

Single Market Scoreboard

Postal services

Reporting period: 01/2016 – 12/2016

About

The purpose of [EU policy](#) in the **postal sector** is to create a single market for postal services. This is being done in 2 stages:

1. introducing competition by gradually opening up markets (completed at the end of 2012).
2. ensuring that **reliable, high-quality** postal services are **permanently** available throughout the EU **at affordable prices**.

Member States must ensure a basic postal service is available. This includes:

- collecting, sorting, transporting and distributing letters up to 2 kg and parcels up to 10 kg
- services for registered and insured items
- deliveries at least 5 working days a week
- all at affordable prices
- available to all members of the public.

This is called the **universal service obligation**.

The [postal sector](#) is changing rapidly. Letter traffic has fallen in many countries. This is partly because of the growth in digital communications. However, the growth in **e-commerce** has increased the number of parcels being handled by postal services. So it is important for the postal industry to make it easier to deliver physical goods bought online.

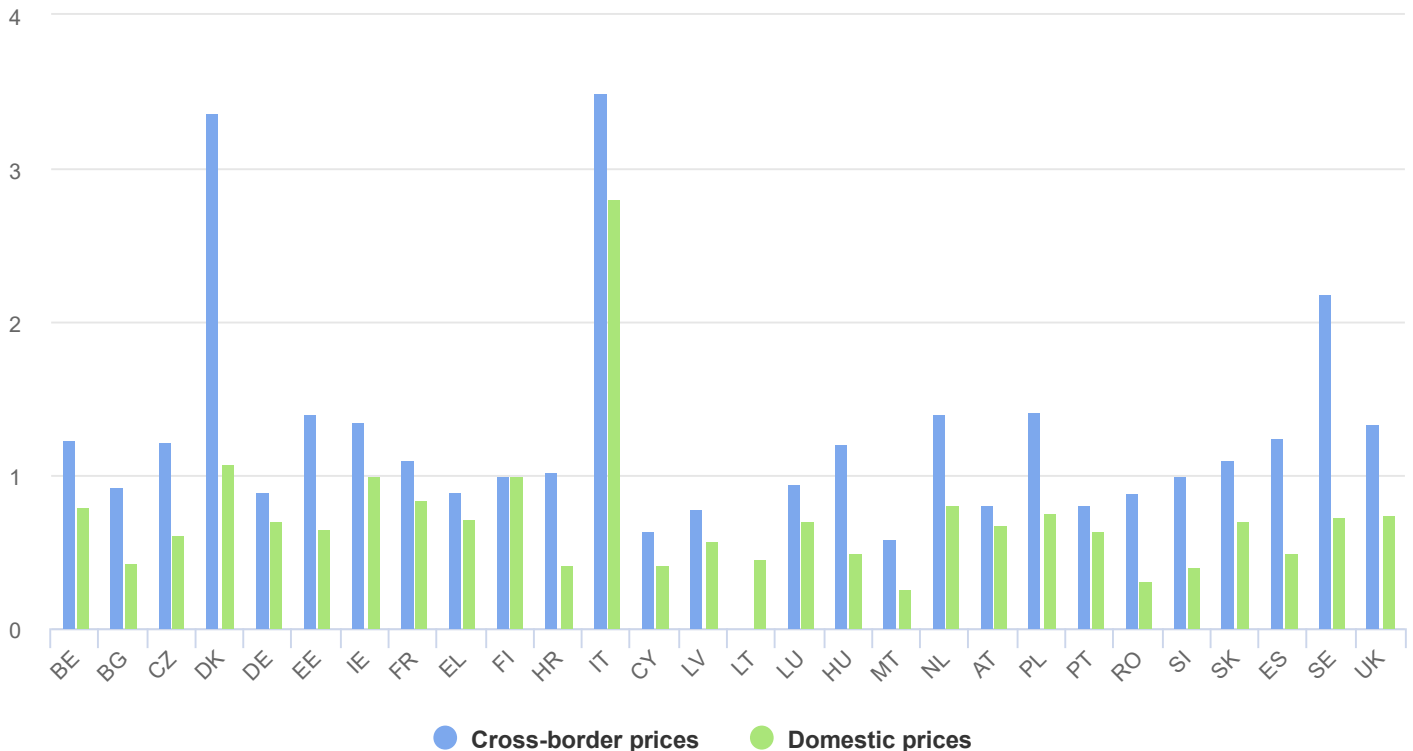
Facts and Figures

The following figures are based on data collected by the Commission for postal services.

