



2018 ANNUAL REPORT



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Foreword

With the founding of the non-profit organisation SYNERJOB in 2007, ACTIRIS, ADG, Bruxelles Formation, the Forem and the VDAB wanted to create synergies with one another, to meet the challenges of regional employment markets more effectively.

We have gone beyond the first decade of existence, with an impressive record of shared challenges and mutual learning that the 2017 activity report demonstrates. Inter-regional mobility, the impact of the last government reform and improving practices are still our priorities, but we can now see more clearly how to be essential partners to citizens who need support in managing their careers in a world where the gateposts are shifting.

This is why, for SYNERJOB, 2018 was a year of new impetus and a focus on the future. There have been two main changes to how we operate: the “rolling agenda” and the start of “strategic areas”.

The “rolling agenda” enables us to have constant discussions targeting Belgian Public Employment and/or Training Services priorities. The SYNERJOB member that hosts the Board of Directors meeting offers the other members the possibility to choose a theme, from among the important projects it is working on, which will be examined in depth at the next Board of Directors meeting. This process will continue from one Board of Directors meeting to the next; the host Public Employment and/or Training Service will present its priority projects and the topic chosen together previously will be presented in detail. In addition to the impetus and mutual enrichment that result, this “rolling agenda” has other advantages, such as quicker identification of work issues that could be pooled, as well as an increase in the volume and variety of the information exchanged, with the possibility of increasing the number of bilateral meetings on topics that have not yet been presented, but which are of specific interest to one of the members.

Furthermore, the members of SYNERJOB are resolutely focused on the future. Today, there are more and more challenges and the need for synergies between the members of SYNERJOB is more significant than ever. Digitalisation, ageing, youth unemployment, migration and labour shortages, to mention only a few examples, are all phenomena that mean that the public employment and professional training services must be able to anticipate, be flexible, agile and innovative and work closely with one another, as well as with other partners. The members of SYNERJOB identified “strategic areas” during 2018 on which they wish to work together to be able to carry out high value-added initiatives. Not least: analysis of the impact of digitalisation on the different professional sectors, tertiary training, development of online skills tests and identification of cross-functional skills. SYNERJOB intends to intensify its efforts next year on these issues, but there is no shortage of other ideas in reserve, such as: professional transitions, the connection between employment and education or active labour market measures.

We are convinced that synergies that exist and that will be created will make our public employment and professional training services even more effective and more legitimate than ever in helping governments meet the current and future challenges of the job market.



Marie-Kristine Vanboeckstal
Chairwoman of SYNERJOB



Fons Leroy
Vice-Chairman of SYNERJOB

When the next activity report for 2019 is published, Fons Leroy, Deputy Director of the VDAB and Vice-Chairman of SYNERJOB, will have retired from a career full of initiatives and intense, creative work on all issues, in which SYNERJOB held an important position. The members of SYNERJOB pay homage to him here, through these few words, for all that his visionary and pragmatic mind has contributed to our association.

The framework

24 February 2005: signature of an inter-regional cooperation agreement

The Brussels-Capital Region, the Walloon Region, the Flemish Region, The Flemish Community, the German-speaking Community and the French Community Commission signed an inter-regional cooperation agreement. Its aim was to promote greater job and training mobility between the regions.

Since then, ACTIRIS, Arbeitsamt der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft (ADG), Bruxelles Formation, the Forem and the VDAB have been working together closely with the aim of integrating as many jobseekers as possible on the job market as well as encouraging their mobility.

Different means are envisaged and encourage the services to:

- Share job offers more intensively;
- Raise awareness among jobseekers and employers on inter-regional mobility;
- Promote and organise language courses and training initiatives together relating to inter-regional mobility;
- Ensure that the names of professions and occupations are consistent, in an aim to improve the exchange of information and guarantee better job market transparency;
- Cooperate in the reintegration of workers who are part of collective redundancies;
- Start specific initiatives between Brussels and the surrounding area.
- Promote inter-regional mobility for jobseekers and workers;
- Intensify collaboration between the Forem and the ADG and strengthen the cooperation agreement signed on 27 May 2004 between the two bodies;
- Strengthen collaboration in terms of language learning and access to skills centres.

3 July 2007: creation of the non-profit organisation SYNERJOB

ACTIRIS, ADG, Bruxelles Formation, the Forem and the VDAB created the non-profit organisation SYNERJOB which expands on the topics addressed, in order to adapt to changes in the job market.

