



Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills

Full Country Report - France

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1.0 COUNTRY OVERVIEW (STATISTICAL ELEMENT TO BE INSERTED BY ECORYS FROM UPDATED COUNTRY OVERVIEW)

1.1 Trends for the entire population

1.1.1 Employment rate – entire population

Table 1.1: Evolution of employment rate - national average (2010-2016) compared to EU data

	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
EU-28 average	:	67.9	68.6	68.6	68.4	68.4	69.2	70	71	75% of the 20-64 year-olds in employment	75
Member State	67.4	69.4	69.3	69.2	69.4	69.5	69.3	69.5	70		

Source: Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code lfsa_ergaed, last updated 25 April 2017.

-Comparison to EU2020 target (75%)

Table 1.1 shows that, given the observed pace of change, France is very unlikely to reach the EU 2020 target (75 %) in terms of employment rate. In 2016, this rate reached 70 % and has virtually not changed over the last decade (it was 69.4 % in 2005; i.e. an increase of 0.6 percentage point in eleven years). Over the same period the EU average has increased from 67.9 to 71 %: the EU average was clearly below the French average and it is now above; even if average is sensitive to extreme values and statistical outliers.

-Comparison to National 2020 target (75%)

Similarly, it is unlikely that France meets the National 2020 target (also 75 %). The main reason usually advanced in France for this is the low economic growth (OFCE, 2016). It is a non-consensual issue in general due to the impact on ecosystems of high economic growth. Yet in France, economists usually consider that economic growth starts creating jobs when it reaches 1.5 to 1.7 %. France has been constantly way under this threshold over the period under consideration (INSEE, 2017).

-Comparison between 2016 national data and the EU-28 average for 2016

In 2016, employment rate in France is exactly on par with the EU average of 2015, and is still one percentage point below the 2016 EU average. Due to relatively weak economic growth, and to succeed in starting to reduce unemployment (the main challenge of the previous presidential mandate, 2012-17), France set in motion new measures to reduce the cost of labour further. By the year 2017, the tax Refund Scheme for Competitiveness and Employment (CICE, Crédit d'impôt pour la compétitivité et l'emploi) and the Accountability

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Pact (Pacte de responsabilité) has saved 230 000 jobs, with the highest benefits going to SMEs that had the opportunity to hire workers (between 20 000 and 40 000 positions).

-Evolution over time

The yearly increase rate over the last fifteen years is very slow and barely noticeable; it is one tenth of a percentage point each year.

1.1.2 Participation rate – entire population

Table 1.2: Evolution of participation rate in education and training - national average (2010-2016) compared to EU data

	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
EU-28 average	:	9.6	9.3	9.1	9.2	10.7	10.8	10.7	10.8		
Member State	2.8	5.9	5	5.5	5.7	17.8	18.4	18.6	18.8	15% of adults in lifelong learning (LLL)	

Source: Participation rate in education and training by sex and age (%), Eurostat code trng_lfse_01, last updated 25 April 2017.

-Comparison to EU2020 target

Table 1.2 shows that France already reached, and exceeded (by 3.8 percentage points), the EU 2020 target in terms of participation rate in adult learning activities. As already identified in the previous Country Briefing, the main quantum leap took place between 2012 and 2013 when non-formal and informal learning activities were taken on board in the French Labour Force Survey. Worthy of note is that France has an operational system for validating non-formal and informal learning outcomes that allows for the awarding of a qualification¹ duly registered in the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications (RNCP, Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles) based on the assessment of learning outcomes, in whatever way they have been acquired, against existing standards. The inclusion of adult learning activities that takes place outside a formal context is therefore sensible, since the corresponding learning outcomes are given currency in the labour market and in the formal education and training system (Werquin, 2013).

-Comparison between 2016 national data and the EU-28 average for 2016

Table 1.2 also shows that, in 2016, France is clearly above the EU average in terms of participation in adult learning activities, but this may well be due to the fact that not all EU

¹ The term qualification is used throughout this paper to refer to the formal document that makes competences visible.

countries have been able to factor in non-formal and informal learning activities, possibly since they do not have an operational system in place to identify adult learning activities taking place outside formal settings.

-Evolution over time

Before 2013, France was clearly below the EU average, and the increase of the participation rate between 2013 and 2016, i.e. after the inclusion of non-formal and informal learning activities, has proved rather shallow.

1.2 Trends for low qualified adults

1.2.1 Share of low qualified adults

Table 1.3: Share of low-qualified adults (ISCED 0-2) – national data (2010-2016) compared to EU-28 average 2016

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
EU-28 average	:	30.6	27.3	26.6	25.8	24.8	24.1	23.5	23
Member State	37.8	33.3	29.3	28.5	27.6	25	23.3	22.5	21.9

Source: Population by educational attainment level, sex and age (%), Eurostat edat_ifse_03, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: this table compares the percentage of the population with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) in 2016 to the EU-28 average for 2016 and the period 2000-2016.

-Comparison to EU-28 average

Table 1.3 shows that France has been able to close the gap over the last decade, and is now below the EU average in terms of the proportion of the population that belongs to the ISCED 0-2 category, i.e. individuals with a low qualification level ("certification" in French). Such central trends mask a somewhat heterogeneous population with two groups of the adult population with a low level of qualification: adults who went to school a long time ago, when a small fraction of each youth cohort was educated long enough, and young adults who could not achieve a qualification before entering the labour market (still as high as 17-20% of each cohort of labour market entrants in 2017).

Between 2015 and 2016, the French and EU averages evolved together: a reduction of 0.5 percentage point in the European Union and of 0.6 percentage point in France.

-Evolution over time

The reduction of the proportion of low qualified young adults leaving the initial education and training system – i.e. entering the labour market – was a statistical fact until the turn of the century. France was for long a country where only a small fraction of the population would be [highly] educated. From the 1970s, the reduction of the flow of young adults entering the labour market was a fact, and therefore led to the reduction of the stock of low qualified

adults. Therefore, the number of low qualified adults diminished dramatically until the year 2000. Since then, France has not been able to reduce significantly and consistently the number of young adults leaving the initial education and training system below the lowest level in the French Qualifications Framework (i.e. without any qualification of any value on the labour market). It always amounts approximately to 20% of each cohort entering the labour market, at all ages (i.e. 120 000 to 150 000 young adults). The evolution over time is therefore the result of occasional successes and not the result of a long-standing policy.

1.2.2 Employment rate of low qualified adults

Table 1.4: Employment rates of low qualified adults (ISCED 0-2) – national data (2010-2016) compared to EU-28 average 2016

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
EU-28 average	:	55.7	53.8	53.4	52.7	52	52.6	53.2	54.3
Member State	55.9	58.6	55.8	55.9	55.7	54.3	53.3	52.2	51.3

Source: Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code ifsa_ergaed, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: This table compares the employment rates of those with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) to the EU average over the period 2010-2016.

-Comparison to EU-28 average

The last year (from 2015 to 2016) in Table 1.4 witnessed a rather radical change in the employment rate of low qualified adults (ISCED 0-2). Whereas the EU average and the French average were quite similar in 2015 – with a difference of one percentage point – it is clearly dissimilar in 2016, with a difference of three percentage points.

-Evolution over time

The comparison of the European Union and French trends over the last ten years clearly shows that not owning a qualification has become a lot more of a serious issue in the search for a job in France than in the European Union in general. The attachment to a qualification – as evidence for competences – is important in France where owning a qualification is the main component of employability.

France displays a high level of productivity, always near the top of the league by European standards, together with Germany. The difference is that Germany still has a lot of occupations that do not require a qualification, whereas France – through its regulation on minimum wage for instance – has increasingly less low qualified occupations on offer.

It is often said that low qualified jobs are disappearing in France. DARES² however states that this is partly wrong. There are 1.1 million more workers in the low qualified service sector compared to 30 years ago (domestic help, individual health aid). It is in fact the low qualified

² DARES 2017 <http://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/2017-041.pdf>

jobs in heavy industry that are disappearing; they are replaced by robots. But low qualified jobs in the service sector are still needed, and are increasing in number. Rate of participation in adult learning of low qualified adults

Table 1.5: Participation rate of low qualified adults – EU average in comparison to national average

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
EU-28 average	:	3.7	3.9	4	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.2
Member State	1	2.7	2.3	2.5	2.5	8.1	7.9	7.7	7.5

Source: Participation rate in education and training by sex and educational attainment (%), Eurostat code and trng_lfse_03, last updated 25 April 2017.

-Comparison to EU-28 average

Here again, until 2012, the average of France was almost on par with the EU average regarding participation in adult learning activities of low qualified adults (Table 1.5). From 2013, the inclusion of non-formal and informal learning activities in the definition of adult learning activities in the Labour Force Survey has changed the statistics dramatically. French participation rates are way above EU ones.

In this context, the most interesting piece of evidence is that the ratio French to EU average is the same for low qualified adults (Table 1.5) and for the whole population (Table 1.2), showing that there is no such thing as a stronger Matthew Effect, whereby adult learning (including in non-formal and informal settings) is more frequent for highly qualified adults, in France. This is somewhat surprising since the beneficiaries of the validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes are often already qualified (Recotillet et Werquin, 2009). In addition, formal adult learning activities are also more frequent for highly qualified people in France; and this is also the case in the European Union. This finding should be researched further but Céreq (2014) also shows that a fair fraction of young adults entering the labour market at a low level of qualification resume studies or engage in adult learning activities soon after leaving the initial education and training system for the first time.

-Evolution over time

Table 1.5 shows that there is slight tendency toward the reduction of participation in adult learning, both in France and in the European Union; and in the same proportion. This may indicate that the return to a sizeable economic growth has taken away adults from learning activities. This fact has often been witnessed on many occasions and in many countries, including beyond European Union borders.

2.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM

2.1 Main features and a concise summary of historic development

France has a long adult learning tradition, mainly consisting of C-VET opportunities and, more recently (even though the system is quite old), of awarding qualifications to self-learners, based on the assessment of their non-formal and informal learning outcomes³. The first obvious, internationally known, reference is Condorcet's speech to the French National Assembly soon after the 1789 Revolution. Condorcet's proposition that learning opportunities should be provided throughout life and that individuals should be guided toward developing their talent for the full exercise of their citizenship and the betterment of their craft proves that adult learning is not a new idea, far from it, in France (Condorcet, 1792). The major adult learning institutions were established a long time ago: the Agency for Adult Vocational Training (Agence nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes, AFPA), in 1946-49, and the National Conservatory for Art and Trades (Conservatoire national des arts et métiers, Cnam), in 1794. They are both completely oriented toward the vocational preparation of adults. The long established Cnam is the only tertiary education institution for adults. It serves the needs of the workers, and the economically active individuals in general, and is the keeper of all crafts ever developed in France. It harbours a museum in Paris. The AFPA even belongs to the Ministry of Labour.

The focus on C-VET, i.e. on vocational preparation for (re)entering the labour market, having a promotion or experiencing an occupational mobility – rather than on adult learning for self-consumption – was confirmed in the early years of the seventies, on the ground that key stakeholders anticipated the end of the "Glorious Thirty" and more sluggish economic growth. C-VET is at the heart of the legislative process and, as early as 1971⁴, C-VET was the backbone of the adult learning system. It was also the time where the ancestor of the French National Qualifications Framework was created. It was then called the Qualifications Levels Grids or the Education Levels Grids, and it describes all of the possible levels of initial education and training leavers. It is entirely and directly connected to labour market positions; and the logic is then "manpower planning" (adéquationisme). Each level of the grid is connected to a position of the labour market and the approach is for the initial education and training to prepare a certain number of graduates at each level of the grid according to the labour market needs.

France was a pioneer – often mimicked – in introducing the Levy system, by which enterprises train or pay taxes. This also indicates a strong focus on C-VET to the extent that it is the enterprises that support the adult learning system.

³ There were some specific measures taken in 1934 for awarding Master Degrees in Engineering through the validation of experiential learning outcomes; and the first holistic Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning Outcomes system was established in 1985 (Law of 1984). The Law of 1984 on Validation of Occupational and Personal Learning Outcomes (VAPP, *Validation des acquis professionnels et personnels*, VAPP85). It was then for access to tertiary education, through exemption of an academic prerequisite. It is still active today and works in parallel to the 2002 VAE system (see below).

⁴ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000687666>

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With almost five decades of high – and constantly increasing – levels of unemployment, France has consistently confirmed its focus on the role of adult learning for better preparing adults to enter or stay in the labour market. Even the former Right to Individual Learning (Droit individuel à la formation, DIF), for instance, discontinued in 2015, allowed the individual participant to choose the learning content, regardless of the industrial sector of her/his enterprise, but it had to have an occupational objective (for an occupational mobility typically: reskilling). The 2002 Law of Social Modernisation, which established the Validation of Experiential Learning Outcomes (Validation des acquis de l'expérience, VAE), also established major instruments such as the National Commission for Vocational Qualifications (Commission nationale de la certification professionnelle, CNCP) and the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications (Répertoire national de la certification professionnelle, RNCP). They both deal with Vocational Qualifications, reinforcing the willingness of the State to focus on labour market issues when it comes to adult learning and qualifications.

