



Report on the quality of service, consumer protection and complaint handling – an analysis of trends

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Background

According to Chapter 6 of the Postal Directive, national regulatory authorities (hereinafter NRAs) shall ensure compliance with the obligations arising from the Directive, in particular through the follow-up of the quality of service.

Quality of service standards regarding the universal service (US) are established in order to guarantee a postal service of good quality. These quality standards should in particular focus on routing times, as well as on the regularity and reliability of services.

The ERGP continuously monitors the effects of postal liberalisation through appropriate indicators by benchmarking the quality of postal services and their development over time, including end-user complaint procedures to ensure that consumers are protected according to the provisions of the Directive.

This document aims at:

- a) reporting on the core quality of service indicators to monitor market development, evaluating the results of regulatory measures and the consumer protection measures taken especially in the field of complaint handling;
- b) reporting on the core indicators to monitor complaint handling and consumer protection.

B. Methodology

The report is based on the replies received from the 33 ERGP members to a questionnaire requesting data for 2015 on quality of service and end-user satisfaction, including consumer protection and complaint handling.

C. Current situation regarding quality of service and end-user satisfaction

The quality of service and the end-user satisfaction have been analysed taking into consideration the following five dimensions:



1. Measurement of the quality of service concerning routing times and the regularity and reliability of services

All 33 ERGP members have regulatory objectives for routing times (100% of the respondents). Only 5 countries (15%) have regulatory objectives regarding queuing time in post offices and 5 countries (15%) regarding lost items or substantial delay.

In 2015, 32 countries established targets for measuring the transit time of end-to-end priority mail in the domestic postal market. There is a wide range of targets across the ERGP countries reflecting different national considerations and, as such, comparisons between ERGP countries cannot be drawn directly.

In 2015, the average value of results (D+1) in countries that provided information on the results (28 countries) was 86.7%, which is lower than in the previous year (89.3% for 29 countries). Amongst the countries that provided their results and targets (27 countries), the universal service provider (USP) achieved the targets regarding D+1 in 17 countries, while in 10 countries the universal service provider (USP) did not.

2. Collection and delivery

Regarding the frequency of collection and delivery to be carried out by the USP, the responses received revealed that the Directive has been implemented by all ERGP members that have established at least one collection/delivery for 5 days a week (in some countries the obligations have been extended to 6 days per week).

Nonetheless, many countries have granted exceptions regarding frequency of collection and in particular delivery. Responses revealed that these exceptions are mainly related to mountain areas, population density, low traffic volumes, cost of service, poor infrastructure, insularity and extreme weather conditions.

In certain countries, due to high costs involved for providing the access for universal service, especially in depopulated areas and isolated geographic areas, there are implemented exceptions regarding the delivery of mail to the home or premises of the recipients. The most common criteria are population density, geographical conditions, areas with lack of street names, and health and safety concerns. The majority of answers revealed that the delivery service in these situations is directed to local post offices, cluster boxes, kerbside letterboxes or, in other cases, to townhalls, public authority's offices etc.



3. Access points

The access point is a rather very sensitive issue and this is reflected by the fact that a vast majority of the countries deem it necessary to have requirements or standards to ensure an adequate number of collection letterboxes and points of contact/postal establishments.

There are different types of points of contact at the European level, the most common being the permanent post office managed by the USP with a full range of services and the permanent post agency managed by a third party.

4. Measurement of consumer satisfaction

According to the responses, 15 out of 33 NRAs (45%) use or monitor indicators of consumer satisfaction in their countries, while 18 (55%) do not. The results from the 2015 questionnaire show that 11 USPs in Europe conduct studies regarding the level of consumer satisfaction and publish the results.

5. Surveys regarding consumers' needs

In terms of measuring consumers' needs, 17 NRAs (52%) conduct such surveys, while 16 (48%) do not. The consumer needs surveys carried out by the USPs are, in most cases, not publicly available and are only published in Iceland.

D. Current situation regarding consumer protection and complaint handling

The report examines four key issues in the field of consumer protection and complaint handling, namely:

1. Competence of NRAs regarding complaint handling

In 26 (79%) out of the 33 countries, the NRA is generally responsible for dealing with users complaints. In two (8%) of these countries where NRAs are responsible for dealing with users complaints, the NRA only handles complaints with regards to the universal service, while in the majority of these countries (81%), all postal service issues can be addressed. Seven (21%) NRAs stated that they are not obligated to handle user complaints.



2. Information provision and access to complaint handling and dispute resolution

There have been no major changes in the number of countries compelling the postal service providers to publish information. In most countries, USPs are generally required to publish information about complaint handling procedures and redress schemes, which was mentioned by 29 (88%) and 24 (73%) NRAs respectively. In 16 countries (49%), there is an obligation covering information on means of dispute resolution.

3. Compensation schemes for individual customers

Regarding the scope of existing compensation schemes, most countries (23 out of 32 or 72%) have an obligation for a specific compensation scheme which concerns the USP. This also extends to other postal service providers in 14 countries (61%).

4. Collection of data on complaints

Almost all NRAs collect data on complaints received by the USP regarding US (26 out of 33). Out of these, 18 indicated to collect data by category and 11 by service. Fewer NRAs also collect data on complaints received by the USP about non-universal services (15). Almost half of the NRAs (15 out of 33) indicate that they collect information on cross-border services complaints.



2. BACKGROUND

Chapter 6 of Postal Directive 97/67/EC, as amended by Directives 2002/39 and 2008/6 (afterwards referred to as Directive in this report), lays down that the NRAs shall ensure compliance with the obligations arising from the Directive, in particular through the follow-up of the quality of service.

The Directive emphasises that the postal reform has brought significant positive developments in the postal sector, increasing both quality of service and focus on meeting consumer needs. Increased competition allows consumers to take advantage of a wider choice of products and services offered by postal service providers and allows these products and services to be continually improved in order to meet consumer demand.

Quality of service standards regarding the universal service are established and published in order to guarantee a postal service of good quality. Quality standards have to focus, in particular, on routing times and on the regularity and reliability of services.

The ERGP continuously monitors the effects of postal liberalisation through appropriate indicators such as benchmarking the quality of postal services and their development over time, including end-user complaint procedures to ensure that consumers are protected in accordance with the provisions of the Directive.

The objective is to collect the necessary data to monitor quality of service, end-user satisfaction, consumer protection and complaint handling within the context of the regulatory measures taken in those fields.

The document aims at:

- a) reporting on the core quality of service indicators to monitor market development, evaluating the results of regulatory measures and the consumer protection measures taken especially in the field of complaint handling;
- b) reporting on the core indicators to monitor consumer protection and complaint handling.

The report looks at the current and past situation of data collection and publishes indicators regarding quality of service, consumer protection and complaint handling. It then analyses this data and identifies market trends regarding quality of service, quality of delivery, customer satisfaction and development of the postal network, as well as consumer protection and complaint handling. The report has been published yearly since 2011 and the objective is to update this report on an annual basis.



This ERGP report describes the current NRAs' practices concerning quality of service, consumer protection and complaint handling as well as the current scope, competencies and powers of NRAs.

The report examines five key issues in the field of quality of service and end-user satisfaction, namely:

1. measurement of quality of service concerning transit time, regularity and reliability of services;
2. collection and delivery;
3. access points;
4. measurement of consumer satisfaction;
5. surveys regarding customers' needs.

The report also examines four key issues in the field of consumer protection and complaint handling, namely:

1. competence of NRAs on complaint handling;
2. information provision and access to complaint handling and dispute resolution;
3. compensation schemes for individual customers;
4. collection of data on complaints.



3. METHODOLOGY

In order to gather information regarding quality of service and end-user satisfaction in the broad sense of the term, including information regarding complaint handling and consumer protection, a questionnaire was submitted in May 2016 to ERGP members and observer NRAs (33 countries) in order to collect information on the situation of 2015 (except stated otherwise in the report).

We received replies from the 33 ERGP members, which are the following: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

This report is primarily based on the answers provided to the questionnaire, which overall, reflects the legislation and practice in place at the end of 2015.

The data used in the report is already collected by NRAs and is publicly available data¹, which means that NRAs did not collect data specifically for the purposes of this ERGP exercise.

For some indicators, we used data already included in previous ERGP reports (based on the NRAs' responses to the ERGP questionnaires, ranging from 2008 to 2015).

With the objective of identifying geographical trends and to present the information in a more appealing way, for some indicators a cluster analysis was made using the following clusters²:

- Western countries: AT, BE, DE, DK, FI, FR, IE, LU, NL, SE, UK;
- Southern countries: CY, EL, ES, IT, MT, PT;
- Eastern countries: BG, CZ, EE, HR, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK;
- Countries outside the European Union (EU): CH, FY, IS, NO, RS.

¹ Only public data were included in the report, confidential figures are not presented individually.

² Classification also used in some of the postal studies commissioned by the European Commission.



4. CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING QUALITY OF SERVICE AND END-USER SATISFACTION

The quality of service and the end-user satisfaction have been analysed based on the following five dimensions:

- 4.1 measurement of the quality of service concerning transit time, regularity and reliability of services;
- 4.2 collection and delivery;
- 4.3 access points;
- 4.4 measurement of consumer satisfaction;
- 4.5 surveys regarding customer needs;

Other elements could also be used to monitor quality of service and end-user satisfaction, but in this report the scope has been limited to the abovementioned dimensions.

We have also referred to the technical standards developed by the European Committee for Standardisation (hereinafter CEN) in the field of quality of service, as laid down in Article 20 of the Directive.

4.1. Measurement of quality of service concerning routing times, regularity and reliability of services

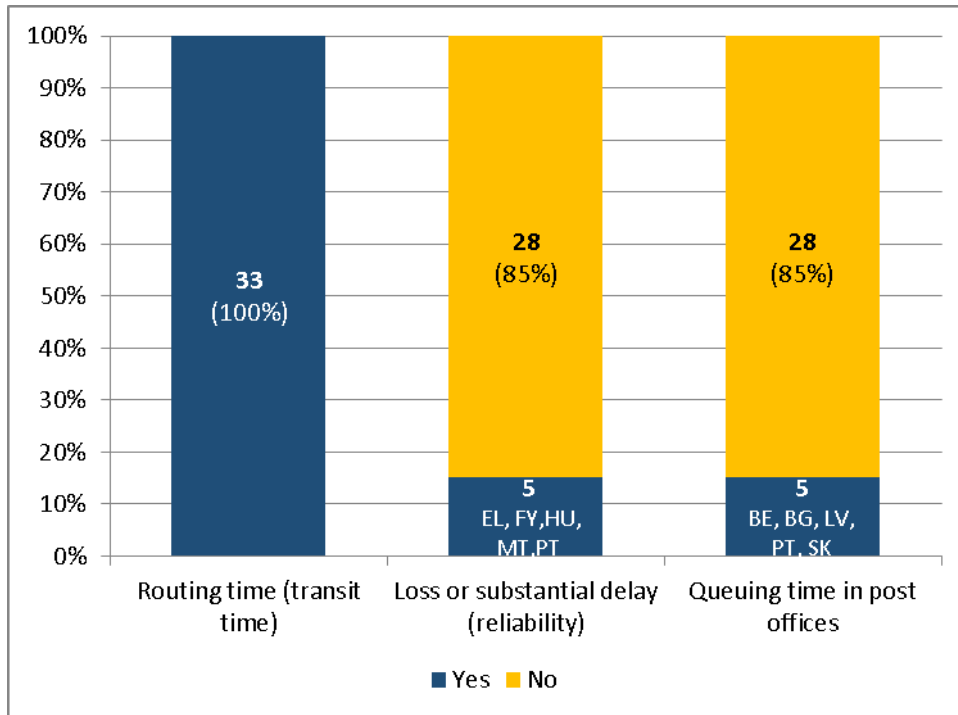
In accordance with the Postal Directive 97/67/EC (especially Chapters 6 and 7 and Annex 2), one of the main tasks of the NRAs is to monitor the quality of service in order to guarantee a postal service of good quality. Quality of service standards have to be set and published in relation to the universal service in order to guarantee a postal service of good quality and have to focus, in particular, on transit times and on the regularity and reliability of services.

The figure below provides details regarding the definition of regulatory objectives for transit time, queuing time in post offices and loss or substantial delay.

Regarding the quality of services, all 33 countries define regulatory objectives which deal with universal services regarding transit time. Only 5 countries (15%) have regulatory objectives regarding loss or substantial delay, which is less than in 2014 (7 countries) since Luxembourg and Serbia no longer have objectives. Switzerland has no regulatory objectives but rather a measurement obligation for loss or substantial delay. Moreover, 5 countries (15%) have regulatory objectives regarding queuing time in post offices, which is more than in 2014 (Latvia now has objectives).



Figure 1 – Regulatory objectives in 2015



Note: in Belgium, regulatory objectives regarding queuing time in post offices are defined in the management contract between the State and bpost

According to the figure below, in 2015, 32 ERGP members had regulatory objectives for priority mail (97%) and 20 for non-priority mail (61%), considering that non-priority mail is not differentiated from priority mail in 3 countries and is not applicable in 4 other countries. Amongst the 33 countries, 22 (67%) had regulatory objectives for parcels, 11 countries (33%) for registered items, 5 countries (15%) for bulk mail and 2 countries for newspapers/periodicals (6%).

In 2015, there has been a change regarding non-priority mail: 20 countries indicated that they had regulatory objectives compared with 17 in 2014. In particular, Italy introduced a non-priority mail service (“Ordinary Mail”) with a D+4 delivery time due to AGCOM decision no 396/15/Cons³. This evolution was accompanied by a restructuring of priority mail regarding quality of service targets and prices.

³<https://www.agcom.it/documents/10179/2209608/Delibera+396-15-CONS/2dfc1d52-435c-44ac-a30a-5f989c762989?version=1.0>


Figure 2 – Regulatory objectives for transit time in 2015 – which kind of service has a regulatory objective

	Priority mail	Non-priority mail	Registered items	Bulk mail	Newspapers / periodicals	Parcels
AT	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
BE	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
BG	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
CH	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
CY	✓	-	-	-	-	-
CZ	✓	-	-	-	-	-
DE	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓
DK	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
EE	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
EL	✓	-	-	-	-	-
ES	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓
FI	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
FR	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
FY	-	✓	-	-	-	✓
HR	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
HU	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
IE	✓	-	-	-	-	-
IS	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
IT	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
LT	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
LU	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
LV	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
MT	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
NL	✓	-	-	-	-	-
NO	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
PL	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
PT	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓
RO	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
RS	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
SE	✓	-	-	-	-	-
SI	✓	-	-	-	-	✓
SK	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
UK	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓
Total 33	32	20	11	5	2	22

Notes:

AT, DE, ES and RS did not differentiate between priority and non-priority mail.

In CZ, IE, MT, SI non-priority mail is not applicable.

ES measures transit time of bulk mail and single-piece priority mail together.

HU: newspapers/periodicals are not a separate item category within the letter post items.

PT: regulatory objective for transit time for registered items is in place since 2016.

RS had regulatory objectives for the quality of service of parcels but the transit time is not measured.



The figure below shows which countries set regulatory objectives for cross-border services and if they had the corresponding results of quality of service.

Figure 3 – Cross-border information per country for 2015

	Regulatory objectives regarding cross-border services	Results regarding cross-border flows
Austria	Yes	Yes
Belgium	Yes	Yes
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes
Cyprus	Yes	Yes
Czech Republic	No	Yes
Denmark	No	No
Estonia	No	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes
FYROM	Yes	No
France	Yes	Yes
Germany	Yes	No ⁴
Greece	Yes	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes
Iceland	Yes	Yes
Ireland	Yes	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes
Latvia	No	Yes
Lithuania	Yes	Yes
Luxembourg	Yes	Yes
Malta	Yes	Yes
Netherlands	No	No
Norway	Yes	Yes
Poland	No	Yes
Portugal	Yes	Yes
Romania	Yes	Yes
Serbia	Yes	Yes
Slovakia	No	No
Slovenia	Yes	Yes
Spain	Yes	Yes
Sweden	No	Yes (Confidential)
Switzerland	No	Yes (Confidential)
United Kingdom	Yes	Yes
Total of "yes"	24	28

Note: in most cases cross-border objectives have been set by national legislation, the results regarding cross-border flows are those published by IPC on its website.

In 2015, as in 2014, 24 countries (73%) set regulatory objectives for cross-border services. Among the countries that established targets, 2 indicated that they do not have the corresponding results. A total of 28 countries, including Iceland and Poland indicated they have the results regarding quality of service for cross-border flows which was not the case before. Sweden and Switzerland indicate that this information is confidential.

⁴ DE: until 2013 cross-border mail transit times were measured by IPC for Deutsche Post who used to transmit the results to BNetzA.



According to the figure below, 22 countries established an objective regarding D+3 and all of them, except the United Kingdom, had an objective regarding D+5 delivery. Only 19 (55%) presented the results of transit time for cross-border flows in 2015.

Figure 4 – Targets and results of cross-border mail in 2015

	D+1		D+3		D+5	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
Austria	-	-	85.00	na yet	97.00	na yet
Belgium	93.00	92.90	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	-	-	85.00	40.00	97.00	82.00
Croatia	-	-	85.00	64.70	97.00	90.10
Cyprus	-	-	85.00	31.40	97.00	69.90
Czech Republic	-	-	-	84.00	-	95.90
Estonia	-	-	-	78.60	-	92.60
Finland	-	-	85.00	na	97.00	na
FYROM	-	-	85.00		97.00	
France	-	-	90.00	91.40	97.00	98.20
Germany	-	-	85.00	na	97.00	na
Greece	-	-	85.00	73.60	97.00	93.10
Hungary	-	-	85.00	89.10	97.00	98.00
Iceland	-	-	85.00	90.00	97.00	98.00
Ireland	-	-	85.00	-	97.00	-
Italy	-	-	85.00	83.90	97.00	93.20
Lithuania	-	-	85.00	70.40	97.00	89.60
Luxembourg	-	-	85.00	89.00	97.00	97.10
Malta	95.00	93.10	-	-	-	-
Norway	-	-	85.00	79.50	97.00	94.90
Portugal	-	-	88.00	89.50	97.00	97.40
Romania	-	-	85.00	-	97.00	-
Serbia	-	-	85.00	56.20	97.00	83.35
Slovenia	-	-	85.00	84.90	97.00	97.20
Spain ⁵	-	-	85.00	na	97.00	na
United Kingdom	-	-	85.00	88.30	-	-
Total	2	2	22	17	21	16
Average	94.00	93.00	85.36	75.56	97.00	91.91

Note: Results are considered as referring to both inbound and outbound flows, except for:

- AT, BE, CY, FR, HU⁶, IE, IT⁷, LU, MT⁸, NO, RO, SI⁹: inbound flows only;
- EL, UK: outbound flows only.

⁵ Results are available only country by country

⁶ HU: Results for outbound flows: 78.70% in D+3 and 96.10% in D+5

⁷ IT: Results for outbound flows: 84.40% in D+3 and 95.00% in D+5

⁸ MT: Results for outbound flows: 97.50% in D+1

⁹ SI: Results for outbound flows: 85.80% in D+3 and 96.60% in D+5



Regarding the source about quality of service results, 6 countries indicated the USP, 11 countries is the IPC and 10 countries explained that the information is provided by the USP but based on the data provided by IPC (3 countries did not answer the question).

4.1.1. Measurement of quality of service for single-piece priority mail in 2015

In 2015, 32 countries set targets for measuring the transit time of end-to-end priority mail in the domestic postal market.

There is a wide range of targets across the ERGP countries reflecting different national considerations and, as such, comparisons between ERGP countries cannot be drawn.

Figure 5 shows the countries that established targets from D+1 to D+5 delivery regarding single-piece priority mail and their results for 2015, according to which:

- 29 countries set a target for D+1 delivery, of which 16 countries at 90% or more, Poland had the lowest targets (68.5%), while Switzerland had the highest (97%);
- 28 countries provided their results for 2015 and the average value was 86.72%, which is lower than the previous year (89.3%);
- 14 countries set a target for D+2 delivery, ranging from 80% (Italy) to 99.5% (Slovenia);
- 15 countries established a target for D+3 delivery;
- only Austria (100%) and Italy (98%) set targets for D+4 and only Serbia (99.5%) and Spain (99%) set targets for D+5.

Compared to 2014, one can conclude that, in 2015, Poland reduced its target regarding D+1 from 80% to 68.5% but increased its targets on D+2 (from 90% to 92.5%) and D+3 (from 94% to 97.8%). Malta increased its target regarding D+1 from 94% to 95%.

