



## EUROPEAN ENVELOPE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION

### **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Envelope still the safest medium, preferred by a majority of European citizens**

FEPE Congress, 15-17 September 2016, Berlin

**Brussels, 19 September 2016.** Resistance is building up across Europe against forcing citizens into digital communication. This was the central theme at the 59<sup>th</sup> Congress of the European Federation of Envelope Manufacturers (FEPE), held in Berlin from 15-17 September 2016.

The digital agenda may be spreading ever more rapidly across Europe but campaigns are now cropping up fighting for the citizen's right to choose how they are contacted – by paper or digitally. FEPE was instrumental in supporting the campaign set-up across Europe and the discussion at the congress revealed the necessity as well as the potential to push the consumer's right to choose.

### **81% of UK adults want to choose how they receive their information**

"Keep me Posted UK" was the pioneer campaign fighting for the consumer's right to choose, without disadvantage, how they are contacted by financial, utility and other service providers. David Gold from Royal Mail reported that more than 57 million British consumers have been secured the right to choose how they are contacted thanks to their approach of granting a "mark of distinction" to UK companies that respect their customer's choice without charging extra for paper.

### **60% of Spanish consumers say they want paper invoices as a standard invoicing medium**

In Spain and Austria the campaigns work to ensure businesses follow existing consumer rights law and to inform and support consumers to exercise their rights. "Thanks to our efforts, service providers are now obliged to issue paper invoices by default" said Emilio Oviedo from the Spanish initiative.

"Austrian legislation is relatively consumer-friendly", explained Adam Christian from Austrian Post. "Postal invoices are often protected by law but we have to fight every day to keep it that way".

### **630,000 Belgian households have been forced into a communication channel**

In Belgium, where 80% of consumers prefer to receive their administrative information on paper, the campaign called "My invoice my choice" seeks to enforce, extend and clarify the legal basis for the right for citizens to choose their preferred means of communication.

### **20% of EU households have no internet access**

"With citizens being increasingly forced into electronic communication, we need to ensure that the citizen's right to choose is included in European legislation, be it about postal communication, contracts on online sales or consumer directives" said Cynthia Wee from PostEurop, representing the EU campaign at the congress round table discussion.

Further topics addressed included the European and Global envelope market as well as paper and postal markets, the new data protection rules and the important role of Direct Mail as a communications channel. The successful Congress was attended by 96 delegates from 20 different countries, representing envelope manufacturers and their suppliers. It was kindly sponsored by UPM, Stora Enso, W+D, Eukalin, Multiplastics, Gascogne, Leipa, Sidaplast, Transilwrap, Rollenco and AW Window Film.

Next year's FEPE Congress will take place from 5-7 October in Marseille, France. For further information please contact Lisa Kretschmann: [info@fepe.org](mailto:info@fepe.org) or +32 2 779 4001.