And precisely, the only way to understand the French approach to adult learning is through the qualification lens. This means that non-formal and informal learning opportunities for adults are valued and the corresponding learning outcomes are given currency through the awarding of a qualification with same currency in the labour market and in the formal education and training system.⁵). In the case of France, it is important to realise that a qualification is the outcome of a learning process, and not of a learning programme. This has made the general acceptance of Validation of experiential learning outcomes easier (Validation des acquis de l'expérience, VAE) as another route to obtaining qualification. The 2002 Law of Social Modernisation is a key stage in this process. It led in particular to the establishment of the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications (Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles, RNCP), managed by the National Committee for Vocational Qualifications (Commission nationale des certifications professionnelles, CNCP), also established in 2002. Worthy of note is that all qualifications, in France, are treated as vocational qualifications, even if they are delivered in the tertiary education system and seen as purely academic in their content.

In practice, four routes exist that all lead to the same qualifications: initial education and training, adult learning, apprenticeship and validation of experiential learning outcomes (Validation des acquis de l'expérience). The qualification standards are the same in all instances – hence the shared currency – but the assessment methods and procedures vary from a system to another. The immediate implication is that the term “adult education” is rather meaningless: many activities that are not designed as education activities strictly speaking may lead to a qualification. The term “adult learning” is more appropriate.

Since 2014 (Social Partners Agreement, 28 May), a new common set of knowledge and occupational competences (Socle commun de connaissances et de compétences professionnelles) was developed for adult learning. These are structured into seven modules. However Regions in France have regulatory competences and may add complementary ones in line with their own strategic policy directions. These knowledge and occupational competences are:

⁵ Werquin, 2012 & 2015

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- Communication in French (listening, reading, writing, speaking);
- Basic rules in arithmetic and mathematical reasoning (e.g. read time, quantify);
- Basic ICT techniques (e.g. use a computer, manage files, search the web);
- Ability to follow teamwork rules at work, to work in autonomy and reach individual objectives (e.g. organise one's own agenda, know ethic rules, cooperate);
- Ability to learn to learn (e.g. self-esteem, search for information, stimulate memory); and
- Mastering basic hygiene, security and environmental rules (e.g. protecting oneself, recycling).

The above common set mirrors the common set of knowledge, competences and culture developed for pupils to master at the end of compulsory education (Socle commun de connaissances, de compétences et de culture) is largely inspired by the European Key Competences Framework.

The below table presents the number of adults in France participating in formal learning, as of 2017.

Table 2.1. Number of adult participants in formal education and training by level of education and age

	Age 20-24	Age 25+	Total
Level of education (i.e. basic, vocational, tertiary)			
Primary	1,319	11	1,330
Lower secondary	139	9	148
Upper secondary	106,576	45,600	152,176
Post-secondary non-tertiary education		9,943	
Short-cycle tertiary education		32,188	
Bachelor's or equivalent level		115,922	
Master's or equivalent level		239,211	
Doctoral or equivalent level		60,259	

Source: Eurostat, Eurostat database table "Pupils and students enrolled by education level, sex and age (educ_uoe_enra02)", accessed 2017.08.21

2.2 Provision

In 2011, approximately 33% of education and training opportunities were provided by employers, 9% by other labour market institutions, 26% by educational institutions and 26% by the civil society⁶.

⁶ OECD, 2016. [Education at a glance 2016: OECD Indicators](#).

Within companies, social partners are in charge of assessing training needs, and organising training policies. Employers may provide their own internal training, or outsource it to providers across the country.

2.2.1 Helps adults improve their basic skills

Low qualified target groups are supported to improve their basic skills by associations such as the National Federation of Welcome and Social inclusion Associations (Fédération nationale des associations d'accueil et de réinsertion sociale - FNARS) or public bodies like the 12 regional public Illiteracy Resource Centres that can be found across the country. These centres are often co-located with existing public services. One example is the CARIF-OREF⁷, a Centre of animation, resources and information on training (Centre animation ressources d'information sur la formation - Observatoire régional emploi formation). These centres provide information about literacy, and promote actions in this field. They also contribute to in the professionalisation of adult learning staff by developing key competences frameworks, and tools to support them, at the local level.

At a more informal level, second chance schools also provide four to eighteen months of basic skills training to young adults from 16 to 25 that did not complete their education; even if a tiny fraction of them already own a qualification⁸. The pathways proposed by second chance schools are of varying duration because young people are working according to renewable cycles. The training provided is highly individualised, and includes work place training in companies. Learners are provided with a skills certificate on completion of their training. It is not a national qualification and has little currency among employers – except the ones involved in providing the traineeship – but it is often a stepping-stone into the labour market or for resuming formal studies; depending of the general policy of the particular second chance school young adults are enrolled with. Again, the second chance schools are targeting early school dropouts and aim at addressing basic skills in the first place. A qualification is therefore out of public sight. The added value also lies in the follow up that most second chance schools organise up to two years after young people leave the school; and which sometimes leads to re-integration of some former participants.

2.2.2 Helps adults achieve a qualification

The oldest institution providing a new opportunity of formal learning and of achieving a qualification, in adulthood, in France is the CNAM (Conservatoire national des arts et métiers), a Tertiary Education and Training Institution for Adults. It was created during the French Revolution, more than two hundred years ago. (See Section 2.2.5)

Another large-scale institution is the Agency for Adult Vocational Training (Agence nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes, AFPA). It was established in 1949 on the foundation provided by the Federation of training centres established in 1946 by Ambroise Croizat. The AFPA serves the Regions, the State, the Industry Sectors, and the private companies. It belongs to the Public Employment Service and has had the form of a not for

⁷ <http://www.intercariforef.org/reseau/>

⁸ Recotillet and Werquin, 2017

profit association until 2017. It is now an EPIC (Établissement public à caractère industriel or commercial), a state-controlled entity of an industrial or commercial nature. It offers qualifying training and delivers qualifications of the Ministry of Labour. The training opportunities mainly concern occupation facing recruitment difficulties and target individual that are the further away from employment (low qualified young adults, women or seniors).

GRETA⁹ ("Groupement d'établissements"), an organisation overseen by the Ministry of National Education is one of the most important adult learning networks in France. The network provides over 4750 adult learning places across the territory as well as online learning provision. For more than forty years, GRETA has helped thousands of adults to undertake C-VET, define their own individualised learning path through skills audits (Bilan de compétences), develop key competences and have provided career change counselling and tailored training. GRETA offers a range of training programmes (some leading to certification) including basic skills provision funded by different sources (employers, public employment services).

Another important adult learning provider is the "Centre national d'enseignement à distance" - CNED¹⁰, an online distance-learning organisation that is funded by the Ministry of National Education. It provides all types of learning activities from basic skills through to training that lead to the acquisition of a qualification. The CNED was the first lifelong learning provider in France and Europe. It has a budget of 94 million Euros and supports approximately 243 000 learners a year, two thirds of which are adults. The participants to CNED pay a tuition fee.

The Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CCI) trains about 600,000 individuals each year anywhere between levels EQF3 and EQF6. This is done thanks to alternating schemes or regular continuing training. The CCI created and manage Business Schools (Écoles supérieures de commerce). There are 28 of those and they are grouped in the Association of Business Schools (Association des grandes écoles de commerce). The Chambers also provide training opportunities to achieve a qualification corresponding to occupations in the Commerce industry (Negoventis Network, registered in the French National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications attached to the National Vocational Qualifications Framework. The CCI manage about 130 schools and deliver qualification also in the industrial sector (Levels 3-6).

The most significant, successful (and often mimicked abroad), initiative is the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes, called Validation of Experiential Learning outcomes (Validation des acquis de l'expérience, VAE). It is of utmost relevance in this section since the VAE is meant to award full qualifications to applicants that are in a position to document their learning outcomes. It is entirely based on assessment and no further formal learning is required from applicants to the extent that they meet the qualifications standards. The interesting aspect of the VAE approach is that the qualifications standards are the same than the ones used in the other qualifying system (apprenticeships, initial education and training and formal continuing training) but the assessment method is different (portfolio of

⁹ www.education.gouv.fr/cid50753/la-formation-continue-des-adultes-a-l-education-nationale.html

¹⁰ www.cned.fr

competences, interviews, and sometimes practical test depending of the Ministry awarding the qualification).

2.2.3 *Helps adults develop other knowledge and skills, not for vocational purposes*

Other public providers include university lifelong learning services, people universities (Universités populaires, University for the Third Age, University of the Free Time or, and the Teaching League (La Ligue de l'enseignement), the oldest popular education association in France. At the local level, though outreach offices many municipalities organise non-formal learning opportunities for young adults ("missions locales", youth info points), either by themselves or via associations.

Nevertheless, given the high relative levels of unemployment – especially for young people – that France has been witnessing for the last four decades, most actions, whether public or semi-public, are targeted to support people in the process of finding or keeping a job. Actions not for vocational purposes are rare, and are often targeted at retired people for instance.

2.2.4 *Facilitates transition to the labour market for unemployed people or those at risk of unemployment (ALMPs)*

The French State has a long tradition of intervening in the labour market, especially in facilitating the school-to-work transition process for young adults. Since the first youth schemes (Plan Barre, named after the Prime Minister) in the second half of the seventies until today, France has had several programmes operating at a time, sometimes in competition with one another. Most schemes are based, to a varying extent, on tax incentives for employers hiring a participant on the programme – in order to lower the cost of young adults' labour, since they are supposed to be less productive because less experienced –, adapted career guidance and learning activities for participants. Some schemes are targeting the competitive private sector (they have had many names and the current one is Contrat initiative emploi, CIE). Some others are for the public service, where participants are hired – often on a part time basis and always for a fixed term contract – in public institutions (they also have had many names and the current one is Contrat d'accompagnement dans l'emploi, CAE). There is a plethora of evaluation work concerning these schemes¹¹. There is no consensus but in the expert's view it seems that schemes in the private sectors are more effective to help participants in finding a job; but there is a strong selection bias due to the

¹¹ See, for the most recent ones: Bala, A. et Werquin, P. (2016), « Une réflexion sur les dispositifs publics d'accompagnement des transitions professionnelles des jeunes », *Céreq échanges*, p. 65.

Borel P., Ferras B. et Le Coz, G. (2013, mai), *Rapport sur l'Évaluation de la politique territoriale de l'emploi*, n° RM2013-164P, [www.modernisation.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/epp/epp_politiqueterritorialeemploi.pdf]

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Dares et France Stratégie (2017, janvier), *L'insertion professionnelle des jeunes, Rapport de diagnostic*, [http://www.actuel-rh.fr/sites/default/files/article-files/rf_jeunes_v19012017.pdf]

Remy M., Thiébaud E. (2015), « Chômage des jeunes : dans la jungle des dispositifs », *Alternatives économiques*, vol. 345, no. 4, pp. 32-32.

Sarfati F. (2015), « L'insertion professionnelle des jeunes entre précarité, incertitude et expérimentation », *Cahiers de l'action*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 9-16.

Stéphane J. (2015), « Politiques d'emploi en faveur des jeunes : quels leviers pour quels effets ? », *Cahiers de l'action*, 2/2015 (N° 45), p. 17-20.

fact that employers select the most employable individuals in the first place¹². Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that individuals benefiting from a programme in the private sector are more often employed after the programme than those who benefited from a programme in the public sector, which in addition is constrained by civil service regulations to recruit people anyway. The fact is that being away from the labour market for a period of time is among the most detrimental factors in explaining the obsolescence of competences. It is therefore highly relevant to see the schemes targeting young adults as a way to maintain high employability levels.

2.2.5 *Opens up tertiary education to adults*

The oldest institution for providing a second chance of qualification in France is the CNAM (Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers), a Tertiary Education and Training Institution for Adults. It was created during the French Revolution, more than two hundred years ago. The Conservatory was founded in 1794. In 1819, the first courses were provided in mechanics, applied chemistry and industrial economics. In 1852, the first research laboratories were established. In 1925, the first graduating class of engineers took place. In 2010, a major step was taken toward the professionalising of young adults finishing upper secondary education (baccalauréat). Today, the CNAM welcomes 70,000 students per year in France, and 7,000 more elsewhere in the world. CNAM has about a million alumni. It offers 450 qualifications in 150 sites in France, and 45 more elsewhere in the world. It is made for adults wishing to resume formal studies, which means distance learning and classroom-based teaching organised during evenings and weekends. By the same token, 50% of the teaching force is first and foremost professionals working in the service or industry sectors.

2.2.6 *Enables adult employees to develop their work-related skills*

Among the recently created jobs, many are precarious jobs, such as employments with fixed term contract, or internship, especially among young adults¹³. There are as many apprentices as young adults participating in a labour market programme. The negative point is that there is some form of selection and only already qualified young adults go into apprenticeship and a large fraction of the young working age population does not have work-related skills.

