

France Relance: plan to relaunch activity, cohesion priority

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 FRANCE

Timeline

2020 Implementation 2021 Implementation 2022 Implementation
2023 Implementation 2024 Implementation

ID number 39506

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has been and continues to be a major health challenge for France. France Relance (France recovery plan) is turning the crisis into an opportunity, by investing in the most promising areas: those that will build the economy and create the jobs of tomorrow.

Among the three priorities of the plan (environment, competitiveness and cohesion), vocational training is part of the cohesion strand, as by 2030 France will have to be able to rely on a well-trained workforce. France Relance aims to maintain skills to prevent losing expertise in companies experiencing temporary difficulties, to provide new training opportunities for young people in the sectors of the future, as well as workplace integration programmes through commercial as well as non-profit sectors.

Objectives

The focus is on facing the challenge of avoiding an increase in inequalities. This recovery will, therefore, be a solidarity recovery, which makes it possible to:

- (a) support and assist young and vulnerable people, including people with disabilities, in securing employment;
- (b) safeguard jobs by strengthening vocational training.

Description

France Relance has a budget of EUR 100 billion in total over two years, out of which 15 billion is for vocational training. The main measures in terms of education and vocational training offered in both IVET and CVET (excluding exceptional employment subsidies) are:

Training young people in strategic and promising sectors

- (a) 100 000 qualifying training courses via the Regional skills investment pacts; with a revaluation of the remuneration for trainees undertaking professional training;
- (b) 16 000 health and care training courses for nurses and caregivers;
- (c) 15 000 skill assessments and training actions leading to certification on digital

- knowledge via a matching contribution to personal training account funds;
- (d) 35 000 places for young people aged 16 to 18 via the National Agency for Adult Vocational Training (*Agence nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes, AFPA*);
- (e) 30 000 additional places for training in higher education;
- (f) 27 000 additional places for recent secondary school graduates (*néo-bacheliers*) to support reorientation and for VET learners studying for an EQF level 3 CAP certificate to move towards a degree and joining the workforce.

Exceptional assistance for more apprenticeships

- (a) apprenticeship support for the first year (EUR 5 000 for minors and EUR 8 000 for adults) for any contract signed between 1 July 2020 and 28 February 2021. The support is allocated to companies regardless of their size (unconditionally for those under 250 employees) and sector for apprentices studying for a diploma or certificate up to the Master level;
- (b) support for apprenticeship schemes under a professionalisation contract (another type of alternating scheme in France) for the first year (EUR 5 000 for minors and EUR 8 000 for adults under the age of 30) for any contract signed between 1 July 2020 and 28 February 2021. The support is granted to companies regardless of their size (unconditionally for those under 250 employees) and their sector for apprentices studying for a diploma or a certificate up to master level or a professional qualification certificate (certification issued by a professional branch).

Strengthening the skills of the workforce

Increase (in the order of 400 000) in the training of active workers: support for companies and employees through the Pro A and CPF (personal training account) transition schemes;

- (a) *Pro A* enables retraining or promotion through alternating training for the least qualified employees, at the initiative of the employee or the employer. Training during working hours is funded by the employer. The list of eligible professional qualifications must be defined in an extended branch collective agreement (examples: paper/cardboard, jewellery, public works). Tuition fees and related expenses (transport/accommodation) are paid by the skill operator (OPCO) affiliated to a given branch (there are 11 OPCOs managing the financing of apprenticeship and other continuing training schemes). They may also pay the employee's remuneration, up to the hourly minimum wage;
- (b) *CPF de transition* (or *projet de transition professionnelle, PTP*), replacing the individual training leave, CIF) is a career transition training project that allows employees to take time off in order to complete a training course to qualify, progress or switch careers. It is open subject to conditions and is granted to the employer on request. The employee is remunerated throughout the training course.

Transforming the continuing training system: the digitisation of training (including new, innovative ways of teaching and learning) with the aim to adjust the training offer to the changing working conditions in different professions and new skill requirements. These investments meet an urgent need for social justice (equal access to training for workers), educational innovation, spatial planning (use of third places to bring training closer to the people) and economic performance (optimisation of technical platforms and increase in the number of beneficiaries without raising costs).

