

## Summary

The Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) is tasked with analysing and describing developments in the postal market and monitoring that postal services meet society's needs. The Authority therefore regularly conducts studies with the aim of increasing the knowledge of users' needs for postal services and to ensure that the universal postal service meets society's needs over time.

In May 2020, Postnord announced that they would pilot a new production model in Lund and Kävlinge between the 28<sup>th</sup> of September and the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2020. Postnord announced that, in practice, the production model would mean that letters with normal postage would be delivered every other day, with certain exceptions. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May, PTS began an inspection of Postnord's pilot with the aim of ensuring that the operator, prior to and during the test, continued to meet the Postal Services Act's requirements on reliability in postal operations and the requirement on delivery time in the Postal Services Ordinance.

As part of the Authority's ongoing regulatory supervision, PTS also decided to commission a quantitative study of the consequences of the new production model on the recipients in the pilot area. The research firm Point AB was commissioned to conduct 1200 phone interviews with a random selection of private individuals and sole proprietors aged 18+ in the pilot area.

The following were the main conclusions of the study:

- For the vast majority, two-day delivery of letters does not have a large impact. A large majority of the respondents had a positive or neutral attitude towards Postnord's pilot, while 22 per cent had a negative attitude towards it.
- Positive consequences stated by the respondents include that it is more environmentally friendly, an adjustment to the decreased number of letters, financial savings and that the service still meets their needs.
- Fears of possible negative consequences for oneself or others influence the attitudes towards two-day delivery. Of the respondents, 22 per cent say that they have a negative attitude to two-day delivery, while 15 per cent say that it entailed negative consequences for them.
- 84 per cent of the people interviewed were not affected by the pilot with two-day delivery, while 15 per cent say that they were somewhat or very negatively impacted. Examples of consequences that the respondents indicated include delays of important or urgent letters and appointment notices from authorities and healthcare services, and risks that late invoices are not paid on time.
- The interviewees' attitudes on the issue depend on age and occupation. The most negative are people who are 45-64 years of age and sole proprietors (the self-employed). These results are reasonable as it is these user groups who most frequently receive letters.

- The main reason that the respondents want physical letters is because not all senders, such as authorities, send digital correspondence. Three per cent of the interviewees have no computer and therefore cannot receive digital correspondence.

One conclusion that PTS draws from the study is that it is important that society, to the furthest extent possible, ensures alternative solutions for groups that have a clear need for postal delivery every day. This involves, for example, individuals with special needs for postal services due to disabilities and to some extent sole proprietors as well. In light of this, PTS is conducting a qualitative study of what needs vulnerable groups have for postal services, which will be published in spring 2021.

Another important issue that the report sheds light on is the need for authorities, regions, municipalities and large companies to ensure an alternative channel for responsive communication with the citizens in the future, regardless of their level of digital participation, as normal postage becomes an ever slower communication service.

This report constitutes one of several inputs into the ongoing review of the universal postal service. On 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2020, the Government appointed a Postal Act commission to review the content and financing of the universal postal service. The commission will present its proposals in 2023.