

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN ADVISES BPOST TO:

- ▶ Make its customer service more accessible so that each user gets the opportunity to report that a specific service is not properly working and to obtain an appropriate solution to the submitted complaint.

REGARDING THE DELIVERY OF MAIL

- ▶ Fully investigate when recurring and structural delivery issues occur, followed by appropriate measures taken for the period of time deemed necessary in order to be able to verify the quality of the provided service.
- ▶ Provide a specific procedure for obituary notices allowing to process them quickly and permitting a better follow-up in the postal circuit.
- ▶ Strictly observe the obligations when delivering registered items, i.e. always deliver the item against the addressee's signature and always ensure that the identity of the addressee is formally verified.

REGARDING THE DELIVERY OF PARCELS

- ▶ Strictly observe the obligations when delivering parcels, i.e. ringing the doorbell of the addressee when delivering a parcel that is too big to be inserted in the letterbox and always put an absence note in the letterbox in case of absence of the addressee.
- ▶ Concerning missing parcels: carry out specific and appropriate investigations within the framework of its internal complaint procedure as well as make the subsequent necessary operational improvements.
- ▶ Regarding the digital tracking tool for users:
 - Improve the quality of the information provided by the digital tracking tool.
 - Carry out, from the front line, an investigation when the addressee declares that the parcel has not been delivered, and this even when the digital tracking tool indicates that the parcel has been delivered.

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN ADVISES THE POSTAL COMPANIES TO:

- ▶ Secure the rights of the addressee by opening an investigation upon request, by giving him/her proper information and, when justified in some cases, by granting financial compensation for the damage suffered.



9.276 REQUESTS FOR MEDIATION IN 2018

4.030
 ADMISSIBLE
 REQUESTS FOR MEDIATION

5.246
 INADMISSIBLE REQUESTS
 FOR MEDIATION

ADMISSIBLE REQUESTS

4.030 REQUESTS FOR MEDIATION RESULTED IN 11.825 COMPLAINTS

3.683
 COMPLAINTS RELATED
 TO LETTER MAIL

3.315
 COMPLAINTS RELATED TO THE
 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLIENT
 AND COMPANY

4.562
 COMPLAINTS RELATED
 TO PARCELS

265
 OTHER COMPLAINTS

11.825 NEW ADMISSIBLE
 COMPLAINTS IN 2018

+ 2.240
 COMPLAINTS 2017

11.435 COMPLAINTS
 CLOSED IN 2018

2.630 COMPLAINTS
 CARRIED OVER IN 2019

14.065
 COMPLAINTS TO
 HANDLE IN 2018

THE DELIVERY OF PARCELS AND LETTER MAIL: THERE IS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENTS



The Office of the ombudsman received 2.844 admissible complaints concerning the delivery of letter mail and parcels. Concerning letter mail, including letters, invoices, daily press, periodicals and addressed printed mail, the category "Errors with the delivery" represents the highest number of complaints. This may concern items delivered at the wrong address, items that were not (fully) inserted in the letterbox, items that were returned to the sender or an interruption in the delivery... Furthermore, despite the decreasing letter volumes, the number of complaints regarding letter mail remained quite high: 1.776 complaints in 2018. The Office of the ombudsman rarely receives complaints regarding isolated issues. The submitted complains concern recurring issues: the same delivery problems appear repeatedly, and this despite repeated complaints.

Concerning parcels and registered items, the failure to comply with the applicable procedure represents the great majority of complaints: systematically giving an absence note (= the postman does not even ring to deliver a registered item or a parcel which requires the signature of the addressee) when delivering a parcel or a registered item, missing signature, no absence note in the letterbox... The category "Errors with the delivery" concerns 1.068 complaints regarding parcels. The most frequent complaints regarding parcels concern missing parcels: 1.110 complaints in 2018.

EVOLUTION

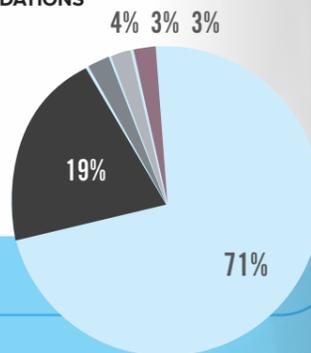
NEW REQUESTS FOR MEDIATION

2018	2017	2016
9.276	5.985	4.697

MEDIATION RESULTS

11.435 COMPLAINTS CLOSED IN 2018

- 8.097 PROBLEM SOLVED/COMPENSATION FOR THE CUSTOMER
- 2.165 CASES WHERE THE COMPANY IS NOT AT FAULT OR THERE IS NO PROOF OF A FAULT
- 481 UNJUSTIFIED COMPLAINTS
- 338 INTERRUPTED COMPLAINTS
- 351 JUSTIFIED OR UNDERSTANDABLE COMPLAINTS BUT WITHOUT A SOLUTION
- 3 RECOMMENDATIONS



4.562 COMPLAINTS RELATED TO PARCELS

The year 2018 is the first year in the Office of the ombudsman history where the number of mediation requests regarding the delivery of parcels exceeds the number of mediation requests regarding the delivery of letters, which is not surprising as such with a parcel sector in full bloom and a letter post volume in steep decline.

The great majority of complaints concern bpost. Regarding the complaints related to parcel delivery: 94% concern bpost. DPD, PostNL, Mondial Relay and DHL Parcel follow bpost in the top.

ADMISSIBLE REQUESTS 2018

-  **4.562** COMPLAINTS RELATED TO PARCELS
-  **3.683** COMPLAINTS RELATED TO LETTER MAIL
-  **3.315** COMPLAINTS RELATED TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLIENT AND COMPANY
-  **265** OTHER COMPLAINTS

BPOST'S CUSTOMER SERVICE IS INSUFFICIENTLY ACCESSIBLE!

The number of inadmissible complaints concerning bpost rose by 85 % in 2018 to 4.823 requests. 682 complainants expressly stated that they could not submit a complaint via the procedures provided by bpost and, as a consequence, had to turn to the Office of the Ombudsman. This means that out of 4.823 inadmissible cases concerning bpost, 1 user in 7 complaints about the inaccessibility of bpost's customer service.

This was also observed for the admissible complaints: 272 users explicitly stated that it was not easy to submit a complaint in the front line to bpost.

Finally, the number of phone calls registered by the Office of the ombudsman also increased sharply in 2018. It has become a daily task for our file managers to inform users on how to contact an employee of bpost by telephone.

The office of the ombudsman declares formally and unequivocally that: the path users have to follow to submit a complaint to bpost's customer service is getting more and more challenging.

Testimony of an addressee:

... my item has the same status since 7 November! But what is really bothering me, is that no one can answer my questions. The post office has given me the phone number of the customer service. And when I call that number, a pre-recorded message dismisses me just like that! The same happens with the online complaint form, I feel that I am being brushed off! ... I cannot contact anyone who could tell me where my parcel is or who could answer my questions!

