DECISIONS

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2022/1327

of 26 July 2022

requesting the Commission to submit a study on the situation of the internal market of Union postal services, in particular regarding the application of Directive 97/67/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, and a proposal, if appropriate, in view of the outcomes of the study

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 241 thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Letter mail has experienced a yearly decline of 4,9 % in the Union since 2008, and this tendency has been accelerated with the contraction of the economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during which letter mail volumes dropped between 12 % and 26 % between 2019 and 2020.

(2) Parcel delivery services have experienced a yearly increase of an estimated 9 % in the Union since 2008, and this tendency has been accelerated due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

(3) The cost of the universal service obligation, based on cost scale, has increased due to the sharp decline of the letter-mail market.

(4) The development of e-commerce and digitalisation has introduced new players, products and services on the market of postal services.

(5) In each Member State universal postal services are provided nationwide, while the needs of the users of those services have significantly changed.

(6) The concept of 'universal service' needs to reflect changing user needs and to be flexible and sustainable.

(7) Directive 97/67/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council [1] has partially fulfilled its objectives. However, there might be a need to revise it in order to ensure that it is future-proof and that it addresses the above-mentioned challenges in a sustainable way.

(8) A detailed analysis of the situation of the internal market of Union postal services would justify the need for a revision of Directive 97/67/EC in order to reflect technological developments and changes in that market and would allow the adoption of the revised Directive within the ongoing European legislative cycle,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The Council hereby requests the Commission to submit a study on the situation of the internal market of Union postal services, in particular regarding the application of Directive 97/67/EC.

[1] Directive 97/67/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 1997 on common rules for the development of the internal market of Community postal services and the improvement of quality of service (OJ L 15, 21.1.1998, p. 14).

Article 2

1. The Council requests the Commission to submit a proposal, if appropriate, in view of the outcomes of the study referred to in Article 1, or otherwise to inform the Council of alternative measures required as a follow-up to the study.

2. In accordance with the usual practice, the Council requests the Commission to ensure that the proposal is accompanied by an impact assessment.

Article 3

This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 26 July 2022.

For the Council
The President
J. SÍKELA