Priority mail prices in PPPs (2017)

The graph below shows the **public tariff for 20 g letters** (in purchasing power parities).

Purchasing power parities (PPPs) are indicators of price level differences across countries. PPPs indicate how many currency units a particular quantity of goods and services costs in different countries. They can be used to eliminate the effect of **price level differences** across countries.



- **Blue** – prices for post sent **from one EU country to another**
- **Green** – prices for **post within a single country**.

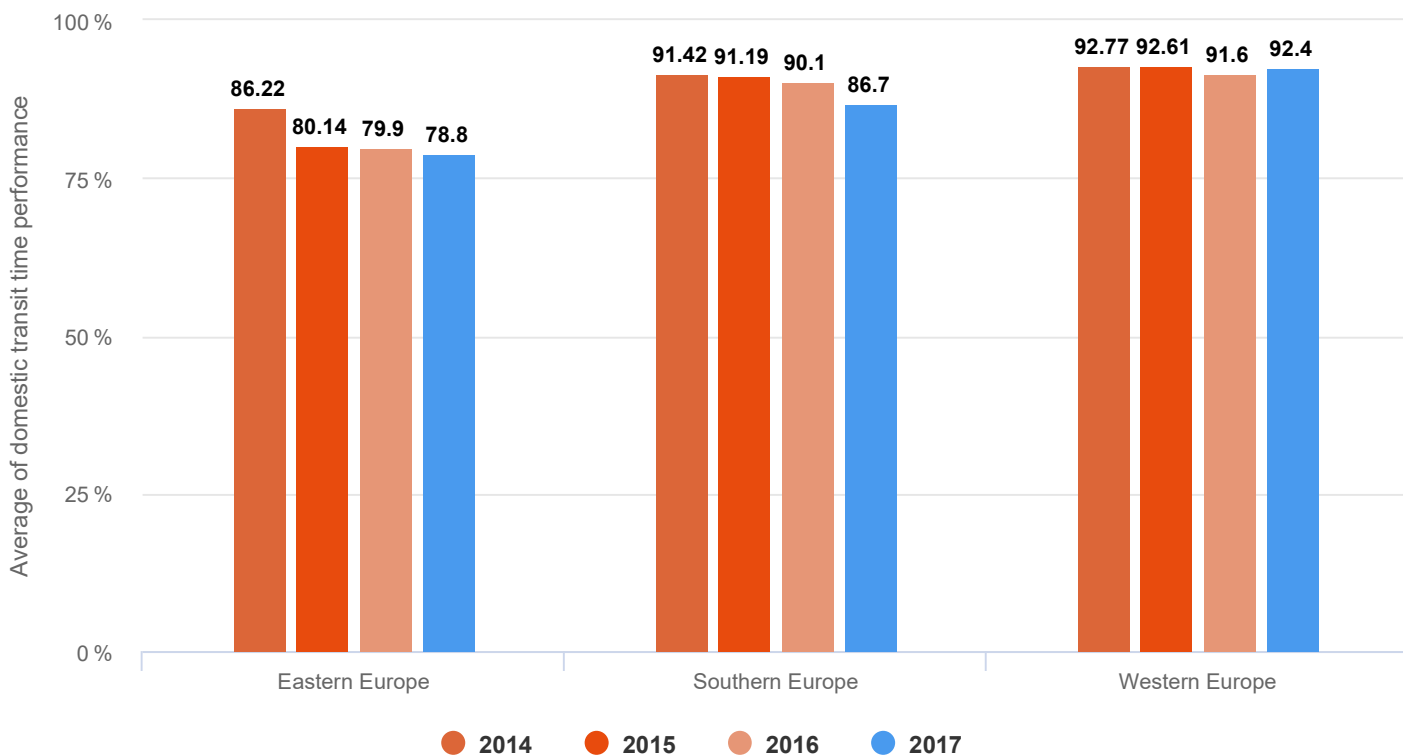
Comments

- All countries charge **much higher prices for deliveries abroad**.
- The biggest gaps between cross-border and domestic services occur mainly in some eastern EU countries.