Italy also introduced some changes with AGCOM decision no 396/15/CONS¹⁰ which established new quality targets starting from October 1st, 2015. Such new quality targets take into account the launch of alternate delivery by Poste Italiane¹¹. Since this decision, at least 80% of priority mail items should be delivered within the first available day after collection (compared to 89% previously), and at least 98% of items should be delivered by the end of the fourth working day after collection (instead of D+3). The first priority mail target is measured in terms of “available” working days in order to enable the implementation of alternate day delivery. Therefore, the targets are set at one, two or three

¹⁰ See footnote 3

¹¹ In 2015 the alternate delivery concerns only 256 municipalities.



working days after collection, depending on whether the collection and/or delivery area is affected by alternate day delivery.

Figure 5 – Targets and results of single-piece priority mail in 2015

	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
AT	95.00	na yet	98.00	na yet	-	-	100.00	na yet	-	-
BE	93.00	91.29	97.00	97.25	-	-	-	-	-	-
BG	80.00	71.40	95.00	92.20	-	-	-	-	-	-
CH	97.00	97.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CY	90.00	87.50	-	97.00	97.00	98.90	-	-	-	-
CZ	92.00	93.82	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DE	80.00	86.60	95.00	97.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
DK	93.00	92.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EE	90.00	87.50								
EL ¹²	87.00	91.70			98.00	100.00				
ES ¹³	-	-	-	-	93.00	92.97			99.00	97.95
FI	80.00	82.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FR	85.00	85.50	-	97.30	99.00	99.20	-	-	-	-
HR	85.00	86.40	95.00	98.10	-	-	-	-	-	-
HU	90.00	90.20	-	-	97.00	99.40	-	-	-	-
IE	94.00	91.00	-	-	99.50	99.00	-	-	-	-
IS	85.00	88.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT ¹⁴	80.00 ¹⁵	na	80.00 ¹⁶	na	80.00 ¹⁷	na	98.00 ¹⁸	na	-	-
LT	85.00	81.10	-	-	97.00	99.00	-	-	-	-
LU	-	96.98	85.00	99.68	99.00	99.99	-	-	-	-
LV	90.00	93.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MT	95.00	95.35	98.00	99.17	99.00	99.70	-	-	-	-
NL	95.00	96.40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NO	85.00	85.40	-	-	97.00	99.50	-	-	-	-
PL	68.50	60.90	92.50	90.70	97.80	97.30	-	-	-	-
PT ¹⁹	94.50	95.20	87.00	90.60	-	-	-	-	-	-
RO	85.00	23.20	97.00	33.50	-	-	-	-	-	-

¹² EL: data available only for the fourth quarter of 2015 and not for the whole year

¹³ In Spain, there is no separation between single-piece priority mail and bulk mail: the results of quality of service presented in this table include those of bulk mail

¹⁴ In Italy, due to AGCOM decision no 396/15/CONS which changed postal regulatory objectives, there was no data collection in 2015 regarding the results of quality of service of postal services.

¹⁵ Target applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15 for postal items originated from and addressed to the municipalities served for 5 days a week.

¹⁶ Target applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15 for postal items originated from or addressed to the municipalities served on alternate days.

¹⁷ Target applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15 for postal items originated from and addressed to the municipalities served on alternate days.

¹⁸ Target applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15 for all postal items.

¹⁹ PT: D+1 applies to letters sent between any location of Portugal's mainland and D+2 applies to letters sent from, between or to any location of the Autonomous Regions of Azores and Madeira.



	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
RS	-	-	90.00	93.58	98.50	97.20	-	-	99.50	99.47
SE	85.00	89.70	-	-	97.00	99.70	-	-	-	-
SI	95.00	98.60	99.50	99.80	100.00	99.90	-	-	-	-
SK	93.00	95.57	99.00	99.72	-	-	-	-	-	-
UK ²⁰	93.00	92.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	29	28	14	14	15	14	2	0	2	2
Average	88.28	86.72	93.43	91.83	96.59	98.70	99.00	-	99.25	98.71

The figure below shows that, in 2015, 17 of the 27 countries that provided their targets and results regarding D+1 delivery achieved their target, while 10 countries did not. Among the 27 countries that provided their results for 2014 and 2015 (D+1), 11 recorded a progress (or stability) in their transit time quality while 16 recorded a decrease (for 3 of them, the result was just slightly lower).

Figure 6 – Targets (2015) and results (2014 and 2015) regarding D+1 delivery of single-piece priority mail

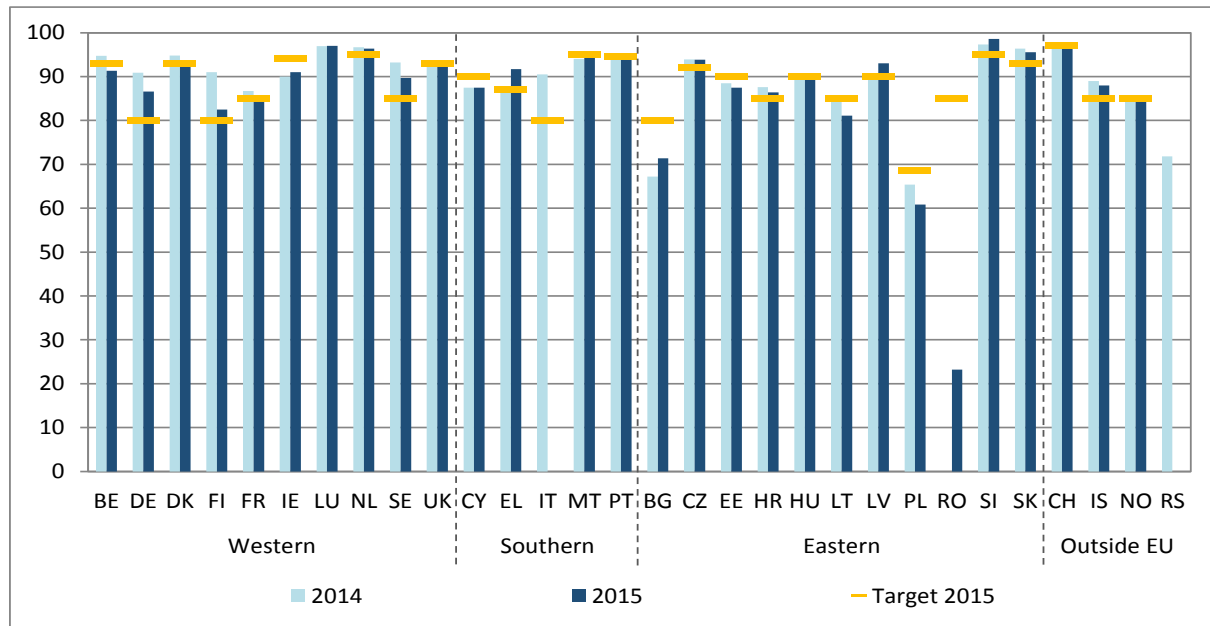
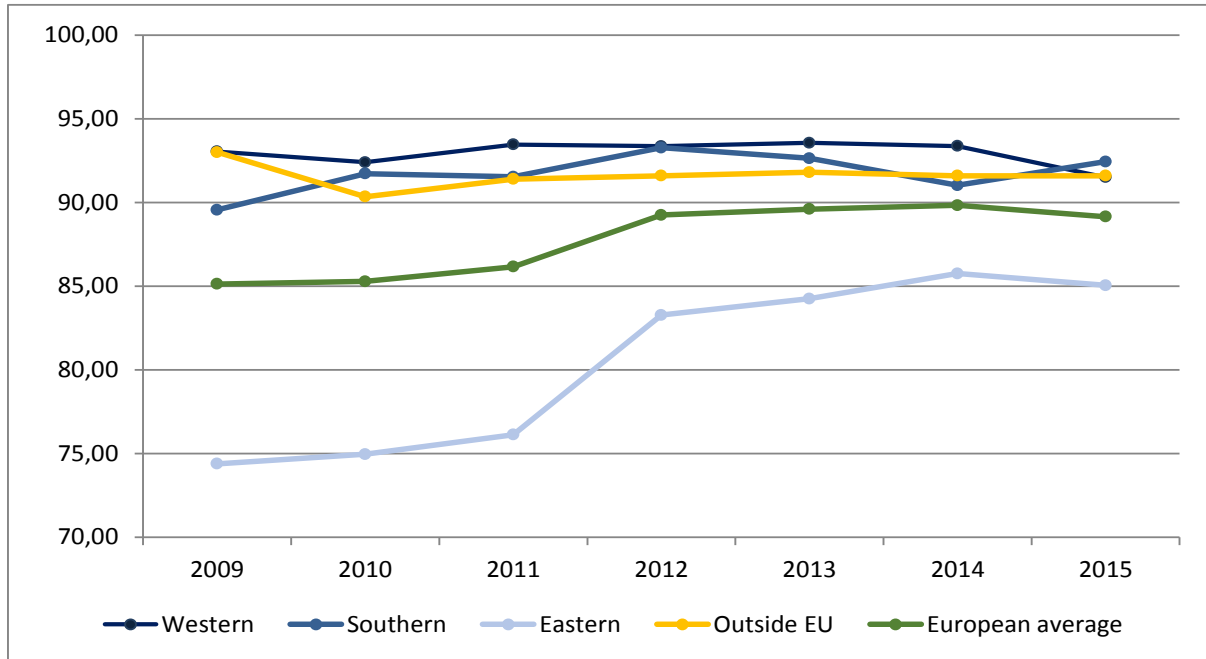


Figure 7 shows the situation of quality of service regarding priority mail (D+1) for the 4 clusters since 2009, except for Eastern countries in which, although the quality results are lower than in the other geographical clusters of countries, they increased significantly in 2012. We can also note that levels of quality of service are quite similar in Western, Southern and non-EU countries and converged in 2015.

²⁰ Royal Mail failed its QoS target this year: <http://www.royalmailgroup.com/media/press-releases/royal-mail-quality-service>
Ofcom is investigating: http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/enforcement/competition-bulletins/open-cases/all-open-cases/cw_01183/?utm_source=updates&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cw_01183



Figure 7 – Evolution of the average value of quality of service of single-piece priority mail regarding D+1 delivery (2015)



Note: Average considering the 23 countries that provided data since 2008 and until 2015 (Western: BE, DE, DK, FR, LU, NL, SE, UK; Southern: CY, EL, MT, PT; Eastern: BG, CZ, EE, HR, HU, LT, PL, SI, SK; Outside EU: CH, NO)

Regarding the **measurement methodology**, in 2015, 29 countries used the European standard EN 13850²¹ for the measurement of single-piece priority mail transit time²².

In measuring the transit time, some events – which have been considered as **force majeure** regarding the European standard EN 13850 – can be excluded from the measurement, with potential impact on quality of service. In accordance with EN 13850, in most countries (19²³), the NRA decides on the application of force majeure events on request by the operator. FYROM and Luxembourg indicate that in 2015 the NRAs no longer accept applications of force majeure events. In turn, in Norway and Slovenia, the NRA has only had this power since 2015. Notwithstanding, the concept of force majeure has been defined in line with the standard, in only 11 countries. In 2015, the number of days of force majeure accepted by the NRAs varied between 0 and 5²⁴ whereas, in 2014, it ranged between 0 and 7 days.

²¹ EN 13850 is a CEN standard for Postal Services – Quality of Services – Measurement of the transit time for single-piece priority mail and first-class mail

²² See annex 1

²³ BE, BG, CH, CY, DK, EL, ES, FI, HR, HU, IE, IT, MT, NO, PL, PT, RS, SI, SK.

²⁴ See annex 2.1



Otherwise, amongst 33 countries, only 3 indicated that in their country there are other exceptions or adaptations, during holidays' periods, which can impact the quality of service measurement²⁵. For instance, this is the case in the United Kingdom for the Christmas period. And in Belgium, during three weeks in the Christmas period, the USP is allowed to sell Christmas stamps (with a delivery speed of D+3 instead of the standard D+1), besides the priority mail (with a delivery speed of standard D+1), and which are excluded from the quality measurement system. In case consumers use these Christmas stamps outside the Christmas period, they will be valid and included in the quality measurement system based on the D+1 standard.

4.1.2. Measurement of quality of service for single-piece non-priority mail in 2015

Regarding the methodology of measurement of quality of service for single-piece non-priority mail, 10 countries used the European standard EN 14508²⁶ while 6 countries used the EN 13850²⁷.

The figure below presents the countries which had a regulatory objective for routing time of single-piece non-priority mail in 2015²⁸.

Based on this table, one can conclude that, in 2015, most countries had a target regarding D+3 (13). Poland (82.5%), Hungary and Iceland (85%) had the lowest targets while the United Kingdom (98.5%) and Luxembourg (99%) had the highest.

Only one country set a target regarding D+1 delivery, whereas 8 countries had a target regarding D+2 delivery and 6 countries set targets for D+4.

Figure 8 – Targets and results of single-piece non-priority mail in 2015

	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5		D+6	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
BE	-	-	95.00	94.95	97.00	98.30	-	-	-	-	-	-
BG	-	-	80.00	90.40	95.00	97.10	-	-	-	-	-	-
CH	-	-	-	-	97.00	98.90	-	-	-	-	-	-
DK	-	-	-	-	-	-	93.00	98.50	-	-	-	-
FI	-	-	95.00	95.90	98.00	98.30	-	-	-	-	-	-
FR	-	-	93.50	93.80	-	-	99.00	99.50	-	-	-	-
FY	85.00	na yet	90.00	na yet	95.00	na yet	-	-	-	-	-	-
HR	-	-	-	-	95.00	95.20	-	-	-	-	-	-
HU	-	-	-	-	85.00	87.00	-	-	97.00	98.60	-	-
IS	-	-	-	-	85.00	96.00	-	-	-	-	-	-

²⁵ See annex 2.2

²⁶ EN 14508 is a CEN standard for Postal Services – Quality of Services – Measurement of the transit time for single-piece non-priority mail and second class mail.

²⁷ See annex 1

²⁸ See figure 2



	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5		D+6	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
IT ²⁹	-	-	-	-	-	-	90.00	na	-	-	98.00	na
LT	-	-	85.00	90.80	-	-	97.00	99.10	-	-	-	-
LU	-	96.98	85.00	99.68	99.00	99.99	-	-	-	-	-	-
LV	-	-	-	-	98.00	99.50	-	-	-	-	-	-
NO	-	-	-	-	-	-	85.00	96.20	-	-	97.00	99.80
PL	-	-	-	-	82.80	80.70	-	-	98.10	97.30	-	-
PT	-	-	-	-	96.30	97.30	-	-	-	-	-	-
SK	-	-	93.00	93.70	-	-	99.00	99.71	-	-	-	-
UK	-	-	-	-	98.50	98.80	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1	1	8	7	13	12	6	5	2	2	2	1
Average	85.00	96.98	89.56	94.18	93.97	95.59	93.83	98.60	97.55	97.95	97.50	99.80

In 2015, France reduced its target regarding D+2 delivery from 94% to 93.5%. Poland also reduced its target regarding D+3 from 85% to 82.8% and increased its target regarding D+5 from 97% to 98.10%.

Amongst the countries that provided their results for 2014 and 2015, 7 recorded a progress in their results while 9 showed a decrease (though for 3 of them, the results were just slightly lower than in 2014). The average value of the results regarding D+3 was about 95.6% which is lower than in the previous year (96.2%).

4.1.3. Measurement of quality of service for registered mail in 2015

Figure 9 presents the countries which had a regulatory objective for registered mail in 2015.

Based on this table, one can conclude that:

- 5 countries set a quality target regarding D+1 delivery (BE, DE, LT, MT, UK) from 80% (DE) to 99% (UK);
- Regarding D+2 delivery, 6 countries set quality targets (BE, DE, FR, LU, MT, SK) from 85% (LU) to 99% (MT);
- 4 countries set targets for D+3, 3 countries for D+4 and one country respectively for D+5 and D+6.

²⁹ Target applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15 for all postal items

**Figure 9 – Targets and results of registered mail in 2015**

	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5		D+6	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
BE	95.00	93.94	97.00	98.42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DE	80.00	86.60	95.00	97.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FR	-	-	95.00	93.90	-	-	99.00	99.20	-	-	-	-
HU ³⁰	-	-	-	-	85.00	96.40	-	-	97.00	99.40	-	-
IT ³¹	-	-	-	-	-	-	90.00	na yet	-	-	98.00	na yet
LT	85.00	-	-	-	97.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LU	-	96.98	85.00	99.68	99.00	99.99	-	-	-	-	-	-
MT	98.00	99.42	99.00	99.89	99.00	99.93	-	-	-	-	-	-
SK	-	-	93.00	96.99	-	-	99.00	99.82	-	-	-	-
UK	99.00	98.40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5	5	6	6	4	3	3	2	1	1	1	0
Average	91.40	95.07	94.00	97.65	95.00	98.77	96.00	99.51	97.00	99.40	98.00	-

In 2015, France increased its target on D+2 from 94% to 95%. In Italy, AGCom decision³² changed regulatory objectives of registered mail: since the 1st of October, there is a target of 90% regarding D+4 (instead of 92.5% regarding D+3) and a target of 98% regarding D+6 (instead of D+5).

Amongst the 7 countries which provided their targets and results for 2015 and 2014, only Slovakia recorded a progress of its quality of results compared with 2014.

4.1.4. Measurement of quality of service for parcels in 2015

For the measurement of transit time of parcels, 4 countries used the European standard TR 15472 , 2 countries used the standard EN 13850 and 6 countries used another methodology.

The figure below presents the countries which had a regulatory objective for transit time for single-piece parcels in 2015.

Based on this table, one can conclude that:

- For D+1 delivery, 7 countries set targets (BE, BG, CH, DK, MT, PL, RS), from 79.5% for the lowest (PL) to 98% for the highest (MT). All the countries that provided their results achieved their targets (except for Belgium), with an average of 94.04% (Serbia had not provided its results);
- Regarding D+2 delivery, 13 countries set targets. Belgium (97%), and Malta (99%) presented the highest targets, while the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (70%), Germany and

³⁰ HU: these targets and results apply only for official document that is a special registered item category. Otherwise the targets for normal registered items are the same as non-registered items but these are not measured.

³¹ Target applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15

³² See footnote 3



Slovenia (80%) had the lowest one. All the countries that provided their results exceeded their targets (97.84% on average);

- Concerning D+3 delivery, 9 countries set targets, 75% being the lowest (FY) and 99% the highest (MT, RS, SK);
- Some countries have targets but no results as in DE, FY, RO, RS and SK, for example due to lack of measurement system in place (RO);
- The UK no longer has regulatory objectives for parcels.

In 2015, 13 out of the 15 countries which provided their targets and results for parcels achieved their targets, 9 recorded a progress (or stability) in their transit time quality regarding the previous year while 6 recorded a decrease.

Figure 10 – Targets and results of single-piece parcels in 2015

	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5		D+6	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
AT	-	-	90.00	na yet	-	-	-	-	100.00	na yet	-	-
BE	95.00	92.51	97.00	98.35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BG	80.00	93.00	95.00	99.90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CH	95.00	97.50	95.00	97.50								
DE	-	-	80.00	No measure	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DK	93.00	96.90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ES ³³	-	-	-	-	80.00	77.42	-	-	95.00	88.52	-	-
FR	-	-	89.50	91.60	-	-	98.50	99.30	-	-	-	-
FY	-	-	70.00	No measure	75.00	No measure	-	-	80.00	No measure	-	-
HU ³⁴	-	-	85.00	98.20	95.00	99.80	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT ³⁵	-	-	-	-	-	-	90.00	95.85 ³⁶	-	-	-	-
LT	-	-	-	-	-	-	97.00	99.76	-	-	-	-
LV	-	-	-	-	-	-	98.00	98.00	-	-	-	-
MT ³⁷	98.00	99.35	99.00	99.75	99.00	99.84	-	-	-	-	-	-
NO	-	-	-	-	-	-	85.00	88.80	-	-	97.00	98.40
PL ³⁸	79.50	84.95	-	-	98.30	99.58	-	-	-	-	-	-
PT ³⁹	-	-	-	-	92.00	93.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
RO ⁴⁰	-	-	85.00	No measure	-	-	97.00	No measure	-	-	-	-
RS	85.00	No measure	95.00	No measure	99.00	No measure	-	-	-	-	-	-
SI	-	-	80.00	99.70	95.00	99.90	-	-	-	-	-	-

³³ ES: For the measure of transit time of parcels, there is no differentiation between single-piece and bulk parcels.