Out of a cohort of about 700 000 to 720 000 young adults entering, or trying to enter, the labour market every year in France, between 120 000 and 150 000 do not have a qualification that would facilitate their hiring for a regular job. Given the difficulties young adults are faced with when trying to find a job even with an EQF Level 5, it should not come as a surprise that young adults below EQF Level 3 are left in dire straights. They are the natural candidates for youth schemes and other precarious jobs.

¹² See for instance http://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/DE_95.pdf or www.actuel-rh.fr/sites/default/files/article-files/rf_jeunes_v19012017.pdf or www.strategie.gouv.fr/sites/strategie.gouv.fr/files/atoms/files/guide_methodologique_20160906web.pdf

¹³ Cereq (2014). Quand l'école est finie. Premiers pas dans la vie active (When schools ends. First steps in active life) [Online]. Available at: www.cereq.fr/actualites/Quand-l-Ecole-est-finie.-Premiers-pas-dans-la-vie-active [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

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The options described in the previous sections are all meant to develop their work-related skills as they barely have any, since they have no qualification and no experience on the labour market. Again, given the importance of owning a qualification in the French system, most of the proposed options are based on the achieving of a qualification; or a higher one for those who are already qualified.

In this landscape, since 1983, the FONGECIFs manages funds for the Individual Learning Leave (CIF, Congé Individuel de Formation), for the Skills Audit Leave (CBC, Congé Bilan de Compétences) and for the Validation of Experiential Learning Outcomes Leave (VAE) under the general umbrella of the C-VET system. It is financed by the funds collected through the levy and proposes the specialist or professional projects for the employees, in addition to more usual activities such as career guidance. It is therefore seen as an institution helping employees at developing their work-related skills, for employment promotion or occupational mobility. The FONGECIFs have sponsored a million projects so far. They will be seventeen as of the 1st of January 2017 (Law NOTRe).

3.0 ADULT LEARNING POLICIES

3.1 Context

Adult learning has a long tradition in France. The right to vocational education and training appeared in the Constitution in 1946. In the post-war period, the State started to organise provision through a unique national organisation in 1946 (Association nationale interprofessionnelle pour la formation rationnelle de la main-d'œuvre - ANIFRMO, now AFPA since 1949, the largest vocational education and training institution in France). The ideas of providing second chance education and social mobility started to grow in French society together with the setting up of many people universities (today coordinated by the French Popular Universities Association – Association des universités populaires de France - AUPF). This started the concept of “permanent education” in 1955 (Pierre Arents). These developments as well as “popular education” which were established during the Enlightenment and soon after the French Revolution (Condorcet) are still widely available today.¹⁴

In the sixties and seventies, continuous vocational education and training focused on employability and became a full part of social partners’ dialogue (notably through the 1971 law¹⁵) while the non-formal learning sector became more institutionalised. In the eighties and nineties, ideas on learning pathways, professional development and personalised training programmes became established. This was based on the need to make education and training provision more coherent, thus reflecting the 1990 and 1993¹⁶ laws that introduced skills audits (Bilan de compétences), and transversal skills acquisition as the route to updating and upgrading skills in order to remain employable – especially in a context of high levels of unemployment.

In 2000, the National Agency for the Fight against Illiteracy (Agence nationale de lutte contre l'illettrisme - ANLCI) was created. The 2004 law¹⁷, following a new social partners’ agreement, made vocational education and training a national obligation and a workers’ right. Two years earlier, in 2002, France revisited its old system for validating non-formal and informal occupational learning outcomes in the law of Social Modernisation; and started developing a validation of experiential learning outcomes system, which is now renowned to be one of the most efficient in Europe. The 2009 reform on orientation and lifelong vocational education and training¹⁸ as well as the 2014 reform¹⁹ (see below) continued the process of the regional decentralisation that was initiated in 2004.

¹⁴ Condorcet (1792), “Rapport à l'Assemblée nationale” (Report to the National Assembly), Paris..

¹⁵ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 1971. **Loi n° 71-575 du 16 juillet 1971 portant organisation de la formation professionnelle continue dans le cadre de l'éducation permanente (consolidated version from 13 August 2014).**

¹⁶ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 1993. **Loi n°93-1313 du 20 décembre 1993 quinquennale relative au travail, à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle.**

¹⁷ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 2004. **Loi n° 2004-391 du 4 mai 2004 relative à la formation professionnelle tout au long de la vie et au dialogue social.**

¹⁸ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 2009. Loi n° 2009-1437 du 24 novembre 2009 relative à l'orientation et à la formation professionnelle tout au long de la vie

¹⁹ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 2014. **Loi n° 2014-288 du 5 mars 2014 relative à la formation professionnelle, à l'emploi et à la démocratie sociale.**

Finally, France is entering an era where many changes – and some of them radical, such as the subsidised jobs being discontinued in the private sector or the streamlining in the C-VET sector – are announced; it is impossible to assess the added value of such changes and most of the current changes haven't even been passed through Parliament.

3.1.1 Distribution of responsibilities regarding adult learning

In France, adult learning is overseen by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry of National Education mainly operates via the GRETA. The Ministry of Labour is essentially responsible for the orientation of continuous vocational training policies, and for securing occupational pathways and access to employment; it proposes new legislative initiatives, handles dialogue with social partners and funds education and training for disadvantaged target groups. These are done through the National Council for Employment, Training and Career Guidance that is composed of twelve ministries, regions and social partners (Conseil national de l'emploi, de la formation et de l'orientation professionnelles - CNEFOP²⁰), and supported by the Joint National Interprofessional Committee for Employment and vocational Training composed of social partners (Comité interprofessionnel pour l'emploi et la formation - COPANEF – with regional branches, COPAREF).

3.1.2 Major national socio-economic strategies governing the provision of adult learning

The 2014 law on vocational education and training introduces several important elements that deeply changed C-VET in France²¹. More importantly, the reform relaxed financial and administrative procedures in order to encourage employers to put training at the centre of their competitiveness strategy, with a compulsory jobs and competences planning (Gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et des compétences – GPEC) that was carried out every three years²². Interviews are carried out with employers every two years to assess how they support the professional development of their employees and assess training needs. Companies with more than 50 employees also have to certify every six years that their workers have followed some kind of education and training, or are bound to fund their new Individual Learning Accounts (see below).

A new Professional Evolution Counselling mechanism has also been set up for employees, job seekers and independent workers. This involves free and confidential tailored support to with a counsellor in order to help develop their professional pathways.

The 2014 law also created an Individual Learning Account (Compte Personnel de Formation – CPF) for employees, this replaced the Individual Right to Learning, (Droit Individuel à la Formation - DIF). The law allows workers and job seekers to accumulate training hours (up to 150). These hours can automatically be used in periods of unemployment. The CPF

²⁰ www.cnefop.gouv.fr/

²¹ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 2014. **Loi n° 2014-288 du 5 mars 2014 relative à la formation professionnelle, à l'emploi et à la démocratie sociale.**

²² CAIRN. [La Gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et des compétences et son effet sur l'employabilité des salariés.](#) Management & Avenir 2011/08 (no. 48)

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implementation is supported by a website²³, which informs learners about their new rights. Priority funding is given to less qualified learners. It is open from the age of 16 (15 for apprentices) for the entire learner's life, and the initiative to use it comes from the worker.

The 2014 law also sets a legal basis for the monitoring of validation of experiential learning outcomes (the French name for recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes) by CNEFOP and CREFOP all along the validation process, promising more coherent data collection.

The major and most recent policy reform in France that reshaped the C-VET system is the Labour Law adopted at beginning of August 2016 on "Modernisation of social dialogue and securing of occupational pathways"²⁴. The Government has promoted it as a route to reinforcing social dialogue, and a higher protection for the labour force, particularly the most vulnerable ones; along the lines of the flex-security approach.

A flagship measure of the Labour Law is the creation of an Individual Activity Account (Compte Personnel d'Activité - CPA). The CPA has not been designed to replace the Individual Learning Account (CPF): the CPF is rather included in the CPA as well as the equally new Individual Account for Prevention of Strenuousness (Compte Personnel de Prévention de la Pénibilité) and new Citizen Commitment Account (Compte d'engagement citoyen). In line with the European Agenda for Adult Learning's objective to increase coherence and coordination in the sector, the CPA aims to reinforce learners' autonomy and their right to a vocational preparation. It has the same conditions as the CPF, but goes further in respect to the enhancement of non-formal or informal learning. For example, a learner can use the time accumulated during a volunteering experience (up to 60 hours) to gain training hours or holiday. The CPA also applies to independent workers, artists, disabled workers and public agents, and extends the CPF scope and learning activities. The CPA will be fully available for employees from January 2017 onwards²⁵.

Finally, the Labour Law also includes several pilot measures such as an extension of professionalisation of contracts (enabling workers to get new qualifications and favouring occupational reintegration) to the least qualified job seekers. These policies will then be assessed and implemented at national scale.

Apart from the Labour Law, other national initiatives that have been implemented this year by the Government includes the "Additional 500,000 trainings" Plan for job seekers which is being implemented by Regions, to facilitate access to learning activities for individuals who need it the most. Approximately one million training opportunities will be provided for low or not qualified individuals, and long-term job seekers²⁶. This initiative is in line with the

²³ www.moncompteformation.gouv.fr/

²⁴ Journal Officiel de la République Française. 2016. [Loi no 2016-1088 du 8 août 2016 relative au travail, à la modernisation du dialogue social et à la sécurisation des parcours professionnels](#)

²⁵ Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi, de la Formation Professionnelle et du Dialogue Social. 2016. [Le Compte Personnel d'Activité](#) (Accessed 28th August 2016)

²⁶ Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi, de la Formation Professionnelle et du Dialogue Social. 2016. [Plan 500 00 formations supplémentaires pour les personnes en recherché d'emploi](#). (Accessed 28th August 2016)

European Agenda for Adult Learning that recommends the development of effective outreach, guidance and motivation strategies for those that need it most.

Another pilot initiative developed by the DGEFP (Délégation générale à l'emploi et la formation professionnelle" – the delegation that is responsible for developing and implementing policies related to employment and vocational training) in 2015 relates to workplace learning (Formation en situation de travail – FEST), which aims to adapt to SMEs' constraints with learning objectives inspired from I-VET²⁷.

Other actions have also been recently implemented at regional level. For example, the Île-de-France Region developed a disabled individuals' employment charter "2016 Great Cause²⁸" which aims to increase their level of qualification through a dedicated programme. This Region also signed a new agreement with public employment services to address skills mismatches, by monitoring training provided for job seekers to help them to better adapt to the needs of employers.

3.2 Adult learning policy framework

3.2.1 A summary of major developments / changes since 2010

Adult learning is no longer the responsibility of central public authorities. A major 2013-2014 reform re-shaped the adult learning sector in many aspects; this included regional decentralisation of activities. Regions now lead in the development and implementation of policies on vocational education and training as well as career guidance through their main governing body, the Regional Council. New regional committees for employment, training and professional orientation (CREFOP, regional branches of CNEFOP) were also created in 2014 to define, monitor and evaluate necessary policies in employment, guidance and training, to ensure the coordination of stakeholders, and coherence and complementarity of education and training programmes. The regional economic, social and environmental Council also has an advisory role.

Regions have for instance inherited the development of competences for literacy programmes – e.g. Avenir Jeunes in Île-de-France (regional plans for prevention and fight against illiteracy) supported by the Illiteracy Resource Centres.

Several programming tools exist at regional level such as the Regional fund for learning and professional training (Fonds régional de l'apprentissage et de la formation professionnelle - FRAFP).

²⁷ Delay B. and Duclos L. 2015. [Mémoire technique relative au projet d'expérimentation "FEST". Soutien au développement des formations en situation de travail.](#) Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle.

²⁸ <https://www.iledefrance.fr/fil-presidence/emploi-personnes-situation-handicap-grande-cause-regionale-2016>

3.2.2 *Main legislative act(s) governing the provision of adult learning*

See Annex 1.

As stated above, France was in an electoral campaign for most of 2016 and early 2017 and the current Government has been in office for less than a semester. All legislative acts are still to be passed. Very little is currently known about what will come out of the iterations between the French Parliament and the French Senate. There is a new Labour Law, which more will be known about in the latter part of 2017.

3.2.3 *Main strategy (-ies) (setting vision, goals and directions for the development of adult learning, usually with a long-term end-date)*

According to reforms proposed by the Government in 2017 – which have not been seen in written yet as it is way too soon – there is a strong willingness to reduce the labour market segmentation by “improving vocational education and training”, in particular for job seekers. There is the objective of promoting decent jobs adapted to current issues such as globalisation, technological shift and the greening of the economy. This will be done partly by putting private enterprises at the forefront of the action.

The expansion of apprenticeship and the reform of the continuing vocational education and training – less actors, more visibility, streamlining of existing networks for career guidance and re- the full C-VET sector – are the two main instrument regularly mentioned by the Prime Minister and the President.

One of the ideas is to maintain, or improve, the competitiveness of French enterprises by increasing the level of competences, and of qualification²⁹, of their work force.