The Board of Directors, which groups the directors of SYNERJOB members, meets several times a year to discuss new projects, support current initiatives and monitor the progress of work groups to which it entrusts specific themes such as the Youth Guarantee or the digitalisation of the job market. The members of this Board of Directors are listed in the appendices.

On 1st July 2016, the Forem took over from the VDAB as Chair of the non-profit organisation SYNERJOB. A permanent secretariat has since managed interactions between the members of SYNERJOB.

Missions

The purpose of SYNERJOB is to combine the efforts of Belgian public employment and professional training services, in order to face the challenges of the job market, in keeping with the missions, tasks and remits of each member and the Board of Directors.

This means:

- Analysing and taking charge of problems on the Belgian job market;
- Considering the challenges together;
- Pooling knowledge and exchanging best practice;
- Buying and/or developing tools and methodologies;
- Taking shared action;
- Signing partnerships within the framework of European or other projects;
- Organising a rotation between the members to offer a single point of contact for the Public Employment and Professional Training Services within the framework of European projects: EURES (EUROpean Employment Services), Youth Guarantee and the European Network of Public Employment Services (ENPES);
- Taking common positions according to the rules of international representation.

The aim of all the initiatives is to co-construct or undertake initiatives on common project(s) (with at least two SYNERJOB partners per project). Each partner deploys its own resources to achieve the targeted results.

As the challenges that SYNERJOB members must meet are sizeable, a strategic working group was created in 2013. This defines the common goals and scope of action via a multi-annual strategic plan (2014-2016 and 2017-2019).

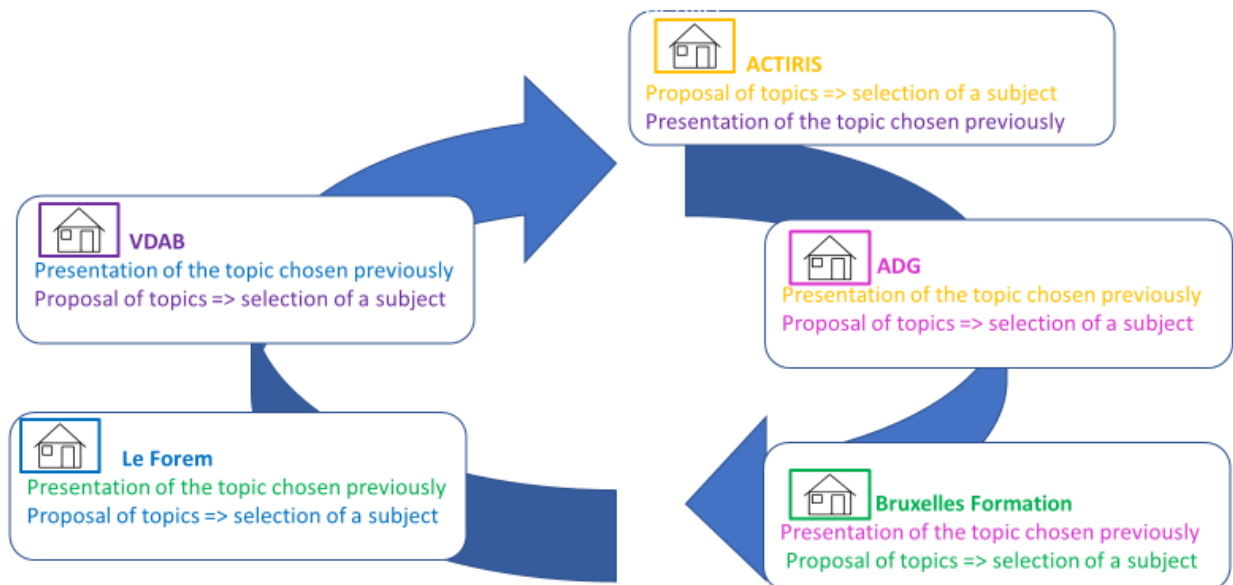
Rolling Agenda

With a view to substantial sharing on themes relating to the job market in the broad sense or on matters that are likely to interest the members of SYNERJOB, a new procedure called “Rolling Agenda” has been put in place.

At each Board of Directors meeting, a member gives a brief presentation of the current projects underway in its organisation that are likely to interest the other members of SYNERJOB.

At the end of the presentation, the latter choose the theme they would like more information about at the next meeting.