³⁴ HU: These targets and results apply for all US postal parcels. It is not known whether there are bulk parcels among them.

³⁵ Targets applicable from 1/10/15 to 31/12/15

³⁶ Annual average

³⁷ MT: There is no distinction between single-piece parcels and bulk parcels

³⁸ PL: The targets and results apply for priority and economic parcels.

³⁹ PT: Universal service, insurance included, traceable (track & trace).

⁴⁰ RO: Will be applicable once the measurement system will be implemented by the USP.



	D+1		D+2		D+3		D+4		D+5		D+6	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
SK ⁴¹	-	-	93.00	No measure	99.00	-	No measure	-	-	-	-	-
Total	7	6	13	7	9	6	6	5	3	1	1	1
Average	89.36	94.04	88.73	97.86	92.48	94.92	94.25	96.34	91.67	88.52	97.00	98.40

4.1.5. Additional information regarding quality of service in 2015

In addition to the measurement of transit time of the main postal services above (letters and parcels), some countries also used other types of indicators to monitor quality of service, such as the measurement of loss or substantial delay. Some countries also monitor transit time of bulk mail, newspapers and periodicals.

Regarding **loss or substantial delay**, 5 countries had regulatory objectives in 2015 (see figure below).

Figure 11 – Regulatory objectives for loss or substantial delay in 2015

	Priority mail	Non-priority mail	Registered items	Bulk mail	Newspapers / periodicals	Parcels
EL	-	-	✓	-	-	-
FY	-	✓	-	-	-	-
HU	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
MT	✓	-	-	✓	-	-
PT	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
Total	2	2	2	1	0	1

Luxembourg and Serbia, which had regulatory objectives regarding loss or substantial delay in 2014, indicated that there were no targets in 2015. Greece now has regulatory objectives but only regarding registered (with tracking number) postal items.

In 2015, there was no regulatory objective in Slovenia but loss or substantial delay were measured for single-piece priority mail and parcels.

In 2015, only Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg and Malta had regulatory objectives for transit time of **bulk mail**. Spain measured transit time of bulk mail along with single-piece priority mail, while France had a measurement of transit time of bulk mail but no regulatory objective. Regarding the methodology⁴², France, Hungary and Malta used the European standard EN 14534⁴³.

⁴¹ In 2015 there was no measurement of transit time of domestic parcels (measurement is executed every three years).

⁴² See annex 1

⁴³ EN 14534 is a CEN standard for Postal Services – Quality of Services – Measurement of the transit time for bulk mail.



Regarding **newspapers and periodicals**, only Malta and Portugal set regulatory objectives, though in Malta, transit time of newspapers and periodicals is not measured separately but is rather included in the measurement of single-piece and/or bulk mail quality of service. Lastly, France and Denmark had a measurement of transit time for newspapers and periodicals but without regulatory objectives.



4.2. Collection and delivery

4.2.1. Frequency of collections and deliveries

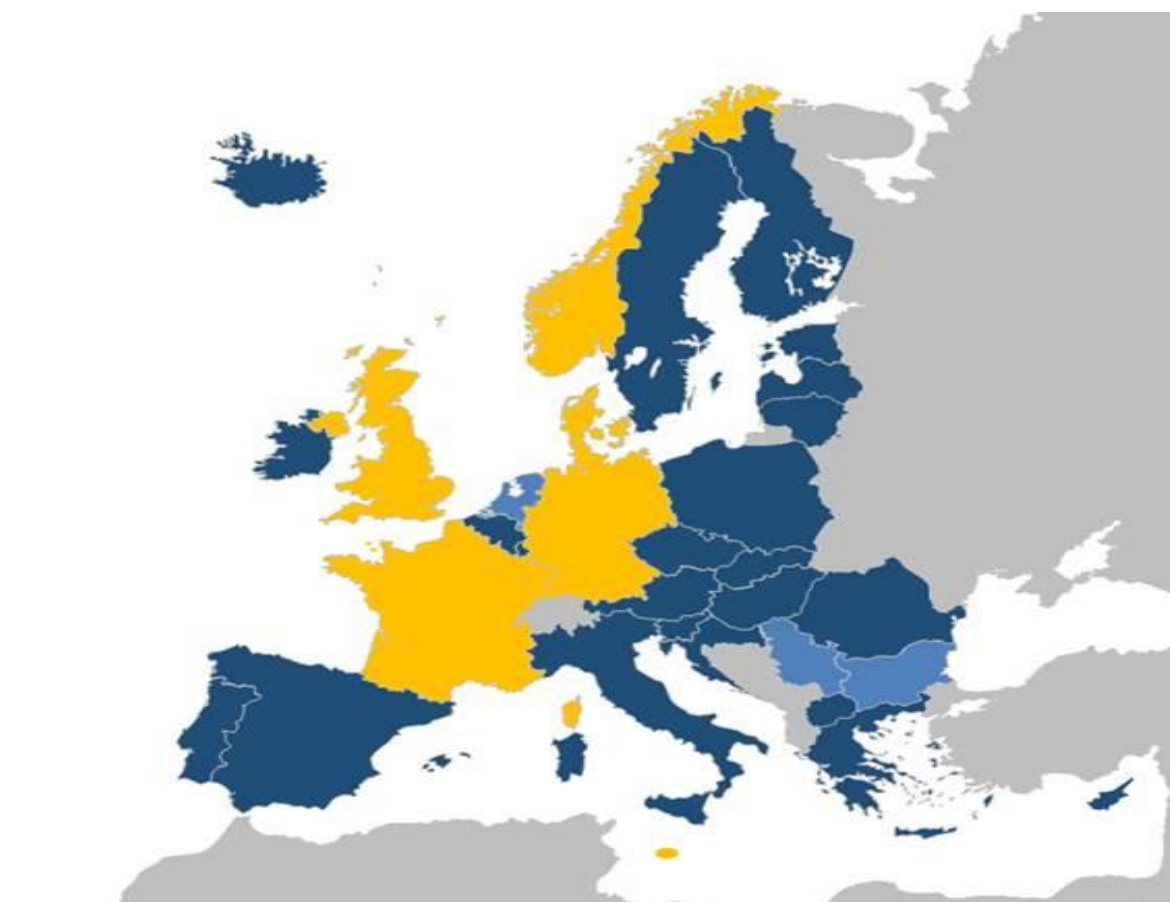
Regarding the frequency of collections and deliveries made by the universal service provider (USP), with few exceptions, the rule is at least one collection and delivery per day for 5 days a week.

The exceptions are those countries in which the obligation to carry out the collection and delivery by the USP was extended to 6 days a week. More specifically, the countries that have at least one collection and delivery per day for six days a week are Bulgaria (only in Sofia), Switzerland (for newspapers), Germany, Denmark, France, Malta, the Netherlands (only for mourning mail and medical mail), Serbia (for correspondence) and the United Kingdom (for correspondence).

It should be noted that in most of the cases the expansion from 5 to 6 days a week takes place only regarding the distribution of correspondence and newspapers.

The split information, specifically on collection and delivery, is shown in the next two figures.

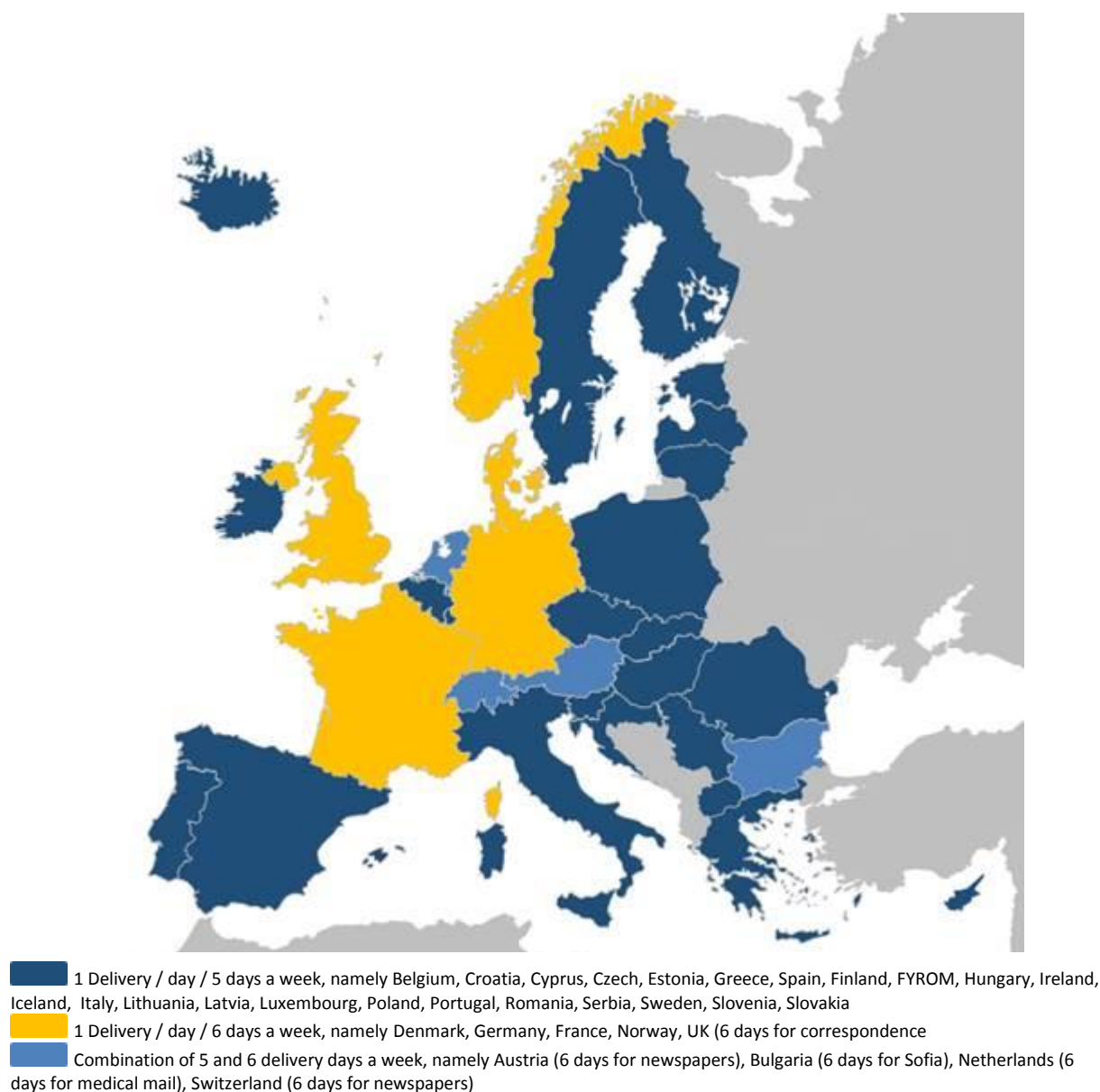
Figure 12 – Frequency of collection in Europe in 2015



- 1 Collection / day / 5 days a week, namely Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech, Estonia, Greece, Spain, Finland, FYROM, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia, UK (for parcels)
- 1 Collection / day / 6 days a week, namely Denmark, Germany, France, Malta, Norway, UK (6 days for correspondence)
- Combination of 5 and 6 collection days a week, namely Bulgaria (6 days for Sofia), Netherlands (6 days for medical mail), Serbia



Figure 13 – Frequency of delivery in Europe in 2015



4.2.2. Exceptions to collection and delivery due to exceptional geographical conditions

According to Paragraph 3 of Article 3 of the Directive⁴⁴, there may be exceptions in the frequency of collection/delivery in circumstances or geographical conditions deemed exceptional, which includes

⁴⁴ Article 3.3. “Member States shall take steps to ensure that the universal service is guaranteed not less than five working days a week, save in circumstances or geographical conditions deemed exceptional, and that it includes as a minimum:

- one clearance
- one delivery to the home or premises of every natural or legal person or by way of derogation, under conditions at the discretion of the national regulatory authority, one delivery to appropriate installations.

Any exception or derogation granted by a national regulatory authority in accordance with this paragraph must be communicated to the Commission and to all national regulatory authorities.”



as a minimum: one clearance/one delivery to the home or premises of every natural or legal person or, by way of derogation, under conditions at the discretion of the national regulatory authorities, one delivery to appropriate installations. The directive underlines in the same paragraph that any exception or derogation granted by a national regulatory authority must be communicated to the European Commission, as well as to all the other NRAs.

The reasons for the exceptions of USO obligations as pointed out by respondents are:

- **mountain areas:**
 - for collection (Bulgaria, Greece, France, FYROM, Iceland, Norway, Romania and Serbia);
 - for delivery (Bulgaria, Greece, France, FYROM, Croatia, Iceland, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Sweden and Slovakia).
- **population density:**
 - for collection (Bulgaria, FYROM, Iceland, Italy, Romania, Serbia and Sweden);
 - for delivery (Bulgaria, Switzerland, FYROM, Croatia, Iceland, Italy, Romania, Serbia Slovakia and Sweden).
- **low traffic volumes:**
 - for collection (Denmark, Italy, Romania, Serbia and UK);
 - for delivery (Denmark, Italy, Romania, Serbia and UK).
- **costs of service:**
 - for collection (Iceland, Norway and Romania);
 - for delivery (Iceland, Norway, Romania and Slovakia).
- **poor infrastructure:**
 - for collection (Bulgaria, Norway and Romania);
 - for delivery (Bulgaria, Norway, Switzerland and Romania).
- **insularity:**
 - for collection (Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Finland, France, Iceland, Norway and Sweden);
 - for delivery (Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Finland, France, Iceland and Sweden).
- **extreme weather conditions:**
 - for collection (Greece, Norway and Romania);
 - for delivery (Greece, Norway and Romania).



Figure 14 – Reasons for exceptions regarding collection in 2015

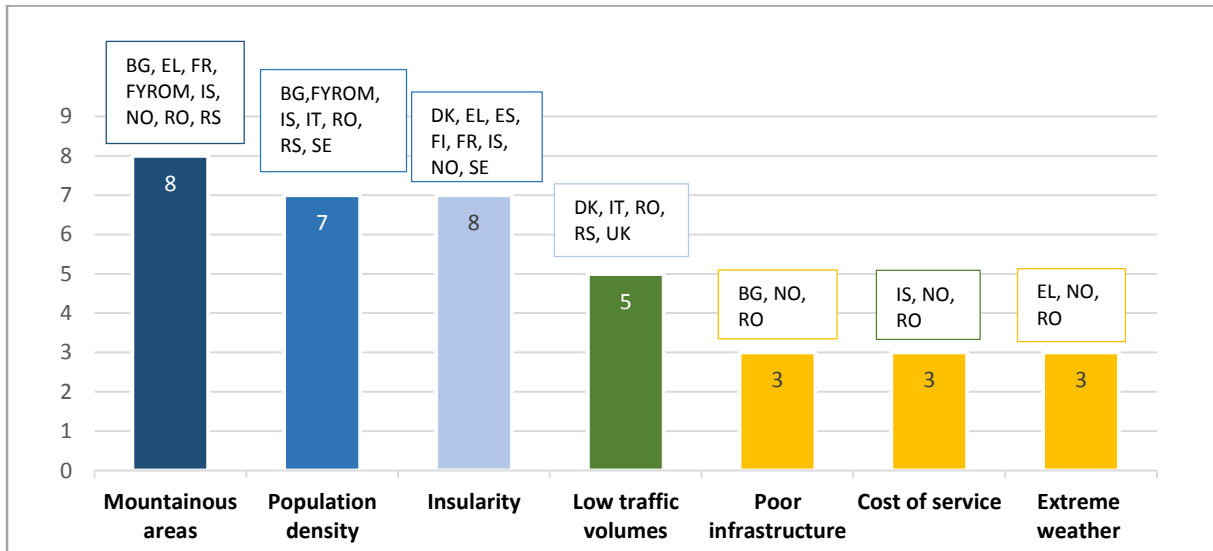
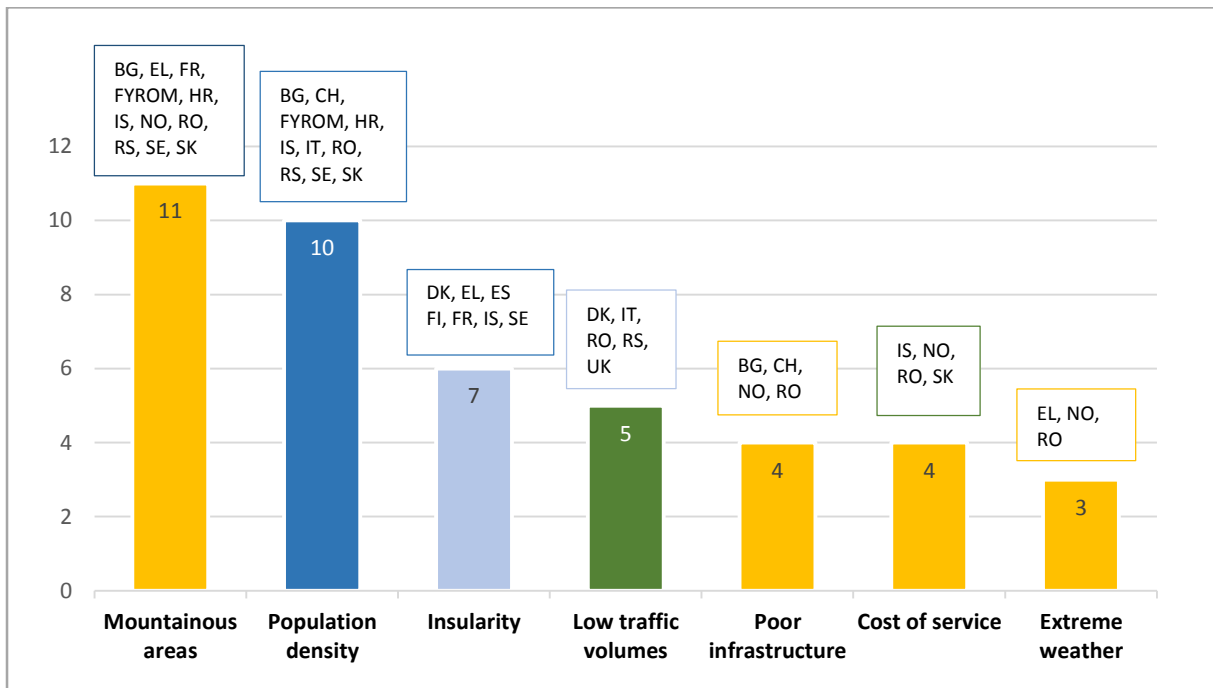


Figure 15 – Reasons for exceptions regarding delivery in 2015



The respondents that answered they have implemented exceptions regarding the frequency of service are:

- for collection: Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Finland, France, FYROM, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Sweden and UK; and,
- for delivery: Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Greece, Switzerland, Estonia, Finland, France, FYROM, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Romania, , Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden and UK.



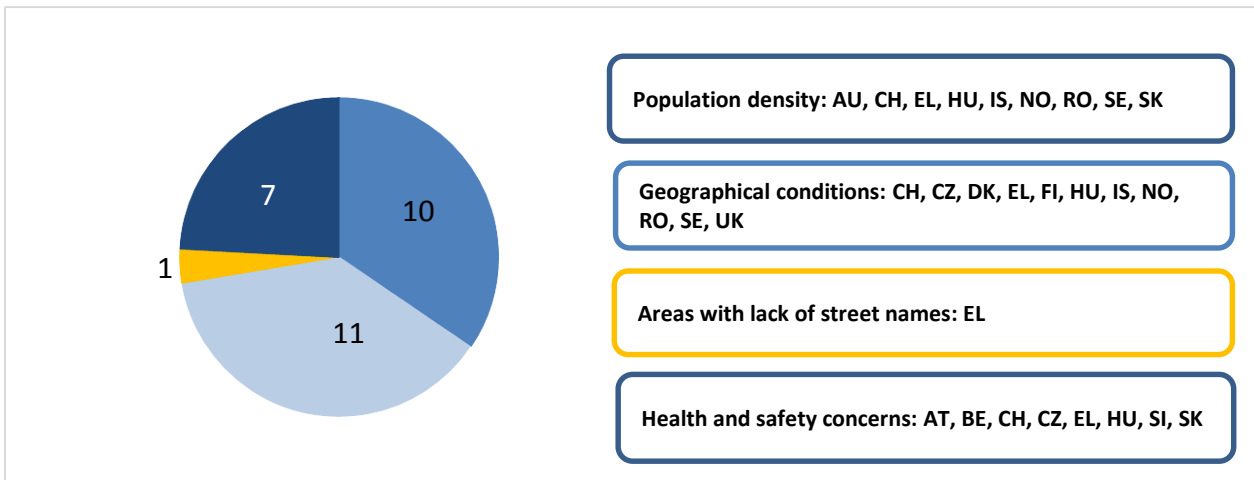
Only in 9 countries the criteria establishing the exceptional geographical character are both defined and published (Bulgaria, FYROM, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Romania, Slovakia and UK). These are available on the links indicated in Annex 5.

