

Continuing vocational training



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EDITORIAL

In France, continuing vocational training (CVT) is characterised by an original structure that leaves an important place for collective bargaining. Historically, access to training has varied according to the status of individuals. This criterion was reduced with the introduction of the personal training account in 2015. This system of access to training is no longer linked to status but to the person (see CPF box p. 11).

Structured in its current form at the beginning of the 1970s and largely reformed since then, the FPC mobilises the State, regional councils as well as companies, public and private training bodies, professional, trade union and family organisations.

The provisions on CVT are the result of initiatives by the social partners in collective agreements and by the State in laws and decrees.

Depending on their status and the specific training problems that individuals, the social partners, the State and, since 1999, the Regional Councils, have created and set up various mechanisms: work-linked training, individual training leave and contracts and professionalization periods.

A major reform took place in 2018 that significantly changed the foundations of the French system in terms of governance, financing and mechanisms, including the monetization of the Training personal account.

Continuing vocational training and apprenticeship is an important economic sector that accounted for 1.2% of France's gross domestic product in 2016.



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LIFELONG GUIDANCE

The guidance system has been restructured in France over the last decade.

Recent reforms in decentralization and vocational training have had an impact on the intervention of guidance structures, staff and guidance services.

Public guidance service

In 2009, a law created the notion of a «public guidance service» (service public de l'orientation - SPO). This public service guarantees everyone access to free, complete and objective information on professions, training, certifications, job opportunities and remuneration levels. In addition, it facilitates access to quality guidance advice and support services, particularly through dematerialised tools.

Regional Public Guidance Service (SPRO)

In 2014, the «Regional Public Guidance Service» (SPRO) was created. The law maintains the principle of a public service in the field of guidance but entrusts the coordination of the actions of guidance structures (apprenticeship and continuing training) to the Regions,

now at the head of an SPRO. It should be noted, however, that the State retains responsibility for policies relating to initial orientation (school and university training).

Career transition counselling (CEP)

Within the framework of the SPRO, a new guidance system is also being created: the Career transition counselling (Conseil en évolution professionnelle - CEP). Employees, job seekers, young people leaving the school system can benefit free of charge from the CEP, whose implementation procedures are defined in a national specification.

Five networks of operators are designated to provide this CEP service: Pôle emploi, Apec, Cap emploi, Missions locales, and Opacif, joint collecting bodies approved for individual training leave. The Region may designate regional operators.

The law of 5 September 2018 provides that one or more operators may be appointed at the regional territory level in accordance with a set of specifications. They should be in place by the end of 2019/beginning of 2020. The Opacif will disappear on 31 December 2019.

LIFELONG VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Vocational education and training have traditionally been at the heart of public policy priorities in France.

Thus, companionship has existed since the middle Ages, learning since the 19th century, and the development of continuing vocational training in the early 1970s was based on long-standing and very diverse adult education practices. These practices form the basis of lifelong learning that has become «lifelong learning» (FTLV).

The FTLV allows everyone to benefit from training either as part of initial training (FI) at school, university or apprenticeship, or as part of continuing vocational training (CVT) for any person, young or adult, already engaged in working life. The initial training courses, managed by the ministries concerned and mainly the Ministry of National Education, are only diploma courses (see appendix p. 16).

On the other hand, the French CVT system offers, not only the possibility of returning to a training path aimed at obtaining the diplomas of the initial system, but also of entering other qualifying paths (sectoral certifications) and especially non-qualifying paths. Thus, most continuing training activities remain short term.

Excerpt from the Labour Code
Lifelong vocational training is a national obligation. It aims to enable each person, regardless of their status, to acquire and update knowledge and skills that support their professional development, as well as to progress by at least one level of qualification over their working life. It is a key element in securing career paths and promoting employees...
It includes initial training, including apprenticeship, and subsequent training, which constitutes continuing vocational training, for adults and young people already engaged in working life or who are engaged in it.

Article L6111-1

«Europe 2020» strategy

Since 2010, education and training policies have been part of the implementation of the European Union's ten-year strategy «Europe 2020» for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The «Education and Training 2020» cooperation framework, defined by the Commission and the Member States, aims to support national actions and help meet the challenges resulting from shared findings: ageing of the population, lack of skilled labour, adaptation to technological developments and global competition.

- Four common objectives at EU level are pursued by 2020:
- make lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
 - improve the quality and effectiveness of education and training;
 - promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;

- encourage creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Through its actions, France contributes to the achievement of these objectives, in particular through measures to combat early school leaving, the promotion of individual training rights to better secure pathways, the development of enhanced training rights for the least qualified, the foundation of professional knowledge and skills, etc.

In 2015, Europe adopted the Riga Conclusions, which redefine the objectives for vocational education and training.

LIFELONG LEARNING BY AGE GROUPS

Age	6 to 10	11 to 15	15 to 18	18 to 25/30	60/65 and over
	Primary school	Lower secondary school	Upper secondary school	University	Universities of the third age, preparation to retirement
	Compulsory learning up to 16 years of age				Labour market Volunteer activities > Retirement
	Initial training				Continuing training
	Lifelong learning				

INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING: WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Education is compulsory from 6 to 16 years of age.

Initial education consists of general, technological and/or vocational education according to selected curricula.