Among the most practical decisions the following are expected:

- *Increasing the role of occupational guidance services through the development of CEP (Conseil en évolution professionnelle) whose intervention may lead to the undertaking of learning activities;*
- *Integrating the Skills Audit (Bilan de compétences) in the Individual Learning Account (Compte personnel de formation, CPF) and promoting Guidance for new entrepreneurs and business creators.*

These two propositions tend to the establishment of Guidance Services within the adult learning system.

²⁹ Again, a qualification is a formal document that makes competences visible. The qualifications distribution is therefore a good proxy for the level of competences of the workers/population.

3.2.4 Main implementing act(s) (setting concrete actions, budget, targets and guiding the implementation of national adult learning policy, usually with a short-term end-date)

As stated on several occasions, all Acts are still to be validated by the Parliament. Nevertheless, some elements of the future Acts have been partly revealed³⁰, in the press or through the Government communication:

Labelling of the education and training provision

As also suggested by the OECD, the Government will create a labelling system for the education and training provision. The first step has already started and is called EduForm³¹; it concerns only the provision organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (GRETAs, and the other institutions that prepare for a qualification delivered by the Ministry of Education). This Label will be awarded by the Minister for Education, on a proposal from the National EduForm Labelling Commission (Commission nationale de labellisation Eduform), for a maximum duration of three years.

This means strengthening quality control for all education and training institutions.

Governance

The Law NOTRe (Nouvelle organisation territoriale de la République) allows for the creation of a common platform where the State and the Regions work consistently with each other for the promotion of employment, apprenticeship and C-VET.

Education and training of low skilled individuals

In the context of their CPA (Individual Activity Account), low skilled individuals may accumulate 48 hours of right to learning activities, up to a maximum of 400 hours, instead of the legal maximum of 150 hours.

Target groups

The typical target groups of the newly elaborated policy are:

- job seekers,
- young adults below 26,
- low qualified adults, and
- disabled people.

³⁰ The only reference available is: www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/var/storage/rapports-publics/174000710.pdf

³¹ Décret n° 2017-239 du 24 février 2017 relatif à la création du label qualité Eduform https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=A2656F4F540FA044C51DAAA4F313EF62.tpdila10v_1?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000034082097&dateTexte=&oldAction=rechJO&categorieLien=id&idJO=JORFCONT000034081889

Education and training programme for 500,000 jobseekers

One of the most ambitious programmes over the last years was to provide half a million job seekers with an education and training plan. The evaluation started in the early months of 2017. Even before the evaluation was done, an extension was already decided for the first semester of 2017 through the continuation of the financing by the Joint Fund for the Securing of the Occupational Pathways (Fond paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels, FPSPP), for 150 Million Euros. The State therefore continues to invest in the vocational preparation of job seekers.

Improve access to education and training

There was a pilot in nine Regions aiming at increasing the minimum entry age into alternating training schemes up to 30 years (until then it was 26).

Developing distance learning provision (Formation à distance, FOAD)

The approach is to generalise the opening of apprenticeship for the achievement of vocational qualifications of the Ministry of Labour. A thousand places were opened in 2016 in seven Regions and this approach will be fully expanded in 2017.

Adaptation to the labour market

The approach is to create 500 new education and training curricula to respond to the market needs (skills shortage, emerging occupations).

Figures of the Individual Learning Account (CPF) as of October 2016

- 576,910 individual education and training plans have been financed;
- 3.5 Millions CPF have been opened;
- 10,971 qualifications have been selected by social partners to be eligible to the CPF, and all levels of qualifications are involved;
- The average duration of the learning activities is 376 hours (477 hours on average for the job seekers, and 138 hours for employees);
- The learning activities the most often used are: basic competences, language tests (TOEIC, BULATS), qualification of nursing assistant, qualification of forklift operator, qualification of nurse, qualification of VAE guidance officer...

The current Government introduced a Competence Investment Plan (Plan d'investissement dans les compétences, PIC³²). Over the next five years, the Ministry of Labour will invest 13.8 billionEuros, with 11 billion devoted to the education and training of jobseekers and of the least qualified young adults. As of 2018, one billion Euros will be invested for the career guidance and education/training of jobseekers and low qualified young adults. On the 25th of September 2017, the Prime Minister presented the C-VET reform: the PIC should reach about two millions people. One of the approaches that should be taken is to monetise the CPF

³² www.actualite-de-la-formation.fr/une-du-sommaire/une-de-2017/le-budget-du-ministere-du-travail-2018-privilegie-la-formation-des-demandeurs-d.html

(Individual Learning Account), i.e. the CPF owners would qualify for a certain amount of money, rather than for a number of hours. As a consequence, employees would directly refer to education and training institutions rather than to the OPCAs, which means they would most probably be discontinued. Quality education and training institutions would receive a label. The competences connected to globalisation and digital technologies are the ones to be developed in the new approach.

3.3 National quantitative policy targets

3.3.1 *Table 3.1 displays the most recent objectives set by the policy makers in terms of promoting learning activities among adults.*

Table 3.1 Targets linked to Adult Learning in broader economic policies/LLL strategies/framework or implementing act

General information		Progress toward target			Source	Summary
Target (target figure and date to be achieved by)	Adoption date (e.g. 31/03/2018)	Initial value (at date of adoption)	Current value	Objective of the current Government		
Training of 500 000 jobseekers, with a low of qualification	2013	500 000	In 2016: 650 000	Objective: 1 million	Priority training programmes. Plan 500 000 training (previous Presidency) Major Investment Plan (current Presidency)	Vocational preparation for long term unemployed people, for a quick return to employment. At the early stage, this would involve only jobs for the future. Large difficulties for the Public Employment Service to manage the demand. Mixed review at the end of 2016.
Alternating training schemes: objective = 500 000 contracts	2014	280 000 Initial budget: 1 Billion Euros	In 2016: 300 000	330 000	Responsibility and Solidarity Pact. The Law of the 5th of March 2014 on vocational education and training, employment and social democracy.	The Government aims at fostering alternating training schemes given the research findings on school-to-work transition (65% have a job 7 months after leaving training). Difficulties due to the tax burden that falls on employers. New measures have been proposed to facilitate the recruitment of young adults in small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
Number of early school leavers each year	2014	110 000	2016: 98 000	N/A	Law for the new foundation of	

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					the school of the Republic. Action plan: commitment of all to fight early school leaving.	
Career guidance of early school dropouts.	2017	1,7 Million (in 2015)		1 million		

3.4 Quality assurance

In its review of the French adult learning system, in the last issue of Education at a Glance (September 2017), the OECD states that there is no Quality Assurance.

Quality control of the different of the C-VET system is at the heart of the current Government approach. Little is known so far regarding the practical application of this, but the rhetoric is clear.

3.5 Future policy developments

The education and training and the vocational preparation of young adults is at the top of the political agenda since the recent Presidential and Legislative elections, and the new Government established in 2017. Options such as establishing a large education and training policy, implementing a civic service, restoring the military service, and/or creating new youth schemes are being considered and debated.

For adults, evidence shows that the level of qualification has been increasing for the last 30 years³³.

The current Government, established in 2017, wants to discontinue the programmes facilitating labour market access in the private sector, because it is said that it does not provide young adults with a regular job afterward. The Government also wants to keep the programme in the public sectors, on the ground that it has become a crucial element in the well functioning of some administrations, or semi-public institutions (e.g. the organisation of the 2024 Olympic Games will heavily rely on young adults employed in the context of this Active Labour Market Policy). There is limited formal documentation and reporting of these plans to date, although stakeholders hear some aspects informally (expressed above). The previous Government subsidised 456 000 jobs in 2016. The current Government has just

³³ DARES (2017). La dépense nationale pour la formation professionnelle continue et l'apprentissage en 2014 (National expenditure on continuing vocational training and apprenticeship in 2014). <http://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/2017-041.pdf>

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decided to reduce their number to 293 000 in 2017; and again mostly in the public sector (in education institutions typically).

The current Government also wants to increase by 15 billions Euros the budget devoted to C-VET. Long term unemployed people (that is more than a year, and/or 12 months in the last 18 months) will have to undertake training activities. The Individual Learning Account (See Section 3.1.2) will be used to facilitate this. However, the new Labour Law (Loi Travail) may revisit these measures. It may also introduce Quality Labels, and discontinue OPCA (See Section 4.2).

The Ministry of Education launched the initiative "Come back to learn" (Reviens te former³⁴) for young adults (16-25) that left school without a qualification. Young adults register online and are called by a guidance officer to assess their situation. In theory, their file is then transferred to the Regional Education Authority that should find them a place in the formal education and training system. However, in practice, the results have proven disappointing in the expert's view as there are few available places, and no actual education/training solutions are proposed to those young adults.

The Government established in 2017 states that it wants to put apprenticeships at the forefront of its policy. As for many other planned actions, it is difficult to assess the results, as it has not been approved by the Parliament yet.

Here again, the Region will be given additional competences in terms of Public Employment Service. The idea is that they already have competences in terms of career guidance, vocational education and training, apprenticeship and economic development; and therefore that they should also be given competences in terms of Public Employment Service. The New Territorial Organisation of the Republic (a.k.a Law NOTRe, Law no 2015-991) has the Act III of the Decentralisation Law implemented during the 2012-2017 Presidency. It aims to reinforce the competences of the Regions and of the Public Establishments for the Cooperation among the neighbouring municipalities. It therefore has direct impacts on the provision of learning opportunities. The territorial instruments of the Public Employment Service – such as Missions locales, Maisons de l'emploi, agences Cap emploi, Écoles de la deuxième chance – will be placed under the responsibility of the Regional Councils from the 1st January 2017. This Law was presented as a first step toward streamlining the field of career guidance and integration into employment, which had been very piecemeal until then. The 2017 Government aims to develop Monitoring and Evaluation, and to minimise the number of independent actors (said to be around 75,000).

Prime Minister Philippe presented the Large Investment Plan (Grand plan d'investissement) on the 25th of September 2017, for the forthcoming five years. The main approaches suggested during the election campaign have been spelled out, in particular in relation to the investment that will be important in C-VET. A 15 billion budget is currently being submitted to the Senate. The breakdown for the use of the budget is provided in Table 3.2, and the first row is further broken down in Table 3.3.

³⁴ <http://reviensteformer.gouv.fr>

Table 3.2 Proposed Distribution of the Budget for C-VET

Initiatives of the Competence Plan	Investment (in Billions Euros)
Sending 2 Million individuals back to work	13,9
Promoting innovation in teacher training colleges	0,3
Ending failure pathways in university tertiary education	0,4
Facilitating school-to-work transitions (Trades and Qualifications Campus”, i.e. Campus des Métiers et des Qualifications, MOOC...)	0,5
TOTAL	15,1

The long-term objective of this component of the budget is to have qualified individuals in the labour market. This measure would involve 2 Million individuals. In the short term, the Government aims at promoting the integration in the labour market of low qualified individuals and unemployed people in the first place; and then early school leavers.

Table 3.3 Breakdown of the Budget for Sending 2 Million Low Qualified Individuals back to Work

Means for sending 2 Millions individuals back to work	Investment (in Billion Euros)
Strengthened career guidance of early schools leavers (1 Million individuals)	6.7
Train job seekers who are the furthest away from the labour market (1 Million individuals)	7.1
Adaptation of the qualification of the labour force	0.1

The main target group is composed of low qualified unemployed people. The objective for 2022 is to increase the return to work by 15 percentage points, i.e. a decrease of 0,5 percentage point of the structural unemployment rate. A proposition for a reduction of the employer’s taxes on low qualified job has been submitted to the Parliament in order to help reach this objective.

The second target group is composed of young early school leavers. The important measure will concern apprenticeship and alternating training schemes. A reform is planned in this sense for the middle of the current Presidency. The plan is to facilitate the access to efficient education and training to young people (16-18): 470,000 young people will be trained, of whom 330,000 will benefit from apprenticeship or alternating training scheme. The Government also proposes to sponsor 4,000 young adults for enrolment in a Second Chance School.

It also proposes qualifying training places, and relatively long (6-9 months), in order of allowing a better inclusion in the labour market. Approaches such as distance learning and MOOCs are often quoted for meeting this objective.

From the rhetoric developed during the election campaign by President Macron, it is clear that a major objective is to simplify access to education and training for all. In order to do so, a discussion about reforming the C-VET system has started with the trade unions.

4.0 INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING SYSTEMS

4.1 Total investment in adult learning and change over time

In total, continuous vocational education and training accounted for 32 Billion euros in 2012³⁵, i.e. 1.52% of the GDP (against 5.3% of GDP for primary to tertiary education, in the OECD average).

In respect to C-VET, there are currently three main types of expenditures: operating expenditures (trainers' salaries, administrative management, etc.); learners' allowances (employers' salary during the training or job seekers benefits, 38% of the budget in 2012); and investment expenditures (e.g. equipment, 1 %). Three main target groups benefit from this expenditure: young people; job seekers; and vulnerable groups.