4.2.3. Obligation to deliver mail to the home or premises of every natural or legal person

Besides the frequency of collections and deliveries, several regulators have implemented some special criteria for defining cases in which the universal service providers are able to assure the delivery of mail at the home or the premises.

In certain countries, due to high costs involved for providing the access for universal service, especially in depopulated areas and isolated geographic areas, exceptions regarding the delivery of mail to the home or premises of the recipients have been implemented, the most common being population density, geographical conditions, areas with lack of street names, and health and safety concerns.

Figure 16 – Derogation of delivery to the home in the frequency of service (collection & delivery) in 2015



The majority of answers revealed that the delivery service in these situations is directed to local post offices (10 countries: AT, CH, CZ, EL, IS, LU, NO, RO, SI, SK), cluster boxes (12 countries: AT, CH, EL, ES, HU, IS, LU, NO, RO, SE, SI, SK), curbside letterboxes (4 countries: CH, CZ, EL and LU) or, in other cases, to townhalls, public authority’s offices etc.

Regarding the number of households where the delivery service is not assured at their address just 8 NRAs submitted estimated percentages (Austria – 2%, Hungary – 1%, Iceland – 4%, Slovenia – up to 1%, Spain – up to 2%, Sweden – up to 1%, Switzerland – up to 1%) and 4 NRAs answered that in their cases these data are not available (Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania and Slovenia).



Five NRAs indicated that in their countries criteria for defending exceptions in terms of mail delivering to the home or premises of the recipient are established: Austria, Greece, Iceland, Slovenia and Slovakia. The large majority of NRAs answered that such criteria are not established in their countries: Belgium, Cyprus, Czech, France, FYROM, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden.



4.3. Access points

In accordance with the European legislation⁴⁵, the postal access points are defined as the physical facilities of the postal network, where postal items may be deposited, to be processed by the postal providers.

4.3.1. Collection letterboxes

Regarding the existence of any legal requirements or standards 29 of 33 respondents (more than 88%) have set requirements/standards to ensure that the USPs provide an adequate number of letterboxes, the only exceptions being France, Norway, Spain and Sweden where the regulation has not imposed such conditions.

More cases revealed that the adequate number of collection letterboxes is linked to the provision of primary and secondary legislation in the European countries with the number of inhabitants, and is often linked to the distance that needs to be travelled to the access points (e.g. a maximum distance of 2 kilometers that one has to travel to the collection letterbox).

Furthermore, in some countries the number of collection letterboxes is linked to the number of inhabitants per geographical area, with differences of approach depending on the rural-urban medium or on the locality size (e.g. at least one collection letterbox per number of inhabitants depending on the type of settlement difference is observed between urban and rural areas).

In more than 60% of the respondent countries', the legal requirements for assuring an adequate number of collection letterboxes can be found mainly in the primary legislation, and in almost 40% of the cases these requirements are found in the regulations and decisions issued by NRAs. The single special case in this is the situation in Hungary, in which the detailed rules for assuring the number of access points is regulated by way of contract between the State and the USP.

The collection time is marked on the collection letterboxes for more than 99% of the respondents, Ireland remaining the only European country where this information is not indicated on it⁴⁶.

Furthermore, information has been gathered regarding the evolution of the number of collection letterboxes since 2008. Where the data for 2008 were not available, the oldest data available were used.

⁴⁵ Article 2 of Directive 2008/06/EC: access points are the physical facilities, including letterboxes provided for the public either on the public highway or at the premises of the postal service provider(s), where postal items may be deposited with the postal network by senders.

⁴⁶ "In IE the notice plates on all access points show the latest time of posting to achieve next day delivery"



The figures below show the percentage change in the number of collection letterboxes per country from 2014 till 2015 (1-year evolution) and from 2008 till 2015 (7-years evolution).

The table with absolute values of the number of collection letterboxes per country is in Annex 6.

Figure 17 – Percentage change in the number of collection letterboxes per countries in 2015 compared with the situation in 2014

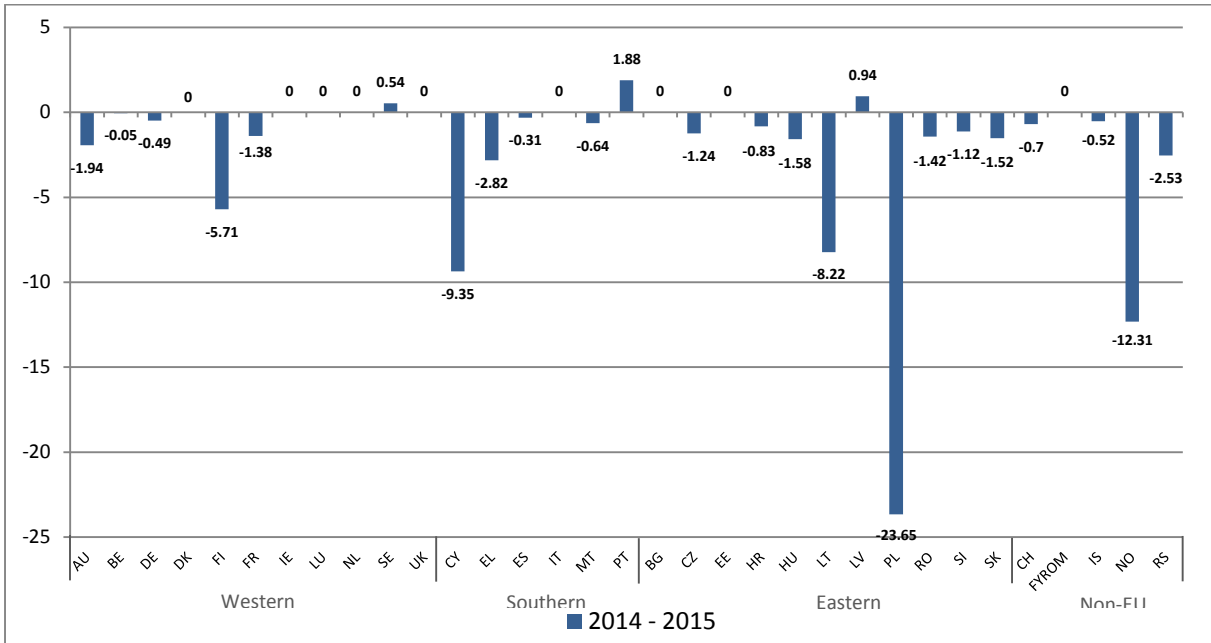
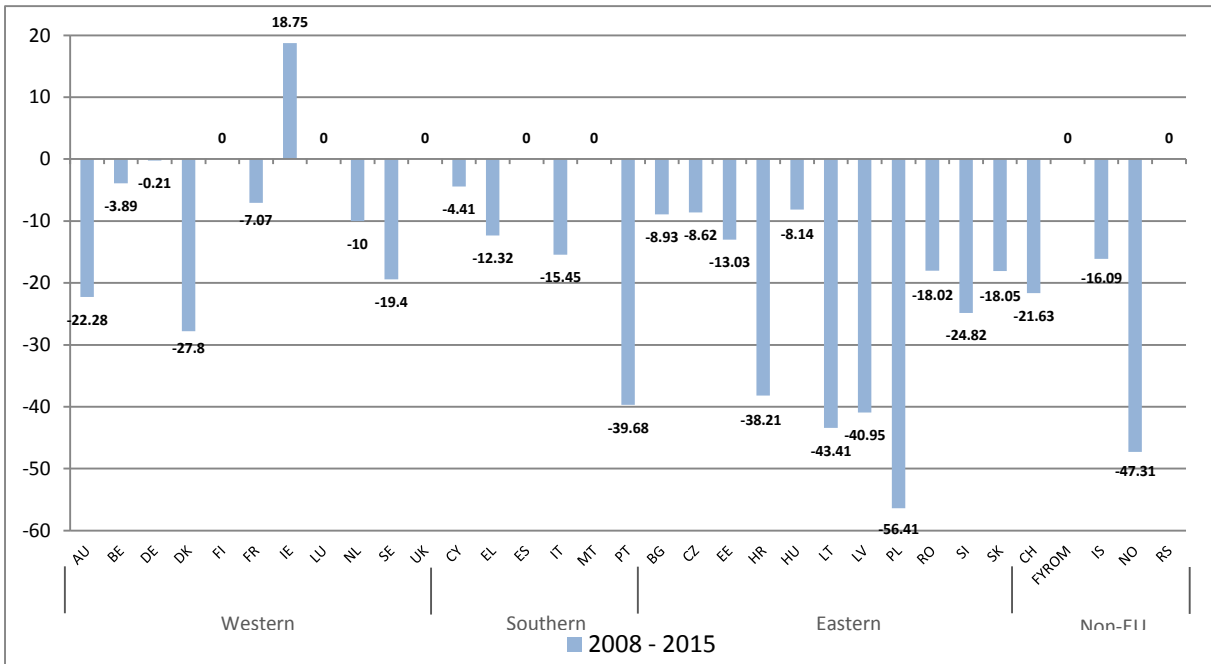


Figure 18 – Percentage change in the number of collection letterboxes per countries in 2015 compared with the situation in 2008



Note: Where the data for 2008 were not available, the oldest data available were used.



Portugal, Latvia and Sweden are the only three European countries where the number of collection letter boxes has grown last year. Otherwise, it can be seen that the number has declined in the vast majority of respondents, remaining unchanged only in Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, FYROM, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherland and UK.

All the respondents reported that the decreasing number of collection letter boxes is due to the declined volumes of real flows processed by USPs. We can conclude that although in some countries a growth was registered or no changes have occurred, we can notice a sensitive decrease in terms of collection letterboxes numbers the last 7 years from 2008 till 2015.

4.3.2. Points of contact

In accordance with the European legislation⁴⁷, the number of points of contact should be established on the territory closely linked to the needs of users. Those units may be managed directly by postal operators (postal establishments), by third parties (such as retail stores...) or correspond to services directly provided by the mailman. Considering all these, Member States should ensure that sufficient contact points are established, taking into account users' needs in order to satisfy the universal service obligation. It is also important to ensure equal treatment of users in urban and rural areas, without prejudice of geographical conditions.

It is a difficult task to evaluate whether the density of access to points of contact corresponds to the necessary equilibrium between the users' needs and the cost-efficient provision of the universal service. In some countries, post offices have an important social function and they are quite often seen as a last stronghold of the state in the small villages, which means that the density of the access/contact points is a particularly sensitive issue.

The answers regarding this indicator revealed that in 29 European states legal requirements/standards/obligations are enforced in order for USPs to ensure that an adequate number of postal establishments are provided. In the large majority of cases, the density of contact points should be established by the USP considering the population density in order to respond to consumer needs.

In 19 of the countries which have confirmed that they have requirements/standards in place, the requirements and standards are expressly provided by primary legislation. Special cases may be considered the situation of FYROM and Norway, where the requirements can be found in the "authorisation/licence regime", Belgium, where the standards are included in the USP's

⁴⁷ In Article 3, 2 of Directive 2008/06/EC: "Member States shall take steps to ensure that the density of the points of contact and of the access points takes account of the needs of users".



“Management Contract”, UK where the requirements are stipulated in the “Licence of the USP” . In Portugal the requirements were defined by the NRA by decision and are applicable till 30 September 2017⁴⁸. In Hungary where the requirements can be found partly in the Postal Act and partly in the Universal Postal Public Service Contract.

The common criteria to ensure an adequate number of points of contact/postal establishments are the same as those identified in the previous years (e.g. number of postal establishments per locality; one postal establishment per number of inhabitants, which could depend on the size of the settlement; maximum distance that one has to travel to the nearest postal establishment; maximum (air) distance between neighbouring postal establishments; minimum number of post offices, providing UPS or full range of postal services; and percentage of population at a certain distance from the postal establishment).

Overall, in the vast majority of European states, the NRA is usually the authority responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements regarding an adequate number of postal establishments on the national territory. Despite this, in Hungary and Poland the NRAs are in charge of ensuring the compliance with the requirements in collaboration with the Ministry. The UK can be considered a special case, given that the ‘Post Office Limited’, is a separate autonomous business unit with no links to the USP, is the entity responsible for ensuring the compliance with the requirements. The smaller subsidiary post offices are managed as 3rd franchises entities. In Switzerland, the responsible body for ensuring compliance with the requirements regarding an adequate number of postal establishments on the national territory is an independent body, approved by the NRA.

In the majority of cases, the supervision is carried out by requiring information to the USP or to various local authorities/organisations which hold publicly information on this. Additionally, there are also combinations of the methods mentioned above. In Austria, the compliance is done by the NRA using a geographical information system. In the case of Estonia, the check-up is done during the licence granting process and the USP provides to the NRA the list of its postal offices. A special situation can be found in Hungary where the USP is obligated by the Universal Postal Public Service Contract to take into account publicly accessible information as state geographic data basis and state register of social basic data in order to prepare the report on accomplishment of quality requirements to be submitted to the NRA and the NRA reviews the report. Also the ministry or its representative can check-up the compliance with the Universal Postal Public Service Contract on an ad-hoc basis or contingently.

⁴⁸ <http://www.anacom.pt/render.jsp?contentId=1334341#.V5sLJRKe9v1>



Furthermore 75% of the respondents indicated they have a system of sanctions in place in the case of non-compliance with the requirements on an adequate number of postal establishments. In most of these cases, the competent authority could resort to fines/penalties or perform a regulatory action, e.g. administrative or legal sanctions.

NRAs have the power to prevent closure of postal establishments in 14 European countries (Austria, Belgium⁴⁹, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech, Estonia, FYROM, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia). The Hungarian NRA can start the procedure if the closure of postal establishments is in breach of law and/or the Universal Postal Public Service Contract and have the power to act as follows: in case of serious breach of the Universal Postal Public Service Contract the NRA can submit an official decision on that to the Minister who is responsible for the postal sector. The Minister can draw the USP's attention to cease the breach and if it is failed the Minister entitled to withdraw the contract. Other respondents checked that in their cases the NRAs are not empowered with this (Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania and Switzerland).

Additionally, care for disabled persons has been kept in mind in some countries as postal points of contact should be accessible for all users, including disabled persons. The large majority of respondents answered that they do not have data available on this matter but, despite this, it should be highlighted that in 6 European states all postal points of contact are equipped for helping disabled persons (Czech, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Luxembourg and Switzerland), with the observation that in Czech and Switzerland is mandatory by legislation that all postal establishments have to be equipped for access of disabled persons. Another 3 respondents reported percentages in this: Belgium – 85,5% by the end of 2014, Italy – 70 % , Hungary – 38 % by the end of 2015 and Slovakia – 29% by the end of 2015.

Furthermore information has been collected regarding the evolution of the number of points of contacts per country since 2008. Where the data for 2008 were not available, the oldest data available were used.

⁴⁹ If not in line with the specifications of the Management Contract between bpost and the State regarding Services of General Economic Interest



The figures below show the percentage change in the number of points of contacts per country from 2014 till 2015 (1 year evolution) and from 2008 till 2015 (7 years evolution).

The table with absolute values of the number of points of contacts per country is in Annex 7.

Figure 19 – Percentage change in the number of points of contacts per countries in 2015 compared with the situation in 2014

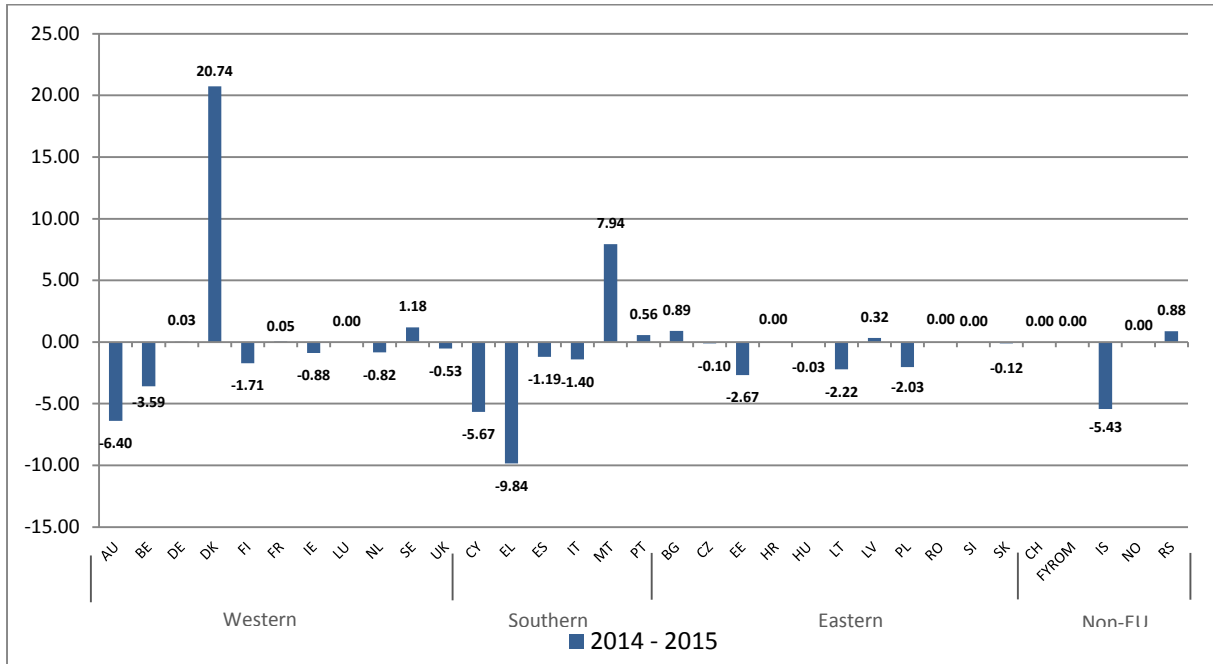
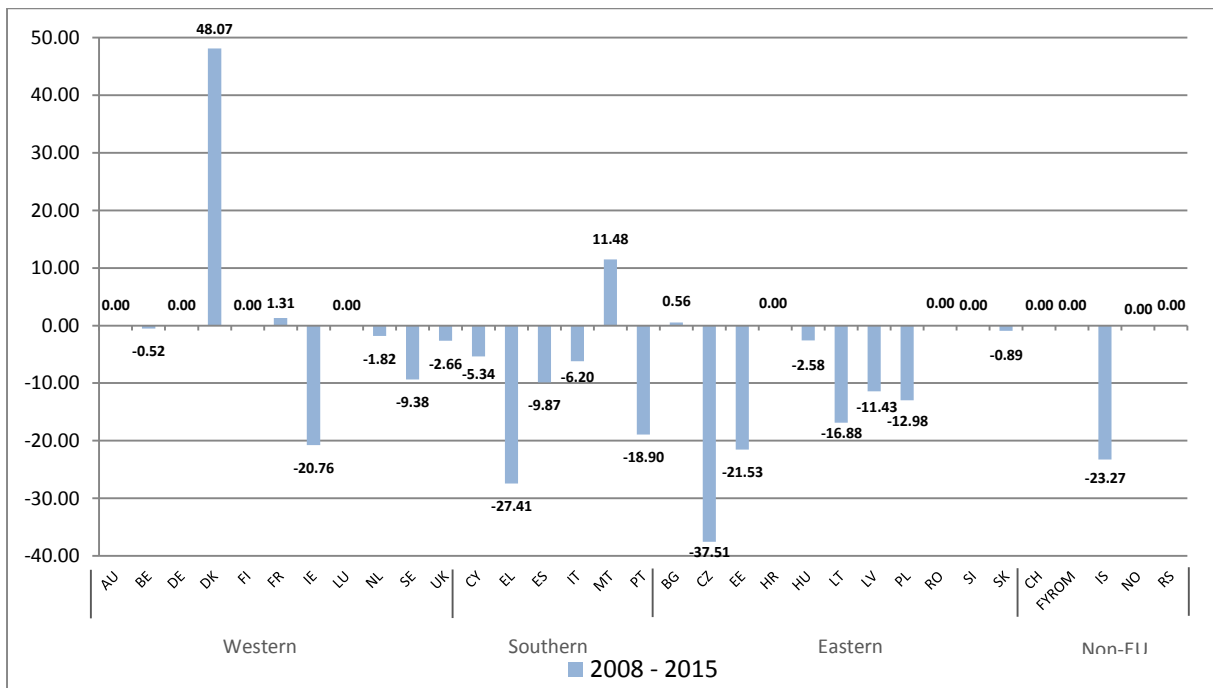


Figure 20 – Percentage change in the number of point of contacts per countries in 2015 compared with the situation in 2008



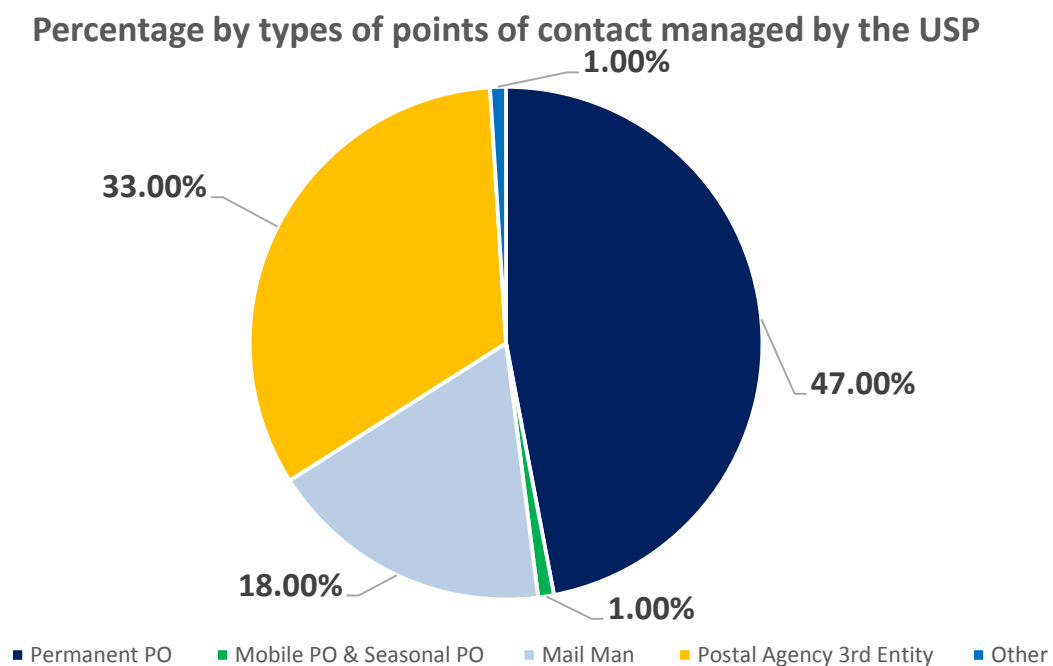
Note: Where the data for 2008 were not available, the oldest data available were used.