Preserving companies' human capital

- (a) companies from all sectors benefit from enhanced training assistance (FNE-formation) for employees in part-time or long-term part-time work. This last measure, which involves collective bargaining, is effective from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2022 (for the submission of the request, covering through 2025 in theory), following the emergency law of 17 June 2020;
- (b) the main innovation, *Collective transitions*, was jointly constructed with the social partners to allow employers to anticipate economic changes and support employees to retrain without relocating. At the end of their training, the employee moves towards a job that is in line with the local market needs, while avoiding a period of unemployment. The State finances all or part of the retraining, depending on the size

of the company. 100% of the remuneration and training of employees is paid for micro-enterprises and SMEs, 75% for companies with 300 to 100 employees and 40% for companies with more than 1 000 employees.

Assessing the recovery plan

A dashboard of projects in the territories and monitoring indicators will be published regularly. In the interests of transparency, the Prime Minister has undertaken to report to Parliament on the implementation of the recovery plan every two months. The implementation of the recovery plan requires a unique budgetary mission (2021-22), led by the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery.

2020 Implementation

The plan was launched on 3 September 2020. It was created in consultation with all stakeholders in the regions, parliamentarians, social partners, representatives of industrial sectors, the associative sector and non-governmental organisations, French, European and international economists, and European partners.

To set a monitoring structure, at national level, the following have been put in place:

- (a) a follow-up committee chaired by the Prime Minister, which brings together parliamentarians, social partners, representatives of local authorities, NGOs and civil society, economists and government services;
- (b) a follow-up steering committee chaired by the Minister of the Economy, Finance and the Recovery (weekly);
- (c) an inter-ministerial committee, chaired by the Prime Minister (half-yearly);
- (d) regional monitoring committees at the local level;
- (e) an employment-training committee (Ministry of Labour and Regions of France).

The Ministry of Labour launched the first call for expressions of interest for the *Collective transitions* training actions. The call resulted in around 100 initiatives from various players (including local authorities and professional organisations).

2021 Implementation

The measures are being rolled out.

2022 Implementation

From 2022 this policy development is part of the national implementation plan (NIP), measure 'Anticipating and facilitating ecological and digital transitions', actions: 'Top-up of the personal training account for training in strategic sectors' and 'Aid for retraining'.

France Relance's second assessment committee report, published at the end of December 2022, provides a progress report on the impact of the French recovery plan, indicating an 89% take-up rate by August 2022.

This report highlights the complexities associated with evaluating a EUR 100 billion plan, which includes more than a hundred measures, especially in a context where not all the measures have been fully implemented

In 2021, more than 2.6 million individuals benefited from the main schemes of the '1 young person, 1 solution' plan (compared with 1.5 million in 2019), of which 727 000 were engaged in apprenticeships and 306 000 were beneficiaries of the youth recruitment assistance scheme. (cf. Measure '1 young person, 1 solution - youth plan').

Over the period from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2022, when the national employment fund for training *Fonds national pour l'emploi FNE-formation* received funding from the 'Recovery Plan' budget supplemented by funds aimed at reducing recruitment difficulties, it provided assistance to 695 000 employees engaged in a training course or a career development programme. With regard to the types of employees who

benefited, the report notes that managers and engineers were over-represented, although employees, technicians and supervisors made up 34% and 20% of trainees respectively. The majority of beneficiaries were also men (62%). These figures need to be analysed in the light of the fact that most of the aid was directed at the industrial sector.

A February 2022 ministerial instruction has simplified access to the *Collective Transitions* scheme for companies with less than 300 employees and opened this scheme to companies that provide mobility leave.

2023 Implementation

The France Relance programme continues to be extended, incorporating enhancements to ensure the sustained impact and adaptability of its initiatives in response to evolving economic and environmental priorities.

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) has been updated to include a new chapter under the REPowerEU initiative, aimed at strengthening France's resilience in energy independence and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. This integration addresses recent European Union guidelines for reinforcing sustainable energy resources, aligning with the broader goals of the France Relance strategy. France's involvement in the REPowerEU initiative directly impacts VET policies by emphasizing the development of skills needed for the green transition. As the country accelerates efforts to strengthen energy independence and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, there is a growing demand for a workforce trained in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable infrastructure. The integration of REPowerEU into the National Recovery and Resilience Plan PNRR reinforces the role of VET by promoting training programmes in sectors crucial to the energy transition, such as solar and wind energy, electric mobility, and energy-efficient construction. It also supports upskilling and reskilling initiatives for workers in traditional energy sectors, ensuring they can transition to new, sustainable job opportunities.