Vocational courses only start from secondary level. The diplomas awarded on completion of these courses are designed to provide direct access to employment and their preparation always includes a period of internship in a company.

These sectors are managed materially and financially, mainly by the Ministry of National Education, and partly by other ministries (Agriculture, Industry, etc.).

Secondary and higher education offer 3 levels of vocational training:

➤ **Secondary vocational education** leads to a Vocational Skills Certificate (CAP) and/or vocational baccalaureate (bac pro).

These diplomas attest to a level of qualification in a profession;

➤ **Technological secondary education** leads to a technician's certificate (BT) or a bachelor's degree in technology;

➤ **Higher education** offers two short vocational courses based on two diplomas: the University Diploma of Technology (DUT) and the Higher Technician's Certificate (BTS).

These diplomas attest to a level of qualification in a technical field.

Higher education also offers long-term professionalizing courses (professional degrees, masters, diplomas from grandes écoles).

All these diplomas can be prepared within the framework of two specific employment contracts: the apprenticeship contract and the professionalization contract.

They can also be obtained within the framework of the validation of prior learning (VAE).

Certifying training courses

All these diplomas can be prepared as part of two special employment contracts - the contract of apprenticeship and the professional training contract. They can also be obtained as part of the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

Training courses are called certifications when they lead to a recognized diploma or certification. These include certifications registered in the National Directory of Professional Certifications (RNCP). This directory provides individuals and companies with information on diplomas and professional qualifications. France Compétences (see p. 9), which manages this directory, is also responsible for setting up the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

www.cncp.gouv.fr

APPRENTICESHIP

The objective of apprenticeship is to provide young people aged 16 to 29 with general, theoretical and practical training to acquire one of the diplomas ranging from a CAP (usually) to an engineering degree.

This training may also be certified by a professional title registered in the National Directory of Professional Certifications (RNCP).

Apprenticeship offers **alternating teaching**. During the apprenticeship contract, the young person is an apprentice, i.e. both an employee of a company and a student in an apprenticeship training centre (CFA).

In most cases, the CFA is a private body managed by the professional branches or consular chambers. It can also be located within a vocational school or university.

The management of the system is ensured by the State (legislation and financing) and the social partners (definition of a national cost per apprenticeship contract -according to the training course-, and creation and management of CFAs). The Regional Councils can intervene to grant additional funding to the CFAs.

Excerpt from the Labour Code

Apprenticeship contributes to the educational objectives of the nation and to professional integration. Its purpose is to provide workers who have fulfilled their compulsory education with general, theoretical and practical training with a view to obtaining a professional qualification attested by a diploma or title for professional purposes registered in the national register of professional qualifications. The training is free of charge for the apprentice and his legal representative.

Article L6111-1

LEARNING IN NUMBERS

While the number of apprentices increased from 2007 to 2012 (438,000), the number of apprentices decreased from 2013 to 419,800 at the start of the 2017 school year.

Source : Annex to the finance bill for 2019.

Until 2018, apprentices, CFAs (training provision) and employers of apprentices benefit from the grants or subsidies granted to apprenticeship by the three main financiers, namely the Regions, companies and the State.

For apprenticeship contracts concluded from 1 January 2019 onwards, there will be only one grant per apprentice and only for companies with fewer than 250 employees and for apprenticeship contracts for a diploma or professional title equivalent to at most the baccalauréat. Its amount will be decreasing from a maximum of 4125 euros for the 1st year to a maximum of 1200 euros for the 3rd year of execution of the apprenticeship contract.

FINAL FUNDER EXPENDITURES FOR APPRENTICESHIP

Contributors	in 2016 (millions of euros)
The Regions (training offer, assistance to apprentices and bonuses to employers)	1 780
The State (support for apprentices and employers through social and tax exemptions and tax credits)	2 210
The companies (In particular apprenticeship tax)	1 370
Other contributors management organizations, apprentices' families, other communities, etc.	400
Total	5 770

Source : Annex to the finance bill for 2019.

CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING: WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Lifelong vocational training aims to enable each person, regardless of their status, to acquire and update knowledge and skills that promote their professional development, as well as to progress by at least one level of qualification over the course of their working life.

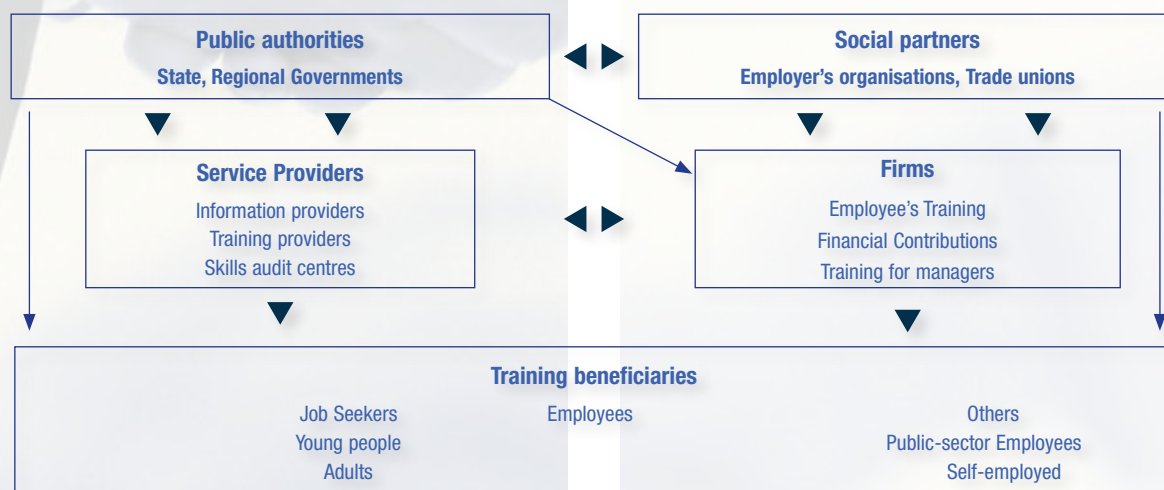
It includes initial and subsequent training, which constitutes continuing vocational training, for adults and young people already engaged in working life or who are engaged in it.

