

PRESS RELEASE
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The French State, the French Mayors' Association, the chairs of the intermunicipal bodies and Le Groupe La Poste sign the local postal coverage agreement for 2020-2022

Today, the local postal coverage agreement for 2020-2022 was signed by Bruno Le Maire, Minister of Economy and Finance, Jacqueline Gourault, Minister of Regional Cohesion and Relations with Local Authorities, Gérald Darmanin, Minister of Action and Public Accounts, Cédric O, Secretary of State to the Minister of Economy and Finance, and to the Minister of Action and Public Accounts, responsible for Digital Services, François Baroin, Chairman of the French Mayors' Association and of the chairs of the intermunicipal bodies, and Philippe Wahl, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Le Groupe La Poste.

The local postal coverage agreement sets the rules which enable La Poste to contribute to regional planning and development, to adapt its network of La Poste retail outlets to meet the needs of the communities served, and to link the Departmental Commissions on Local Postal Presence (CDPPTs) to the work and guidance of the National Postal Coverage Observatory.

This fifth agreement signed between the three stakeholders forms part of a long-standing commitment, in which €2 billion in investments have been made since 2008 to adapt and modernise La Poste's local coverage.

New priorities born of a participatory approach

This new local postal coverage agreement is the product of a participatory approach with the CDPPTs, which the National Postal Coverage Observatory launched and approved in January 2019, with the support of 1,200 elected representatives.

It sets out a number of priorities for the 2020-2022 period:

- maintain specific local dialogue rules, primarily by reaffirming the central role of the mayor in dialogue and broader information from elected representatives;
- continue to adapt the postal network through new forms of postal coverage pooling, and consolidate and gradually develop the France Services system both in physical locations and remotely;
- increase the range of products and services and support for rural communities, urban communities and French overseas departments in economically and socially vulnerable areas;
- secure regional planning financing and maintain a fair balance between the financing of rural areas and of disadvantaged urban areas;
- enhance measures for digital services;
- boost innovation rights granted to CDPPTs;
- consolidate CDPPTs' central role in the local governance of regional planning and strengthen links with proponents of other public regional planning policies.

Strong dialogue and consultation

The agreement secures the mayor's key role in the local dialogue system, particularly as regards changes to opening times and summer closures. Closures may not exceed three weeks over a period to be agreed with the elected representative. Public service areas or France Services located in a post office cannot be closed during the summer. Tourist areas are of particular importance, as postal coverage must be maintained during high tourist seasons.

Stronger financing and a change to the division of resources

The postal equalisation fund may receive a maximum national allowance of €177 million per year. The division of resources differs to take into consideration the distinct needs of local areas, particularly in rural areas and in urban priority neighbourhoods.

The scope of La Poste retail outlets eligible for financing has been adjusted. The priority scope includes local authorities in municipalities with a population of less than 10,000, partnerships with retailers in municipalities with a population of less than 2,000, post offices with low footfall and postman-counter clerk post offices in municipalities with a population of less than 10,000, public service areas and France Services in post offices and all La Poste retail outlets located in urban priority neighbourhoods, in French overseas departments and high societal priority post offices.

Incorporating digital inclusion issues

In conjunction with the regional planning mission, the agreement aims to incorporate digital inclusion issues such as identifying digital weaknesses, deploying digital equipment and coordinating local initiatives with local authorities and other partners, primarily to deliver the “digital pass”.

More space for innovation

The local postal coverage agreement for 2020-2022 provides more space for innovation. Funds have been set aside for innovative measures in each French department, including improving digital accessibility, access to ombudsman services and supporting habitual use and trials as part of the regional planning mission.

Satisfaction trends

Satisfaction surveys of La Poste retail outlets will now be carried out every year. The surveys, to be conducted by an independent body, will measure the satisfaction of elected representatives, customers and partners and will provide an overview of the various types of postal coverage (post offices and partnerships).

The central role of strengthened CDPPTs

The CDPPTs will have an increased role in postal coverage and will be granted greater resources from the equalisation fund. There will also be a stronger link with proponents of other department-level public regional planning policies. The Commission will have a say on any proposal to convert a postal public service area into a France Services area, or on the creation of a postal France Services area. The Chair of the CDPPT shall also attend meetings of the Departmental Committee for Access to Public Services organised by the Prefect.

A Vice-Chair may be appointed in addition to the Chair, to replace the latter in the event of absence.

This agreement has been entered into for a three-year term. It is in keeping with the guidance set out by the 2018-2022 Public Service Agreement between the French State and La Poste.

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