C-VET in 2012 was financed by a number of actors: 3% of the funding came directly from companies; 14% from Regions through procurement contracts; 14% from the State; 19% from public organisations (to train civil servants); 6% from other actors such as public employment services; and 4% directly came from learners³⁶. The State intervention is applied in different forms: tax exemption on some contracts; tax credits (e.g. training expenses for entrepreneurs); and support to professional branches and companies (e.g. grants to promote training and counselling – Engagement de développement de l'emploi et des compétences.³⁷

In 2016, 11.7 Billion euros were allocated to labour and employment in the State budget³⁸. One Billion has been earmarked for the "Additional 500 000 trainings" Plan.

4.2 Public national investment

Private and public employers are legally bound to finance continuous training via the joint commissions (Organisme paritaire collecteur agréé - OPCA)³⁹. These joint commissions collect companies' mandatory contributions from their professional branches (payroll levy). These contributions are put towards a Joint Fund for Securing Professional Pathways (Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels" - FPSPP) that was created in 2009, and granted 900 Million euros each year. Companies with less than 10 employees contribute 0.55% of their payroll, and those with more than 10 employees contribute 1%. This Joint Fund is used to finance Individual Learning Accounts, education and training leaves, and training in SMEs. Once the contribution is made, employers may decide which training plan is appropriate for their organisation.

³⁵ Centre Inffo. 2015. [La formation professionnelle continue en France.](#)

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ CEDEFOP [Database on Financing Adult Learning](#) (Accessed 2 October 2016).

³⁸ Direction du budget. 2016. [Le budget de l'Etat voté pour 2016 en quelques chiffres.](#)

³⁹ As stated elsewhere in this document, the current Government aims at discontinuing the OPCAs, at least when it comes to the role they have had so far. They are foreseen as become guidance officers for the elaboration of education and training plans for individuals. By the same token, they would be managed nationally and not regionally.

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At a regional level C-VET is financed by central allocations, following the decentralisation of the Regions. The funds from these central allocations are used to partly finance the Regional fund for learning and professional training (Fonds régional de l'apprentissage et de la formation professionnelle - FRAFP) and European Social Fund co-financing. Regions are free to decide how they distribute the allocations between I-VET and C-VET.

The public employment services and UNEDIC (Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce – the department of the PES in charge of managing unemployment benefits) also support the training of job seekers. In 2013, 643 765 job seekers undertook learning activities according to figures published by the Public Employment Services (Pôle-emploi). These activities were mostly funded by Regions. Other funders also support the training of specific target groups, such as the association managing the fund for professional insertion of disabled individuals (Association de gestion du fonds pour l'insertion professionnelle des personnes handicapées - Agefiph).

As of 2017, there is limited in terms of update on financial allocation matters since the current Government, established in 2017 has not made changes here yet.

Table 4.1. Breakdown of public national investment⁴⁰

Title of public investment source	Source of funding	Amount of funding	Targeted number of participants	Targeted level of provision	Start/ end date
Strengthened career guidance of early schools leavers	State	6,7 billions euros	1 million		Summer 2018-2022
Train jobseekers furthest away from labour market	State	7,1 billions euros	1 million		Summer 2018-2022
Adaptation of the qualification of the labour force	State	0,1 billions euros			Summer 2018-2022
Promoting innovation in teacher's training college	State	0,3 billions euros			Summer 2018-2022
Ending failure pathways in university tertiary education	State	0,4 billions euros			Summer 2018-2022
Facilitating school-to-work transitions (Trades and Qualifications Campus", i.e. Campus des Métiers et des Qualifications, MOOC...)	State	0,5 billions euros			Summer 2018-2022

⁴⁰ From Tables 3.2 and 3.3

4.3 EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF)

4.3.1 Structural fund support planned as part of 2014-2020 financial framework

One of the specificities of the use of the ESF in France is that it is managed by the State for issues related to employment, poverty and social exclusion (65% of the national budget) and by the Regions for issues related to education, training and guidance (the remaining 35%).

The ESIF (European Structural and Investment Funds) represents 28 millions Euros, of which 15.5 millions come from the European Policies for Economic Cohesion, and 1.1 Billion for the European Territorial Policies⁴¹.

- The two main measures are⁴²:
- Youth employment, which is a European emergency: creation of the Initiative for Youth Employment Fund. The target group for France is the NEETs (young people Not in Education, Employment or Training). Several actors have been involved (Public Employment Service, outreach offices such as Missions locales, the Ministry of Education, and local not for profit associations for local integration). The objective is to send 365 000 young adults back to employment. A first budgetary line was provided by the Initiative for Youth Employment (310,2 millions Euros) and a second one by the ESF, which matched the money (310 millions Euros). This measure concerns at the same time recent early school leavers and unemployed qualified people. By the end of 2016, 750 operations had been subsidised to promote youth employment.
- Programme for employment and inclusion: the budget provided by the ESF amounts to 5.9 billion Euros (65% managed by the State, and 35% by the Regions). This programme is composed of key focus areas:
 - Guidance towards employment for job seekers and individuals out of the labour force (economically inactive), as well as promoting occupational mobility and developing entrepreneurship (453 Millions Euros);
 - Anticipating economical changes and securing occupational pathways (707 millions Euros); and
 - Fighting poverty and promoting inclusion (1.6 Billions Euros). This budget is mainly (88%) transferred to the Conseils départementaux (the administrative level just below the Regional level) and to the Local Plans for Inclusion and Employment (Plans locaux pour l'insertion et l'emploi, PLIE).

Taking stock on the 31st of March 2017 on the European Union programmes (European Funds for Regional Development - FEDER, ESF and Initiative for Youth Employment - IEJ) one can

⁴¹ Ministère du Travail (2017). Le programme opérationnel national "Emploi et inclusion" (The operational national programme "Employment and inclusion") [Online]. Available at <http://www.fse.gouv.fr/candidater-et-gerer/fse-mode-demploi/le-fse-quest-ce-que-cest/le-programme-operationnel-national-emploi-et-inclusion> [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

Ministère du Travail (2017). Europe et emploi: faire le pari des jeunes adultes, c'est possible! (Europe and employment: betting in young adults is possible!) ([Online]. Available at <http://www.fse.gouv.fr/dossiers-thematiques/europe-et-emploi-faire-le-pari-des-jeunes-adultes-cest-possible> [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

⁴² www.avise.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/201411_cgjet_fse_2014-2020_et_iej_2014-2015_en_france.pdf
CGET (2017). Autorités de gestion FEDER-FSE au 31 mars 2017 - hors coopération territoriale européenne (FEDER-FSE Management Authorities as of 31 March 2017 - excluding European territorial cooperation).

see that 18% of the total budget went to education and training, 14% to social inclusion and 27% to employment⁴³. The corresponding budget were: FEDER = 1.9 Billions, ESF (not included IEJ) = 1.9 Billions and IEJ = 673 Millions (matching national money: 5,9 Billions).⁴⁴

Of the 14.7 Billion Euros allocated to France by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund for the period 2014-2020, around 2.4 Billion was dedicated to employment, 1.9 Billion to vocational education and training, and 2.2 Billion to social inclusion. According to the data on financial support to the Member States between 2014 and 2020 on Operational Programmes for the European Social Fund (ESF), the planned financial support from the European Union for the investment priority directly targeting adult learning, (i.e. Investment priority 10.3 – Enhancing access to lifelong learning) is 1,374 Billion Euros. In September 2016, 7% of the ESF in France was devoted to education and training, and involved the funding of approximately 10,403 projects.

The French National Operational Programme for the ESF focuses on three priorities: supporting job seekers (accounting for 15% of the budget), securing professional paths (24%); and promoting inclusion in the labour market for the most vulnerable, such as low-qualified adults (56%). 300 000 beneficiaries were supported in March 2016.

4.3.2 *EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF) provided as part of 2007-2013 financial framework⁴⁵*

The key figures of the programming of the ESF in France between 2007 and 2013 were 4.5 billions Euros and 65,102 subsidised projects. This represents 6.8 million individuals involved one way or another through the ESF funding. When it comes to the European investment FEDER and ESF:

- FEDER: the major investment was towards technological research and innovation in enterprises. This represents 2.8 billion Euros invested over the period at stake, i.e. 37% of the European funding. The social aspect, and the valuing of human capital in particular, represents 7.8% of the FEDER funding, i.e. 98 million Euros.
- ESF: the use of the money was organised along three main areas:
 - Improving access to employment, and increasing duration of employment;
 - Valuing human capital; and
 - Improving social inclusion.

All together, this represents a budget of 5 billions Euros, i.e. 80% of the total ESF budget.

⁴³ CGET, (2017). Programmes 2014-2020 [Online]. Available at: www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/Des-programmes-pour-qui-pour-quoi/Programmes-2014-2020#/regional [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

⁴⁴ CGET, (2017). Avancement des Programmes (Progress of programmes) [Online]. Available at: <http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/Des-programmes-pour-qui-pour-quoi/Avancement-des-programmes> [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

⁴⁵ CGET, (2017). Retour sur la Programmation 2007-2013 (A look back at the programming 2007-2013) [Online]. Available at: www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/Des-programmes-pour-qui-pour-quoi/Retour-sur-la-programmation-2007-2013 [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

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In addition, 17% of the budget was allocated to the most remote regions, especially to fight unemployment (i.e. 440 Millions Euros). This was done through the valuing of human capital. The area "valuing human capital" therefore represented 45% of the total ESF money.

Finally, 2% of the ESF budget was allocated to reforms for employment and social inclusion (i.e. 103 Millions Euros).

4.4 Effectiveness of investment⁴⁶

At the initiative of the UMP party, the French Senate – and its Committee for the control of public policies – carried out an evaluation on supply and demand of C-VET (*La formation professionnelle continue au service de la sécurisation des parcours*). This stock taking exercise showed that the French system was not effective anymore due to the fragmentation of the system. It was said to be too piecemeal and therefore not very effective. Such a system does not allow for the attainment of the objectives set by the Government. Some of the recommendations were:

- Simplify and strengthen governance;
- Revisit the financing of C-VET; and
- Strengthen the central role of the individual learner by making her/him more proactive, through strengthened guidance.

One of the main targets of the C-VET system should be those individuals who are the most further away from any education and training opportunity. Quality control and innovative C-VET actions are the two other key terms in the report.

During the previous five-year Presidency, some measures were set in motion to respond to these recommendations such as the Labour Law and the Law of the 5th of March 2014 on C-VET. The latter was meant to facilitate access to education and training opportunities leading

⁴⁶ Sources:

Dubie, J, and Morange, P., (2014). La Formation Professionnelle Continue au Service de la Sécurisation des Parcours (Continuing Vocational Training at the Service of Securing Career). www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/controle/com_cec/formation-synthese-rapport.pdf

Journal Officiel de la République Française. 2014. **Loi n° 2014-288 du 5 mars 2014 relative à la formation professionnelle, à l'emploi et à la démocratie sociale.** <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000028683576>

Centre Info, (2017). Les dispositions formation de la loi du 8 août 2016 relative au travail, à la modernisation du dialogue social et à la sécurisation des parcours professionnels (The training provisions of the Act of 8 August 2016 on work, modernization of social dialogue and the securing of career paths). www.actualite-de-la-formation.fr/une-du-sommaire/une-de-2016/les-dispositifs-formation-de-la-loi-el-khomri-definitivement-adoptes.html

Centre Info, (2017). Le Programme du Nouveau President Emmanuel Macron (The Programme of the new President Emmanuel Macron). www.actualite-de-la-formation.fr/une-du-sommaire/une-de-2017/le-programme-formation-du-nouveau-president-emmanuel-macron.html

DARES (2017). La dépense nationale pour la formation professionnelle continue et l'apprentissage en 2014 (National expenditure on continuing vocational training and apprenticeship in 2014). <http://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/2017-041.pdf>

Challenges (2016). Formation des chômeurs: le "plan 500.000" est-il applicable? (Training for the unemployed: Is the "500,000 plan" applicable?) [Online]. Available at: https://www.challenges.fr/emploi/formation/formation-des-chomeurs-le-plan-500-000-est-il-applicable_31646 [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

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to a qualification for the broad public and therefore respond to the needs of the labour market. The key areas were particularly targeted:

- Securing occupational pathways at the individual as well and collective (enterprise) levels;
- Revisiting C-VET;
- Improving readability and effectiveness of the system so that all labour market participants (whether workers or unemployed) may have access to C-VET opportunities; and

Some measures were also proposed to streamline the C-VET management:

- Reducing the number of actors and the interim levels, and channelling the funding to one single OPCA. The main role of the OPCAs would therefore be more towards providing advice and guidance to enterprises. They would contribute to the development of C-VET, and of apprenticeship in particular;
- Implementing the Individual Learning Account (Compte personnel de formation, CPF) to offer a unique entry point into lifelong learning for individuals to manage their education and training activities;
- Facilitating access to learning opportunities without having to seek approval in some instances; and
- Facilitating the use of validation of experiential learning outcomes opportunities (e.g. eligibility condition lowered from three to one year).

Guidance and advice:

- Creating the Career Development Counselling (Conseil en évolution professionnelle, CEP).