At this meeting, a more in-depth presentation is given on the chosen theme and another member briefly presents the projects likely to interest the others. And so on.



As this new procedure was put in place at the end of 2018, only the “New Support” theme was presented by ACTIRIS.

The major themes addressed

Over the current events and problems encountered, the SYNERJOB Board of Directors created working groups specific to certain themes. These work groups comprise experts from each member of the non-profit organisation. They may be permanent or temporary, depending on the themes addressed and their continuity over time.

For the working groups that are still active listed in this report, the following information is generally given: the framework/context in which the group works and a few achievements in 2018.

For certain themes that are covered by several working groups or for more specific matters, more general information is given.

The contact details of the SYNERJOB permanent Secretariat are provided at the end of the report, for more information on the matters presented.

I. Inter-regional mobility

The job market situation differs from one region to another. Greater inter-regional mobility alleviates the mismatch between job supply and demand. The partnerships created between VDAB and ACTIRIS, between DAB and the Forem, and between the Forem and ADG aim to strengthen inter-regional mobility for Walloon, Brussels and of German-speaking Community trainees and jobseekers.

a) Forem-VDAB collaboration

Since May 2008, specialised VDAB and Forem advisors have been working together along the language border. They are responsible for active intermediation (matching the job offer with the jobseeker), organising jobdatings and job exchanges.

A new cooperation agreement was signed in 2018 by the respective supervisory ministers Muyters and Jeholet. This aims to strengthen inter-regional mobility by improving jobseekers' access to job offers, by raising awareness among jobseekers and employers and by facilitating language learning.

What were the results in 2018?

Specialised advisors managed 4,083 jobs located in Flanders and proposed to Walloon jobseekers. More than 20,000 Walloon jobseekers were directed to these job offers.

The exchange of job offers, municipal actions, actions to prepare jobseekers by the Forem and open applications, enabled at least 25,268 Walloon jobseekers to find a job in Flanders in 2018 (source: DIMONA).

b) Forem-ADG collaboration

- Management by the Forem of 400 job roles for companies located in the German-speaking Community;
- Management by the ADG of 111 job roles for companies located outside the German-speaking Community;
- 59 jobseekers in the German-speaking Community followed training in Forem training centres, while 32 Walloon jobseekers followed training in an ADG training centre;

c) ACTIRIS-VDAB collaboration

In 2018, nearly 6,000 job opportunities were transferred to ACTIRIS, including more than 3,000 temporary roles. ACTIRIS mobilised a total of 26,986 Brussels jobseekers. They were invited, informed, tested, prepared and supported.

The exchange of job offers, municipal actions, actions to prepare jobseekers by ACTIRIS and open applications, enabled at least 10,323 Brussels jobseekers to find a job in Flanders in 2018 (source: DIMONA).

d) Automatic flow of job offers

Since June 2006, the VDAB, the Forem and ACTIRIS have automatically sent job offers to each other and published them. These job offers are those that remain open for a very long time, and those which are hard to fill such as professions with labour shortages. In this way, tens of thousands of job offers are exchanged each year.

The number of offers exchanged automatically between the different public services for employment for 2018 was 219,2191.

e) Professional training

This training enables the learner to both acquire additional skills required on the job market (languages, adaptation to new environments, cultural openness, independence and initiative, etc.) and to be directed to specific professions that may be more present in certain regions.

Inter-regional mobility in terms of training is achieved through company training internships with the convention tool FPI/Formation Professionnelle Individuelle (Brussels), IBO/Individuele BeroepsOpleiding (Flanders), PFI/Plan Formation-Insertion (Wallonia) or IBU/Individuele Berufsausbildung im Unternehmen (German-speaking Community) or the monitoring of professional training in a training body located in another region.

Here are the figures relating to professional training:

- Number of jobseekers trained in the VDAB, ADG, Bruxelles Formation and Forem training centres

	2018
From ADG to the Forem	58
From Bruxelles Formation/ACTIRIS to the Forem	389
From VDAB to the Forem	148
From the Forem to ADG	32
From the Forem to Bruxelles Formation	287
From the Forem to VDAB	60

- Number of Walloon jobseekers who have gone on a language immersion internship in a company in Flanders: 20.

II. Transfer of remit

a) Sixth State reform

Through the transfer of remit over employment and training that it provides for, the sixth State reform has made the federal entities more responsible, but above all it has offered them new drivers.