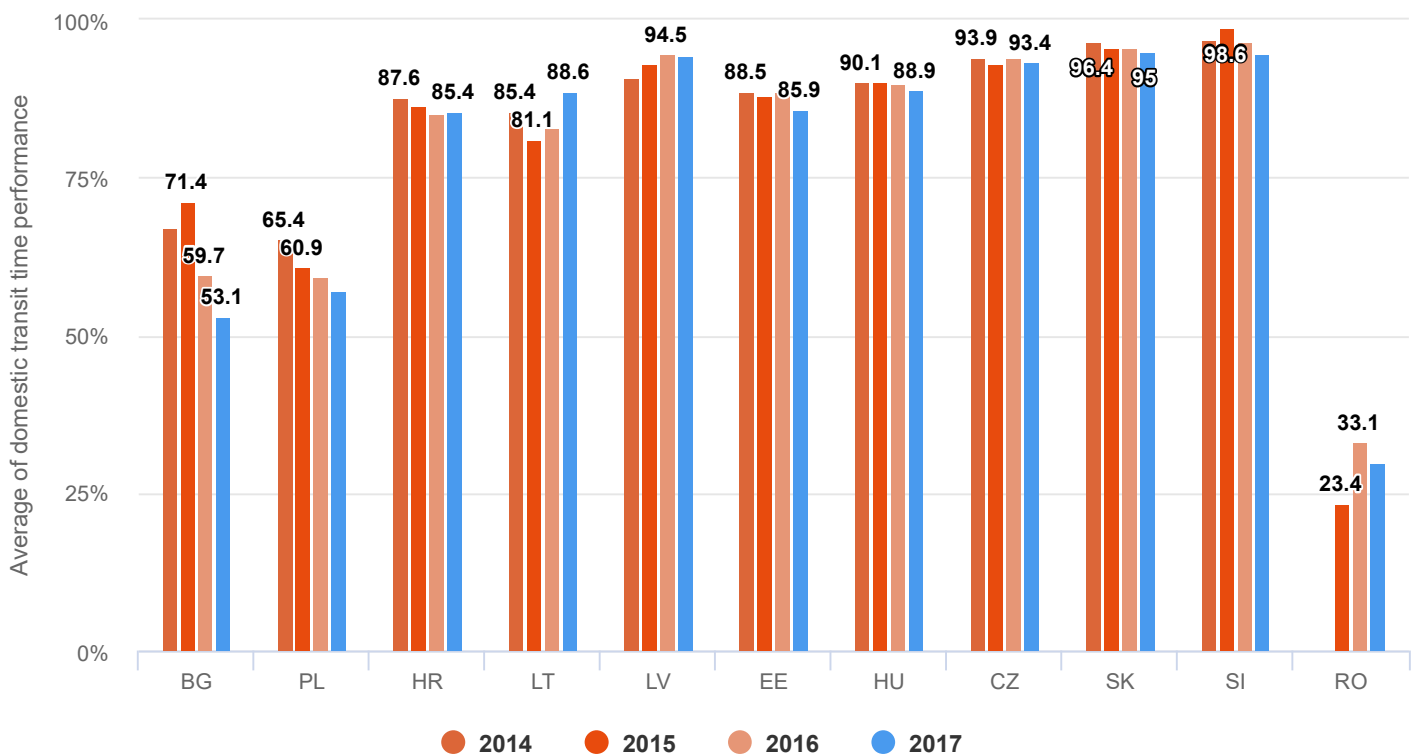
Domestic transit time performance

Transit time describes the time needed for postal items to be delivered. This is measured from the time of dispatch (when a person posts a letter) to the item's arrival at the final destination (when the postal service delivers the letter to the house or premises of the recipient).