Its purpose is to:

- facilitate their adaptation to the developments of new technologies and new working conditions;
- contribute to maintaining and improving their level of qualification;
- increase their opportunities for social and professional advancement.

It is a key element in securing career paths and promoting employees.

The State, the Regions, local authorities and the social partners shall contribute to the development of continuing vocational training policy.



MAIN ACTORS

- **The State** passes laws. It has a contractual policy aimed at providing assistance (exemptions from social security contributions, subsidies as part of employment and skills development commitments, etc.). Since September 2018, the State has been able to implement a national programme to meet an additional qualification requirement for young people and job seekers. (e.g. Skills Investment Plan)
- Begun in 1982, the decentralisation of vocational training responsibilities to the **Regions** was completed in 2014. The Regions have full competence in vocational training and thus develop their own training policy as part of a «regional public training service» (SPRF).
- **Professional and trade union organisations** shall participate in the drafting of provisions relating to continuing vocational training and shall contribute to their implementation of the training. Created at the initiative of the social partners, the skills operators (see box below) manage certain contributions of the companies (see p. 14). Since 1 January 2019, the social partners have been exercising the governance of apprenticeship with the State.
- **Companies** are both the privileged places to implement training and, together with the Regions and the State, the main financiers of continuing vocational training.

In addition, the employer is bound by legal training obligations: to ensure that employees adapt to their workplace, but also to ensure that their ability to hold a job is maintained.

Competences operators (Opérateurs de compétences – Opco)

Provided for by the law of September 2018 reforming the French training system, the skills operators are intended to succeed the current joint approved collection bodies (OPCA). Initiated by the social partners in a logic of major training courses, 11 to 12 organisations should be created in 2019.

Their main missions are:

- to ensure the financing of apprenticeship and professionalization contracts, according to the levels of coverage set by the branches;
- to provide technical support to member branches for employment and skills planning management (GPEC) and for their certification mission;
- to ensure a local service for the benefit of very small, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs, i.e. less than 50 employees), and to promote work-study programs (apprenticeships and professionalization contracts).

MAIN AUTHORITIES

➤ France Compétences

Created on 1 January 2019, France compétences is a national public institution in charge of regulating and financing vocational training and apprenticeship.

Placed under the supervision of the Minister in charge of vocational training, its role is to:

- distribute the pooled funds to the various actors in vocational training and apprenticeship;
- regulate the quality of training;
- make recommendations on costs, care rules and access to training;
- establish and guarantee the relevance of certifications, including the updating of the National Directory of Professional Certifications (RNCP);
- ensure the proper implementation of the reform on vocational training and apprenticeship.

➤ Crefop (Regional Committee for Employment, Vocational Training and Guidance)

Crefop is a four-party body composed of representatives at regional level, the State, the Regional Council, trade union organisations of employees and employers, and the main regional operators. Crefop's main mission is to ensure coordination between these actors and the coherence of training programmes in the region. It is also responsible for diagnosis, studies, monitoring and evaluation of policies within its field of competence, in conjunction with Cnefop.

➤ National Association for Interprofessional Joint Certification and Professional Development

To replace **Copane** (Comité paritaire interprofessionnel national pour l'emploi et la formation professionnelle), this association bringing together the social partners should have its missions validated in a national interprofessional agreement negotiated in January 2019.

ACCESS TO CONTINUING TRAINING: MAIN BENEFICIARIES AND MECHANISMS

All persons, from their entry into working life to retirement, have a right to training through a Personal Training Account that can be used on their own initiative and is sustainable regardless of any changes in their status.

Access to training can also be linked to the status of individuals: public and private sector employees, self-employed workers and job seekers benefit from special access to training.

The training of jobseekers is thus mainly the responsibility of the Regions. At the same time, it is the employers (private or public) and the social partners who have the main responsibility for the training of people in employment.

CIVIL SERVANTS

Civil servants (State, local authorities and public hospitals) may benefit from training measures financed by a specific contribution from the three public services.

- **The training plan** includes all the training that the administration offers to its agents. The staff member is then considered during the probationary period as on actual service. His remuneration is maintained.
- **Training leave** is an individual right that allows the agent to take training of his choice during his working time. The agent on training leave shall receive remuneration.
- **The Personal Training Account** allows the agent to capitalize 24 hours per year, up to a maximum of 150 hours (24 hours per year up to 120 hours and then 12 hours per year up to 150 hours). Since January 2017, it has replaced the Individual Right to Training (DIF) measure.

SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS

Non-employees (farmers, craftsmen, self-employed workers, shopkeepers, liberal professions) can also access training. They must contribute to the financing of their training by paying a contribution to a collecting body authorised by the State.

Since 2018 they have also benefited from the Personal Training Account.

Supporting professional transitions

- Career transition counselling (see p. 4).
- The skills audit allows employees and jobseekers to assess their personal and professional skills and define a career plan (with the possibility of training actions).
- The validation of prior learning experience (VAE): any person (employee or job seeker) who can prove professional experience as an employee or on a voluntary basis corresponding to a desired diploma or level of qualification, can have the prior learning of his experience validated in order to obtain all or part of a certification and thus be exempt from the corresponding examinations.

PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYEES

Regardless of the company, employees can take part in continuing vocational training during their working lives.

The departure in training can be done within the framework:

- of the company's **training plan**. It includes all training activities that are initiated by the employer. The employee in training is on a professional assignment; he is paid by the company;
- the **personal training account** (see below).
- the **personal transition training account** (compte personnel de formation de transition). It came into force in January 2019 and replaces the individual training leave (CIF). This measure is intended for employees of the company who have a certain length of service as an employee and who wish to implement a professional transition project, or change their profession or trade after having completed certification training.
- the **retraining or promotion by work-based training** (Pro-A). The purpose of this measure, which came into force in January 2019, is to enable employees to change jobs or professions, or to benefit from social or professional promotion through training activities. Pro-A combines general, professional and technological education provided in public or private training institutions or, when it has a training service, by the company.

JOB SEEKERS

Any jobseeker may, under certain conditions, undergo paid training.

For young people aged 16 to 25, the departure for training can take place within the framework of:

- a **particular type of employment contract** such as the professionalization contract, financed by the company and exempt from social security contributions by the State. It gives access to work-linked training leading to a recognised professional certification;
- the **training actions financed by the Regional Councils**.
- the **personal training account** (see below).

For unemployed employees and other jobseekers, the departure for training can take place within the framework of:

- **Specific work contracts**, providing for mandatory training actions (professionalization contract) or which may provide for training actions (single integration contract);
- **Training courses**, financed by the Region;
- Training courses financed by the unemployment insurance agency - Unédic - (personalised project for access to employment). Pôle emploi is responsible for its implementation;
- the **personal training account** (see below).

The personal training account (Compte personnel de formation - CPF)

The CPF is a tool for securing professional careers. It entered into force on 1 January 2015 and must enable its holder, throughout his professional life, to maintain his level of qualification or to access a higher level of qualification, and facilitate the management of his professional transitions.

The CPF is universal in nature: anyone aged 16 or over entering working life benefits from a CPF until retirement, regardless of their status: employee, job seeker, self-employed person, etc. This account is attached to the person who can mobilise them throughout their working life.

Since 1 January 2019, the Personal Training Account has been credited in euros at the end of each year, and no longer in hours. The account will be credited with 500 euros per year with a maximum of 5000 euros. The funding of the account will be reinforced for all assets that do not have a level V qualification (800 euros capped at 8000 euros).

The amount of the CPF is a base in euros that can be matched, in particular by:

- a competences operator • Pole emploi (national employment agency)
- the Region or State • l'employeur • or the account holder himself.

The CPF offers access to training courses leading to professional certifications registered in the national register and those leading to certificates validating blocks of skills. Under certain conditions, actions to validate acquired experience, skills assessments, preparation of the theoretical practical test of driving licences or training, support and advice provided to business creators or purchasers are also eligible.

The employee activates his CPF whenever he wishes outside working hours. On the other hand, when the CPF is mobilized in whole or in part during working time, the employee needs an «authorization of absence» from his employer.

This account is managed by a dedicated dematerialized service whose maintenance and management are entrusted to the Caisse des dépôts et consignations.

Website : www.moncompteformation.gouv.fr

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING

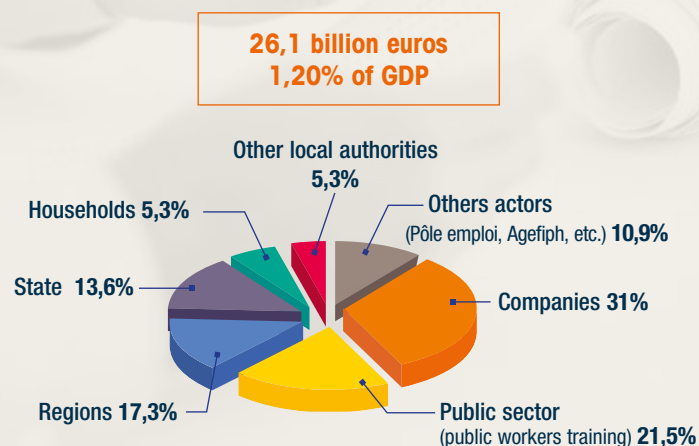
Continuing vocational training is mainly financed by the State, the Regions and companies.

