

UNI Europa Post & Logistics Declaration on PostNord Denmark USO Overhaul on World Post Day

9 October 2024

UNI Post & Logistics gathered in delegation and met in Copenhagen, Denmark from 7 to 9 October 2024 in support of the Danish postal trade union 3F Post and their ongoing efforts relating to the significant changes in Denmark's postal law.

Starting January 1st, 2024, Denmark ended its universal postal service for letters, with a few exceptions. The obligation for PostNord Denmark to deliver letters nationwide is revoked. Exceptions include that mail services will still be provided for small islands, visually impaired individuals, and international mail through procurement processes.

The transitional agreement ensures the continued delivery of specific mail items until the new procurement processes are completed. The agreement covers mail services for small islands, visually impaired individuals, and international mail. It ensures that there will be no immediate disruption in these essential services while the new system is being put in place. The changes in Denmark's postal law will affect both the frequency and price of domestic letter delivery: Domestic letters will no longer be delivered daily. Instead, delivery will occur within five business days. This means that letters might take longer to reach their destinations compared to the previous daily delivery schedule. The cost of sending domestic letters will also change, with already a price hike of 100%. These adjustments are part of a broader effort to adapt to the significant decline in mail volumes and the increasing shift towards digital communication. This change is driven by a substantial decline in mail volumes due to digitalization, with Denmark experiencing a 90% reduction since the start of the millennium.

Trade unions in Denmark have expressed significant concerns regarding the changes to the postal law and the impact on PostNord and the concerned workers. Trade unions are worried about job losses and the reduction in service quality, especially for rural areas and vulnerable groups. The postal trade unions

argue that the end of the universal postal service will lead to increased inequality in access to postal services.

UNI Post & Logistics joins 3F Post and supports their demands and calls for measures to protect workers' rights and ensure fair working conditions during the transition period. Postal trade unions advocate for continued state support to mitigate the negative effects on employees and customers.

Postal trade unions call on PostNord Denmark management and the Danish state to safeguard jobs in PostNord Denmark and enabling smooth transition to the extent possible, securing full-time employment where feasible, and ensuring decent employment terms for the workers ensuring postal provision in the country.

Postal trade unions call on PostNord Denmark and the Danish state to guarantee upskilling measures are put in place to ensure labour market transitions and avoid deskilling of postal services workers. Furthermore, postal trade unions call for strong regulation of the adjacent parcels market and to enact measures to limit subcontracting in the parcels market and the use of self-employed drivers in last-mile parcel delivery.

Postal trade unions are adamant that a level playing field is required to avoid exacerbating price pressure in parcel delivery which in turn drives wages and working conditions downwards. These demands are preconditions to enable PostNord Denmark workers to continue ensuring the reduced postal universal service provision in the country.

Alarmingly, procurement to visually impaired Danish citizens has already been lost by PostNord Denmark. Already after one year of implementation, it is clear that instead of having more economic players in the market, we are now faced with a market that resembles a quasi-monopoly. Additionally, the level of service has significantly deteriorated. This is a direct consequence of employees being laid off and distribution centres being closed. The implementation has proven to be just as questionable as the content of the postal law itself. We are in an untenable situation that threatens to leave the Danish public with an uncertain and opaque letter market.