Dutch Junior Economy Minister, Frank Heemskerk, on the other hand insists that the Netherlands cannot go ahead with full market opening until "a fair playing field" exists in both Germany and the United Kingdom. He gives the "high" minimum salary imposed by the German government as an example (over which TNT has filed a formal complaint with the European Commission) and the fact that, contrary to its competitors, Deutsche Post enjoys a VAT exemption on 40% of its operations as proof that the German postal market is still far from offering a level playing field. He also says he needs more assurances on the working and pay conditions for postmen in his own country before going ahead with the liberalization plans. But under pressure from MPs to set a date, he promised to "undertake maximum efforts" to completely open the postal market by 1 January 2009. The disputes highlights the difficulties linked to the practical implementation of new EU rules on the opening up of European postal markets to competition. In the UK – one of the few countries where full liberalization has already taken place – a recent report commissioned by the government found that the liberalization of the UK postal service has produced "no significant benefits" for either households or small businesses. The report, carried out by an independent panel and published in May, further warns that the current situation poses a "substantial threat" to Royal Mail's financial security, and thus, to the continued provision of the universal service. A final report is due to come up with ideas for measures to provide Royal Mail with a "stable financial future" later this year. The UK postal regulator Postcomm has suggested that Britain should follow Sweden's example in allowing the partial privatization of Royal Mail, but trade unions point to the "massive" job losses and "destruction of working conditions" that took place in Sweden when it liberalized.



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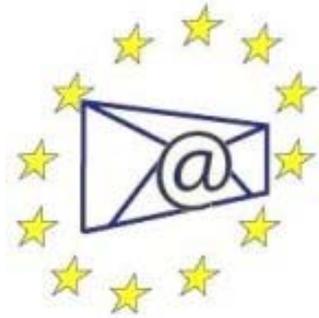
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<http://www.uniglobalunion.org/postal>

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EU: High Level Conference-The EU Postal Service Liberalization

The EU Commission organized a high level conference on 24 June in Brussels, gathering postal operators, regulators, EU commissioners, ministers and trade unions from most of the EU member countries. UNI Post & Logistics actively took part in the meeting. The first part of the meeting consisted of presentations, including from EU Commissioners Mc Creevy (Commissioner for Internal Market and Services) and Kroes (Commissioner for Competition). They mentioned the importance of quickly implementing the liberalization process and that market opening was a means and not an end for a sustainable postal sector. They also said that protectionism "occurring through back doors", including minimum wages which the Commission considered were barriers to competition, was unacceptable. UNI reacted strongly to this point pointing out that UNI was not prepared to accept liberalization that was in reality social dumping, and indeed, if every citizen is to gain from liberalization, as Commissioner Kroes mentioned, having a minimum wage in the postal sector would be a start. The second part of the meeting was dedicated to panel discussions; the first one on users' needs in a liberalized postal market and the second on coping with regulatory challenges. The discussions evolved around the Universal Service, its evolution and funding. Indeed, as Johnny Thijs, CEO of De Post - La Poste (Belgium) mentioned in order for liberalization to be a success, the Universal Service must be fully funded.



The other point of discussion was on the social aspect of liberalization, including minimum wages. Frank Heemskerk, Dutch State Secretary of Economic Affairs, made an important point in saying that one of the conditions for the Netherlands to open up its market is that new competitors on the postal market have socially acceptable working conditions. He underlined the importance of consultation at national and European level between employers, unions and governments. He reaffirmed the duty of the Dutch government to open up its market in a socially responsible way.

USA: National President of the NPMHU testifies about challenges facing the U.S. Postal Service

John Hegarty, National President of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, appeared before the House Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, in May to share his thoughts about the challenges facing the U.S. Postal Service since the implementation of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006. J. Hegarty said that the Postal Service is pursuing a "fool's gold situation" by "making plans to replace long-term career employees dedicated to the mission of the Postal Service with low-paid, no benefit, non-career, and often transient workers." He then mentioned the Mail Network Protection Act, "...that we are fortunate to have". J. Hegarty also mentioned the concerns linked to the outsourcing of services as well as the upcoming report on the network realignment. Regarding the latter he said that "If the Postal Service would share its draft plans with us ahead of time, we could work to minimize the dislocation and inconvenience to our members, as is required by our collective bargaining agreement, and also minimize the service disruptions that may occur to your constituents..".

More information on: <http://www.npmhu.org/Pubs/UPDATE/2008/up080501.asp>

Poland: UNI supports Postal Workers on strike since 3rd June

Since January 2008, workers of the Polish post have been negotiating wages increases for this year for all the workers of Polish Post. The workers of Polish Post affiliated to the "Solidarnosc" Trade Union have been on a long-term strike from 3rd June in protest against lack of progress in the negotiations.

