



LE GROUPE LA POSTE

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **The French government, the French Mayors' and Presidents of inter-communal bodies' Association and Le Groupe La Poste sign the 2017-2019 local postal coverage agreement**

Today, Jean-Michel Baylet, Minister of Regional Planning, Rural Affairs and Local Authorities, Christophe Sirugue, Minister of State for the Industry, François Baroin, Chairman of the French Mayors' and Presidents of inter-communal bodies' Association and Philippe Wahl, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Le Groupe La Poste, signed the local postal coverage agreement for the 2017-2019 period. The agreement will be signed by Michel Sapin, Minister for the Economy and Finance, in the coming days.

This fourth local postal coverage agreement is aligned with previous agreements, which created long-lasting partnerships (postal agencies and relais poste outlets) and developed new forms of resources pooling (*Maisons de Services Au Public* - public service areas - and postman-counter clerks in post offices), ensured that more than 4,000 post offices were renovated, and encouraged maintaining postal coverage in rural locations, in deprived urban areas and in French overseas departments.

The new agreement pledges increased accessibility. Its primary goal is to adapt postal coverage to each region's and population's diverse needs while taking into account changes in common practices and technologies.

### **Increased funding with a redefined scope**

The amount of annual resources allocated by the French government via compensation funds **is increasing from €170 million to €174 million** compared to the previous agreement. In particular, this increase allows the implementation of the **500 maisons de services au public (MSAP) hosted in post offices** to be 75% funded.

The funds will now be directed to the **10,000 retail outlets that must be consolidated for regional planning purposes** - shared post offices, partnerships with local authorities and retailers, post offices opened less than 18 hours per week, urban retail outlets in deprived urban areas and retail outlets in French overseas departments.

### **Strengthening of the responsibilities of the Departmental Commission on Local Postal Coverage (CDPPT)**

The postal coverage agreement enables CDPPT to have more flexibility and autonomy with regard to resources management. Each CDPPT allocates all of the departmental allowance from the compensation funds upon a proposal by a representative of La Poste and in the presence of a representative of the French government. They can also test out new solutions, notably service sharing solutions.

### **Increasing digital accessibility**



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The new postal coverage agreement emphasises on initiatives aiming to **improve access to digital services**, with innovative training initiatives and support for common practices. Resources allocated to digital accessibility must account for at least 15% of a department's overall budget: this represents €75 million (2017-2019), i.e. €30 million more than the previous agreement.

### **Adapted terms and conditions for postal coverage evolution**

The agreement adapts rules on disclosure and consultation.

For all the retail outlets that are eligible to receive compensation funds, for all municipalities that have one single post office or for each new municipality, any change in a retail outlet's status is subject to the mayor's approval. The mayor has two to three months to make a decision on changing the status of a retail outlet and type of partnership. If no response is received within this time frame, the status change is considered accepted.

For all other retail outlets, postal coverage can be changed after enhanced consultation based on a report summarising a comprehensive offering of postal services in line with each area's specific characteristics and regional projects. The mayor has two to three months to express an opinion on the proposal presented to him if he wishes to do so. If no response is received within this time frame, the status change is considered accepted. If the mayor wishes to do so, La Poste undertakes to submit a second postal network change proposal to the mayor for his opinion.

A comprehensive assessment and satisfaction survey will be conducted half-way of the agreement.

### **New disclosure measures**

As a general policy, disclosure deadlines have been standardised to two months.

When summer shut-down measures are in place, a description of postal services accessible nearby will be communicated to the mayor. Summer shut-downs may not exceed three weeks. Projected summer shut-downs will be presented during CDPPT meetings organised at the beginning of the year.

The National Observatory of Postal Coverage will ensure that these principles are properly applied throughout the agreement, in collaboration with local postal coverage departmental commissions.

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