From 2012, a “Sixth State reform” working group (WG) was set up within SYNERJOB to work together on these many areas. The work of this group was particularly intense between 2012 and 2017. It worked more specifically on the following transferred remits:

- Control of availability for jobseekers receiving benefits or on integration time;
- The availability waiver exempting jobseekers from the obligation to be available for the job market. It enables jobseekers receiving benefits to follow professional training, studies or a traineeship;
- So-called target-group measures that cover reductions in social contributions, activations and premiums;
- Articles 60.7 et 61;
- Local employment agencies (LEA).

Although, in methodological terms, matters have all now been made operational within the regions, work to share the “Sixth State reform” WG’s information was carried out, mainly to share the regulatory or more operational aspects, through ad hoc sub-groups (LEA, Traineeships, Availability, etc.).

The 2018 work includes:

- The implementation of a specific “inter-regional mobility” WG in 2018 to address the issue of sharing job offers and promoting them;
- In terms of availability control, an agreement on the uniform monitoring model for the regions was made within the Directors’ Committee in 2014. However, this monitoring is still being refined and adapted, taking into account Public Employment Services’ practices;
- The issues of social fraud, residence problems, as well as adapted availability were also addressed in the WG;
- Finally, consultations were also held with the federal government concerning the “unemployable” group, given the adoption of this new statute by the federal government. The Regions agreed to use the same diagnostic tool (ICF) and offer a more uniform service to this group.

b) Control of the group that is very far from the job market, with medical, mental, psychological or psychiatric (MMPP) problems

In their mission to support and control active job searching, the Public Employment Services (PES) are faced with a group that is very removed from employment, which has medical, mental, psychological or psychiatric (MMPP) problems that are often combined with social problems. Among these people, we must distinguish between those who can still be employed and those who cannot. This is why SYNERJOB took the initiative, at the end of 2017, to launch a working group to provide proposals on how to help these people. The aim was to lead the four PES and the federal bodies concerned to agree on criteria to determine the distance from the job market and on a structural solution as to the status and type of income to be allocated to those who cannot be employed, with the aim of them no longer having to look for a job.

Following this initiative, the Regional Minister for employment in Wallonia proposed to organise an

Interministerial Employment Conference on 28/2/2018. It was then in charge of setting up a working group, to examine the possibility of giving a specific status to the most vulnerable jobseekers. This working group reached a proposal for beneficiaries of integration and unemployment benefits, whose support model has 2 stages:

- Stage 1: determination of the distance from the job market and starting on a specific path
- Stage 2: allocation of an “unemployable” status to the beneficiaries concerned.

These conditions were subject to a consultation with the Federal Minister for employment and were applied through the adaptation of the Royal Decree of 25.11.1991 regulating unemployment. They will be applicable from 01/07/2019, with a transition period ending on 31/03/2020 for files that are still being analysed. Pending the publication of these regulatory changes in the Moniteur Belge, PES are putting in place the necessary actions with a view to implementing these new conditions, and meeting regularly to agree on homogeneous practices to identify the future “unemployable” status.

c) Local Employment Agencies (LEA)

A working group specifically dedicated to the Local Employment Agencies was created in 2014. One of the aims of this group is to gain a better understanding of the system and its complexity and to agree on the positions to adopt with respect to the different parties (ONEM, Edenred),

On 1st January 2018, the reform of the LEA system came about in Flanders. The changes prevent the inter-regional mobility of LEA workers between other regions and Flanders. However, many Walloon LEA workers previously provided services for Flemish horticultural companies.

A protocol on agriculture and horticulture was therefore signed on 5 February 2018 between the Regional Employment Minister Philippe Muyters and the Vice-Chairman and Walloon Employment Minister Pierre-Yves Jeholet. This enables Walloon LEA workers to work in Flemish companies.

The Boerenbond, the Forem and the VDAB established the agreements and procedures necessary for the practical implementation of said protocol.

d) Professional training and traineeships

This working group was created to:

- Develop a proposal aiming to define the remits of different Public Employment and/or Training Services with respect to jobseekers who are following a traineeship/training in a company in another region to where they live;
- Sign agreements to simplify exemptions for these jobseekers as far as possible;
- Gather statistics on the different types of traineeship/training in companies in general and on the number of “cross-border” initiatives in particular.

In 2018, this working group met to exchange information on the learning reforms in the workplace and to sign agreements to solve trainees’ problems.