Education and training of those who need it most:

- Plan for 500,000 additional education and training plans for job seekers;
- Plan for 500,000 apprenticeship contracts. It will be compulsory for public companies to operate like private companies for the recruitment of young people on apprenticeship contracts. It will also be compulsory for Apprenticeship Centres (Centre de formation d'apprentis, CFA) to carry out tracer studies after the end of the training period, in order to promote apprenticeship.
- The Youth Guarantee (Garantie jeunes) extended to the whole territory;
- For the Individual Learning Account (CPF): possibility to cumulate up to 400 hours for job seekers and the least qualified individuals.

The investment in adult education and training keeps increasing according to DARES (2014), mainly the investment by enterprises (+3.6%), not so much by the State or the Region (respectively -1.7% and -3.7%).

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New reforms under consideration will promote:

- Priority target groups, i.e. unemployed people, low qualified individuals and young people, yet the unemployment rate still increases. According to the Director of the Public Employment Service (J. Bassères), the new plans and strategies should respond to the needs of those employers that experience great difficulties in recruiting workers with appropriate qualifications. The two schemes that display the better results are:
 - The Operational Individual Preparation for Employment (Préparation opérationnelle à l'emploi individuelle, POEI)
 - The Preliminary Training before Recruitment (Formation préalable au recrutement, AFPR)

Both schemes are pre-employment contracts and it should not come as a surprise that they display the best rate of return to employment: 73%, against 56.9% on average for the entire 100 000 Plan.

Evidence for 2016 shows that 300 000 additional education and training actions were registered, which is below expectations.

Evidence for 2017 shows that 1 126 000 education and training actions – of which 975 000 were prescribed by the Regions, 68 000 were guidance actions to create a business, 76 000 were professionalisation contracts and 7 000 were collective guidance action for the validation of experiential learning outcomes. The Government found these results encouraging and extended the programme for an additional semester.

According to the new President, 32 Billion Euros spent in C-VET is a large budget compared to the return on investment. Questioning the cost effectiveness of the French C-VET system has been quite frequent over the last decades. He proposes that the State share of the C-VET budget be lowered to 15 Billions in order to implement the reform of the C-VET and apprenticeship systems.

This is the reason why, on the basis of the policy started in 2014, the President wants to strengthen the C-VET system in order to control the unemployment rate:

- Direct access by individuals asking for education and training – i.e. discontinuation of the OPCA system – with strengthened guidance;
- Access to education and training opportunities made easy for low qualified unemployed people – 1 million education and training planned – especially thanks to their Individual Learning Account (CPF);
- Facilitating the education and training of recent early school dropouts. The objective is to reach out to a reasonable fraction of the young people entering the labour market for the first time each year without a single qualification worth something in the labour market. There should be additional subsidies for Second Chance Schools, which will allow to connect education/training to successful inclusion in employment;
- Promoting innovation through the development of new technologies to make education and training opportunities more accessible (distance learning, MOOCs). Proposing education and training options that are in line with the jobs of the future; and

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- Increasing the qualification level of labour market entrants in general.

Among the “new” approaches, one concerns the labelling of the education and training provision. The idea is for potential learners to enrol in education and training programmes or actions leading to a qualification, and which meet employers’ expectations. The recent propositions have just been made public (25 September 2017). From then on, a dialogue is being organised with the social partners, which should lead to a Law in Summer 2018.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING POLICY

The following sub-sections assess the existing policy through the lens of the six key success factors for effective adult learning policy that have been identified in a recent study.⁴⁷ There is very little by the way of update that can be added in 2017 given the Government established in 2017, it is early days for the reformulation and introduction of policy.

5.1 Develop learners' interest in learning

As described in previous sections, information, advice and guidance on learning is very well developed in the adult learning system in France through a wide range of dedicated structures, public and private organisations. The latest reforms are also likely to improve awareness-raising among potential learners for example, through: the employer and the employee new assessment interview process carried out every two years; the framework of the Career Development Counselling new mechanism; the website developed to inform [potential] learners on how to develop their CPA; and through the tailored support offered by public employment services to job seekers. Yet it seems that not all the new mechanisms created by the 2014 Law have been communicated to all employees. As an example, the assessment interview has only been communicated to 20% of the departments in charge of training in companies, and in 2016 only half of the companies had implemented it. Nothing is mentioned in the law on how it should be implemented⁴⁸.

Social partners in France are also very well engaged in the planning, promotion and recruitment of adult learners. The 2016 Labour Law also includes specific training for employees to increase the quality of social dialogue. However, this Law changed the hierarchy in social negotiations and imposed a company agreement that could take precedence over a sector agreement. This has been considered a major social setback by the Law detractors and could negatively influence quality and access of C-VET in the years to come.

5.2 Increase employers' investment in learning

The major aim of the 2014 C-VET reform was to provide incentives to employers to train their workforce through the simplification of the funding system (collection of contributions by OPCA). Yet this change, based on company's size, could result in an 80% or more decrease in the OPCA collection in 2016, and by 15 to 20% in other collecting bodies⁴⁹. In 2017, the survival of the OPCA network as such is at stake.

⁴⁷ Key success factors, indicating the strength of evidence (available in all languages):

<https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/policy-tool/key-success-factors>; Study "An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe": <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/final-report-20150817-en.pdf>

⁴⁸ CNEFOP. 2016. *Premier rapport sur la mise en oeuvre du Compte Personnel de formation et du Conseil en évolution professionnelle. Tome 1.*

⁴⁹ JDN (2016). Réforme de la formation, un an après quel bilan? (Reform of the training, one year after which assessment?) [Online]. Available at: <http://www.journaldunet.com/management/expert/63373/reforme-de-la-formation--un-an-apres-quel-bilan.shtml>. [Accessed: 12-10-2017]

One progress is the compulsory skills and jobs estimation carried out every three years (Gestion Prévisionnelle des Emplois et des Compétences - GPEC), which is complemented by compulsory training for all employees (companies with more than 50 employees) every 6 years. The GPEC aims to anticipate challenges related to the evolution of jobs and competences, and coordinate the various HR processes in order to better match company occupations and the skills needed in the future. Its primary goal is to avoid or limit terminations of employment contracts for economic reasons. In theory, it appears that the generalisation of the GPEC can be a major win-win instrument both for the company competitiveness, and for worker's employability, but trade unions are very doubtful of the success of this measure and have called for an evaluation of its efficiency⁵⁰.

In respect to workplace learning for adults, the pilot initiative developed by the DGEFP last year for SMEs will be closely monitored (FEST). It is aimed at tailoring workplace learning to the needs, constraints and environment of SMEs, promoting a more strategic use of training for companies' competitiveness and improving employees' skills, especially for the lowest qualified, by proposing a model based in I-VET. This initiative seeks to advance C-VET conditions by going beyond classical dual systems, as the French legislation allows training in premises that are different from the workplace, but does not say much on workplace learning rules and learning objectives.

The 2015 Macron Law on growth, activity and equality of economic chances⁵¹ included a new obligation for OPCA to fund this kind of learning, which seems quite problematic given the foreseen decrease of their budgetary envelope. The 2016 summer saw a generalisation of this experimentation and an implementation decree should soon clarify the role of OPCA. This initiative is to be followed up in the years to come. The OPCAs are a one-stop centre to collect money for C-VET, and to subsidise in-company education and training actions. They contribute to the Joint Fund for Securing Pathways (Fond paritaire de sécurisation des parcours, FPSP). The Government established in 2017 is asking for more transparency and, in all likelihood, the OPCA will be discontinued to reduce the number of interim levels in the C-VET chain. However, it is way too early to state anything concrete regarding their future (see some assumptions above). There are no formal reports on this matter since the Government was only established in 2017, so this represents the view of the expert.

5.3 Improve equity of access for all

The deteriorating labour market situation in France is an issue for access to C-VET. The 2016 Semester CSRs indicate that the cost of labour at minimum wage has been reduced, hampering low qualified individuals employment prospects. In addition, the design of the unemployment benefit system does not appear to encourage these individuals to get back to work, and makes it more favourable for employers to offer short-term employment complemented by work benefits. In this context, many employees do not stay long enough in a company to benefit from many of the new mechanisms in place; this may hinder

⁵⁰ CAIRN. [La Gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et des compétences et son effet sur l'employabilité des salariés](#). Management & Avenir 2011/08 (no. 48)

⁵¹ <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000030978561&categorieLien=id>

participation in C-VET in the future. The current Government wants to target unemployed people in this respect so they benefit more and more easily from these new mechanisms.

In 2014, one jobseeker out of two was employed after training, a slight decrease compared to 2013. Jobseekers are not forgotten in the latest policy reforms as they can benefit from most of the new schemes put in place, such as the Professional Evolution Counselling and the Individual Activity Account. The challenge with the Professional Evolution Counselling will be to make sure it does not encroach on the work of skills audits professionals, and to ensure that both mechanisms are complementary in a comprehensive approach. Another challenge will be the financing of structures proposing Counselling, as neither the professionalisation of public agents nor the hiring of new ones has been embedded in law. In respect to the CPF, the Government has developed a quality framework for the training that needs to be delivered based on a specific criteria. However, implementation has been quite slow. Training providers have lost 15% of their turnover in 2015 due to a lack of visibility on the new platforms, and despite the success of the 732 000 beneficiaries involved in the initiative in 2015, the efficiency of the mechanism will only be assessed in the light of its real contribution to securing professional pathways⁵².

Unemployed people also benefit from specific measures, including the provision of tailored support after the termination of a contract, an extension of professionalisation contracts to the least qualified, and the flagship "Additional 500,000 trainings" Plan targeted at low or not qualified unemployed people, and long-term job seekers. A few months after the launch of the "Additional 500,000 trainings" Plan, the initiative has proven to be quite successful with a strong increase in applications for training in all regions (a +50% to +130% weekly enrolment rate, depending on the Region, compared to 2014)⁵³. This has been a unique opportunity for training providers even though stakeholders are doubtful that the 500 000 target will be reached, as public employment services and outreach offices have sometimes faced challenges in recruiting people. The fact that the new partnership between the State and Regions involves cooperation with public employment services is also an interesting step forward.

Regarding participation in learning of economically inactive people and other target groups that are the most far away from adult learning, it is quite hard to collect data on these groups. In general, these target groups are often taken care of by civil society. However, support in general for these groups is limited⁵⁴ and depends on State subsidies to survive in the coming years.

Recent migration flows are also a challenge, not because migrants are low qualified but often because of challenges related to languages and recognition of learning outcomes. There is actually an unsolved debate on the actual qualification level of recent migrants. There is a general belief that they are highly educated – based on the fact that it is costly to pay for

⁵² CNEFOP. 2016. [*Premier rapport sur la mise en oeuvre du Compte Personnel de formation et du Conseil en évolution professionnelle. Tome 1.*](#)

⁵³ EPALE. 2016. [*Le Plan des 500 000 formations en France : un premier bilan positif.*](#)

⁵⁴ According to the Ministry of Labour, 28% of low qualified or unqualified individuals had access to education and training opportunities after the implementation of the 2016 Labour Law. On average, the duration of the education and training spell was about four months. The rate was 29% when it comes to young adults 26 and below. It was 20% for senior people and about 20% for long term unemployed people.

their travel to Europe– but piecemeal evidence suggests there is probably a sort of balance between the most and the least qualified. The main issue is elsewhere anyway: all the groundwork carried out with recent migrants has not provided any evidence on which competences should be assessed and validated. Not only are education systems dissimilar – and equivalencies difficult to find – but there seems to be a mismatch between the competences they bring and the qualification standards used in France, let alone the language issue. According to the Observatory of Inequalities (Observatoire des inégalités) unemployment among migrants is as high as 17% in 2016. In 2014, 40% of the migrants aged 15-64 have at most a qualification at level below the lowest level of the French Qualifications Framework (INSEE). This figure is 26% for the whole 15-64 population living in France. Specific programmes linked to the teaching of French as a foreign language are mostly organised by the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) for newly arrived immigrants. Parents of immigrant pupils are also entitled to follow language courses. Those that have stayed in France for more than five years and cannot access the programmes turn to counties (départements), municipalities or local associations. OECD in 2016 still notes that there are large disparities in France in immigrants' educational attainment and upward mobility compared to French natives⁵⁵.

There are also many initiatives developed in France for basic skills programmes. In 2013, illiteracy was designated by the Government as a "Grand National Cause" thanks to the ANLCI advocacy, with hundreds of initiatives across the country and four priorities agreed until 2018, such as reducing illiteracy rate to 5%)⁵⁶. Experts forecast a decrease in illiteracy rates to 5.4% in 2025 (which could match the UN Sustainable Development Goal on a substantial proportion of adults achieving literacy and numeracy by 2030). Latest PISA figures show progress illiteracy rates among French pupils above that of the OECD average; but efforts need to be doubled while 1 out of 10 young people is still considered illiterate, and half of them are not at school. A wide range of basic skills trainings are either offered by the GRETA, AFPA and CNED or set up in the framework of various types of public support mechanisms or work contracts. Other national basic skills programmes include for instance the "First pages" initiative by the Ministry of Culture developed to sensitise small children and their families to reading through local actions (animations, library loans...). Family Educational Actions, also carried out by ANLCI, are aimed at reinforcing parents' basic skills to help them support their children through their educational pathways (awareness raising, counselling...).

