Education and training in figures

Further information

This spotlight is based on input from ReferNet France.
VET in France

Vocational education and training (VET) is by tradition, central to France’s adopted priorities: guiding first appeared in the Middle Ages and apprenticeship in the 16th century. The development of lifelong learning in the early 1970s was based on long-standing and widely diverse adult education practices that are the foundation of continuous education.

Initial vocational education and training (VET)

VET at upper secondary level. On leaving lower secondary school (collège) at age 15, students are streamed either towards a general (ISCED 3A) or a vocational general (ISCED 3B) level, to prepare for a two-year professional skills certificate (CAP) or a three-year vocational baccalaureate. These qualifications are designed to provide direct access to employment and the training always includes in-company internship. However, access to tertiary level VET programmes in related fields is possible. Upper secondary education is governed and financed largely by the Ministry of Education and partly by other ministries (including agriculture and industry).

VET at tertiary level (ISCED 5B). The lycée-vocational (lycée-technique) is designed for entry into the labour market. Students can also decide, on completion, to go on to a master’s level for a vocational qualification at EQF level 6. Young people on an apprenticeship contract (from one to three years) have the status and rights of other employees and receive a salary. The course takes place both in the workplace and in an apprenticeship training centre. The system is governed by the State (legislation), the regional councils (giving setting) and the social partners (management of the CPA). Its funding comes from the State, which exempts enterprises from employer contributions for the amount of each apprentice’s salary. The regional council (renewing on request) is responsible for the apprenticeship subsidy and companies (apprenticeship tax).

Continuous vocational education and training (CVET)

CVET applies to those entering the world of work or already in work, both the young and the adults. The objectives of CVET include promoting professional integration or reintegration; maintaining people in work; encouraging the development of skills and access to different levels of professional qualification; and contributing to economic and cultural development and social progress. Access and funding procedures for courses vary according to individual status, other jobseekers, public employees, self-employed workers, etc. Training is on-the-job in the regions, with central government intervening only for particular target groups (the liberals, foreigners, and people with disabilities). Employers (private or public) and the training provider (e.g. the region or the training company that manages the training) share the cost. The training market is open: in 2011, more than 58 650 training providers earned revenues of EUR 13 billion for 25.8 million training courses.

Apprenticeship

This pathway can lead to all vocational certifications registered in the national directory of professional qualifications, which includes all secondary or higher education certifications as well as vocational qualification certificates (CQP), created by the professional branches. Young people on an apprenticeship contract (from one to three years) have the status and rights of other employees and receive a salary. The course takes place both in the workplace and in an apprenticeship training centre. The system is governed by the State (legislation), the regional councils (giving setting) and the social partners (management of the CPA). Its funding comes from the State, which exempts enterprises from employer contributions for the amount of each apprentice’s salary. The regional council (renewing on request) is responsible for the apprenticeship subsidy and companies (apprenticeship tax).

Distinctive features of VET

Right to education. The State ensures the promotion of the individual’s right to education. It has the obligation to organise public education to the highest level of quality and security. Role of the social partners. The social partners have an essential role in regulatory, political and financial aspects of VET programmes. The inter-professional agreements they sign form the basis for the introduction of reforms and are generally reflected in legal and regulatory documents. Social partners also manage the different bodies that collect compulsory company contributions to apprenticeship and vocational training, as well as the unemployment insurance system for job-seekers.

Obligation to contribute financially to CVET. French CVET is distinguished by the existence of compulsory contributions allocated to a particular purpose, reflecting the desire to encourage companies to train their staff. The role is set by the law, but some professional branches have applied rates above the legal minimum.

Recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training.

Another distinctive feature is the recognition of individual rights to training, designed to promote social progress and reduce inequalities in access to training. The best known are the individual training leave (CIF) and the most recently introduced personal training account (compte personnel de formation, CPF). The main purpose of this measure is to support the use of an ‘individual right scheme’, by making it more accessible to all (employed and unemployed) and more portable from one company to another.

Challenges and policy responses

Fight drop-out. The main stakeholders (Ministry of Education, employers, and social partners) work together on measures to prevent early leaving at secondary and tertiary levels, including the development of apprenticeships. The measures include the appointment of a contact in each school to identify learners at risk of dropping out, and the creation of platforms for groups of lycées to coordinate available places in training or courses leading to jobs where there is recruitment.

Establish a leadership role for regions. The law of 2014 gives regions authority over vocational training, career advice and coordinating job support policies; managing training policies, implementing VET, including apprenticeships, for young people and adults; and supporting small and medium sized enterprises in their territory. This new law also created regional public training services and regional public guidance services.

Ease career transitions. The main aim of the new career guidance scheme (conseil en évolution professionnelle, CEP) is to offer support for personal career transitions for employed and unemployed people, along with, if needed, suitable training. The State, regions and social partners are responsible for this, together with the CPF.

