Postal activities
Discussant Remarks

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Introduction

• European perspective from papers and presentations
• EU Law playing its part in liberalising access to the sector’s universal service obligation
• Some interesting issues raised across all papers
• Consistent themes
Themes

• **Evolving sector**
  • Technological – sorting, logistics etc
  • Cultural – switch from letters to parcels with email and e-commerce
  • New ‘products’ – where should they be classified?

• **Well defined with no real classification issues**
  • Though care needed to separate postal from other, eg financial, activities when measuring output

• **USO means sector dominated by small number of enterprises, usually just one**
  • Brings issues around disclosure and dependency
Turnover and output

- Supported by relevant and established legislation – STS and SBS in EU
- National accounts’ needs are for deflated turnover, but volume measures acceptable where no rapid quality change: does that describe this industry?
- Weighted deflator – does it make a difference?
SPPIs

- Industry and product base approaches, but latter more prevalent?
- Identification of B2B and B2C often difficult
- Prices ‘target’ often pragmatic:
  - Contract pricing – good
  - Unit value pricing – challenges
  - List prices – OK for B2A but others?
  - HICP/CPIs – with transformations
UK experience and issues

- Revolution not evolution
  - Privatisation, competition, recession leads to..
  - Fragmentation, which demands change
  - Mixed deflator, CPI and SPPI, less relevant?
  - No more ‘I love you’s… influences on volumes
  - Amazonian muscle