2024 Implementation

In January 2024, the Evaluation committee of the national France Relance plan published its final report, which includes an assessment of the macroeconomic impact of the plan as a whole and, in the second part, examines various specific measures.

The new Regional Skills Investment Pact cycle 2024-27 extend the objectives of the 2019-23 cycle, building on the success in scaling up training initiatives for job seekers and modernising training systems. These updated pacts now incorporate regional specifics, addressing local needs, employer demands, labour market characteristics, and previously achieved outcomes. The target groups have been expanded to include job-seeking youth under 26 who have left education without completing their studies, either upper secondary studies and at most, undergraduate two-year programmes (Bac+2).

The extension of the apprenticeship recruitment aid until 31 December 2024 has been approved to further stimulate the engagement of young people in training.

The financial support for training from the National Employment Fund (FNE Formation) 2024 now supports training programmes aligned with priorities such as the ecological, agricultural, and digital transitions, as well as demographic shifts. The FNE Formation has also been allocated to meet the training needs associated with major events, including the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2024 WorldSkills competitions.

The pre-apprenticeship programme was concluded on 31 December 2024, to be succeeded by a new call for projects, O2R, aimed at youth outreach and engagement (*Offre de repérage et de remobilisation, O2R*).

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Economy, Finance and Recovery
- Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation
- Ministry of Labour, Employment and Professional Integration (until 2022)
- Ministry of Labour, Full Employment and Inclusion

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
 Young people (15-29 years old)
 Unemployed and jobseekers

Entities providing VET

Companies
 Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
 Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats
 Integrating digital skills and competences in VET curricula and programmes
 Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies
 Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs
 Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

European priorities in VET

VET Recommendation

VET agile in adapting to labour market challenges

Flexibility and progression opportunities at the core of VET

VET as a driver for innovation and growth preparing for digital and green transitions and occupations in high demand

VET as an attractive choice based on modern and digitalised provision of training and skills

VET promoting equality of opportunities

Osnabrück Declaration

Resilience and excellence through quality, inclusive and flexible VET

Establishing a new lifelong learning culture - relevance of continuing VET and digitalisation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Plan France relaunch - Ministry of labour](#)

[Career transition retraining scheme 'CPF de transition'](#)

[France Stratégie, 2022 - The France Relance Plan Assessment Committee - Second Report](#)

[Update of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan \(PNRR\) to incorporate a REPowerEU chapter | Directorate General of the Treasury \(economie.gouv.fr\)](#)

[Final report of the Evaluation Committee of the national France Relance plan](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Anticipating and facilitating the ecological transition

As part of the 2016 State-Regions partnership agreement, in September 2017, 500 new vocational training courses were introduced across VET upper secondary schools (*lycées professionnels*) with a strong emphasis on ecological transition.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

1 young person, 1 solution - youth plan

The total budget of the youth plan is EUR 6.7 billion, with measures to support young

people aged 16-25 after the COVID-19 crisis. It mobilises a set of tools: hiring assistance, training, support, financial assistance for struggling young people, etc. to respond to different situations.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2021 Completed

Measures attracting learners back to education and training

Any student who, at the end of compulsory schooling, has not attained a level of training recognised by a national diploma or a professional qualification registered and classified at or above level 3 of the national register of professional qualifications (RNCP) must be able to pursue studies to

 FRANCE

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Reinforcing access for all to lifelong learning (the 2018 law)

The 2018 Law for the freedom to choose one's professional future provides for:

 FRANCE

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

CVET

2024 Implementation

Anticipating and facilitating the digital transition

Within the framework of the 2016 State-Regions partnership agreement, 500 new training courses are offered in VET upper secondary schools (*lycées professionnels*) since September 2017.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Promoting equalities and inclusiveness

Within the framework of 2016 partnership agreement between the State and the regions to support employment and social inclusion, a strategy was set out to extend the range of qualifications that can be gained through apprenticeship.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Training actions for jobseekers

In January 2016, the government launched a plan to create 500 000 training places for jobseekers (*Plan 500 000 formations pour demandeurs d'emploi*).

 FRANCE

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2024 Implementation

Developing apprenticeship

Social partners have been involved in the design of the reform, along with regional authorities, chambers of commerce, and experts. Stakeholder consultation lasted from November 2017 to January 2018.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

“ … ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). France Relance: plan to relaunch activity, cohesion priority: France. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/39506>