The most common type of points of contact at the European level, based only on the information received from the responding countries, remains access to a permanent post office with or without a full range of services (47%) followed by post agencies managed by 3rd parties (33%). The answers received to the 2016 questionnaires revealed that the point of contact represented by mailmen managed by the USPs are quite considerable (18%).

The figure below illustrates the percentage of distribution of points of contact in each country in 2015. The table with absolute values of the number of types of points of contacts per country is in Annex 8.

Figure 21– Proportion by contact points by type in 2015



Regarding the range of services offered by the postal agencies managed by a 3rd entity, 8 respondents answered that they are offering the full range of services (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland). In Greece, Latvia, Malta and Romania, the postal agencies are offering basic services. In Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovenia and Slovakia the services offered are only within the scope of universal service.

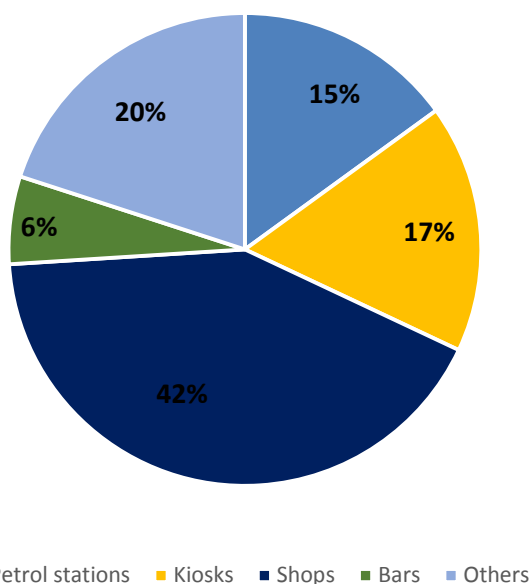
The case of Czech Republic is worth noting, where the services offered include storage of parcels and registered mail, selling of postal stamps, packaging material and the collection of postal items). In the Netherlands the range of services offered by the postal agencies depends on whether they are full or limited postal agencies operated by a 3rd entity.



With the single exception of Belgium (where the postal agencies managed by the 3rd entity are situated mainly in the urban areas), the large majority of NRAs answered that in their case these agencies are situated mostly in the rural areas (Austria, Cyprus, Czech, Estonia, France, FYROM, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia). Despite this, in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK, this kind of agencies is situated also in rural and urban areas.

Regarding the postal agencies managed by 3rd entities the answers provided by the respondent countries showed that these are mainly located in shops and food stores (25 answers), followed by kiosks (10 answers), petrol stations (9 answers) and bars (3 answers). The figure below illustrates the location of postal agencies managed by third parties.

Figure 22 – Location of post agencies managed by 3rd parties in percentages in 2015



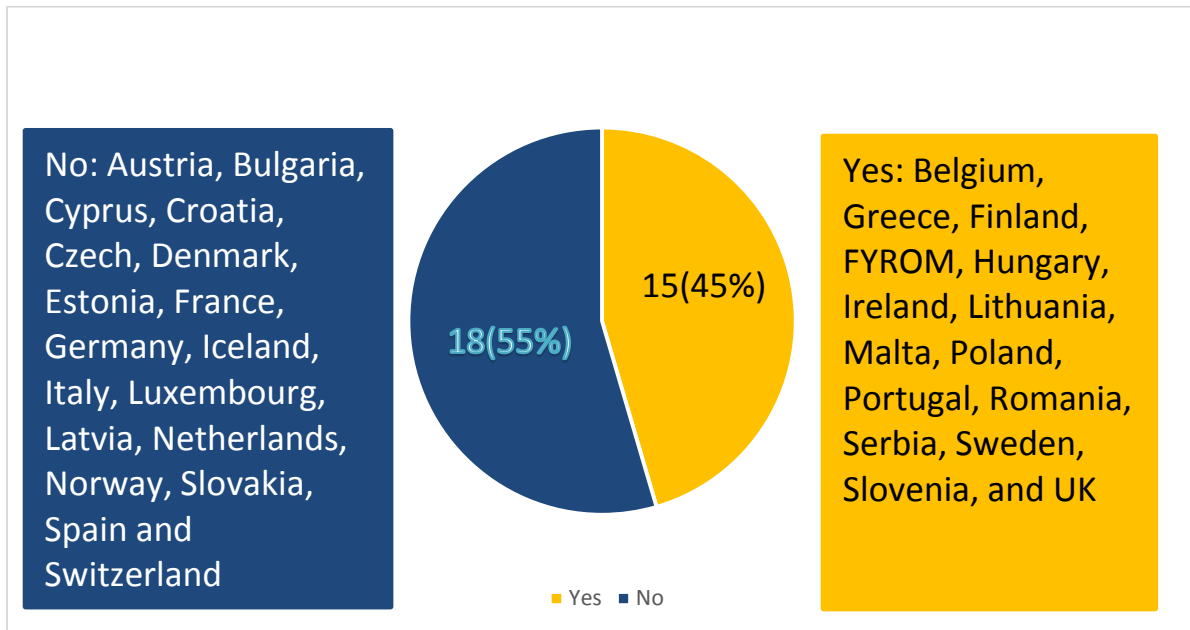
We can conclude that in the vast majority of countries that provided data on the number of points of contacts, we found a decrease in the number of permanent post offices managed by the USP with a full range of services and an increase of other types of points of contact, especially permanent post agencies managed by a 3rd entity.



4.4. Measurement of consumer satisfaction

As is shown in the figure below, in 2015, the overall trend of the NRAs monitoring consumer satisfaction remained relatively consistent. According to the responses to the 2015 questionnaire, 15 (45%) of the 33 respondent NRAs monitor indicators of consumer satisfaction in their country, while 18 (55%) NRAs do not.

Figure 23 – NRAs surveys on consumer satisfaction, in 2015



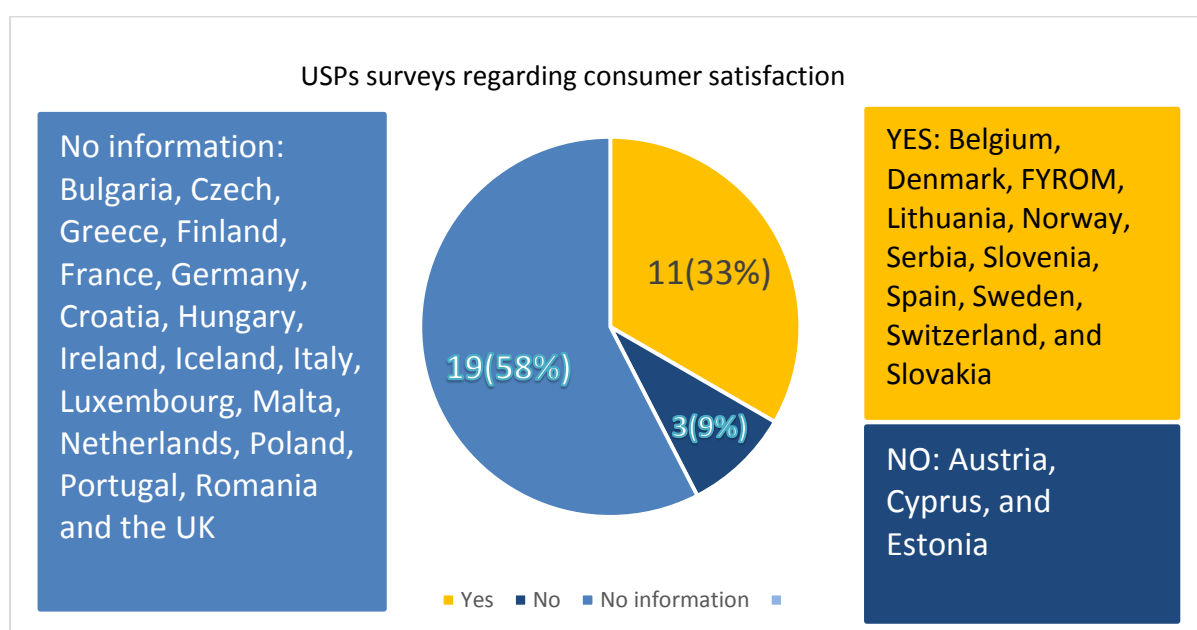


Furthermore, the results from the 2015 questionnaire show that 11 USPs in Europe conduct studies and publish results regarding the level of consumer satisfaction (the USPs from Belgium, Denmark, FYROM, Lithuania, Norway, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden).

It should be noted that there is no certainty as to whether the rest of the USPs are monitoring the level of consumer satisfaction or not, taking into account that the large majority of respondents answers that they do not have information regarding the possible surveys on this, managed by USPs⁵⁰.

The figure below provides more details regarding the use of user’s satisfaction by USPs in Europe .

Figure 24 – USPs surveys on consumer satisfaction, in 2015



⁵⁰ 19 NRAs answered that they do not have that information: Bulgaria, Czech, Greece, Germany, Finland, France, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania and the UK

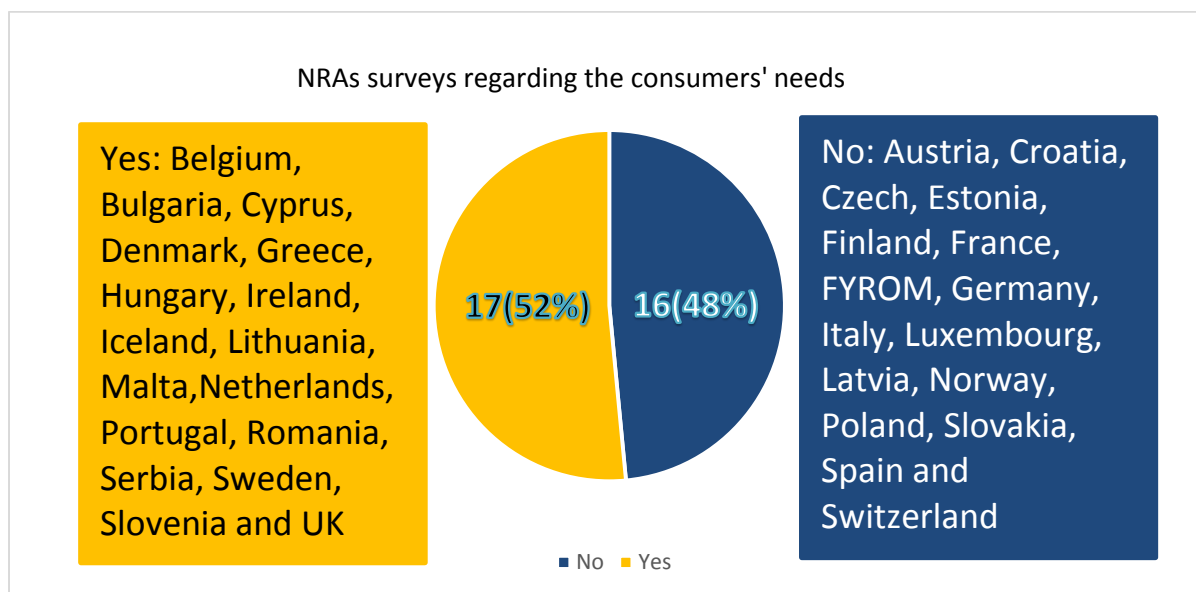


4.5. Surveys regarding consumers’ needs⁵¹

In 2015, the overall trend of those NRAs monitoring customer needs remained relatively consistent. In terms of surveys regarding consumers’ needs and market, 17 NRAs (52%) answered that they conduct such surveys, while the other 16 NRAs (48%) do not. The surveys are mostly carried out either annually or on an *ad hoc* basis to serve regulatory needs. Furthermore, the surveys are focused on quantitative and qualitative research and are either conducted by an independent body or developed directly by the NRAs. The trends observed during the previous years remained the same, and regarding the methodologies used, the answers revealed that the surveys developed in the respondent countries include telephone interviews/computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATIs), standardised questionnaires, and face-to-face interviews. In the majority of cases, the results of the NRA studies regarding consumers’ needs are published on the Internet, on the web page of the NRAs.

The figure below highlights the overall situation regarding the monitoring of consumers’ needs in Europe, in 2015.

Figure 25 – NRAs surveys on consumers’ needs, in 2015



⁵¹ ERGP Report 2016 on scope of USO with reference ERGP 2016 (16) Report on the universal service in light of changing postal end-users’ needs



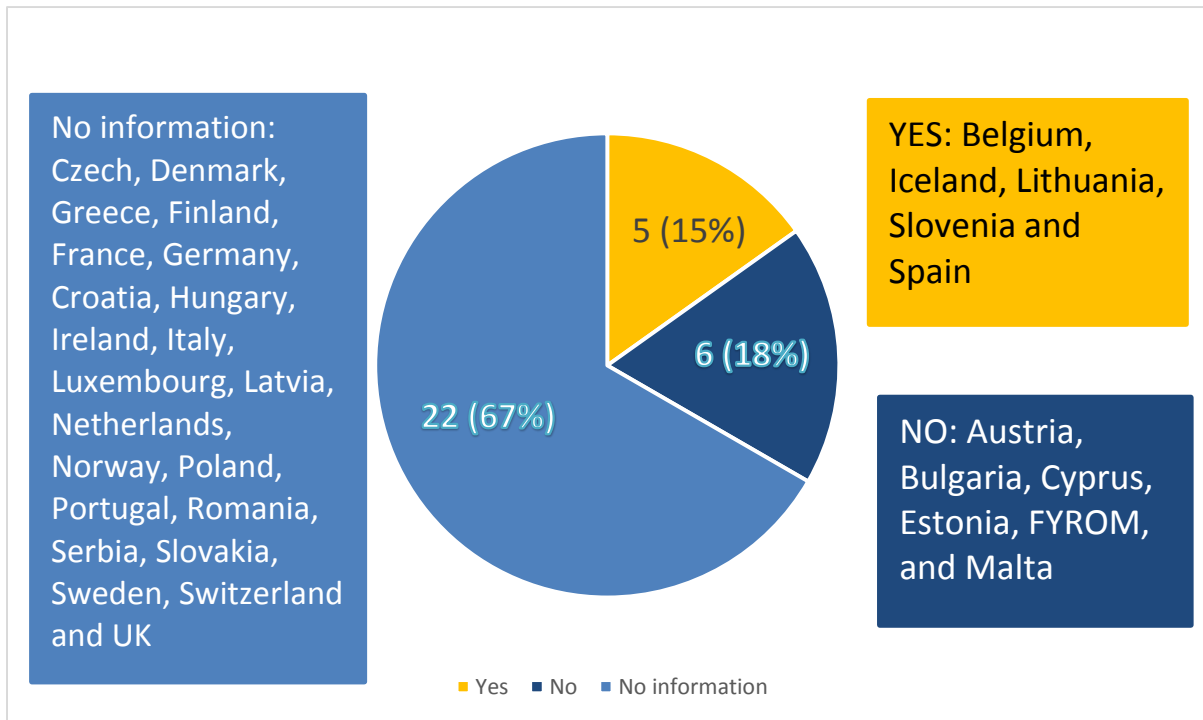
Regarding consumers’ needs surveys conducted by the USPs, the answers received revealed that only 5 (15%) universal service providers in Europe conducted these surveys in the last period: Belgium, Iceland, Lithuania, Slovenia and Spain. However, only the survey on the consumer’s needs developed by the USP in Iceland is publicly available.

Once again, it should be emphasised that there is no certainty as to whether the remaining USPs are developing studies on their consumers’ needs or not, as the majority of respondents answered that they do not have this information of their USPs⁵².

The results show that the USPs from Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, FYROM and Malta, have not recently developed surveys on the consumers’ needs.

The following figures sets out the situation regarding the USP’s consumers’ needs surveys in Europe.

Figure 26 – USPs surveys on consumers’ needs, in 2015



⁵² 21 NRAs answered that they do not have that information: Czech, Denmark, Greece, Finland, France, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and UK



5. CURRENT SITUATION ON THE ASSESSMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES

The complaint handling and consumer protection questionnaire results have been analysed from the following four perspectives:

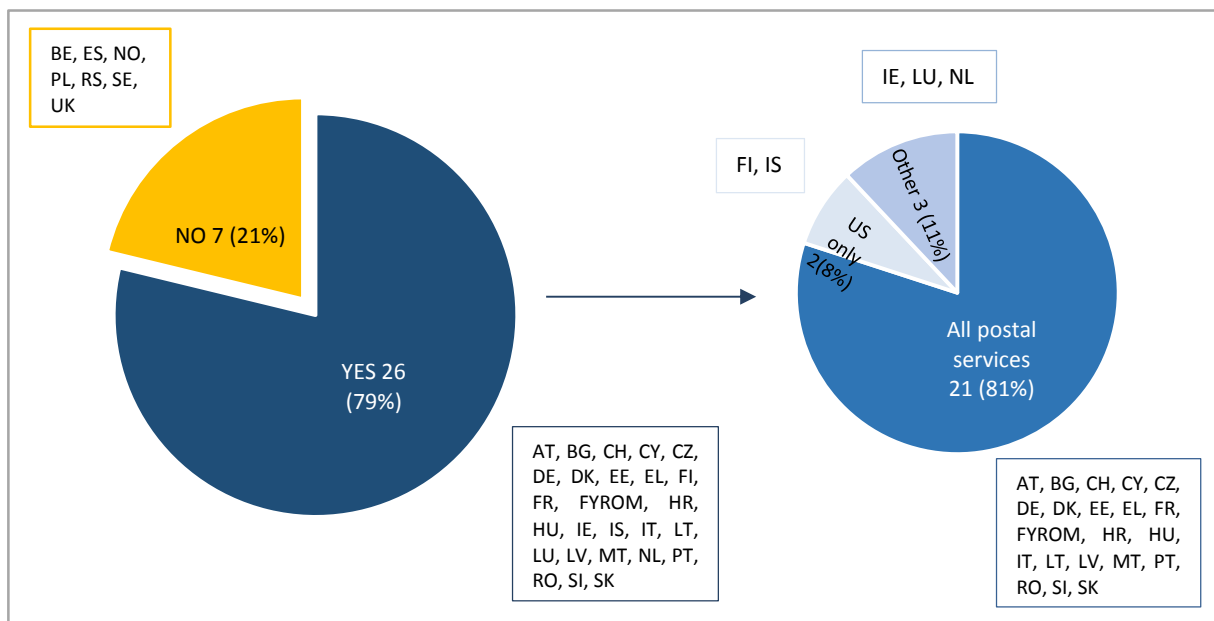
- 5.1 competence of NRAs on complaint handling;
- 5.2 information provision and access to complaint handling and dispute resolution;
- 5.3 compensation schemes for individual customers;
- 5.4 data on complaints.

