

"Perspective 50plus" to enhance the mobility of long-term unemployed persons

The Federal Programme of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) aims to improve the employability and employment opportunities of people over 50

Mobility is a basic requirement for all workers. Commuting between home and the place of work or moving to take up a new job elsewhere has become part of everyday life in the modern world of work. Commuting distance must not become an insurmountable obstacle in reintegrating older long-term unemployed into the labour market. Therefore, the employment pacts under the Federal Programme "Perspective 50plus – Employment pacts for Older Workers in the Regions" work closely with public transport operators and companies in the regions. Together they identify the needs of older long-term unemployed persons and extend their services accordingly. As regards public transport, "Perspective 50plus" is not only concerned with improving timetables: for inexperienced or unsure passengers seemingly confusing timetables, busy train stations and complicated connections are real obstacles. Mobility training to help people getting around by local public transport is a simple and effective remedy in these cases. In individual transport, the Federal Programme aims to mobilise potential synergies, for example by encouraging commuters to participate in car-sharing or car-pooling.

Moreover, the programme supports individual mobility by offering drivers safety training or helping participants to get a driving licence. The share of income spent on commuting should not be too high. Therefore, measures to cushion the cost of commuting have been developed in the context of the programme. It is possible, for example, to pay the costs of season tickets in the case of public transport users. Travel expenses to job interviews are also refunded.

Sometimes, moving within Germany or a new start abroad may be an option for returning to working life. When long-term unemployed persons find a job in a new geographical environment, other aspects, apart from the above-mentioned mobility requirements, have to be taken care of. These include, for example, finding accommodation and attending language courses, if necessary. Where long-term unemployed men or women have been successfully placed into employment, the Perspective 50plus Programme provides for so-called "moving coaches" to help them organise their move. Beyond immediate practical assistance, the Federal Programme contributes in a more general way to greater mental mobility: Counselling and coaching gives unemployed persons new perspectives, helping them to break with old patterns of thinking. An awareness of new paths is being created, both literally and in the proverbial sense.

To increase the mobility of "50plus" long-term unemployed, the BMAS Federal Programme cooperates with strong network partners. They include not only public transport associations or policy-makers and administrations at regional level, but also businesses like car dealers and car rental companies. Moreover, the Programme wants to enlist "Perspective 50plus" ambassadors as supporters of the initiative.

The BMAS Federal Programme constitutes a powerful network committed to bringing 50plus long-term unemployed back into employment. A broad range of measures to support mobility opens up wider geographical horizons for long-term unemployed persons. Their search for a job is no longer limited to their place of residence and the surrounding area but can extend even across national borders. This improves their prospects of finding a job significantly.

The BMAS Federal Programme

"Perspective 50plus – Employment Pacts for Older Workers in the Regions" is a labour market programme launched by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It is aimed at enhancing the employability and employment opportunities of "50 plus" long-term unemployed persons. It is based on a regional approach and is supported by 62 regional job alliances. This approach makes it possible to take account of regional particularities.