III. SYNERJOB and Europe

For a few years, the European Commission has required that a single point of contact be appointed by each Member state for a series of projects. This is why SYNERJOB put itself forward at the end of 2013 as the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for ENPES (European Network of Public Employment Services), EURES (EUROpean

Employment Services) and Youth Guarantee projects. In concrete terms, ACTIRIS, the Forem and the VDAB each coordinate one of these projects.

For Refernet, Bruxelles Formation dedicates an expert with financial support from other members of SYNERJOB.

a) ENPES, the European Network of Public Employment Services

The European Network of Public Employment Services is a network that groups PES from the 28 Member states of the European Union, as well as Iceland and Norway. It was established by European Parliament and Council Decision No. 573/2014/EU of 15 May 2014 on the improvement of cooperation between public employment services (PES).

On the “PES Board”, the network’s decision-making body, each country has only one seat. For Belgium, although four PES have been appointed as members of the network by Belgium’s permanent representation to the European Union, only one PES represents Belgium, based on a rotation decided by the SYNERJOB Board of Directors.

Before 2014, PES formed an informal network at European level called “Heads of Public Employment Services” (“HOPES”), with the status of expert network for the European Commission. This network was created in 1997 as part of the first European strategy for employment. Meetings were already held on a bi-annual basis and mainly concerned the exchange of information and the formulation of informal opinions.

With the creation of SYNERJOB in 2007, a collaboration between Belgian PES took shape to better prepare “HOPES” then ENPES (European Network of Public Employment Services) meetings together. European matters are regular points on the SYNERJOB Board of Directors meeting agenda.

In addition to the preparation and debriefing of different network European meetings, the members of SYNERJOB concerned led common work together in a series of projects, the most important of which are:

- Support to the definition of a Belgian position concerning the regulation establishing a “European Labour Authority”;
- Procedures relating to the assessment of ENPES;
- A second cycle of Benchlearning;
- Validation of the main ENPES deliverables;
- The participation of certain working groups in ENPES, including:
 - ✓ The Future of Work;
 - ✓ PES cooperation with the Education sector.

b) EURES (European Employment Service)

EURES is a European regulation reviewed in April 2016 aiming to support and facilitate the free circulation of workers in the European Economic Area (EEA) (the 28 Member States of the European Union, plus Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland) and Switzerland.

The role of the SYNERJOB EURES working group

1. Within the legislative framework

The EURES regulation provides for the appointment of a EURES National Coordination Office (NCO) for each Member state. As a result, it was necessary for Belgium to find a solution that observes regional remits. SYNERJOB was presented as the single point of contact, without prejudice to the responsibilities of the NCOs

(National Coordinator Offices) of the regions and the German-speaking community. The SYNERJOB Board of Directors appoints one of the Belgian PES to coordinate the project with its counterparts and to communicate with the European Commission.

As a result, the SYNERJOB EURES working group collaborates intensively. The legislative processes relating to the regulation are monitored closely by the working group which agrees on the Belgian positions to be communicated to the European Commission.

2. Within the framework of implementing the regulation

The regulation provides for the EURES network to be opened up to other organisations, which requires an admission procedure. A procedure applicable to all regions was followed in 2018 at the beginning of the work carried out within the framework of SYNERJOB.

In the first phase of the admission procedure, the FGTB (Fédération générale du travail de Belgique - Belgian General Labour Federation) and the CSC (Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens - Confederation of Christian Unions) were recognised as EURES partners. The procedure was assessed, after which corrections and improvements were necessary. A second cycle is planned for spring 2019.

3. In the discussions concerning the European Labour Authority - ELA

The EURES working group also took part in defining its position in the legislative process to create the ELA. This aspect was very relevant insofar as the EURES European Coordination Office was integrated in the ELA. The Belgian positions were sent to Belgium's permanent representation to the European Union.

In general, intensive collaboration within the SYNERJOB working group is not only useful for SYNERJOB's strategic position, but also enables mutual learning to understand the EURES regulation and to implement it. At European meetings, Belgium often speaks or defends its point of view with solid arguments that are appreciated both by the European Commission and by the counterparts from other EU Member States.

c) Youth Guarantee

Following the European Union Council's recommendation in April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (Garantie pour la Jeunesse, GJ), SYNERJOB was appointed as the 'GJ' single point of contact for Belgium for European Institutions to implement the recommendation.