- **The Regions** have general competence in the field of continuing vocational training. They finance CVET mainly through decentralisation allocations.
- **The State** becomes involved within the framework of its contractual policy. Its intervention takes various forms (single aid for apprenticeship or aid to professional branches and companies to anticipate their needs in terms of qualifications and training). Since September 2018, the State has been able to implement and finance a national programme to meet an additional qualification requirement for young people and job seekers.
- Financing by **companies** corresponds on the one hand to a legal obligation in the form of a tax contribution, and on the other hand to their direct payment of the costs of training actions carried out for their employees (see p.14).

While the State, the Regions and companies each contribute to the financing of continuing vocational training in their respective fields, opportunities for co-financing are encouraged.

THE FINANCING OF CONTINUING TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP IN 2016

Source: Finance bill for 2019



Co-financing and Coordination of funders

- The European Social Fund (ESF) may grant co-financing aid. It allows the European Union to influence the training and employment policies of the Member States.
- The High Commissioner for Skills and Inclusion through Employment shall support the definition and implementation of policies for skills transformation, including digital development, in the field of lifelong vocational training. Its main tasks are to ensure the design and deployment of the skills investment plan, by promoting the transparency, quality and innovation of the training offered to jobseekers, as well as the match between the training offer and the skills needs of companies in the short, medium and long term.
- The CPRDFOP (see next page), a programming tool, is implemented in particular by territorial objectives contracts, signed by the Regional Councils with one or more professional branches. Concrete and operational measures and the related co-financing are described.

PUBLIC FUNDERS

THE STATE

The State has specific budgets that finance:

- training activities for specific groups (immigrant workers);
- information actions on initial training and guidance;
- assistance in the development and implementation of training plans in companies or professional sectors.

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE STATE



THE REGIONS

A regional public vocational training service (SPRF) is being set up in each region. This SPRF establishes a right of access to vocational training for the lowest levels of qualification.

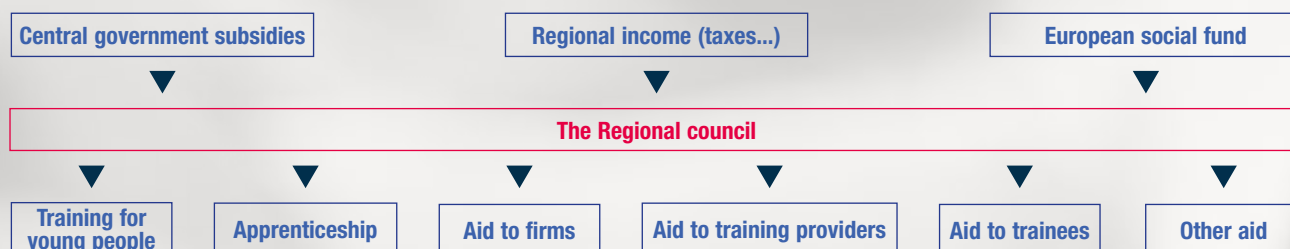
Each Regional Council funds measures for young people aged 16 to 25 and adults, especially job seekers, in line with the priorities it has defined.

In 2014, the Region was entrusted with the training of specific groups: people with disabilities, prisoners, French

nationals living abroad and illiterate people.

The Region is also involved in economic development. It is responsible for planning, equipment programming and land use planning. The Region is the leader in supporting innovation, internationalisation of companies and support for higher education and research.

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE REGIONAL AUTHORITIES



Programming tools of the regional authorities

- In consultation with the State and the social partners, the Regional Councils coordinate all vocational, initial and continuing training courses offered in the region through the Regional Plan for the Development of Vocational Training and Guidance (CPRDFOP).
- The State and each Region also participate within the framework of a State-Region project contract adopted for seven years on the basis of priority objectives established jointly and co-financed. The 2015-2020 contracts are in progress.

PRIVATE FUNDERS

THE COMPANIES

Every company also contributes to the development of continuing vocational training by participating each year in the financing of training activities or other services, such as the skills assessment or the VAE.

Since the 1970s, all employers have been obliged to contribute to the development of CVT as a minimum percentage of the gross annual payroll of all their employees. These percentages are so-called «legal obligation». The rate of these contributions corresponds to

- 0,55 % of the gross payroll of companies with less than 11 employees;
- 1 % of the gross wage bill of companies with at least 11 employees.

The reform initiated in 2018 provides that these contributions will be collected for the period 2019-2020 by the competence operators (Opco – see p. 9).

By means of collective agreements, some sectors of activity have provided for participation rates above the legal minimum.

Distribution of the contribution

From 1 January 2021, this contribution will be merged with the apprenticeship tax to form the single contribution to vocational training. It will be collected automatically by URSSAF and redistributed by France Compétences (see p. 9) to the actors concerned for the financing of the actions.

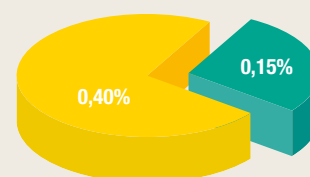
The distribution of the contribution to vocational training will be based on the training mechanisms, namely:

- A part for the «alternance» distributed among the competences operators;
- Another for the «development of the skills of SME employees (less than 50 employees)» equally distributed among the competences operators;
- A third for the training of «job seekers» will be paid back to the State to finance the Skills Investment Plan;
- Finally, the sums allocated for the «CPF» will be redistributed to the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations for the management of the CPF and to the Regional Interprofessional Joint Commissions for the professional transition CPF (see p. 11).

