

Preface

This book is a result of the 24th Conference on Postal and Delivery Economics, which was held May 18–21, 2016 at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. The conference was a joint effort of the Florence School of Regulation—Communications and Media (FSR C&M) at the European University Institute and the Center for Research in Regulated Industries (CRRI) at the Rutgers Business School.

It is now more than a quarter century that this conference has been held. Indeed, the conference followed all the crucial steps of the evolution in the postal sector, which is now impacted by the digital revolution.

Perhaps the major theme that emerged was the impact of the Internet and the resulting electronic competition on the postal sector. Key topics for discussion were, and are, the market change and new users' priorities, the impact on regulatory and competition dynamics and the re-thinking of the Universal Service Obligation.

The conference was made possible by the contribution of generous supporters. We would like to thank them not only for financial support. In addition, they provided helpful advice in their role on the organizing committee as well as, along with others, intellectual contributions, advice and encouragement: Mohammad Adra, Bruno Basalisco, Jody Berenblatt, Claire Borsenberger, Fabio Camerano, Steven Cape, Isabelle Carslake, Beverly Collins, João Confraria, Margaret Cigno, Peter Dunn, Colm Farrelly, Charles Fattore, Stefano Gori, Andrea Grillo, Robert Hammond, John Hearn, Paul Hodgson, George Hoopis, Adam Houck, Christian Jaag, Denis Joram, Patrick Keating, Keith Kellison, George Kuehnbaum, Martin Maegli, Meloria Meschi, Henrik Ballebye Okholm, Ted Pearsall, José María Rodríguez, Chris Rowsell, Jim Sauber, Michael Scanlon, Gennaro Scarfiglieri, Soterios Soteri, Nancy Sparks, David Stubbs, Mark van der Horst, Tim Walsh, and David Williams.

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We would like to thank our distinguished dinner speaker, the President of AGCOM (the Italian National Regulatory Authority) and 2017 Chair of ERGP (European Regulators Group for Postal Services), Angelo Marcello Cardani. In his speech he focused on the impact of the digital revolution on the postal sector and the challenges it triggers and, also comparing it with other industries, he underlined the need to transform these challenges in opportunities.

In addition, we thank all authors and participants of the conference. Absent their contributions, the conference and this book would not have been possible. The usual disclaimers are applicable. In particular, the views expressed reflect the views of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors or sponsors.

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