

**Question for written answer P-002015/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Third-country postal services and terminal dues

The classification system of the UN body the Universal Postal Union (UPU) sets the rates for the 'terminal dues' which postal operators sending international letters and parcels must pay towards the cost of final delivery in another country. Dues are set according to a country's level of postal services rather than its overall economic capabilities. Therefore, some third countries which have experienced more recent economic growth and which send large volumes of e-commerce small packets into the EU pay lower terminal dues to European universal service providers.

In its 2016 impact assessment, the Commission acknowledged the unequal situation resulting from inequitable terminal dues rates, describing the UPU as a 'discriminatory system' that 'creates distortions in the cross-border market'.

Besides potential losses to operators caused by unfavourable UPU conditions, EU consumers face increased charges if operators recoup the money lost by charging more for domestic services.

Does the Commission agree that this distortion of competition, which means that EU Member States are effectively subsidising third countries' postal services, weakens the efforts to boost e-commerce?

Does the Commission intend to raise this issue at the UPU Extraordinary Congress to be held in September 2018?

Can the Commission explain what other steps it will take to tackle the distortions arising from terminal dues concessions to third countries?