Regarding basic digital skills, central and regional authorities have initiated a number of actions such as national certifications (B2i), public digital spaces (EPN) or specific trainings. There are other training providers who have also started to develop open educational resources or use ICT and Internet to find resources, and provide distance learning. The French public employment services in 2015 developed a partnership with Open Classrooms - one of the MOOC leaders in the French market – to provide training to job seekers, however only online courses on basic numeracy skills are proposed for free so far.

Regarding schemes to recognising prior learning, the validation of learning outcomes in France is one of the most mature systems in Europe, this is overseen by an inter-ministerial

⁵⁵ OECD, 2016. [Education at a glance 2016: OECD Indicators](#).

⁵⁶ www.anlci.gouv.fr/Actualites/Agir-ensemble-contre-l-illettrisme/Bilan-Agir-contre-l-illettrisme-grande-cause-nationale-2013

committee for the development of VAE (CIDVAE), who are also responsible for the promotion and coordination of data collection improved by the 2014 Law.

5.4 Deliver learning that is relevant

The most recent policy framework focuses on learners' needs and motivation; examples include the assessment interview with employers carried out every two years, and the Career Development Counselling. Yet the above analysis reveals that learning is often imposed on lower qualified workers by employers, and may take into account their needs (at least what the employer think their needs is) but not their motivation. Besides, the learners who deserve particular attention are the ones who are the most far away from learning, and vulnerable groups who do not benefit from these mechanisms (inactive people, migrants, short-term contracts, etc.). In such cases, the civil society can be a good alternative, for instance, the widely spread APP label (Individualised Pedagogical Workshops - Ateliers de Pédagogie Personnalisée) adapted to basic skills training, and held by more than 480 training providers certified by AFNOR⁵⁷. The APP label is a certificate that acts as a tool for training, employment, and competitiveness. It allows workers and jobseekers to validate a first level of qualification in seven fields of competences.

In terms of skills forecasting, the GPEC has proven to be a very good tool to use to match skills with provision. Skills matching accounts is embedded in a number of recent initiatives; for instance the proposed "Additional 500 000 trainings" Plan is based on a skills needs assessments in companies and regions.

With regards to the promotion of innovation and flexibility in the delivery of learning, the Individual Activity Account can be regarded as an important step to bridging formal and non-formal learning. However, there are a number of questions around the CPA: will the fact that training hours can only be cumulated when working be a disadvantage for jobseekers? Will employees using their CPA for training not related to their job be well perceived by their employer?⁵⁸ It is too soon to assess the efficiency of this initiative.

Finally, the national qualifications framework revisited in 2002 – on the basis of the qualifications levels first established in 1969 – with the setting up of the National Committee for Vocational Qualifications (CNCP) and the National Catalogue of Vocational Qualifications (RNCP) was aligned in 2010 with the EQF, however, this is still structured in five levels rather than in eight, and no clear agenda has been set up to adapt to a eight-level structure; even if the EU instructions do not recommend that countries adopt an eight-level structure as the EQF is a meta framework, not a template. The framework covers the qualifications awarded by ministries, training providers and social partners. The French framework is strongly focused on the labour market and has to evolve constantly to remain relevant. All levels of qualification can be obtained via the VAE system⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ <http://www.app-reseau.eu/>

⁵⁸ Collectif. 2015. [*Le Compte Personnel d'Activité, une réforme insuffisante pour garantir les droits à la personne*](#). Le Monde

⁵⁹ CEDEFOP. 2014. [*France – European inventory on NQF*](#).

5.5 Deliver learning that is of high quality

As adult learning initiatives are so diverse in France, it is also difficult to come up with standardised quality assurance mechanisms that are often initiated by the providers themselves, such as the APP method with the AFNOR label. However, it is not possible to assess and compare the quality of the adult learning offer, partly because not all stakeholders agree on the quality standard labelling of companies.

Some initiatives have emerged to tackle the challenge of scattered data due to the diversity of the sector, for instance, the annual evaluation of all regional actions by the CREFOP. This evaluation is supported by the work of local authorities, economic, social and environmental committees, public employment services, statistics and research structures, social partners organisations, information centres, and the CARIF-OREF network that provides information on employment and training opportunities and plays a role of observer and analyst, through its skills forecast.

Adult learning professionals' qualifications vary in France x. As training provision is so diverse, qualifications and working conditions depend on employers, social partners' agreements or public procurement conditions. For example, University adult trainer qualifications are usually bachelor degrees, and some master degrees in initial or continuous education propose a specialisation in adult learning, sometimes related to basic skills challenges, but no national standards exist for initial education. Continuous professional development is offered for adult trainers by public authorities, for example the Illiteracy Resource Centres (CRI), and the ANLCI that compiles data, coordinates initiatives and proposes public action on illiteracy.

Since the January 2016 Eduform label (National Education), the 2017 President wants to create another quality label. The Article L. 6316-1 of the Labour Code says that the funders and sponsors (State, Regions, Public Employment Service, Opcv/Opacif, Agefiph) involved in C-VET have to check for the quality of the learning opportunities they subsidise, whatever the financing scheme (included Individual Learning Account, décret n°2015-790 du 30 juin 2015.). For the record, of the 86,000 training establishments formally registered in France, only a few (approx. 2,000) are labelled or accredited.

5.6 Ensure coherent policy

Regarding synergies between various decision levels, the analysis has shown that the partnership between the State and regions is functioning well. A key aspect of lifelong learning policy coordination has been articulated by the National Council for Employment, Training and Professional Orientation (CNEFOP), and its regional branches. However, since the latter has only been in existence for two years, it is too soon to tell if policies are being correctly implemented at the national level, and whether regional realities can inspire a truly national vision. Besides, the merging of regions in France this year raises important questions on the future of adult learning management. Will duplicated structures remain or will some disappear, leaving some areas deprived? How much will the re-organisation cost? Many territories far from urbanised areas fear that cities will absorb their financial means, which

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has already been acknowledged by stakeholders. This may also have a negative impact on territorial organisation as people will go where their learning needs can be met by providers.

In its 2016 National Reform Programme, the French Government set out policies that increase synergies between various employment and social partners to ease access to employment, and therefore indirectly to C-VET. Social partners and the state have for instance set up the Visale mechanism⁶⁰ to guarantee the unpaid rents of unemployed people during the three first years of their housing contracts, to enable them to quickly find a job. As obtaining a driver license is also an obstacle to find work, the Government has also increased the license exam sessions, and pursued reforms that aim to spread the driver license cost over 40 months. To date, 843 000 young people have benefited from this initiative.

⁶⁰ www.visale.fr/#!/

6.0 STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM

6.1 Strengths

Decentralised governance close to field realities

For several years adult learning has been decentralised to Regions. This is regarded as a very positive step since policies can now be aligned to the needs of the Regions, as well as learners' - even though some aspects of decentralisation still need further implementation according to stakeholders, such as in the field of the VAE, and in respect to qualifications and C-VET frameworks that are still managed at the central level.

Accessible, flexible and relevant C-VET opportunities

There are many initiatives in place to re-skill and up-skill individuals in line with labour market needs, even though these are unequal among territories. Tailored and individualised support for workers to develop career pathways, and jobseekers are available thanks to mechanisms like the Career Development Counselling, and the biennial interview with employers. Training has also been made compulsory in big companies with social partners fully involved in the process. Innovative initiatives such as the Individual Learning Account build bridges between formal and non-formal learning opportunities, and between employers' needs and personal development.

A fully operational system for validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes

Compared to other EU countries, the French VAE system has for many years been known for its quality mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning and work experience (1992). The 2002 legislation, which sets out the VAE (Validation des acquis de l'expérience) processes, builds on a conception of validation as an individual right. All qualifications under the National Qualifications Framework can now have the same currency as formal education qualifications. 60 000 learners apply each year and half get a full qualification. However, there are elements in the VAE system that could still be improved, for instance, in terms of access and transparency or cooperation between stakeholders from different fields (employment, education, youth...); the Government seems to be currently discussing a simplified process for this⁶¹.

6.2 Weaknesses

A lack of policy emphasis on vulnerable groups

Like in many other EU countries, emphasis is put on C-VET when one speaks of the adult learning sector, and all target groups that are far away from the labour market (early careers, senior learners, minorities, women, disabled), and are extremely disadvantaged in terms of access to learning opportunities. The level of adult literacy and numeracy is among the lowest

⁶¹ CEDEFOP. 2016. [Monitoring the use of validation of non-formal and informal learning](#).

in the EU for those with poor qualifications, and for senior age groups. These groups cannot remain the sole responsibility of civil society as a result of a lack of public support. Some stakeholders have recommended a reinforcement of local synergies between decentralised public structures for education and employment, municipalities and associations, so that public policies are more equally spread across territories and closer to learners' needs. Counties (Départements) and not only Regions need more financial means to tackle increasing unemployment. Guidance from the EU level can be better exploited as well, such as recommendations from the EU High Level Group of Experts on Literacy. Policy frameworks such as the future Skills Guarantee can also facilitate a better national focus on vulnerable target groups.

Hermetic sub-sectors

One of the main messages of the 2016 Country Specific Recommendations was the lack of bridges between the education sector and the labour market, and of cooperation between C-VET stakeholders. As reflected in many European countries, the French adult learning system is utterly scattered among various types of providers, funded by different mechanisms and unequally spread across different territories. This results in policy development, implementation and assessment being carried out in silos while the worlds of formal, non-formal and informal learning barely coincide with each other. A national lifelong learning Council could be set up to overcome this fragmentation.

Scattered data collection

As a consequence of the diversity of adult learning provision, monitoring and assessing related policies are difficult to ensure by national authorities and independent stakeholders, especially since they are a shared competence between two ministries and their responsibility is now mainly decentralised. Even data on the effective VAE system are not centralised. This hampers proper policy assessment and improvement. Besides, the definition of what to measure is rather complex. The concept of adult learning is often blurred and likely to encompass many fields and actors. This is even truer at European and global level, even though this also contributes to the richness of the sector.

As of 2017, the main concerns are that the adult learning system is too complex. The adult learning – mainly C-VET – system is often said to be too complex with too many interim actors. There are many organisations that deal with C-VET (Opca, Cnefop, Copanef, Fongecif ou CPF). In addition, it is generally the most qualified individuals that benefit more and more often from adult learning opportunities. A further weakness is a lack of Quality Assurance – the labelling system takes a long time to be set in motion. In addition, the way it is envisaged at the moment – in 2017 – it is more about increasing control than improving quality.⁶²

⁶² <https://www.la-croix.com/Economie/Economie-et-entreprises/Pourquoi-formation-professionnelle-pose-probleme-2017-10-09-1200882685>

7.0 FURTHER POLICY REFORMS AND ORIENTATIONS NEEDED

Further reforms and orientation in the sector of adult learning in France will be subject to uncertainties of future economic and employment trends, like many other policy moves. The fact that the labour market is slowly deteriorating, and that work contracts are becoming more and more precarious and short is bad news for continuous vocational education and training. Besides, the 2016 Labour Law allowing company agreements to prioritise sector agreements does not reassure social partners and public authorities that the guarantee to have the right to access training will not be affected by these changes.

In addition, the C-VET sector has undergone important changes in its governance with massive decentralisation towards the Regions. If this reform is based on a subsidiarity principle, this transfer of competences should be accompanied by a transfer of financial resources so that not only learners from the wealthiest Regions benefit from adult learning opportunities. The merging of Regions however brings even more uncertainties. What is more, the Government should keep a single policy orientation for the adult learning sector so that coherence is maintained among regional initiatives, especially taking into account the diversity of adult learning, and its hermetic sub-sectors. David Lopez (La Ligue de l'Enseignement) suggests reinforcing compulsory cooperation at governance level (Ministries, regions), and in the field (employers, trainers) to support learners, since some stakeholders still have a different vision of the sector. Convergent orientations need to be adopted via concrete proposals for partnerships. An emphasis could be put on guidance mechanisms, as counsellors are usually the ones at the crossroads of formal learning opportunities and of options for validating non-formal and informal learning outcomes.

In terms of funding, many questions also need to be asked– e.g. what will be the cost of the Regions' mergers – but also along the implementation of new legislation, where necessary financial means to ensure a smooth transition are not always available (e.g. for the Career Development Counselling). Implementation is also often very slow, partly because of the diversity of stakeholders.

There is also a need to focus on the provision of information on learning opportunities for learners to make them aware of the opportunities offered to them; here again, better guidance and "one-stop shops" solutions (which existed until last year in the "employment houses" in rural territories) can be further explored.