5.1. Competence of NRAs on complaint handling

This subchapter evaluates the scope and competence of the NRAs in handling complaints from users about postal services.

The figure below shows that in the majority of countries NRAs are generally responsible for dealing with users' complaints, most of which covering all postal services. Almost all of the countries where NRAs are responsible for dealing with users' complaints have procedures in place to resolve those complaints. Nevertheless, the number of NRAs dealing with users' complaints seems to be decreasing since less 2 NRAs have this competence when compared with the situation in 2014.

Figure 27 – NRAs dealing with users' complaints in 2015



Note: Other in IE (ComReg) has regulatory remit to accept, for resolution, complaints which remain unresolved after due completion of all the procedures of a postal service provider's own complaints and redress code of practice. Consumers must have exhausted the complaints procedures of the postal service provider before ComReg can accept such complaints.

LU: In cases involving loss, theft, damage or non compliance with service quality standards.

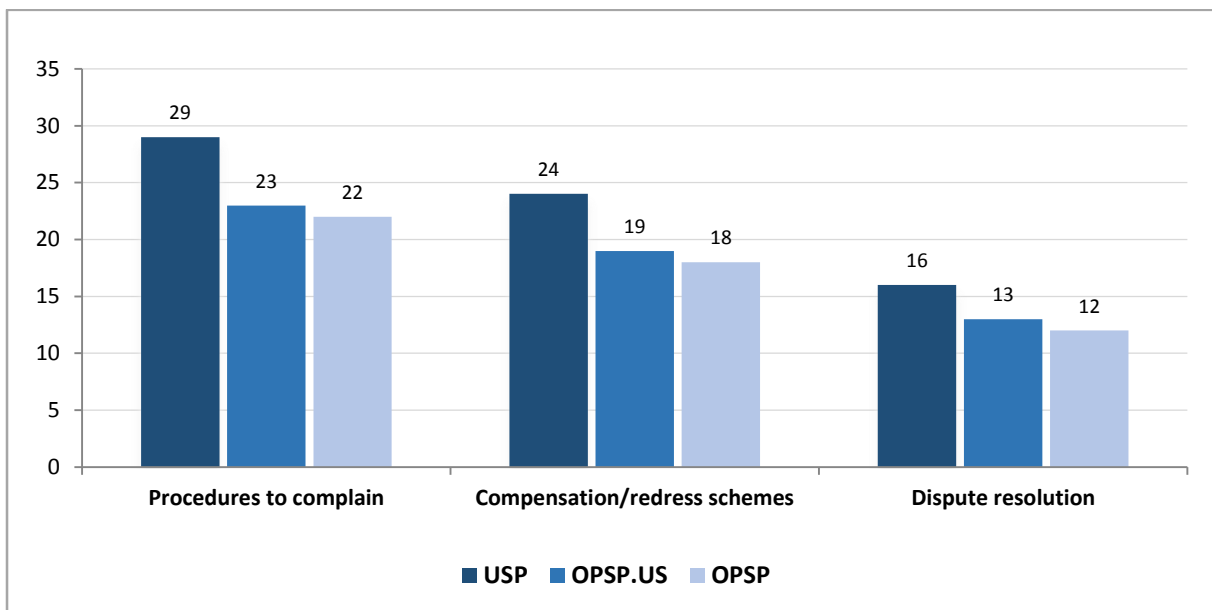


5.2. Information provision and access to complaint handling and dispute resolution

This subchapter analyses the information available to users on complaint handling procedures, redress schemes and means of dispute resolution, while also looking at the existence of regulation regarding complaints handling and of alternative dispute resolution schemes.

The figure below indicates that most countries have obligations in place for postal service providers to publish information regarding procedures to complain and compensation schemes (usually on the providers’ website, access points, general terms and conditions), which has slightly increased from 2014. Even though less countries have obligations to publish information about dispute resolution mechanisms than about complaint and compensation schemes, this has seen a significant increase from 12 (in 2014) to 16 countries when it comes to USP obligations.

Figure 28 – Obligations to provide information in 2015



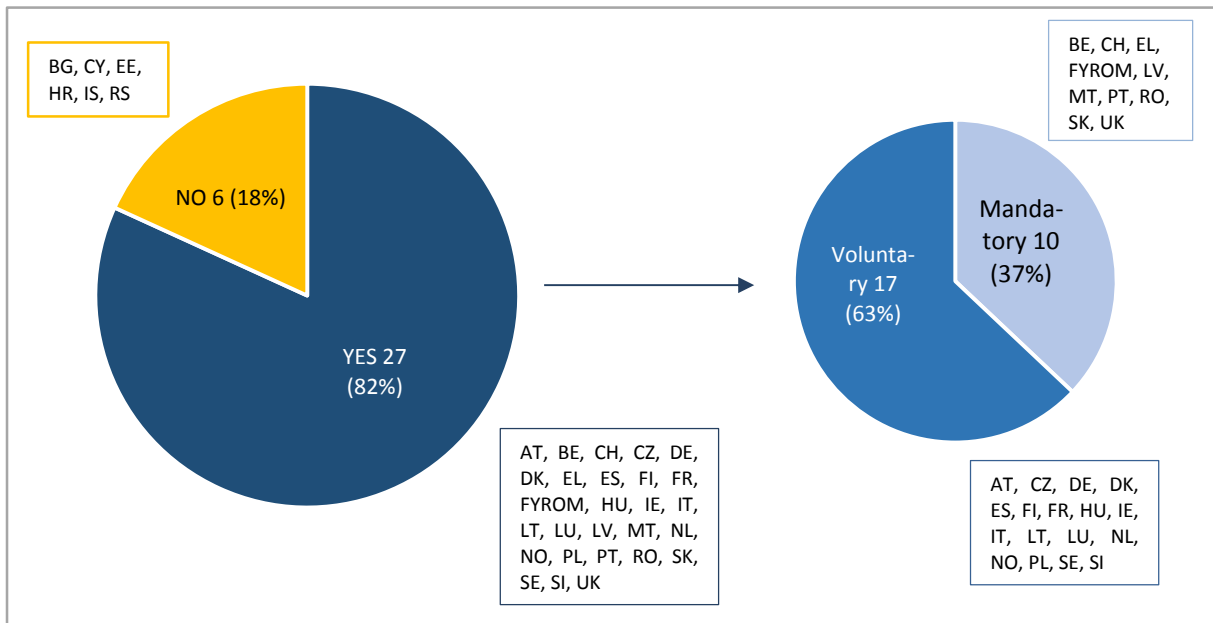
Note: The list of countries where postal service providers are obliged to provide information is available in the appendices (annex 9).

Focusing on the regulation of complaint handling procedures, the situation has remained more or less the same for the past few years with most NRAs indicating that such regulation exists for the USP (BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, RS, SI, SK, UK).



The figure below shows that in a vast majority of countries alternative (or out-of-court) dispute resolution mechanisms are available, most of which are voluntary. The number of countries with such mechanisms has increased, with 5 more countries indicating to have them (three mandatory and two voluntary) when compared with 2014.

Figure 29 – Alternative (or out-of-court) dispute resolution in 2015



Finally, turning to the implementation of the CEN standard EN 14012: 2008, the situation in 2015 was similar to the one in 2014, with 14 countries (BE, CH, HU, FR, HR, IS, LT, MT, NO, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK) indicating that the USP has implemented this standard.



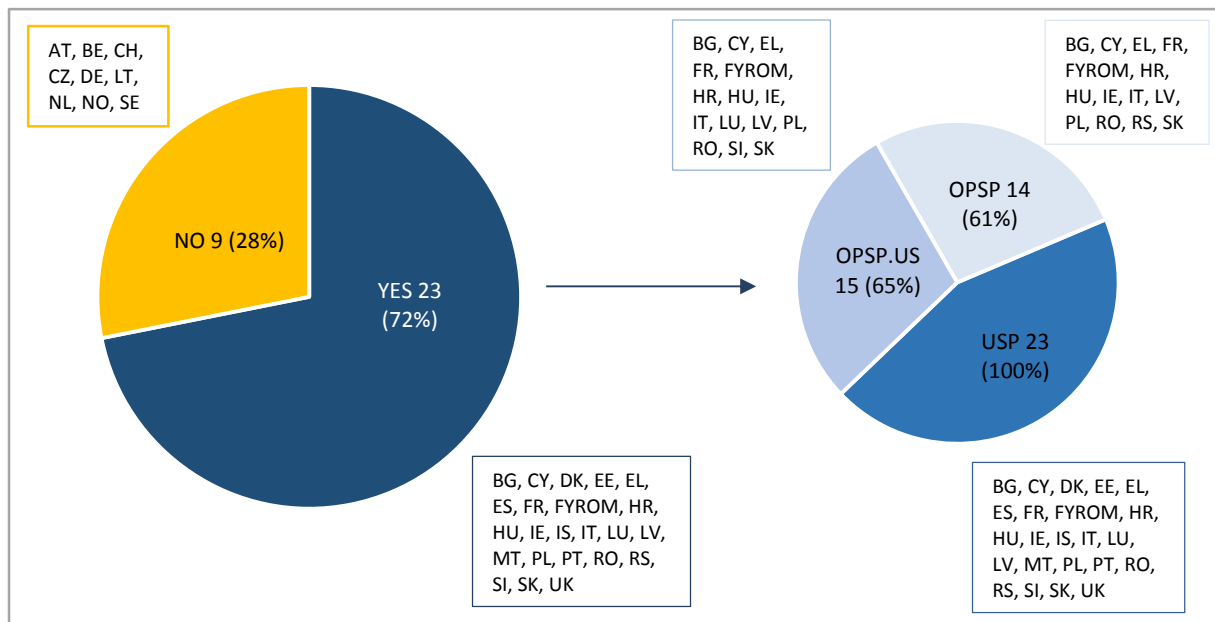
5.3. Compensation schemes for individual customers

This subchapter looks at the existing compensation schemes for individual customers, focusing on their framework, scope and disclosure.

The number of countries that have an obligation for a specific compensation scheme has been increasing for the past few years. As indicated in the figure below, most countries have such an obligation covering the USP (1 more when compared to 2014).

When asked to explain why there is no obligation on this matter, the countries that were in this situation mentioned as main reasons the lack of justification in legislation, the lack of need or the fact that this subject is covered by general terms and conditions and civil law.

Figure 30 – Mandatory compensation schemes for individual customers in 2015

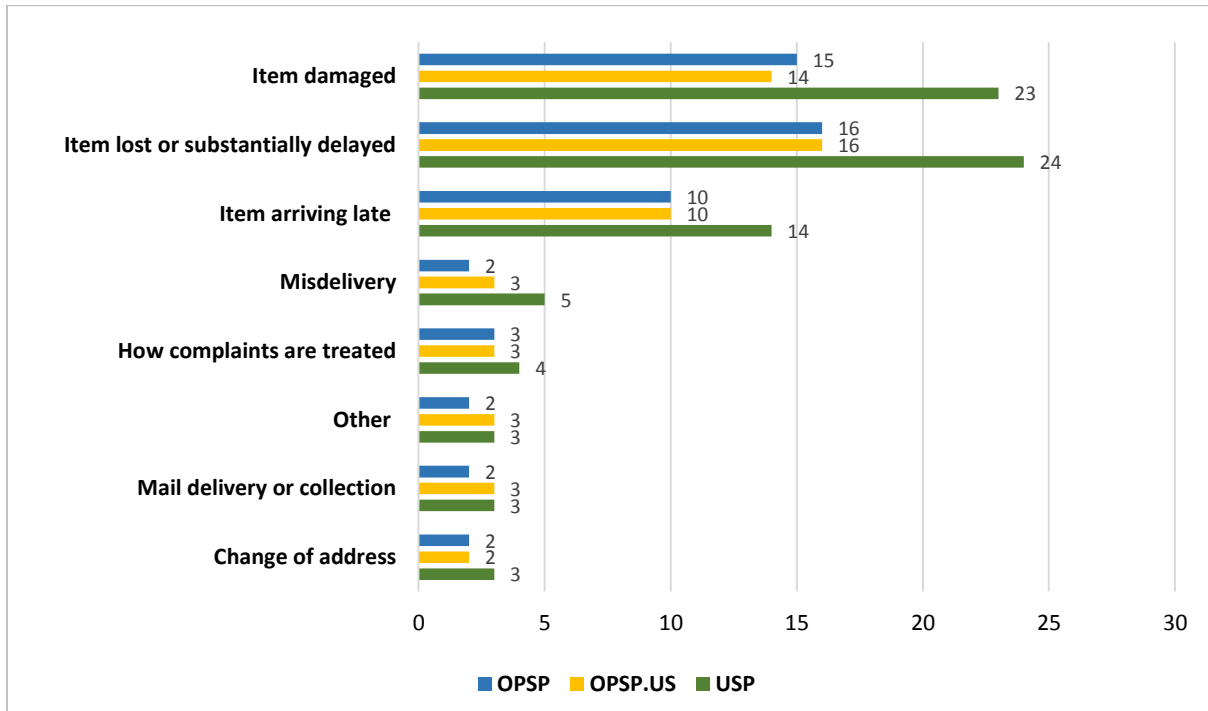


As to types of service failures covered by existing compensation schemes, figure 31 shows that in most countries these schemes cover, for the USP, at least the items damaged and items lost or substantially delayed.

When comparing with the situation in 2014, there has been a slight decrease in the number of countries where compensation schemes cover items arriving late, items damaged and items lost or substantially delayed as well as an overall slight increase in the number of countries that cover change of address in their compensation schemes.



Figure 31 – Coverage of existing compensation schemes for individual customers per type of service failure in 2015



Note: The list of countries per postal service provider and type of service failure covered is available in the appendices (annex 10).

Turning to the mechanisms in place to make consumers aware that compensation schemes are available, no changes have occurred in the situation portrayed last year, with the majority of countries (BG, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SI, SK, UK) indicating that these mechanisms exist (mostly at the providers’ website and access points and also at the NRAs’ websites).



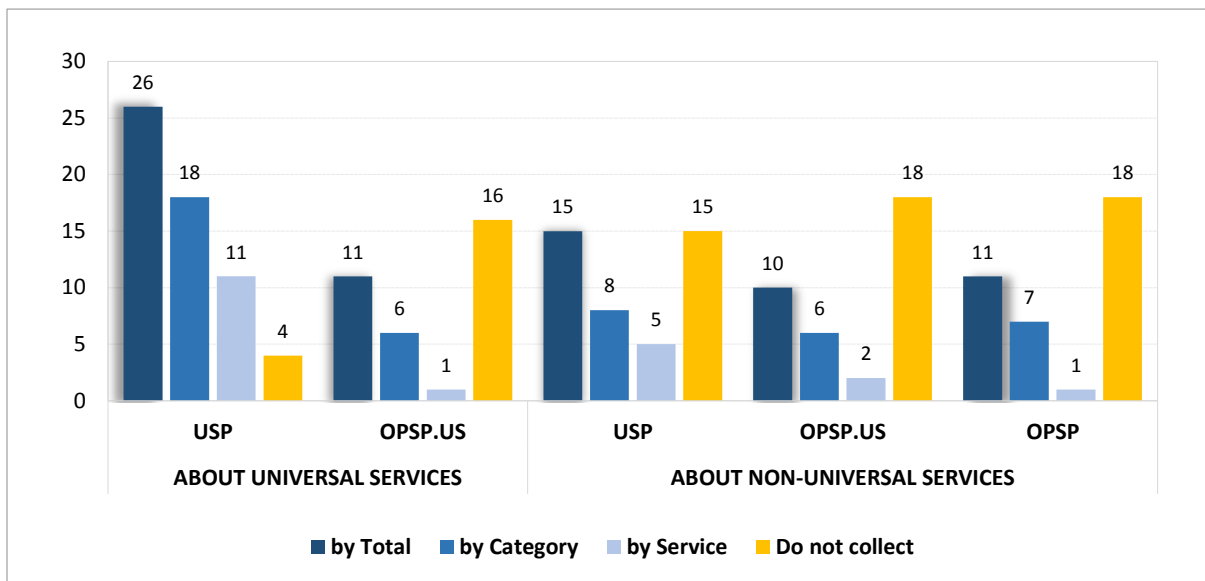
5.4. Data on complaints by NRAs

This subchapter looks at the data that NRAs are collecting on the number of complaints about postal services in general and, in particular, about cross-border services. Furthermore, the data on the number of complaints collected by NRAs are also published.

5.4.1. Collection of data by NRAs

Based on figure 32, most NRAs collect data on the total number of complaints received by the USP regarding universal services, with no changes from the situation portrayed last year, except as regards the collection of data by category and by service which has slightly decreased. Fewer NRAs collect data on complaints received by the USP about non-universal services and the majority does not collect data on the number of complaints received by other postal service providers, a similar situation as the one that existed in 2014.

Figure 32 – Collection of data by NRAs on the number of complaints received by postal service providers in 2015

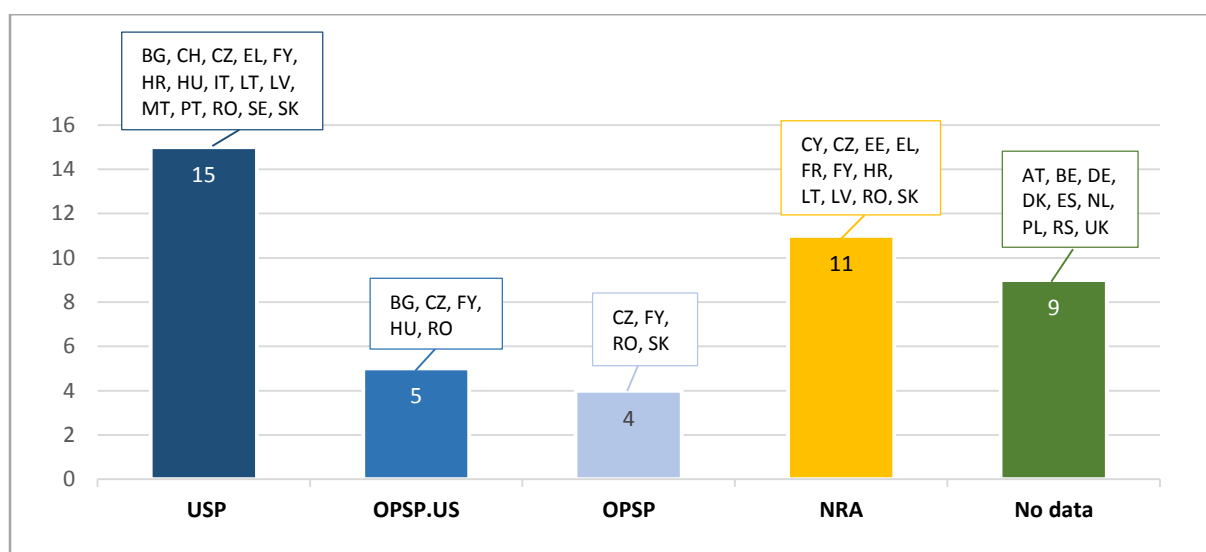


Note: The list of countries where NRAs collect data on complaints and from which postal service providers is available in the appendices (annex 11.1.).

The figure below focuses on cross-border services complaints, where the situation remains more or less the same as regards the collection of data by NRAs on complaints received by the USP, with a slight decrease concerning the collection of data on complaints received by other postal service providers, when compared with the situation in 2014. Significantly less NRAs (11 in 2015 against 19 in 2014) are indicating to have data on complaints about cross-border services received by them.



