



## PRESS RELEASE

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### PUBLIC ENTITIES AND POLICIES

## MOBILITY AND ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT The Hauts-de-France region: an illustration of national issues

**A significant proportion of unemployment is due to difficulties in matching job supply with job demand. One of the reasons for such difficulties is a lack of geographical mobility for job seekers. This is a significant issue: 1 to 2.5 percentage points of the national unemployment rate thus may be linked to geographical mismatch.**

**By analysing the obstacles to mobility within the Hauts-de-France region, characterised by a strong contrast between the influence of the Lille metro area and the areas suffering from a combination of economic and social handicaps, the Court and the regional chamber found that the range of mobility aids was poorly known, unevenly distributed and insufficiently used by job seekers.**

**The social consequences of the health crisis call for more structured and better coordinated policies and actions in this area, both at a national and local level.**

**To that end, the financial jurisdictions have made nine recommendations.**

### **An abundant, disparate aid supply**

The obstacles to geographical mobility faced by job seekers are financial (purchase and maintenance of a vehicle, funding of a driving licence, cost of public transport, etc.) and socio-cultural (imperfect knowledge of travel or aid options, particularly among the youngest).

To remove such obstacles, a financial aid, created in 2008 and simplified in 2014, covering travel, accommodation and meal expenses, is paid by Pôle emploi. At the same time, mobility support initiatives (aid in obtaining a driving licence, childcare aid, financial aid to help RSA recipients return to work and training, etc.) have been set up in the Hauts-de-France region, at the initiative of local authorities or specialised associations.

However, their deployment across the country is uneven. The Lille metro area is characterised by a high density of aid and support provided by public and private organisations. In rural areas, some dynamic communities (e.g. Fourmies) developed multiple initiatives to help job seekers. Conversely, in Santerre (east of Amiens) or the southern Beauvais metro area, aid is limited or non-existent and provides only marginal support in the job search process.



## **Aid little known and poorly coordinated, access too limited**

People who have benefited from mobility aid offered by Pôle emploi stress that the aid has had a real impact on their return to employment or their entry into training. However, the conditions for granting those subsidies are too often restrictive (minimum distance to travel, amount of the allowance, sponsor of the training, etc.). The people concerned also point out the difficulties in putting together funding applications. The Hauts-de-France region is trying to remedy the “blind spots” of these schemes, but its action affects a fairly small audience and comes up against the same obstacles to accessing aid. Thus, despite sustained communication, 82% of job seekers are not aware of the region’s aid and 51% of Pôle emploi’s aid.

Furthermore, due to a lack of coordination between actors, the supply is sometimes redundant while, on the other hand, some territories are not covered. By introducing an obligation to consult with the actors, the December 2019 Mobility Orientation Act should encourage coordination, which has been lacking until now. The region and the departments, in conjunction with Pôle emploi, should use this text to develop complementary actions, adapted to the needs of job seekers and covering all their territories. This recommendation also applies to other regions, where initiatives are not sufficiently structured.

## **A policy that needs to be strengthened**

There is currently little evidence that guarantees that a particular aid actually contributes to a return to employment. Outcome indicators should be put in place to see whether the situation of beneficiaries has improved. A better impact of aid also requires closer involvement of companies and the revival of their mobility plans, which are currently insufficiently developed.

Pôle emploi must also seek solutions to the difficulties of moving people throughout their support process, not just in the preliminary phase.

In addition, job seekers often aim for positions abroad. In addition to the two specific EU schemes (Eures and Erasmus+), cross-border cooperation, such as the “Employment without borders” or “Forward” projects developed in the Hauts-de-France region between the French and Belgian employment services, can play an effective role.

The scale of the challenges that need to be met in order to face the social consequences of the health crisis must lead to local initiatives being included in the framework of more structured policies, for the benefit of a greater number of beneficiaries.

**[Read the report](#)**

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