THE FINANCING OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING UNTIL 2018 As a % of the firm's gross annual wage bill

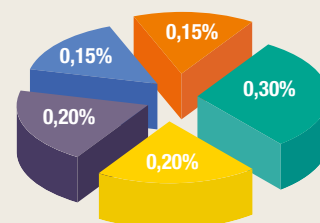
Companies with less than 11 employees

Using the 0,55%



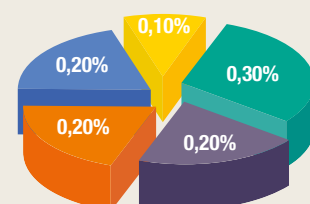
Companies with 11 to less than 50 employees

Using the 1%



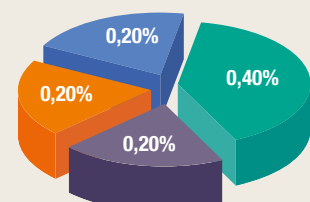
Companies with 50 to less than 300 employees

Using the 1%



Companies with 300 or more employees

Using the 1%



- Funding of training plans
- Funding of professionalization
- Funding of individual training leave
- Funding of the personal training account
- Funding of the Joint Fund for professional career security (see p. 12)

TRAINING PROVIDERS

Three types of organisations are involved in the field of continuing vocational training: training organisations, centres for the validation of prior learning (VAE) and competence assessment centres.

Continuous training is an open market. The founding texts of continuing vocational training did not confer any monopoly or dominant position on any particular provider.

Individuals, companies, associations, institutions and private or public bodies may therefore carry out training activities, whatever their activity.

In 2016, 68,000 training organizations shared the training market.

Quality and continuing training

A decree of 30 June 2015 defines six «quality» criteria that are now required for any continuing training service purchased by one of the 5 main public funders (Opca/Opacif, State, Regions, Pôle emploi and Agefiph).

Since 1 January 2019, France compétences (see p. 9) has been responsible for contributing to the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of the training provided. As such, it issues an opinion on the single national quality certification standard. In addition, it recognizes the certification bodies that can issue this certification. It is also within this framework that France compétences is designated as the national quality reference point for France to the European Union (Eqavet).

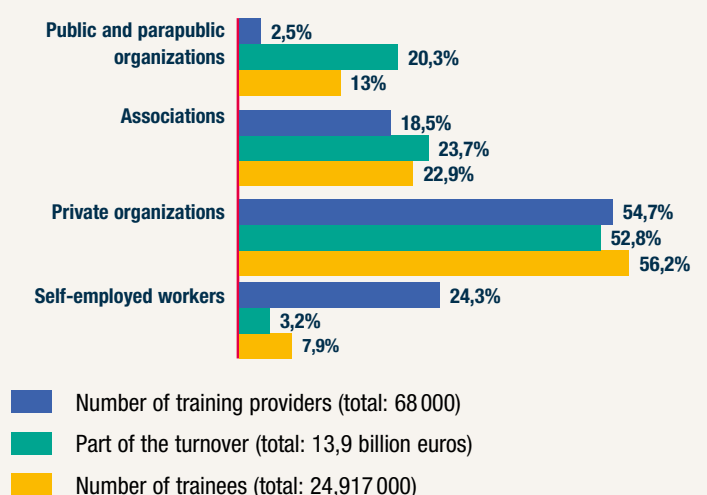
For more information:

Focus on the quality of continuing vocational training activities

The main types of training organizations are:

- Public and parapublic training organizations
 - GRETAs: training centres located in institutions of the Ministry of National Education
 - AFPA (National Association for Adult Education)
 - vocational training and agricultural promotion centres, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture;
 - the bodies of the consular chambers (chambers of agriculture, commerce and industry, trades).
- Private organizations
 - Non-profit organizations (associations under the 1901 law);
 - Private for-profit organizations;
 - Self-employed workers.