The proposals offered by the company to the workers are extremely unsatisfactory. Moreover, if the union accepted the proposals the employees would be receiving low pay that does not meet their basic needs and expectations.

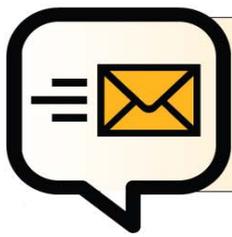
Now the unions legitimate protest action is considered by the employer as illegal although they passed the steps of the legal procedure concerning the possibility to organize the strike action. "Now our members are constantly exposed to different forms of violation of their rights. There are often cases of intimidation and persecutions and our members are threatened to lose their jobs. We are extremely concerned about this situation and we consider the attitude of our employer as an unprecedented attack against our union" says Bogumil Nowicki, President "Solidarnosc" Trade Union for Polish Post Workers

UNI Post & Logistics Global Union sent a letter to the Director General of the Polish Post to support over 12'000 postal workers who went on strike for nine days. The strike ended on 12 June at midnight, in order not to expose union members to the risk of losing their job. Indeed, during the strike, many cases of violations of trade union law were observed. Furthermore, a trade union member was fired without having been given any reasonable motives.

However, negotiations will continue with the employer for wage increases for workers of the Polish Post.

UNI's letter may be found at:

<http://www.uniglobalunion.org/unipostal.nsf/d3ae12c135a6a3aac1256b2f0050ecdc/cbfa35ffb8f35f4dc125746e002ca65b?OpenDocument>



Negotiations still continue for some Portuguese unions in CTT - Correios de Portugal

One of UNI's Portuguese affiliates, Sindetelco, has finished negotiations and signed a new collective agreement with CTT - Correios de Portugal. The union advises that they think this is a good deal for their members and that after three years of hard work they have agreement that in 2008, 100 new workers will have definitive contracts and 100 in the next year.

However the other UNI affiliates involved, SNTCT and SINTTAV are unhappy with the offer and have continued their protest action including their fifth strike since negotiations started which took place on 9 June. The unions say 65% of the CTT workers participated in strike action. They say that CTT are trying to make worse working hours, end the concept of a work place, and to take away the universal access for workers to the CTT private system of health and social assistance.

SINTTAV and SNTCT are undertaking with the Portuguese government ministry of labour, a mediation process. They are not confident that this will resolve the impasse so they have also initiated a complaint to the ILO. UNI Post & Logistics continues to monitor the situation to assist affiliates as appropriate.

Post Social Dialogue Plenary meeting elects a new President and Vice President



UNI Post & logistics representatives at the Post Social Dialogue, unanimously supported the election of Dominique Bailly of Post Europe as the President of the Social Dialogue for the next two years, and John Baldwin from the CWU, UK as the Vice President. The plenary meeting taking place in Brussels on 5 June also heard that Marta Pradanos-Gonzalez from the Europeans Commission was moving to a new job and that the Commission representative for the Post Social Dialogue would now be Bianca Busuioc. The committee thanked Marta for her strong support to the activities of the committee and her good advice over the last two years she has been the Commission representative for the Post Social Dialogue and welcomed Bianca to her position.

A presentation was given by DG Marketing on the process for implementing the 3rd Postal Directive and how countries now had to implement the Directive into national law.

UNI delegates asked some searching questions and reminded the Commission that the social aspects of the implementation must be considered. They asked how the Commission intended to monitor this and ensure there were no negative employment affects from the new Directive. The Commission said they were completing a survey of employment trends and they would also be holding an information meeting with the Commissioners concerned in the European Parliament where these issues would be further discussed.

The Social Dialogue Working Groups all reported to the meeting and discussed their future activities which included a proposed Accident Prevention Technical Seminar to share Best Practice in the Postal Sector to be held in September 2008. The Skills & Training Working Group also gave summary of their 2008 activities and how they could continue to implement the Joint Declaration on Skills & training Development. The CSR Working Group reported on the very successful recent 2nd CSR day to advocate the position in the Joint Statement on CSR. There was agreement on a new pan of activities for the rest of 2008.

The presentation on the 3rd Postal Directive may be found at:

<http://www.uniglobalunion.org/unipostal.nsf/d3ae12c135a6a3aac1256b2f0050ecdc/06dc07a4bc4cf453c125747100291dc4?OpenDocument>

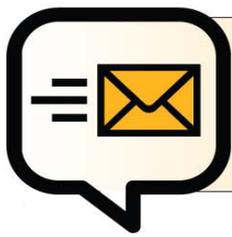


Neil Anderson, UNI HOD Post & Logistics; John Baldwin, Post Social Dialogue Vice President; Rolf Buttner UNI Post & Logistics World President; and Dominique Bailly, Social Dialogue President at the Post Social Dialogue Plenary meeting