Furthermore, a clear strategy must be determined by decision-makers in charge of partnership approaches concerning access to learning for the most vulnerable groups. It is worrying that employment rates of low-qualified adults has become worse in the last few years, particularly given the current skills forecasts, and that these adults remain so far away from learning (along with other disadvantaged groups), compared to other cohorts. France also has to tackle its alarming low level of adults equipped with basic skills. Too often, civil society compensates for the lack of public authorities' support for these groups. Training is also too focused on C-VET, and the right to training is too often denied to people who do not have an employer or the Public Employment Service to finance it, and when they do, the training is more imposed rather than based on learners' personal motivation. On the contrary,

fragile groups need tailored, flexible and long-term learning opportunities which can be provided by various stakeholders working in close cooperation, e.g. social workers, youth workers, trainers, etc. These adults need a very wide range of alternatives facilitated by innovative tools, such as new ICT, and also support to develop crucial transversal competences such as learning to learn. ICT can also play a very important role in informing adults about learning opportunities, and providers will also need to develop their online presence, according to the OECD (2016), 56% of participants in adult learning in 2011 found information about their learning opportunity on Internet⁶³.

Finally, France needs a more coherent approach to quality assurance for the sector including better monitoring, data collection and assessment; these are in the plan of the current Government. As no policy can be assessed without clear indicators on their results, it is crucial to have reliable sources of information on target groups. The National Agency for the Fight against Illiteracy (ANLCI) is for instance currently putting a lot of effort to harmonise adult literacy indicators in France. Such a systemic and systematic collection of information in a lifespan perspective would be a precious tool to monitor the progress made by individuals along their training and professional paths. The building blocks established by the ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning can be a good basis to elaborate a set of reliable indicators.

As of 2017, it is too early to determine how the Government's approach should be altered since there is some uncertainty since the Government is new.

⁶³ OECD, 2016. [*Education at a glance 2016: OECD Indicators.*](#)

8.0 SUMMARY

This report presents the current situation regarding adult learning in France in all its forms – to the extent possible as many decisions are being taken at the time of writing, after a long period of inaction due to the election campaign – as well as recommendations for further policy elaboration.

Worsening employment conditions and low adult learning participation rates among low-qualified adults are worrying and symptomatic of the fact that this target group remains very fragile, and is unlikely to have the skills needed for the labour market. This is a major challenge for the French Government that has to take into account the European Commission's Country-Specific Recommendations, by putting a special emphasis on low qualified individuals.

Today mainly overseen both by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Labour, adult learning has a long tradition in France and has started to genuinely expand after the Second World War. Reforms in the seventies and the nineties have particularly shaped C-VET which represents a major part of adult learning in France, employers being the first funders of training - even though popular education has a very strong identity carried out by civil society and especially very old associations such as La Ligue de l'Enseignement.

The sector has also undergone an in-depth change thanks to the recent legislations in 2014 and 2016, including in its governance, with a massive decentralisation towards regional authorities that have established a new form of partnership with the State to reinforce policy coordination.

Yet, even though France can pride itself on many aspects such as this new decentralised governance, a strong quality C-VET system and a fully operational validation of experiential learning outcomes (VAE) system to bridge formal and non-formal learning outcomes, many challenges remain to be tackled such as the low rates of employment and learning participation among low qualified adults, a weak emphasis on fragile target groups that are often left to not for profit associations, a lack of cooperation among stakeholders from the different sub-sectors involved in adult learning, as well as a systematic approach to data collection due to a lack of aggregated information and indicators.

Recommendations for further policy reform will very much depend on several elements of context that remain today, such as a deteriorating labour market or changes in governance due to the merging of regions. It is too early to tell what the 2017 Government means for developments here. Overall, it will be of crucial importance to protect the right to training, give the appropriate financial means to support new reforms and mechanisms, and set a clear and coherent policy and quality assurance strategy in a partnership approach with stakeholders based on a holistic vision of adult learning realities and challenges.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. List of adopted legal acts, strategies, laws

Name	Date of adoption	Short description of content
Employment, Social Dialogue Modernisation and Career Paths Securing Act 2016	8 August 2016	This law introduced the Compte personnel d'activité (Individual Activity Account) that gives its holder the right to personalised support in setting up an occupational project. It was created to help the holder use vocational training hours, to reinforce autonomy and to secure a career. It is constituted by three accounts. This Law contains a significant change also regarding the Validation of Experiential Learning Outcomes: the eligibility condition, i.e. the condition to be allowed to become an applicant, is shifted from three years of experience to only one year of experience.
New Territorial Organisation of the Republic (a.k.a Law NOTRe), Law no 2015-991	7 August 2015	This Law belongs to the Act III of the Decentralisation Law implemented during the 2012-2017 Presidency. It aims at reinforcing the competences of the Regions and of the Public Establishments for the Cooperation among the neighbouring municipalities. It therefore has direct impacts on the provision of learning opportunities. The territorial instruments of the Public Employment Service – such as Missions locales, Maisons de l'emploi, agences Cap emploi, Écoles de la deuxième chance – will be placed under the responsibility of the Regional Councils from the 1st January 2016 on.
Professional Training, Employment and Social Democracy Act 2014.	5 March 2014	Introduces several important elements that changed C-VET in France amending the main bodies of vocational training. At the national level, the National Council for Employment, Vocational Training and Guidance (Conseil national de l'emploi, de la formation et de l'orientation professionnelles) replaces the National Council for Vocational Training throughout life (Conseil national de la formation professionnelle tout au long de la vie) and the National Employment Council (Conseil national de l'emploi). This law also created the Regional Council for Employment, Vocational Training and Guidance, which rationalizes and simplifies the existing bodies at regional level: the Regional Coordinating Committee for Employment and Vocational Training and the Regional Employment Council.
Employment Security Act 2013.	14 June 2013	The law adopted a new scheme for accessing adult continuing training, the Compte Personnel de Formation (Individual Learning Account). It became applicable as of

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		January 2014. Unlike previously existing schemes, the Individual Learning Account is something that the whole of the working adult population can benefit from.
Development of work-study programmes and professional career security 2011.	28 July 2011	The law makes changes in access to apprenticeship and supervises work experience in companies, reforms the regimes applicable to contracts and periods of professionalization, and introduces the job security contract
Lifelong guidance and vocational training Act 2009.	24 November 2009	The law requires the regions to create a Regional Plan Contract for the Development of Vocational Training based on recommendations from the regional authorities, State representative, the local education authority and employees' and employers' organisations. The regions along with the State and companies fund C-VET.
Active solidarity income and policies of insertion Act 2008.	1 December 2008	The professionalisation contract was established giving access to work-study training while enjoying the status of a salaried employee.
Local Administrations' Liberties and Responsibilities Act.	13 August 2004	The law sets the principle that the Régions have entire responsibility over apprenticeship and youth and unemployed adults' vocational training. Regional Councils define and organize apprenticeship and vocational training policies.
Social Modernisation Act 2002.	17 January 2002	In regards vocational training the 2002 law established work-experience accreditation (VAE) and a regional employment and vocational training co-ordination committee in each region, it reformed the internship tax collection system paid by companies for work-study training, and coordinates around the regional council the funding of apprentice-training centers.
Organization of Continuing Vocational Training in the Context of Continuing Education Act 1971	16 July 1971	The 1971 law established adult education and training as a right and a national obligation shared among all economic and social stakeholders: the State, Regions, and social partners define the framework; the State, Regions, companies and social partners provide the funding; and the State, Regions, companies, broader public and private organization provide the learning programs.

Annex 2. Inventory of policy interventions

Name of intervention	Source (with hyperlink)	Budget	Outputs	Which of the 6 building blocks for successful adult learning policies does it target?						Further details/description (purpose, duration, responsible entity etc.)
				Fosters learners' interest in	Employers' investment in	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	
Individual Learning Account	(2015). Mon Compte Personnel de Formation (My Individual Learning Account) [Online]. Available at: http://www.moncompteformation.gouv.fr/ [Accessed: 25 September 2017]. République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training). https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_public	Company contributions amounted to €6.7 billion. Proposed state financing in 2017 of €3,0 million in payment appropriations (CP - crédits de paiement).	As of October 2016 576,910 training courses validated; 3.5 million accounts opened; 10,971 certifications selected by social partners from eligible lists. Average duration of training is 346 hours.		√	√	√	√	√	The Individual Learning Account came into force on 1 January 2015 under the act of 5 march 2014 on Vocational training, Employment and Workplace Representation. The accounts give workers rights to training at any point in their career,

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	ue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf									whether they are working or not, so that they can develop their skills and make career changes including changing to another sector of activity. Companies pay a one-off contribution of 1% of the payroll.
Individual Activity Account	Délégation Générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation Professionnelle (2017). Compte Personnel d'Activité (Individual Activity Account) [Online]. Available at: https://www.moncompteactivite.gouv.fr/cpa-public/ [Accessed: 23 September 2017]. Cour de Comptes, (2016). Note d'Analyse de l'Exécution Budgétaire. France (Analysis Note on Budgetary Execution). http://www.anrt.asso.fr/fr/mires-note-danalyse-de-lexecution-budgetaire-2016-19577	The cost of this project is estimated at €33 million between 2014 and 2017 (construction and operation of information system).	Not available		√	√	√	√	√	It aims to reinforce the right to professional qualification. It gathers (but does not replace) the Individual Learning Account, the arduous work, and the civic engagement accounts. It is available for all workers throughout their career. Learning hours can be accumulated per time worked and

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										<p>also from volunteering activities. Effective from 2017 to all employees and job applicants, and 2018 for the self-employed.</p> <p>Responsible authorities: Department of National Education, Higher Education and Research, Department of Labour, Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue.</p>
Validation of Experiential Learning Outcomes (VAE)	<p>Cnetre Inffo, (2017). Le Portail de la Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience (Portal of Validation of Experiential Learning Outcomes). Paris, France. http://www.vae.gouv.fr/</p> <p>République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training). https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_public</p>	Proposed €1,92 million in payment appropriations in 2017.	In the period of 2003-2014 approximately 310,000 candidates have been certified.	√		√			√	<p>Adopted in 2002 it allows beneficiaries to obtain a certification on the basis of professional experience after validation of the acquired knowledge and skills by a jury. The resulting certification</p>

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	ue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf								(diploma, professional title or certificate) must be entered in the National Register of Professional Certification. It is not necessary to follow a training course.
The Additional 500,000 Trainings Plan.	Pôle Emploi, (2017). Plan 500 000 Formations supplémentaires (Additional 500 000 trainings plan) [Online]. Available at: http://www.pole-emploi.org/actualites/plan-500-000-formations-supplementaires-@/409/view-article-166642.html [Accessed: 20 September 2017]	€987 million in engagement authorizations (AE- autorisation d'engagement) and €399 million in CP spent in 2016.	450,000 trained or undergoing training, and 33,000 signed a professionalization contract		√	√		√	Launched in 2016, it aims to enable access to learning for individuals who need it the most. Training opportunities will be provided for low or not qualified individuals, and long-term jobseekers.
Individual Training Leave.	Direction de l'information légale et administrative, (2017). Congé Individuel de Formation (Individual Training Leave)[Online]. Available at: https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F14018 [Accessed: 23 September 2017]. République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training).	€ 1,056 million in 2015 collected for individual training leave.	A total of 80,827 beneficiaries in 2015.	√	√	√		√	It allows the employee to benefit from a remunerated leave of absence to receive training to qualify, evolve or retrain. Contributions are received for this purpose from companies with at

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	https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publicue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf									least 10 employees. Additional funding from the State and the region.
Professionalisation Contracts	République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training). https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publicue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf	€ 18,00 million in 2017	Financing in 2017 of a total of €18 million		√		√		√	Allows beneficiaries to acquire a vocational qualification in order to gain access to a specific position in the company. Companies hiring a jobseeker aged 45 and over benefit from an exemption from employers' contributions.
Public Scheme for the Remuneration of Jobseekers in Training.	République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training). https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publicue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf	Proposed budget of €41,00 million in 2017.	87,800 beneficiaries in 2015			√	√			Allows unemployed jobseekers who undertake training to benefit from an entitlement to unemployment insurance until the end of their training.
Second Chance Schools (E2C)	République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training). https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publicue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf	€24,00 million in AE) and €24,00 million CP in 2016.	115 2nd chance schools were expected in 2016. The positive exit rate reached 59% in 2015, 4,092 people.			√			√	Training for young people aged 16 to 25 years who lack qualifications and aim at social and professional integration. Only criterion is the

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	<p>ue/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf</p> <p>Réseau E2C France, (2017). Les Écoles de la 2^e Chance (Second Chance Schools) [Online]. Available at: https://reseau-e2c.fr/ [Accessed: 24 September 2017].</p>								appropriate age and motivation
<p>Franco-German Exchange Program for Youth and Adults in Initial and Continuing Vocational Training</p>	<p>République Française, (2017). Annexe au Projet de Loi de Finances pour Formation Professionnelle (Annex to the Law Project of Finances for Professional Training). https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2017/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2017_formation_professionnelle.pdf</p>	<p>Financing in 2017 of €0,70 million</p>	<p>More than 100,000 participants since its inception.</p>				√		<p>Since 1980 it aims to foster mobility between France and Germany by enabling young people undergoing training and adults already engaged in working life to carry out part of their training in the partner country.</p>

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