Data by status in 2016

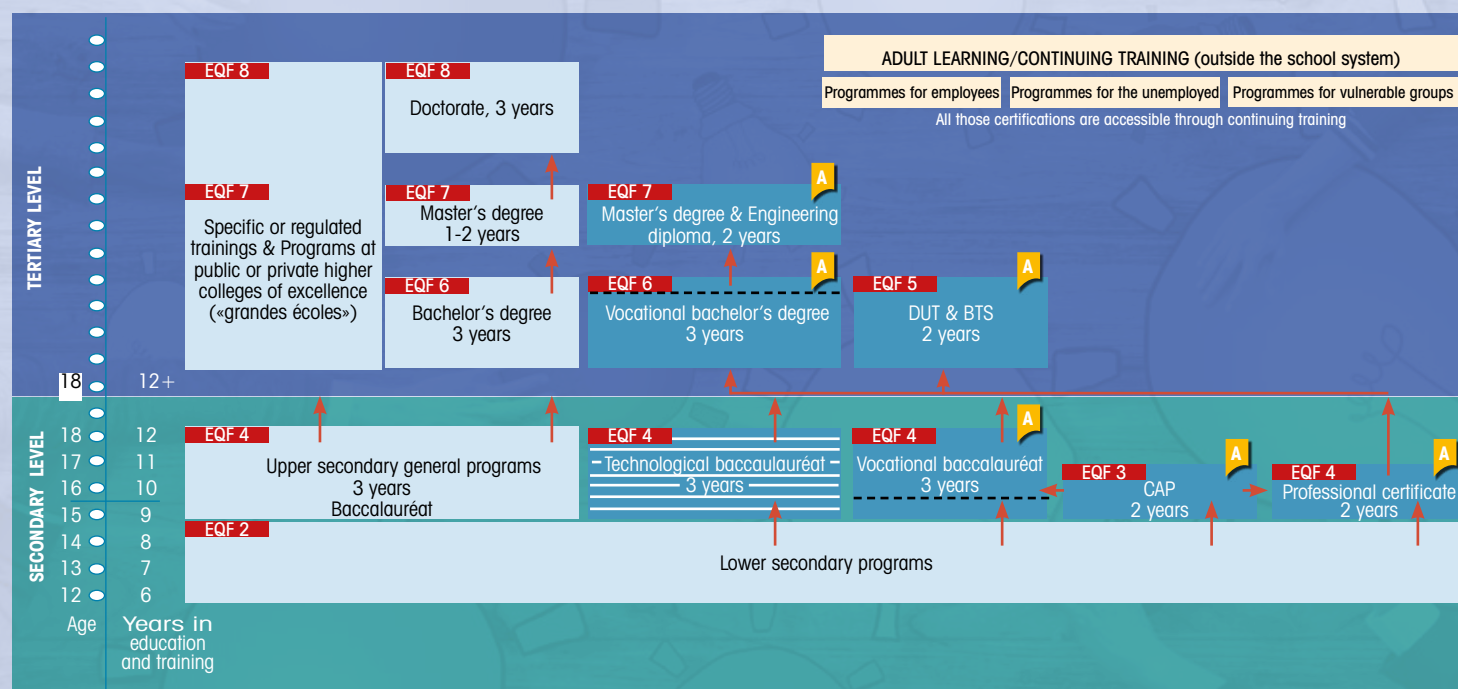


Increased regulation for skills audit centres

Skills audit bodies must meet certain requirements, particularly in terms of methodology and ethics.

THE VET SYSTEM IN FRANCE

VET IN THE FRENCH EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM



Professional certifications

Professional certification is the recognition by a legitimate authority of a qualification or know-how in a defined professional field.

A National Directory of Professional Certifications is established and updated by France compétences (see p. 9).

Professional certifications registered in the National Directory of Professional Certifications provide validation of the skills and knowledge acquired necessary for the exercise of professional activities. They are defined in particular by an activity framework that describes the work situations and activities carried out, the professions or jobs targeted, a skills framework that identifies the resulting skills and knowledge, including transversal skills and knowledge, and an evaluation framework that defines the criteria and methods for evaluating learning outcomes.

Professional certifications are classified by level of qualification and field of activity. The classification by qualification level is established according to a national qualifications framework defined by decree which determines the criteria for grading skills with regard to jobs and possible correspondences with qualifications in the States belonging to the European Union.

Professional certifications are made up of blocks of competences, homogeneous and coherent sets of competences contributing to the autonomous exercise of a professional activity and which can be evaluated and validated.

New Art. L. 6113-1 of the Labour Code

Professional certifications are acquired through initial training, continuing professional development, apprenticeship, or through the Validation of Prior Learning (VAE).

GENERIC TERMS

Alternance or work-study

Intended for young people and adults, this system consists of practical sessions and theoretical training sessions. This term includes apprenticeships and work-study contracts.

Alternance contract or work-study contracts

Special type of employment contract created by the social partners and incorporating professionalisation contracts.

Apprentice

Young person aged 16 to 25 recruited under an apprenticeship contract.

Apprenticeship

A training process as part of initial training in the form of an employment contract with specific conditions. It alternates practical sessions in companies with theoretical sessions given within a CFA.

Apprenticeship contract

A special form of employment contract for young people under 25 years of age with a private or public sector employer.

Apprenticeship tax

Tax obligation of certain employers to contribute financially to technical and initial vocational training. It is dissociated from the contribution to the development of continuing vocational training.

Contract of objectives

Multi-annual contract setting out the main guidelines and objectives for the development of vocational training signed between a Regional Council, the social partners and the State. E.g.: contract of objectives and means for the development of learning or the contract of territorial objectives.

Contribution to training

Mandatory legal contribution for all companies to finance employee training as part of the training plan, training leave, CPF, etc.

Synonyms: legal obligation, rate.

Gross annual payroll (MSAB)

All remuneration paid to employees used as a basis for the payment of the contribution due by companies for their participation in the development of training.

Individual training leave - CIF

Possibility for any employee, under certain conditions, to obtain an authorization of absence to follow the training of his choice.

Personal Training Account - CPF

Device allowing the holder to acquire hours of training to train throughout his professional career, whether he is an employee or a job seeker.

Skills audit

Continuing professional training system (present in the Labour Code). It provides the elements for evaluating personal and professional skills in order to define a professional project.

Social partners

Representatives of federations or employers' organisations and trade unions.

Training plan

All training Schémas decided by the employer to achieve the objectives pursued by the company.

Tutor

Person responsible for supervising, training and tutoring an employee during his or her periods of on-the-job training.