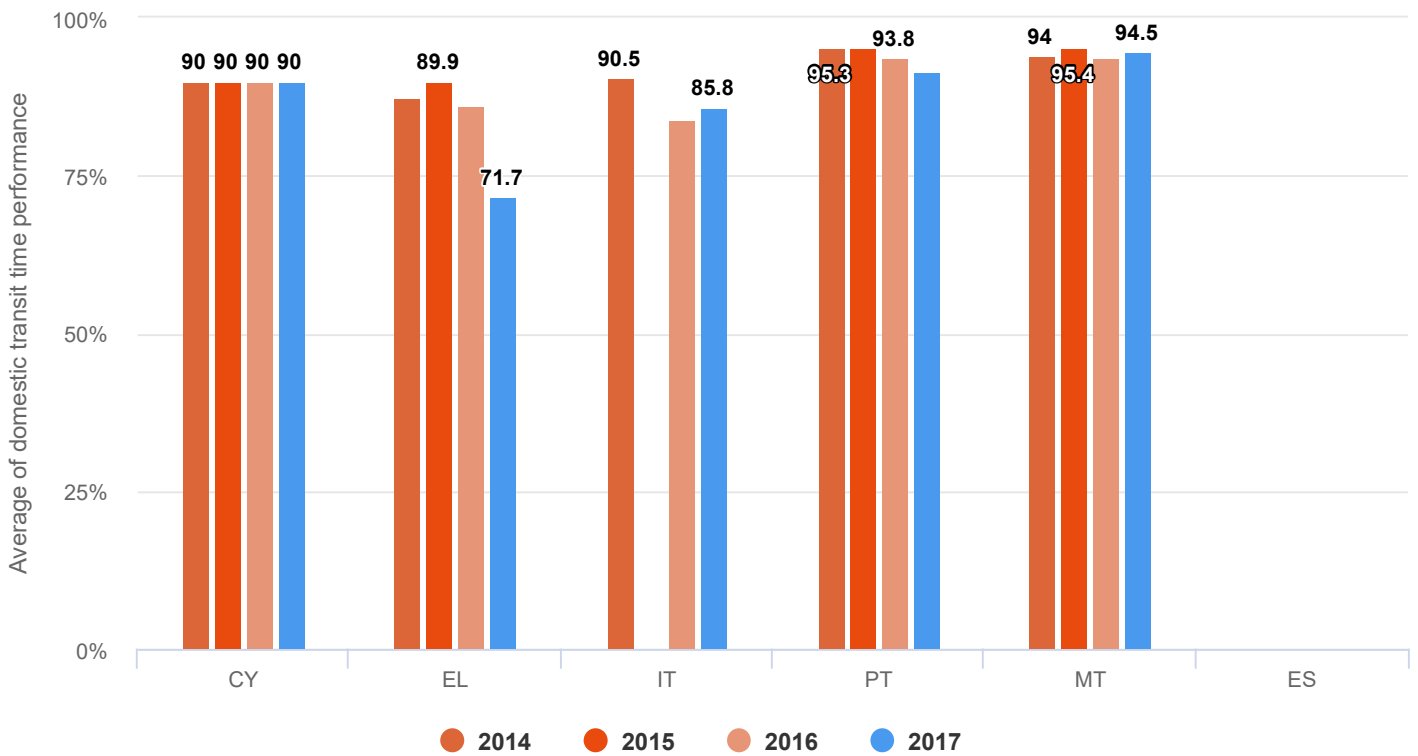
All clusters



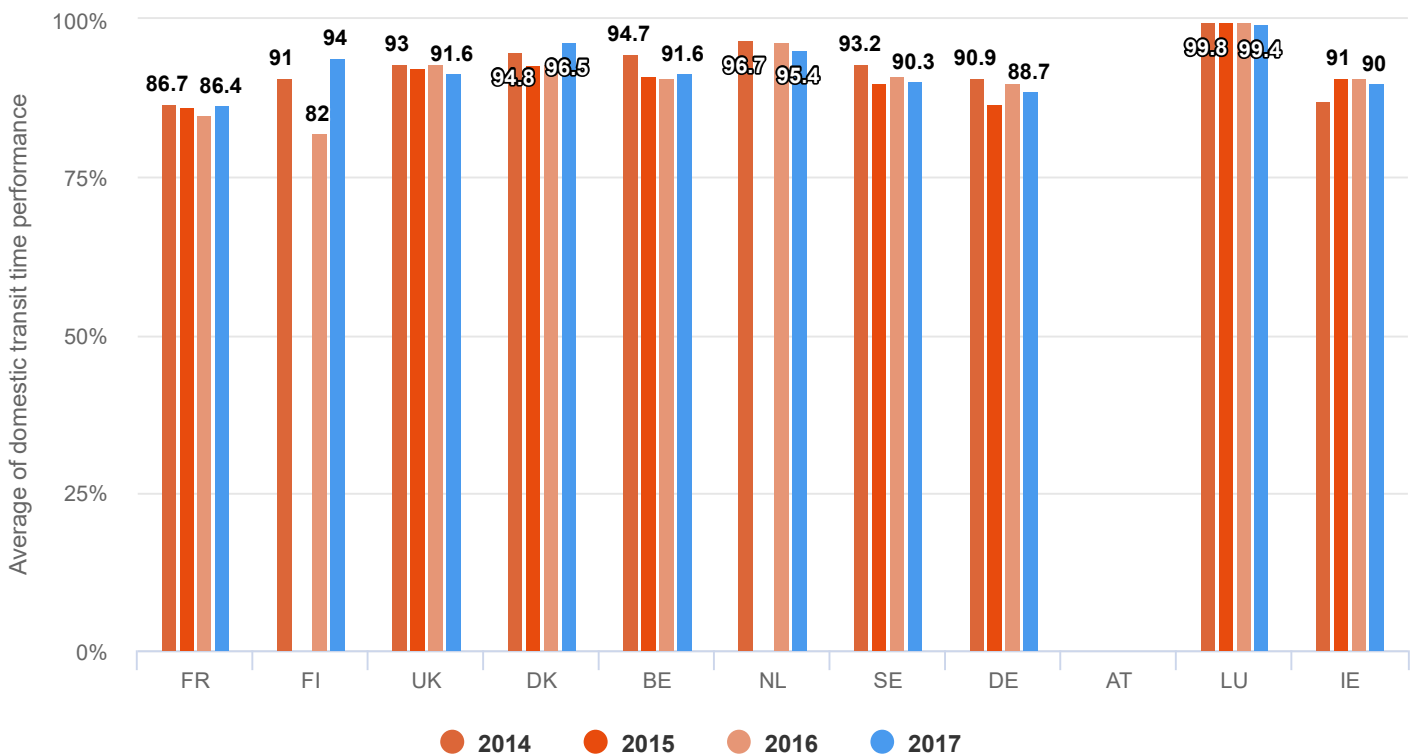
Eastern Europe



Southern Europe



Western Europe



* Member States' revised figures for 2013, compared to the last Single Market Scoreboard

Using the same methodology as the [EU postal sector study](#), the chart above shows the percentage of **priority mail delivered by the next working day (D+1)**, in the same country.

It also shows the **targets** set for this by national governments.

The chart divides EU countries into 3 groups, reflecting (1) **GDP per capita** and (2) when they **joined the EU**:

- **Western countries** – Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden & the UK.
- **Southern countries** – Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal & Spain.
- **Eastern countries** – Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Comments

- Most **western** countries meet the next-day target in 90% of cases, but performance is worsening in some of them.
- The **eastern** and **southern** countries' performance, with a few exceptions, are deteriorating.
- **The performances of Romania, Poland and Bulgaria**, which fall far below the EU average anyway, are continuing to deteriorate. In Greece, next-day delivery fell significantly in 2017.
- There is no data on next-day delivery in **Spain** as the Spanish legal performance standard is "*delivery by the 3rd working day*". No data are published on Austria and the Netherlands, as confidentiality applies to some or all the years concerned.

Priorities

The Commission:

- will continue to **monitor** the EU countries' performance closely.
- adopted a **regulation on cross-border parcel delivery services** in 2018 to increase regulatory oversight and price transparency on the parcel market.