In 2018, within the framework of recurrent activities, SYNERJOB and its GJ working group carried out the following actions:

- Attendance at and contribution to European events relating to the GJ:
 - ✓ Participation in "Mutual Learning" events on "Tracking and mapping NEETs" in Zagreb (Croatia) on 14/6, "Enhancing support to Young people through integrated services" on 8 and 9/10 in Luxembourg and in the "Workshop on Internship programmes" in Skopje (North Macedonia) on 27/11;
 - ✓ Attendance at different events organised by the European Commission in Brussels throughout the year (bilateral EU-Taiwan meeting, etc.);
- Attendance at and contribution to GJ national coordinators' meetings (28 Member States) organised by the European Commission:
 - ✓ Attendance at the coordinators' meeting organised by the Directorate-General Employment in Brussels on 14/03 and in Luxembourg on 8-9/10 and transfer of the latest information on GJ projects (EMCO examination, new IEJ envelope, etc.)
- Coordination and contribution to the exercise to monitor the recommendation and implement it:
 - ✓ Contribution to the EMCO annual exercise to collect data from different Belgian PES;

- ✓ Contribution to various questionnaires throughout the year;
- Working group meetings:
 - ✓ WG meetings on 21/3 and 24/8 to provide information on the current topics and prepare the “Peer Support” project with Cyprus;
 - ✓ Contribution to the report and the event on SYNERJOB’s first 10 years;
 - ✓ Coordination and attendance at the workshop on “Mapping NEETS” organised by Accenture and Youth Start.

In 2018, in addition to recurring activities, the GJ working group took part, at the Commission's request, for a duration of 15 months in 2018-2019, in the “Cyprus Peer Support” project aiming to support the Cypriot Labour Ministry in formulating a strategy for NEETs, in cooperation with Portugal and Lithuania. This exercise consisted in two capacity-building missions with Cypriot PES (04/2018 and 2019), organising the visit of a Cypriot delegation to Brussels (09/2018), as well as in the exchange of expertise and best practice throughout the project and several contributions to the Cypriot GJ action plan.

d) ReferNet

ReferNet is the European information network monitoring vocational and education or training policies (VET), on behalf of the agency CEDEFOP, one of whose missions is to develop and promote initial and ongoing professional training.

Comprising all the public actors in professional education and training in Belgium, the national network is coordinated and run by Bruxelles Formation based on a SYNERJOB decision, with national representation given by the Flemish Community¹, within the framework of a four-year mandate (2015 - 2019).

Each year, the missions entrusted to the network are subject to an action plan that provides for a series of productions, in connection with the priorities of the 2020 Education – Training strategy and the 5 medium-term objectives (Riga 2015: learning in the workplace; access to qualification and certification; training quality; key skill; training teachers and trainers).

In 2018, ReferNet Belgium produced:

- A political report monitoring the different measures taken by Belgium between March 2017 and February 2018;
- Two articles:
 - ✓ The first on the image of professional teaching and training in Belgium
 - ✓ The second on “digitalisation and the future of work” in Belgium (a review of the situation);
- 3 Spotlights (one per Community): diagrammatic leaflet presenting our VET systems, main challenges and key Eurostat indicators;
- Investigation into the mobility of young people in apprenticeships: data update;
- 5 news items: relating to the various initiatives taken by partners to promote or develop VET.

The coordinating body also maintains a website that is regularly updated and publishes Cedefop analyses, events and information about the sector in Belgium (www.refernet.be).

IV. SYNERJOB and WAPES (World Association of Public Employment Services)

This international association under Belgian law (AISBL) provides a contact platform between the managing

¹ *Teaching and training department.*

directors and experts of public employment services worldwide.

It enables best practice, knowledge and training to be exchanged, and close collaboration between public employment services.

a) SYNERJOB's support

The executive secretariat of this global association is based in Brussels, on VDAB premises, and is supported by SYNERJOB. All the public employment services in Belgium are members of WAPES through SYNERJOB. SYNERJOB also provides its legal and other experts to support WAPES in general and the secretariat in particular. The secretariat is managed by Mrs Eve-Marie Mosseray, who has been seconded by the Forem since August 2018.