Validation of prior learning (VAE) or Accreditation of life experience

Measure allowing any individual to have their professional or volunteer experience validated in order to obtain all or part of a certification.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AFPA	Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes - Association for Adult Vocational Training
ANI	Accord national interprofessionnel- National Interprofessional Agreement
BC	Bilan de compétences - Skills Audit
BTS	Brevet de technicien supérieur - Higher Technician's Certificate
CAP	Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle - Vocational Skills Certificate
CBC	Congé de bilan de compétences - Skills Audit Leave
CCI	Chambre de commerce et d'industrie - chamber of trade and industry
CDD	Contrat à durée déterminée - Fixed Term Contract
CDI	Contrat à durée indéterminée - Permanent contract
CDI	Contrat à durée indéterminée - Permanent contract
CEP	Conseil en évolution professionnelle - Career development counseling
CIF	Congé individuel de formation - Individual Training Leave
CNAM	Conservatoire national des arts et métiers - National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts (National School of Engineering and Technology)
COT	Contrat d'objectif territorial - Territorial Contract of Objectives
CPA	Compte Personnel d'Activité – Personal Activity Account
CPF	Compte Personnel de Formation - Personal Training Account
CPRDFOP	Contrat de plan régional de développement de la formation et de l'orientation professionnelles - Regional Plan's Contract for the Development of the Vocational Guidance and Training
FPSP	Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels - Joint Fund for Professional Career Security
FSE	Fonds social européen - European Social Fund
GRETA	Groupeement d'établissements publics locaux d'enseignement - Consortium of Local Public Educational Institutions
MEN	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale - Ministry for National Education
Opc	Organisme paritaire collecteur agréé - Approved Joint Collecting Body
Opc	Opérateurs de compétences - Competences operators
Opacif	Organisme paritaire agréé dans le cadre du congé individuel de formation - approved Joint Body for the Individual Training Leave
RNCP	Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles - National Directory of Professional Certifications
SPRF	Service public régional de la formation - regional Public Service of Training
SPRO	Service public régional de l'orientation - regional Public Service of Guidance
Unedic	Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce - National Professional Union for Employment in Industry and Trade
VAE	Validation des acquis de l'expérience - Accreditation of Life Experience (Validation of non-formal and informal learning)

STATISTICS

Population and employment

Total population in France in 2016		66,991,000
Labour Force	Men	29,207,000
	Women	15,129,000
		14,078,000

Source: Insee 2017

Job seekers in 2016		2,972,000
Of which jobseekers registered for more than one year		1,346,000
Unemployment rate		10,1%
By age		
Under 25 years old		24,6%
From 25 to 49 years old		9,3%
More than 50 years old		6,9%

Source: Employment survey - INSEE 2016.

Number of people who received a training session in 2014 (in millions)

- Employee in private sector
- Employee in public sector
- Unemployed people
 - who have attended a training funded by the regional authorities
 - who have attended a training funded by the national
- Self-employed workers



Source: 2016 and 2017 Budget Plan

Access rate to continuing vocational training for the private sector employees in 2014 and 2015

* Rate of employees working in firms with more than 10 employees who benefited from one or more training sessions between January 2014 and mid-2015.

Breakdown by gender *		Breakdown by business size *	
Men	42 %	10 to 19 employees	27 %
Women	40 %	20 à 49 employees	29 %
Total	41 %	50 à 249 employees	41 %
		250 à 499 employees	45 %
		500 à 1999 employees	47 %
		2000 employees and more	51 %
		Total	41 %

Breakdown by occupational category *	
Management	58 %
Intermediary professions	48 %
Staff	37 %
Manual workers	33 %
Total	41 %

Source : CNEFP-Céreq, survey « Défis », 2015

SEE ALSO



These documents are available (free of charge) on Centre Info websites:

- www.europe-et-formation.eu
- Website of ReferNet France that provides information about VET in France

www.centre-info.fr/refernet

You will also find different reports and thematic studies on VET in France.

Centre Inffo

Centre for the Development of Information
on continuing vocational training



For more than 40 years, Centre Inffo has been the expert who deciphers the latest training news at national, regional and European level.

An association under the supervision of the Ministry in charge of vocational training, it has a public service mission in the fields of guidance and continuing training.

Centre Inffo develops a professional training offer, legal and documentary expertise, an engineering and consulting dimension in the fields of orientation/training and plays a role as a facilitator of public debate. As a privileged interlocutor of public authorities, social partners and public and private vocational training actors, it supports and accompanies them in their efforts to welcome, inform, advise and assist the public.

Centre Inffo is also Cedefop's correspondent as the leader of the ReferNet consortium. It is also a member of the European Information Network on Guidance and Mobility in Training: Euroguidance, www.euroguidance-france.org

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The ERASMUS+

France Agency / Education Training



The Erasmus+ France / Education Formation Agency is responsible for the promotion and management of the Erasmus+ programme and its mechanisms in France in the field of education and training.

The main objectives of the Erasmus+ programme are to enable citizens to acquire skills useful for a profession, to contribute to multilingualism and European citizenship.

The Erasmus+ National Agency actively participates in the reflection on the evolution of the Erasmus+ programme and on sectoral, national and international issues in the field of education, higher education, vocational training and adult education.

The Agency is also at national level the Europass and Euroguidance Centre, coordinator of the European Agenda for Adult Learning and support service of the EPALE platform. It also ensures the national coordination of the ECVET (European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training) team of experts and the European Language Label.