Figure 33 – Collection of data by NRAs on the number of complaints received by postal service providers and the NRA about cross-border services in 2015



Items lost or substantially delayed was the main reason mentioned by most countries (BG, CY, EL, IT, PT, SE, SK) for complaints on cross-border issues, followed by items damaged (EE, EL, LT, LV, SK). Other reasons mentioned include misdelivery, VAT and costings issues, and the lack of responsibility of the postal service providers from the country of origin.

5.4.2. Complaints on postal services collected by NRAs

The figures in this chapter show data on the number of complaints received by USPs and by NRAs in 2014 and 2015 per country and per number of inhabitants in each country⁵³. Data on the number of complaints received by USPs about cross-border service complaints are also shown.

When analysing these data, it should be taken into consideration that comparisons between the numbers presented by the countries may reflect differences in the legal and regulatory frameworks, market volumes/structure, as well as cultural aspects. For instance, in some countries end-users may have to address their complaints first to the service provider before submitting it to the NRA while in others they are able to reach the NRA in first or second instance (depending on these particularities, numbers on complaints may overlap). These and other aspects may have a significant impact on the number of complaints that postal service providers and NRAs receive.

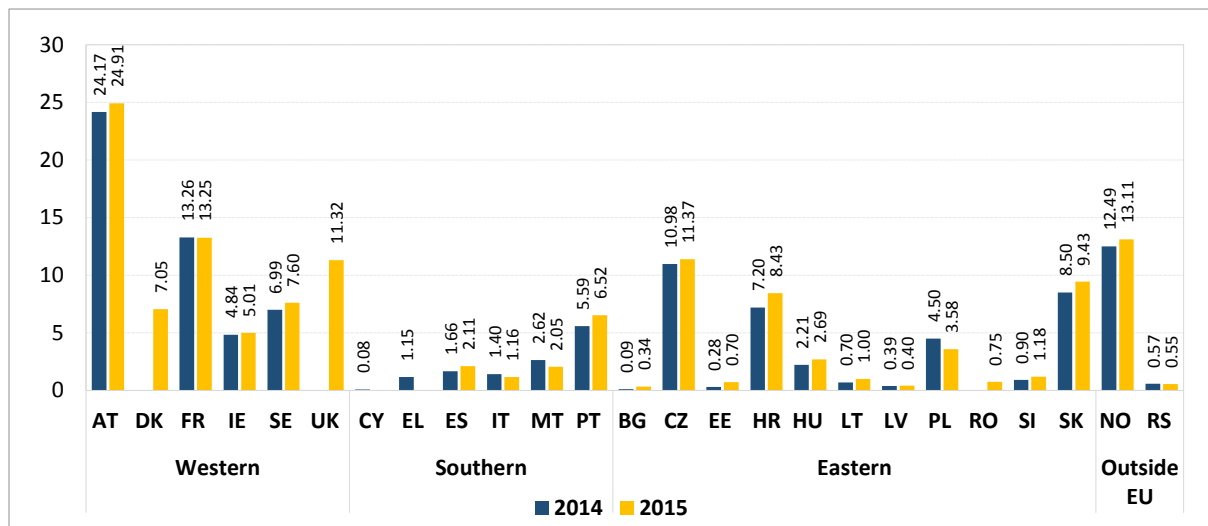
⁵³ The information on the population of each country that was used is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001&plugin=1>. For this report it was last collected on July 10, 2016.



It should also be kept in mind that the numbers provided by NRAs may have differences in scope. For instance, some may consider only written complaints while others may include only justified complaints.

The figure below shows the complaints received by USPs about universal service per country per 1000 inhabitants. The complaints rate ranged in 2015 from 24,91 (Austria) to 0,34 (Bulgaria). The overall complaints rate has slightly increased from 2014 to 2015 (6,17 complaints per 1000 inhabitants in 2014 and 6,11 in 2015), but is still less when compared to the situation portrayed in 2013 (7,77). When considering the geographic clusters, the overall complaints rate is higher within Western countries (12,29 complaints per 1000 inhabitants) and much lower in Eastern countries (3,81) and Southern countries (2,01).

Figure 34 – Complaints received by USPs about universal service per country per 1000 inhabitants, 2014-2015

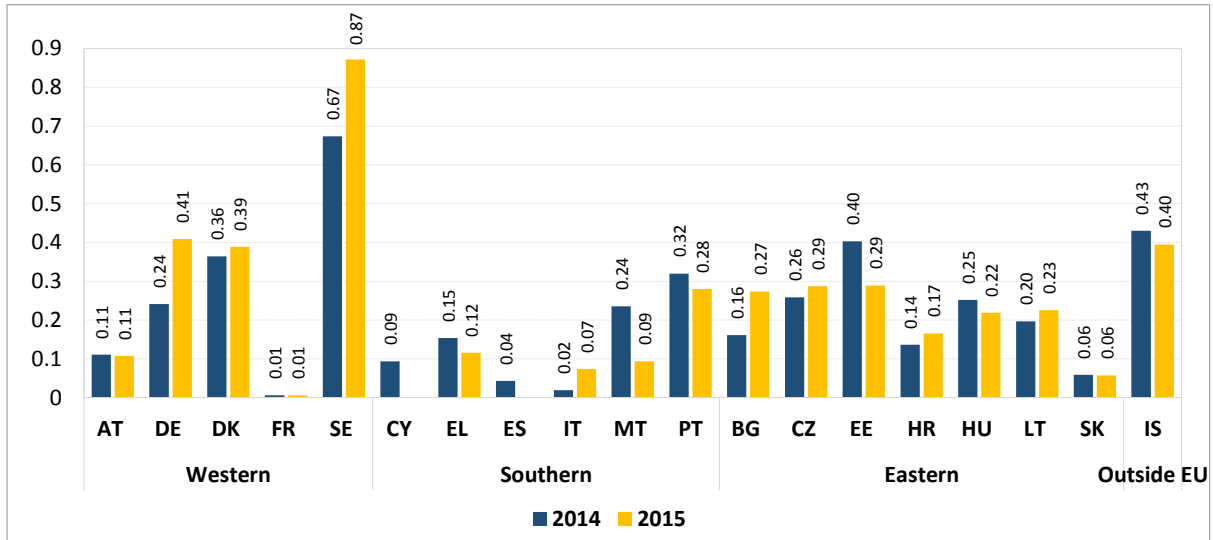


Note: The number of complaints received by USPs and the population per country are included in the appendices (annex 11.2.).

The figure below shows complaints received by NRAs about postal services per country per 10000 inhabitants. In 2015, the complaints rate ranged from 0,87 (Sweden) to 0,01 (France). The overall complaints rate has increased when compared to 2014 (0,15 complaints per 10000 inhabitants in 2014 and 0,21 in 2015), influenced by significant increases in Bulgaria, Germany, Italy and Sweden. When considering the geographic clusters, Western and Eastern countries show a similar overall complaints rate (0,26 and 0,22, respectively) while Southern countries show a lower overall complaints rate (0,11).



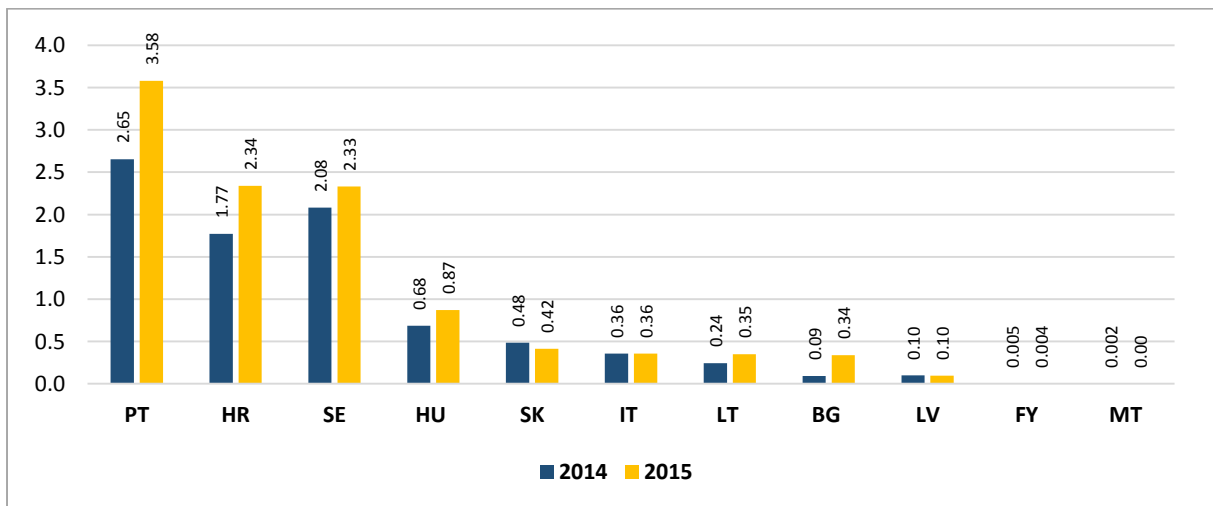
Figure 35 – Complaints received by NRAs about postal services per country per 10000 inhabitants, 2014-2015



Note: The number of complaints received by NRAs and the population per country are figured in the appendices (annex 11.3.).

In turn, the figure below shows complaints received by USPs about cross-border services per country per 1000 inhabitants. The complaints range in 2015 from 3,58 (Portugal) to 0,004 (FYROM). In the majority of countries, the complaints on cross-border services have increased, when comparing 2015 to 2014, which could be related with the increasing volume of electronic commerce.

Figure 36 – Complaints received by USPs about cross-border services per country per 1000 inhabitants, 2014-2015



Note: The number of complaints received by USPs and the population per country are included in the appendices (annex 11.4.).



ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Methodology for each country for the measurement of quality of service of domestic services provided by USP in 2015

Services	Standards	Count	Country	%
Single-piece priority mail	EN 13850	29	AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK	96,7%
	Other	1	EE	3,3%
Single-piece non-priority mail	EN 13850	6	FI, FR, IS, IT, LT, NO	35,3%
	EN 14508	10	BE, BG, CH, DK, HR, HU, PL, PT, SK, UK	58,8%
	Other	1	LV	7,1%
Bulk mail	EN 14534	3	FR, HU, MT	75,0%
	EN 13850	1	ES	25,0%
Parcels	EN 13850	3	DK, NO, UK	21,4%
	TR 15472	4	BE, MT, PL, SI	28,6%
	EN 14508	1	FY	7,1%
	Other	6	BG ⁵⁴ , CH, ES ⁵⁵ , FR ⁵⁶ , HU, LT ⁵⁷ , PT ⁵⁸ , RO ⁵⁹	42,9%
Registered mail	EN 13850	2	AT, LT	28,6%
	TR 15472	1	BE	14,3%
	EN 14508	1	SK	14,3%
	EN 14137	1	MT	14,3%
	Other	2	FR ⁶⁰ , HU	28,6%
Cross border mail	Methodology based on EN 13850	14	AT, BG, CY, EE, EL, FR, HR, HU, IS, IT, LU, MT, PT, SI	93,3%
	Confidential	1	CH	6,7%

⁵⁴ Admitting data from the barcode where technically possible, otherwise from the date-stamp.

⁵⁵ No standard used

⁵⁶ Methodology based on a track and trace system, that may be audited.

⁵⁷ As parcels must be registered data of clearance, sorting and delivery of such postal items is visible for USP. According to these data USP can estimate the average result.

⁵⁸ The measurement is based on a sample of real mail items (parcels), selected according to their real mail flows.

⁵⁹ When this kind of service (priority domestic parcels) will be introduced in the commercial offer of the USP, The USP will have to communicate to the regulator the methodology of the quality of service measurement.

⁶⁰ Methodology based on a track and trace system, that may be audited.



Annex 2 – Force majeure and other exception which have an impact on the measurement of quality of service

2.1 Number of days of measurement impacted by force majeure events in 2015 and reasons

Country	Number of days accepted by the NRA	Geographical area affected	Reasons	Number of days denied by the NRA
BE	5	2 national incidents 3 regional incidents	Strikes (4) and security reason (1)	0
BG	0	-	-	0
CY	0	-	-	0
EL	2	National	Strikes	8
FY	0	-	-	-
HR	-	Regional	Extreme weather conditions	-
HU	0	-	-	0
IE	0	-	-	6
IT	0	-	-	-
MT	0	-	-	0
NO	0	-	-	-
PL	0	-	-	-
PT	0	-	-	0
RS	0	-	-	-
SI	0	-	-	0
SK	0	-	-	0



2.2 Other exceptions that have an impact on the measurement of the quality of service in 2015

Country	Exceptions
BE	<p>During three weeks in the Christmas period, the USP is allowed to sell Christmas stamps (with a delivery speed of D+3 instead of the standard D+1), besides the priority mail (with a delivery speed of standard D+1), and which are excluded from the quality measurement system. In case consumers use these Christmas stamps outside the Christmas period, they will be valid and included in the quality measurement system.</p> <p>The consumers have to be well-informed and the standard D+1 stamp should always be available as an alternative to this Christmas stamp.</p> <p>The Christmas stamp is available in the entirety of Belgium.</p>
EE	<p>In the case of an island which does not have a regular ferry, boat or flight connection which allows delivery of a postal item with the prescribed frequency. On holidays there is no collection or delivery, in case of island the collection and delivery is done with the frequency of connection.</p>
UK	<p>The Christmas period is exempt. The current exemption runs from the first Monday in December to the first working day after the New Year public holiday in the following year. It is national.</p>



Annex 3 – Data regarding quality of service measurement and audit in 2015

3.1 Information about measurement and audit regarding transit time of single-piece priority mail

	Who commissions or orders the measurement?	Who pays for the measurement?	Is the measurement audited?	Who is responsible for ensuring the audit
AT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BE	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BG	NRA	NRA	No	-
CH	NRA and USP ⁶¹	USP	Yes	Independent organisation
CY ⁶²	USP	USP	Yes	USP
CZ	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
DE	USP	USP	Yes	USP
DK	NRA	USP	No	-
EE	USP	USP	No	-
EL	NRA	NRA	Yes	NRA
ES	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
FI	NRA	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
FR	USP	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
HR	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
HU	USP	USP	Yes	USP
IE	NRA	NRA	Yes	NRA
IS	-	USP	No	NRA
IT	NRA	USP	Yes	USP
LT	USP	USP	No	-
LU	USP	-	Yes	-
LV	USP	USP	Yes	USP
MT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
NL	USP	USP	Yes	USP
NO	USP	USP	Yes	-
PL	NRA	NRA	Yes	NRA
PT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
RO	USP	USP	Yes	USP
RS	NRA	USP	No	-
SE	USP	USP	Yes	-
SI	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
SK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
UK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
Total of yes	-	-	26	-

Note: considering countries for which single-piece priority mail is applicable and that have a measurement.

⁶¹ The NRA grants an approval.

⁶² The NRA makes sure both the measurements and the audits are done in accordance with the standard EN 13850



3.2 Information about measurement and audit regarding transit time of single-piece non-priority mail

	Who commissions or orders the measurement?	Who pays for the measurement?	Is the measurement audited?	Who is responsible for ensuring the audit
BE	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BG	NRA	NRA	No	-
CH	NRA and USP ⁶³	USP	Yes	Independent organisation
DK	NRA	USP	No	-
FI	NRA	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
FR	USP	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
FY	USP	-	No	-
HR	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
HU	USP	USP	Yes	USP
IS	-	USP	No	-
IT	NRA	USP	Yes	NRA
LT	USP	USP	No	-
LU	USP	-	Yes	-
LV	NRA	NRA	Yes	NRA
NO	USP	USP	Yes	-
PL	NRA	NRA	Yes	NRA
PT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
SK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
UK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
Total of yes	-	-	14	-

Note: considering countries for which single-piece non-priority mail is applicable and that have a measurement.

⁶³ The NRA grants an approval.



3.3 Information about measurement and audit regarding transit time of registered mail

	Who commissions or orders the measurement?	Who pays for the measurement?	Is the measurement audited?	Who is responsible for ensuring the audit
AT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BE	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
DE	USP	USP	Yes	USP
FR	USP	USP	No	-
HU	USP	USP	Yes	USP
IT	NRA	USP	Yes	USP
LT	-	-	No	-
LU	-	-	-	-
MT	USP	USP	No	-
SK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
UK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
Total of yes	-	-	7	-

Note: considering countries for which registered mail is applicable and that have a measurement



3.4 Information about measurement and audit regarding transit time of single-piece parcels

	Who commissions or orders the measurement?	Who pays for the measurement?	Is the measurement audited?	Who is responsible for ensuring the audit
AT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BE	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BG	USP	USP	No	-
CH	NRA and USP ⁶⁴	USP	Yes	USP and an independent organisation
DK	NRA	USP	No	-
ES	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
FR	USP	USP	No	-
FY	USP	USP	No	NRA
HU	USP	USP	Yes	USP
IT	NRA	USP	Yes	USP
LT	USP	-	No	-
LV	NRA	NRA	Yes	NRA
MT	USP	USP	No	-
NO	USP	USP	Yes	-
PL	NRA	USP	Yes	NRA
PT	USP	-	Yes	NRA
SI	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
SK ⁶⁵	USP	USP	-	-
UK	USP	USP	Yes	NRA and USP
Total of yes	-	-	12	-

Note: considering countries for which single-piece parcel is applicable and that have a measurement

⁶⁴ The NRA grants an approval.

⁶⁵ There was no measurement in 2015



3.5 Information about measurement and audit regarding transit time of cross-border mail

	Who commissions or orders the measurement?	Who pays for the measurement?	Is the measurement audited?	Who is responsible for ensuring the audit
AT	USP	USP	Yes	NRA
BE	Other	other	Yes	other
BG	USP	USP	Yes	other
CY	USP	USP	Yes	USP
CZ	USP	USP	No	-
EE	USP	USP	No	-
FR	USP	USP	No	-
FY	USP	USP	No	NRA
HR	USP	USP	No	NRA
HU	USP	USP	Yes	USP
IS	NRA	USP	No	-
IT	The Group of the Universal Service Providers	USP	Yes	Price Waterhouse Consulting
LU	IPC	-	Yes	-
MT	USP	USP	No	-
NO	USP	USP	No	-
PT ⁶⁶	USP	na	Yes	NRA
RO	USP	USP	Yes	USP
SR	-	-	No	-
SI	USP	USP	-	-
UK	-	-	No	-
Total of yes	-	-	9	-

Note: considering countries that have a measurement

⁶⁶ The audit promoted by the NRA only covers the calculation made by the USP (based on the information provided by IPC) and reported to ANACOM. This audit does not cover the measurement itself.



Annex 4 – Derogation in frequency

1. Croatia: According to the Croatian PSA (Postal Service Act) reasons for the exceptions to the guaranteed frequency of delivery are determined in Article 35 of Ordinance on the provision of the universal service. This way, the universal service providers are obliged to perform, among other things, the delivery of postal items on the whole territory of Croatia with exceptions: up to 10% of the total number of Croatian households, according to the official results of the census in Croatia; delivery in specific geographical areas in Croatia: mountain areas, islands and areas with extremely harsh conditions of access); delivery of ordinary letters and notification of the arrival for postal items are done through collective post boxes. Also, the universal service providers are obliged to deliver to the Croatian NRA (HAKOM) the list of all the variance in the performance of universal postal services (including delivery) on the grounds of compliance with the Ordinance on the provision of the universal service. At present, the NRA doesn't have a list of these exceptions.

2. Denmark: In accordance with the Postal Services Directive and pursuant to Article 15 of the Danish Postal Service Act of 2010, the Danish National Regulatory Authority (the National Transport Authority), has stipulated that the permanent inhabitants of a number of small Danish islands (approximately 7-8 islands) will have to pick up their postal items - letters and parcels - at a central location on the mainland (typically in the ferry port). The inhabitants receive compensation from the universal service provider for this derogation from the universal service. As a principle, the limit is set at 10 permanent inhabitants but 3-4 small islands with a population below 10 permanent inhabitants are subject to more individual arrangements such as the delivery of postal items in a letter box in the ferry port or delivery to the homes of the inhabitants by the boatman or by one of the inhabitants (for which he will be compensated). For all other Danish islands with a daily boat or ferry service and with more than 10 permanent inhabitants, postal items are carried to the island on a daily basis Monday through Saturday and delivered to the homes of the inhabitants. The service requirement for domestic parcels is day-to-day delivery Monday through Friday between all Danish cities, except for parcels to the Danish island of Bornholm (in the Baltic Sea) where an extra day must be expected for delivery.