DPWN European Works Council Chair calls for better EWC's

Magrit Wendt, Chair of the Deutsche Post World Net (DPWN) European Works Council, says stronger EWC's will mean more respect from employers. For more information go to: [http://www.uni-](http://www.uni-europa.org/unieuropean.nsf/3827df393340872dc12572aa004d73fc/03e75d4876854056c1257473004986a5?OpenDocument)

[europa.org/unieuropean.nsf/3827df393340872dc12572aa004d73fc/03e75d4876854056c1257473004986a5?OpenDocument](http://www.uni-europa.org/unieuropean.nsf/3827df393340872dc12572aa004d73fc/03e75d4876854056c1257473004986a5?OpenDocument)



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Swiss Communications union has a new President and talks of merger

Alain Carrupt has been elected as the new President of UNI's Swiss affiliate, Syndicat de la Communication, to replace Christian Levrat who is now the head of the Socialist Group in the Swiss parliament. Alain has worked closely before with UNI Global Union in his role as Syndicat de la Communication Deputy General Secretary and has been a part of the UNI Telecom Regulation Working Group.

Alain told the delegates at the special conference to undertake the election, that the two main issues facing the union which he would be putting his immediate efforts into where the fight to stop the liberalisation of the Swiss postal market and the proposed full privatisation of Swisscom, the main Swiss telecom operator.

During the conference, the delegates were also told of a plan to merge the union with two other unions, le Syndicat des services publics (SSP) and the media union Comédia, to make any new union the second largest union in Switzerland with more than 84,000 members. UNI Global Union wishes Alain well in his new post and looks forward to working closer with him in the future.

CWU UK assists Zimbabwe affiliate

Trade unions in Zimbabwe continue to be under fire from the Mugabe regime so UNI's UK Post & Logistics affiliate, the CWU, is supporting the Zimbabwe Post and Telecom affiliate, the Communications and Allied Services Workers' Union, through a union aid project set up by the UK TUC. The CWU is helping to finance the rent of the CASWZU office in Harare so the union can continue to have a home to operate out of.

Conditions for unions operating in Zimbabwe are extremely difficult with their members and officers subject to violence, harassment and often false criminal charges with for example, two Zimbabwean trade unionists Lovemore Matombo and Wellington Chibebe from the ZCTU, currently being prosecuted for 'spreading falsehoods prejudicial to the state.'

Many thanks go to the CWU for their support during the ongoing onslaught against democracy in Zimbabwe.

New versions of mail trains on the way?

In an interview with the Financial Times, the CEO of the French train manufacturer Alstom, said that the company was developing a new version of the high speed TGV train for freight designed specifically for the logistics market and to take over their short haul aircraft networks.

Philippe Mellier told the Financial Times the plan was to win over from air the express parcel business of companies such as UPS and FedEx.

"I think that very high-speed trains in the future could be a good alternative to the UPS and FedEx fleet of planes today," he said. With the cost of fuel increasing dramatically and the trains going faster and faster (with a new 360km/hr version now operating), if freight can get the same priority as passenger trains, rail looks a viable option according to Alstom. Also the new high speed lines are now crossing borders with one recently joining France and Germany. Alstom thinks that the idea of running high speed lines to air hubs will mean the express mail companies will want to use the new trains.

Of course the use of rail for postal services is not new, mail trains used to be the backbones of many postal networks, maybe the new high speed trains will see a resurgence of the "mail train"!

UNI Post & Logistics launches 2 new networks and web forums:

In order to improve on access to information and exchange of information and opinions, UNI Post & Logistics has launched two new forums. The first one on: Liberalisation/Regulation and the second one on: DPWN/DHL. Emails will be regularly sent out to networks and a webpage for each topic is under construction.

If you wish to sign up to these networks please go to: <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/unipostal.nsf/index?openpage>

Or send us an email: postal@uniglobalunion.org

UNI Post & Logistics Communications Questionnaire

A vital part of UNI Post & Logistics work is making sure that the right information and communications are going to the right people in your union and that union members in the sector are well informed about the issues they are facing and are able to help their colleagues globally to understand the challenges and changes. In order to do this we have prepared a small questionnaire that we would ask you to complete and e-mail, fax or post back to us as soon as possible.

This questionnaire can be found on the UNI Post & Logistics web page at: http://www.uniglobalunion.org/unipostal.nsf/0/120308_EN_08

Forthcoming Events

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|------------------------|--|
| 22-23 July 2008 | -UNI Post & Logistics World Committee, Nyon |
| 23 July-12 August 2008 | -24 th UPU Congress, Geneva |
| 2-3 Oct. 2008 | -UNI-Europa Post & Logistics Committee, Luxembourg |
| 27-28 Oct. 2008 | -UNI Apro Post & Logistics Committee, Jakarta, Indonesia |