Develop apprenticeship and guidance. Overall, the school system has been reformed for the ensuing years. Nine themes have been raised, including focusing on vocational (lycées to encourage ‘terminal courses’ to young people and school-based courses). There will also be a complete overhauling of the unemployment scheme, funded by a regional public service responsible for coordinating existing systems and providing genuine ‘second chance’ solutions.
Vocational education and training (VET) is, by tradition, central to France’s adopted pedagogic goals first appeared in the Middle Ages and apprenticeship in the 18th century. The development of formalising learning in the early 1970s was based on long-standing and highly diverse adult education practices that are the foundation of continuous education.

Initial vocational education and training (IVET)

VET at upper secondary level. On leaving lower secondary school (collège) at ISCED 2A, generally at the age of 15, students are steered either towards a general (ISCED 3A) and technological (ISCED 3B) upper secondary school (lycée), to prepare for a general (ISCED 3A) and technological (ISCED 3B) or private sector employees, public servants, self-employed workers). Training of job-seekers is managed by the regions, with central authorities (Ministry of Education and training) having overall responsibility for the different bodies that collect compulsory contributions allocated to a particular purpose, reflecting the desire to encourage companies to train their staff. The role is set out in the law, but some professional branches have applied rates above the legal minimum. Recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training. Another distinctive feature is the recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training, designed to promote social progress and reduce inequalities in access to training. The best known are the individual training leave (CIF) and the most recently introduced personal training account (compte personnel d’autoformation, CPA). The purpose of this measure is to support the use of an ‘individual right scheme, by making it more accessible to all (employed and unemployed) and more portable from one company to another.

Apprenticeship.

VET in France

Apprenticeship can be defined as a paid job with a formal agreement between an employer (private sector employee, public servants, self-employed workers). Training of job-seekers is managed by the regions, with central authorities (Ministry of Education and training) having overall responsibility for the different bodies that collect compulsory contributions allocated to a particular purpose, reflecting the desire to encourage companies to train their staff. The role is set out in the law, but some professional branches have applied rates above the legal minimum. Recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training. Another distinctive feature is the recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training, designed to promote social progress and reduce inequalities in access to training. The best known are the individual training leave (CIF) and the most recently introduced personal training account (compte personnel d’autoformation, CPA). The purpose of this measure is to support the use of an ‘individual right scheme, by making it more accessible to all (employed and unemployed) and more portable from one company to another.

VET in the French education and training system

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VET in the French education and training system

Technical and vocational courses within universities (tertiary level) provide general courses and partly by other ministries (including agriculture and financed largely by the Ministry of Education and training). However, access to employment and the training always open: in 2011, 51% of job-seekers is managed by the regions, with central authorities (Ministry of Education and training) having overall responsibility for the different bodies that collect compulsory contributions allocated to a particular purpose, reflecting the desire to encourage companies to train their staff. The role is set out in the law, but some professional branches have applied rates above the legal minimum. Recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training. Another distinctive feature is the recognition of ‘individual rights’ to training, designed to promote social progress and reduce inequalities in access to training. The best known are the individual training leave (CIF) and the most recently introduced personal training account (compte personnel d’autoformation, CPA). The purpose of this measure is to support the use of an ‘individual right scheme, by making it more accessible to all (employed and unemployed) and more portable from one company to another.

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Establish a leadership role for regions. The law of 2014 gives regions authority over vocational training, career advice and coordinating job support policies: managing training policies, implementing VET, including apprenticeships, for young people and adults, and supporting small and medium size enterprises in their territory. This new law also created regional public training services and regional public guidance services. The dynamic created by decentralisation is an essential element in general VET strategy; it contributes to more effective public action by bringing the decision-making and management bodies closer to local realities.

Easy career transitions. The main aim of the new career guidance scheme (conseil en évolution professionnelle, CEP) is to offer support for personal career transitions for employed and unemployed people, along with, if needed, suitable training. The State, regions and social partners are responsible for this, together with the CFP.

Develop apprenticeship and guidance. Overhaul of the school system has been announced for the coming years. Nine themes have been raised, including on focusing on vocational (lycées to encourage ‘technical schools and school-based courses’. There will also be a complete overhaul of the system of vocational education and training by a regional public service responsible for coordinating existing systems and providing genuine ‘second chance’ solutions.

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FRANCE

Education and training in figures

Further information


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## FRANCE

### Education and training in figures

#### Learners in upper secondary education enrolled in vocational and general programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Vocational</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>77.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Snapshot, tab data collection on education systems, date of extraction 31.3.2013.

#### Tertiary education by type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>ISCED 5B</th>
<th>ISCED 5A-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Snapshot calculations based on data from the national TACE survey, collection date of extraction 11.6.2013.

#### Lifelong learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey, 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 19.5.2014.

#### Early leavers from education and training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage of early leavers from education and training, 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection on education systems, date of extraction 30.5.2014.

### Further information


This spotlight is based on input from ReferNet France.