3. Greece: The list of settlements located in areas that are excluded due to special geographical peculiarities are approved by the Minister of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks and are included in annexes to the USP's Management Contract between the USP and the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks.

The list of settlements located in areas that are excluded due to special geographical peculiarities is formed by a 3 members committee where one member is from the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks, one member from the Greek NRA (EETT) and one member from the USP. The proposed settlements that are excluded from the quality measurements once evaluated and approved by the Minister of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks are included in annexes to the USP's Management Contract between the USP and the Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport and Networks. The list is published on the Internet.

4. Ireland: The reasons provided by the USP for each of the derogations sought were: the low demand on these days and postal service users have alternative methods of communications, many businesses are closed/inaccessible on these days and services were not provided previously on those days, and finally there would be significant costs to provide the services now. By way of consequence ComReg has granted a derogation from the universal postal service for the following working days: a full derogation for Mondays following a public holiday that falls on a Saturday or Sunday, a full derogation for the first working day after 26 December (St. Stephen's Day), a derogation for collections only on 24 December and a part derogation for Good Friday.



5. Slovenia: This reason can produce permanent or temporary effects. **Permanent** exceptions to delivery in the case of difficult access to the addressee may be determined in the following cases: if the apartment, individual dwelling house or business premise of the user of postal services from the nearest public road is more than 200 m and access to it is not possible with a suitable vehicle, namely, every day of the year; if the apartment, individual dwelling house or business premise of the user of postal services from the nearest public road is more than 2000 m, access to it is possible with a suitable vehicle, namely, every day of the year; if the access to user premises is only possible with the passage of land privately owned by a third party which does not allow passage. The distance mentioned above is measured from the nearest public road, and the shortest path to which is added a supplement to the height difference, so that above 100 m of altitude for every 100 m difference in altitude 1000 m routes added or proportionate share. **Temporary** exceptions to delivery within the framework of the implementation of the universal postal service in the case of difficult access to the addressee are determined in the event of a public road or path to the addressee temporarily impassable (under construction or damaged), if there are temporary physical barriers preventing access to the house letterbox or addressee or, if the weather and other hydro-meteorological and geophysical natural catastrophes do not allow service and delivery (force majeure). **Permanent exceptions** for delivery because of care for health and safety of the deliverer is determined if a public road or path to the addressee is in such bad shape that it represents a threat to the deliverer's health or safety. **Temporary exemptions** from the service and delivery because of care for the health and safety of the deliverer are determined in the case of dangerous animals, violent behaviour to the deliverer or temporary threatening physical access barriers to home letterbox or destination. Also, the temporary exceptions to delivery because of care for health and safety of the deliverer may be determined in the case of temporarily blocked public roads or snow-covered or icy road, flooded roadway, fire and other similar causes on which the postal provider has no influence. The NRA has not defined a list of settlements located in exceptional geographical conditions, but has a detailed list of households facing such circumstances. The list in case is updated monthly or immediately if there are some bigger events of natural disasters.

6. Spain: As is stipulated in the Spanish law: "Deliveries shall take place at least every working day, from Monday to Friday, **except in the case of special geographical circumstances or conditions**, in accordance with the provisions of this Act and its implementing regulations. Notably, a delivery shall be made at suitable installations which are different to the postal address, following authorisation by the National Postal Sector Commission (now CNMC), when there is competition of the conditions set out in the implementing regulations of the present Act, in accordance with the provisions of Directive 97/67/CE. For the purposes of the preceding paragraph, zones of low population density, which shall not include rural zones, shall be duly defined."

7. UK: The number of exceptions are published on Royal Mail's website annually (this does not include individual addresses). The document published by Royal Mail lists the categories of special circumstances for derogation by the rule stipulated in the universal service obligations: ex. health and safety, difficulty of access: http://www.royalmailgroup.com/search/google_cse_adv/exceptions. The list is refreshed annually.



Annex 5 – Countries in which the criteria establishing the exceptional geographical character both defined and published

<p>Bulgaria: http://www.crc.bg/files/bg/TDR_spisak.pdf;</p>
<p>FYROM: http://www.ap.mk/mk/legislativa1/238-2011-11-03-12-29-25;</p>
<p>Greece: http://www.eett.gr/opencms/opencms/EETT_EN/eGov;</p>
<p>FYROM: http://www.ap.mk/mk/legislativa1/238-2011-11-03-12-29-25;</p>
<p>Iceland: https://www.pfs.is/library/Skrar/akv.-og-urskurdir/akvardanir-PFS/Akv_PFS_nr.34_2015_.pdf;</p>
<p>Ireland: http://www.comreg.ie/_fileupload/publications/ComReg14135.pdf;</p>
<p>Italy: http://www.agcom.it/documents/10179/2209608/Delibera+395-15-CONS/a9012437-c38c-4baa-8fd8-257472caba41?version=1.2;</p>
<p>Slovakia: http://www.posta.sk/stranky/informacie-k-otvaracim-hodinam-post;</p>
<p>UK: http://www.royalmailgroup.com/sites/default/files/USO%20Collection%20Exceptions%202015.pdf and also the http://www.royalmailgroup.com/sites/default/files/Delivery%20Exceptions%20-%202015.pdf</p>



Annex 6 – Absolute numbers regarding the evolution of the number of collection letterboxes in 2008, 2014 and 2015

Number of collecting letter boxes of the USPs				
Country	2008	2014	2015	Evolution
AU	20000	15851	15544	Decrease
BE	13800 ⁶⁷	13270	13263	Decrease
BG	5286	4814	4814	Unchanged
CH	18913	14927	14823	Decrease
CY	953	1005	911	Decrease
CZ	23746	21971	21698	Decrease
DE	111058	111375	110829	Decrease
DK	10250	7400	7400	Unchanged
EE	3193	2777	2777	Unchanged
EL	9754	8800	8552	Decrease
ES	n/a	25242	25163	Decrease
FI	n/a	7000	6600	Decrease
FR	147793	138849	136930	Decrease
FYROM	n/a	359	359	Unchanged
HR	5051	3147	3121	Decrease
HU	9540	8904	8763	Decrease
IE	4800	5700	5700	Unchanged
IS	230	194	193	Decrease
IT	61500	52000	52000	Unchanged
LT	2981	1838	1687	Decrease
LU	1168	1168	n/a	Unchanged
LV	1817	1063	1073	Decrease
MT	468	471	468	Decrease
NL	20000	n/a	18000	Decrease
NO	24762	14879	13047	Decrease
PL	52396	29914	22838	Decrease
PT	15972	9457	9635	Decrease
RO	16211	13482	13290	Decrease
RS	n/a	2052	2000	Decrease
SE	29128	23351	23478	Growth
SI	3054	2322	2296	Decrease
SK	6797	5656	5570	Decrease
UK	118000	118000	118000	Unchanged

⁶⁷ Data of 2010


Annex 7 – Absolute numbers regarding the evolution of contact points in 2008, 2014 and 2015

Number of contact points of the USPs				
Country	2008	2014	2015	Evolution
AU	0	1890	1769	Decrease
BE	1351	1344	1344	Decrease
BG	5401	5383	5431	Growth
CH	0			Unchanged
CY	1160	1164	1098	Decrease
CZ	11079	6930	6923	Decrease
DE	0	13165	13169	Growth
DK	751	921	1112	Growth
EE	418	337	328	Decrease
EL	5943	4785	4314	Decrease
ES	9926	9054	8946	Decrease
FI	0	878	863	Decrease
FR	16862	17075	17083	Growth
FYROM	0	0	0	Unchanged
HR	0	1016	1016	Unchanged
HU	3883	3784	3783	Decrease
IE	1426	1140	1130	Decrease
IS	159	129	122	Decrease
IT	13911	13233	13048	Decrease
LT	954	811	793	Decrease
LU	466	114	0	Decrease
LV	700	618	620	Growth
MT	61	63	68	Growth
NL	2085	2064	2047	Decrease
NO	0	0		Unchanged
PL	8489	7540	7387	Decrease
PT	2873	2317	2330	Growth
RO	0	0	0	Unchanged
RS	0	1478	1491	Growth
SE	4170	3735	3779	Growth
SI	558	560	558	Growth
SK	1678	1665	1663	Decrease
UK	11952	11696	11634	Decrease


Annex 8 – Absolute numbers of contact points by type in 2015

Number of contact points by type in 2015					
Country	Permanent PO	Mobile& Seasonal	Mailman USP	3rd entity	other
AU	497	0	0	1272	0
BE	664	0	0	680	0
BG	2981	0	2450	0	0
CH	1464	5	1295	735	0
CY	56	0	0	1042	0
CZ	3124	0	3609	190	0
DE	827	0	0	12333	0
DK	6	0	0	1098	0
EE	200	0	0	128	0
EL	732	0	2170	720	692
ES	2970	0	5976	0	0
FI	863	0	0	0	0
FR	9254	0	0	7829	0
FYROM	329	3	629	0	0
HR	1009	7	0	0	0
HU	2334	1122	0	307	20
IE	51	0	0	1079	0
IS	62	60	0	0	0
IT	13048	0	0	0	0
LT	659	133	0	0	0
LU	0	0	0	0	0
LV	570	1	24	25	0
MT	36	2	0	30	0
NL	0	0	0	0	0
NO	38	0	1478	1362	0
PL	4671	0	0	2716	0
PT	616	3	0	1711	0
RO	0	0	0	0	0
RS	1257	1	0	233	0
SE	260	0	1912	1607	0
SI	416	24	0	0	118
SK	1615	5	0	43	0
UK	0	0	0	0	0



Annex 9 – Obligations to provide information

Countries where postal service providers are obliged to publish information on procedures to complain, compensation schemes and dispute resolution⁶⁸

	Universal Service Provider	Other Postal Service Providers active in the Universal Service area	Other Postal Service Providers
Procedures to complain	BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, UK	BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, UK	BE, BG, CY, CZ, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, UK
Compensation schemes	BG, CY, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK	BG, CY, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK	BG, CY, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK
Dispute resolution	BE, CH, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IS, IT, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK	BE, CH, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, IE, IT, PT, SI, SK, UK	BE, CH, CY, CZ, EL, ES, IE, IT, PT, SE, SI, SK
No obligation	AT, DE, NL		

⁶⁸ NRAs notes:

SK: Obligations to provide information on dispute resolution since February 2016.



Annex 10 – Compensation schemes for individual customers

Countries that have compensation schemes for individual customers⁶⁹

	Universal Service Provider	Other Postal Service Providers active in the Universal Service area	Other Postal Service Providers
Item lost or substantially delayed	BG, CY, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RS, SI, SK, UK	BG, CY, EE, EL, FR, FYRO, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, PL, SI, SK	BG, CY, EE, EL, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, RS, SI, SK
Item arriving late	BG, DK, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LU, PL, PT, RS, SI, UK	BG, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LU, PL, SI	BG, EL, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, PL, RS
Item damaged	BG, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SI, SK, UK	BG, EL, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO, SI, SK	BG, EE, EL, FR, FYROM, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, RO, RS, SK
Change of address	HU, IE, SI	IE, SI	HU, IE
Mail delivery or collection	IE, IT, SI	IE, IT, SI	IE, IT
Misdelivery	ES, IE, IT, PT, SI	IE, IT, SI	IE, IT
How complaints are treated	IE, IT, RS, SI	IE, IT, SI	IE, IT, RS
Other	BG, IE, SI	BG, IE, SI	BG, IE

⁶⁹ NRAs notes:

BG: Other: stolen item. Non-observance of the deadline for refund of the cash on delivery.

SK: Only lost recorded items, only substantially delayed express items.



Annex 11 – Data on complaints

11.1. NRAs that collect data on the number of complaints received by postal service providers⁷⁰

		Universal Service Provider		Other Postal Service Providers active in the Universal Service area		Other Postal Service Providers	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
About Universal Services	Total	AT, BG, CH, CY, CZ, EE, EL, ES, FR, FY, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK	BE, DE, IS, NL	BG, CY, CZ, EL, FY, HU, LT, LU, PL, RO, SI	AT, BE, CH, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, IS, LV, MT, NO, PT, SK		
	Category	CH, CZ, EL, ES, FR, FY, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI		CZ, EL, FY, PL, RO, SI			
	Service	CH, EL, ES, FR, FY, HR, IT, LT, LV, PT, SE		FY			
About Non-Universal Services	Total	BG, CH, CY, CZ, EL, FY, HU, IT, LT, NO, PL, RO, RS, SE, SK	AT, BE, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, IE, IS, LU, LV, MT, NL, PT, SI	BG, CY, CZ, EL, FY, HU, LT, PL, RO, SI	AT, BE, CH, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, IS, LU, LV, MT, NL, NO, PT, SK	BG, CY, CZ, EL, FY, HU, LT, PL, RO, SI, SK	AT, BE, CH, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, IS, LU, LV, MT, NL, NO, PT, SE
	Category	CZ, EL, FY, IT, LT, PL, RO, SE		CZ, EL, FY, PL, RO, SI		CZ, EL, FY, PL, RO, RS, SI	
	Service	EL, FY, IT, LT, SE		FY, IT, PL		FY	

⁷⁰ NRAs notes:

PT: The data refers to answered complaints by the USP.



11.2. Complaints received by USPs about universal service per country per 1,000 habitants, 2014-2015⁷¹

	2014			2015		
	USP complaints	Population	Complaints per 1,000 habitants	USP complaints	Population	Complaints per 1,000 habitants
AT - Austria	205572	8506889	24,17	213646	8576261	24,91
BG - Bulgaria	685	7245677	0,09	2437	7202198	0,34
CY - Cyprus	65	858000	0,08	-	-	-
CZ - Czech Rep.	115419	10512419	10,98	119844	10538275	11,37
DK - Denmark	-	-	-	39902	5659715	7,05
EE - Estonia	374	1315819	0,28	925	1313271	0,70
EL - Greece	12618	10926807	1,15	11004	10926807	1.01
ES - Spain	77103	46512199	1,66	97791	46449565	2,11
FR - France	873834	65889148	13,26	879895	66415161	13,25
HR - Croatia	30574	4246809	7,20	35609	4225316	8,43
HU - Hungary	21854	9877365	2,21	26481	9855571	2,69
IE - Ireland	22290	4605501	4,84	23169	4628949	5,01
IT - Italy	85230	60782668	1,40	70582	60795612	1,16
LT - Lithuania	2050	2943472	0,70	2928	2921262	1,00
LV - Latvia	779	2001468	0,39	795	1986096	0,40
MT - Malta	1116	425384	2,62	880	429344	2,05
NO - Norway	63811	5107970	12,49	67733	5166493	13,11
PL - Poland	171240	38017856	4,50	136070	38005614	3,58
PT - Portugal ⁷²	58276	10427301	5,59	67692	10374822	6,52
RO - Romania ⁷³	-	-	-	14854	19870647	0,75
RS - Serbia	4095	7146759	0,57	3929	7114393	0,55
SE - Sweden	67398	9644864	6,99	74054	9747355	7,60
SI - Slovenia	1865	2061085	0,90	2437	2062874	1,18
SK - Slovakia	46046	5415949	8,50	51107	5421349	9,43
UK - U. Kingdom ⁷⁴	-	-	-	732869	64767115	11,32

⁷¹ The information on the population of each country that was used is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001&plugin=1>. For this report it was last collected on July 10, 2016.

⁷² The number of complaints received by the USP in Portugal is influenced by the existence of a legally established “complaints book”, that has to be available on all postal service providers’ establishments.

⁷³ Founded complaints.

⁷⁴

<http://www.royalmailgroup.com/sites/default/files/annual%20complaints%20report%20for%202014%2015.pdf>



11.3. Complaints received by NRAs about postal services per country per 10,000 inhabitants, 2014-2015⁷⁵

	2014			2015		
	NRA complaints	Population	Complaints per 10,000 inhabitants	NRA complaints	Population	Complaints per 10,000 inhabitants
AT - Austria	94	8506889	0,11	92	8576261	0,11
BG - Bulgaria	117	7245677	0,16	197	7202198	0,27
CY - Cyprus	8	858000	0,09	-	-	-
CZ - Czech Rep.	272	10512419	0,26	303	10538275	0,29
DE - Germany	1951	80767463	0,24	3318	81197537	0,41
DK - Denmark	205	5627235	0,36	220	5659715	0,39
EE - Estonia	53	1315819	0,40	38	1313271	0,29
EL - Greece	168	10926807	0,15	126	10858018	0,12
ES - Spain	200	46512199	0,04	-	-	-
FR - France	42	65889148	0,01	38	66415161	0,01
HR- Croatia	58	4246809	0,14	70	4225316	0,17
HU - Hungary	249	9877365	0,25	216	9855571	0,22
IS - Iceland	14	325671	0,43	13	329100	0,40
IT - Italy	115	60782668	0,02	450	60795612	0,07
LT - Lithuania	58	2943472	0,20	66	2921262	0,23
MT - Malta	10	425384	0,24	4	429344	0,09
PT - Portugal ⁷⁶	331	10427301	0,32	288	10374822	0,28
SE - Sweden	650	9644864	0,67	850	9747355	0,87
SK - Slovakia	32	5415949	0,06	31	5421349	0,06

⁷⁵ The information on the population of each country that was used is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001&plugin=1>. For this report it was last collected on July 10, 2016.

⁷⁶ ANACOM also receives complaints that are submitted to postal service providers through a legally established “complaints book”, available on all postal service providers’ establishments. These complaints have to, submitted to penalty, be sent to the NRA.


11.4. Complaints received by USP about cross-border services per country per 1,000 inhabitants, 2014-2015^{77/78}

	2014			2015		
	USP complaints	Population	Complaints per 1,000 inhabitants	USP complaints	Population	Complaints per 1,000 inhabitants
BG - Bulgaria	675	7245677	0,09	2431	7202198	0,34
FYROM	10	2065769	0,005	9	2069172	0,004
HR- Croatia	7518	4246809	1,77	9880	4225316	2,34
HU - Hungary	6759	9877365	0,68	8600	9855571	0,87
IT - Italy	21779	60782668	0,36	21692	60795612	0,36
LT - Lithuania	716	2943472	0,24	1022	2921262	0,35
LV - Latvia	197	2001468	0,10	194	1986096	0,10
MT - Malta	1	425384	0,002	0	429344	0,00
PT - Portugal	27673	10427301	2,65	37125	10374822	3,58
SE - Sweden	20062	9644864	2,08	22726	9747355	2,33
SK - Slovakia	2622	5415949	0,48	2252	5421349	0,42

⁷⁷ NRAs notes:

PT: The values refer to answered complaints by the USP and only to universal services. The number of complaints received by the USP in Portugal is influenced by the existence of a legally established “complaints book”, that has to be available on all postal service providers’ establishments.

⁷⁸ The information on the population of each country that was used is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00001&plugin=1>. For this report it was last collected on July 10, 2016.



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TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CEN – Comité Européen de Normalisation / European Committee for Standardisation

IPC – International Post Corporation

NA – Not available

NRA – National Regulatory Authority

OPSP.US – Other Postal Service Providers active in the Universal Service area

OPSP – Other Postal Service Providers

US – Universal Service

USP – Universal Service Provider

USO – Universal Service Obligation

X - Not applicable



COUNTRY CODES AND NRA ACRONYMS

COUNTRY CODE	NRA ACRONYM
AT - Austria	RTR
BE - Belgium	BIPT
BG - Bulgaria	CRC
CH - Switzerland, Helvetia	POSTCOM
CY - Cyprus	OCECPR
CZ - Czech Republic	CTU
DE - Germany	BNETZA
DK - Denmark	TBST
EE - Estonia	ECA
EL - Greece	EETT
ES - Spain	CNMC
FI - Finland	FICORA
FR - France	ARCEP
FYROM - Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia	AP
HR- Croatia	HAKOM
HU - Hungary	NMHH
IE - Ireland	COMREG
IS - Iceland	PFS
IT - Italy	AGCOM
LT - Lithuania	RRT
LU - Luxembourg	ILR



LV - Latvia	SPRK
MT - Malta	MCA
NL – The Netherlands	ACM
NO - Norway	NKOM
PL - Poland	UKE
PT - Portugal	ANACOM
RO - Romania	ANCOM
RS - Serbia	RATEL
SE - Sweden	PTS
SI - Slovenia	AKOS
SK - Slovakia	TELEOFF
UK – The United Kingdom	OFCOM