Whether from its members attendance at governance meetings (board of directors, executive board, general assembly), by organising seminars or from active participation in working groups, SYNERJOB regularly supports WAPES actions.

b) SYNERJOB, an active member of WAPES

From frequent feedback from the executive secretary on development within WAPES, SYNERJOB members stay perfectly up-to-date with the organisation's activities and can assess the relevance of one of SYNERJOB's members being involved in them. Beyond the themes addressed, the activities organised enable us to create or strengthen ties with other PES and to work towards meeting certain objectives.

c) Added value for SYNERJOB

Reflections on the long-term strategy that are propelled and led by Fons Leroy with his proposal to use an adapted version of benchlearning are factors that position SYNERJOB as an essential player within the WAPES network.

Furthermore, WAPES's collaboration with many organisations (ILO, OECD Leed, African Union, IDB, WEC, European Commission, etc.) enables actions and best practice from the SYNERJOB members to be implemented and highlights the innovations made.

V. Cross-functional themes

Some working groups handle topics that straddle several themes or more general topics. Here are a few examples of these groups:

a) ROME v3/Competent

ROME (Répertoire Opérationnel des Métiers et des Emplois - Operational Jobs and Occupations Directory) is an occupational directory. It is currently in its third iteration, hence its name ROME v3, version 3.

To enable a better match between supply and demand on the labour market, the Competent tool was created. Starting from ROME v3 'occupational' groups, detailed 'occupation' profiles were created and linked to their requirements in terms of general or specific skills required on the job market. As a partner of the 'Competent' project, the VDAB adapts the frameworks from ROMEv3.

Priority is given to automatic matching, by this tool, between supply and demand, and through this to inter-regional mobility or mobility with border regions (this tool is also used in France and Luxembourg).

Since 2018, ROME/Competent classification has been available in French and in Dutch. In collaboration with SYNERJOB partners, renewal of the Competent tool has begun.

With a view to operationalising matching between labour supply and demand and data exchanges via the ROME/Competent tool, changes have been made in terms of technical migration with SYNERJOB members. These changes have been possible thanks to:

- Implementation of the “My profile” service for users specific to the Forem;
- Preparation of services for employers within the Forem and ADG;
- Modernisation of the “My Actiris” account that enables the jobseeker to manage his ACTIRIS file;
- Preparation of data exchange between ACTIRIS and Bruxelles Formation.

The “Job market explorer” application displays information about employment, unemployment and job offers in a region and focuses on different occupations in shortage and the training offering. This application enables better management of jobseekers’ files, through advice that is more tailored to the jobseeker and the reality of the job market in their region.

The possibilities of making this application operational for the whole Belgian job market will be studied in more detail by the ROME/Competent working group.

b) Collective redundancies

Inter-regional collaborations are put in place when workers residing in other regions are affected by a collective redundancy or company restructuring or closure. The 24 February 2005 cooperation agreement provides for a social emergency plan to re-assign workers who are part of a collective redundancy. It automatically applies if:

- More than 250 workers are dismissed in a region;
- At least 50 of these workers reside in another region.

A crisis cell then supervises implementation of the plan: it coordinates intervention from the public services concerned and defines the social emergency plan. It is chaired by the Minister of Employment in the Region where the site most affected by the redundancies is located. A few examples: Sabena Technics, Carrefour, UCB and ING.

An agreement protocol signed between the Flemish region, the Walloon region, the German-speaking community, the Brussels-Capital region and the federal government, came into effect on 1 January 2016 to define the terms of application for the following matters:

- Restructuring discount cards - employer benefits;
- Reimbursement of outplacement costs;
- Outplacement cheques.

This protocol sets the remit of the region in which the employer establishment is located as a starting point.

In 2018, this protocol was amended to incorporate changes of the Royal Decree of 9 March 2006 relating to the active management of restructurings. In addition to the three matters mentioned above, the protocol incorporates the terms of application relating to approval of the outplacement offer for collective redundancies announced after 31 December 2017.

c) Digitalisation of the job market

To determine to what extent cooperation on the theme of job market digitalisation could be relevant for SYNERJOB, SYNERJOB members identified the following 4 fields:

- Data mining;
- Simplifying registration;
- Data exchange and use of applications;
- Digitalisation of the training offering.

d) Communication on Belgian job market statistics

Since 2017, the regional public employment services have published common statistical content via the SYNERJOB website.

This tool is updated on a monthly basis and provides benchmark information to observers and stakeholders in the Belgian job market, facilitating comparison between regions and offering an alternative to the ONEM publication.

In 2018, the working group dedicated to this theme drafted a document to harmonise the unemployment rates in major cities (Antwerp, Brussels, Charleroi, Ghent and Liège) between regions. It explained the different possibilities for calculating the active population in these cities and the corresponding unemployment rates based on the methodology used, for the population of working age and for young people.

Strategic areas

SYNERJOB members also want to work together flexibly yet effectively over future years to define and implement actions that will enable them to meet new challenges such as digitalisation, ageing, youth unemployment and migrations.

The members identified seven areas in which SYNERJOB intends to intensify its efforts in the coming years:

- Professional transitions;
- Digitalisation of the economy and work;
- Changes in the skills and abilities expected;
- Active measures to manage the job market;
- Connection between employment and education;
- Promotion of inter-regional mobility for jobseekers;
- Implementation of a watch system and organisation of strategic seminars

In 2018, the 7 areas were ranked by priority and actions to be led within the framework of priority areas were proposed.

Actions on which SYNERJOB members will intensify their discussions are:

- For job market digitalisation
 - ✓ Analyse the impact of digitalisation on the different professional sectors
 - ✓ Analyse the impact of digitalisation on higher education courses
 - ✓ Developing and/or sharing online skills tests;
- For changes in the skills and abilities expected
 - ✓ Identify cross-functional skills, including digital skills.

Event: SYNERJOB's anniversary

On 27 March 2018, SYNERJOB organised a conference at the initiative of the non-profit organisation's members' general directors. This took place within the prestigious setting of the Ateliers des Tanneurs, in Brussels. Hosted in French and in Dutch, by the journalist Sacha Daout, the conference gathered around one hundred experts from PES, professional federations, the academic and political worlds, social partners and companies.

The event was an occasion to present a summary of all the actions led in collaboration by the different Belgium public employment and training services since the creation of SYNERJOB in 2007, as well as to address current and future projects.

After an analysis of the state of the Belgian employment market, different themes were addressed:

- Inter-regional mobility actions;
- Projects implemented within the framework of the Youth Guarantee;
- Training collaborations;
- Actions relating to skills transfer;
- SYNERJOB's presence abroad (ENPES and WAPES);
- The importance of benchlearning was also addressed. Thanks to their involvement in European and global networks, the members of the non-profit organisation learn how other public employment services address the employment market, and thereby enhance their professional practices.

Appendices

Addresses

Addresses of SYNERJOB institutional members as of 31/12/2018

ARBEITSAMT DER DEUTSCHSPRACHIGEN GEMEINSCHAFT (ADG)

Category B public law institution

Headquarters at Vennbahnstrasse 4/2 4780-SAINT-VITH

Represented by Robert Nelles, Deputy Director.

BRUXELLES FORMATION

Category B public law institution

Headquarters at rue de Stalle 67,1180-BRUSSELS

Represented by Olivia P'tito, General Director.

REGIONAL BRUSSELS EMPLOYMENT OFFICE (ACTIRIS)

Category B public law institution

Headquarters at boulevard de l'Astronomie 14, 1210-BRUXELLES

Represented by Grégor Chapelle, Managing Director

And Caroline Mancel, Deputy Managing Director

WALLOON OFFICE FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (Le Forem)

Category B public law institution

Headquarters at boulevard Tirou 104, 6000-CHARLEROI

Represented by Marie-Kristine Vanboeckstal, General Director.

VLAAMSE DIENST VOOR ARBEIDSBEMIDDELING EN BEROEPSOPLEIDING (VDAB)

Extern Verzelfstandigd Agentschap met rechtspersoonlijkheid (independent external agency with a legal status)

Headquarters at boulevard de l'Empereur 11, 1000-BRUXELLES

Represented by Fons Leroy, Managing Director.

Address of the SYNERJOB Chair and Permanent Secretariat:

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SYNERJOB website:

www.SYNERJOB.be

Members of the SYNERJOB Board of Directors as at 31/12/2018

Le Forem

represented by Marie-Kristine Vanboeckstal

VDAB

represented by Fons Leroy

ACTIRIS

represented by Grégor Chapelle
and Caroline Mancel

ADG

represented by Robert Nelles

BRUXELLES FORMATION

represented by Olivia P'tito

Mandates

Marie-Kristine Vanboeckstal, Chairwoman

Fons Leroy, Vice-Chairman

Grégor Chapelle, Secretary

Robert Nelles, Treasurer

Olivia P'tito, Auditor

Basilio Napoli, Auditor

Session dates in 2018

Board of directors

6 February 2018

24 April 2018

28 June 2018

20 September 2018

22 November 2018

General Assembly

28 June 2018