

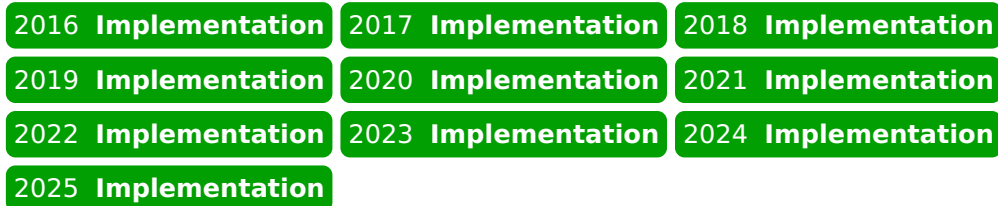
# Tackling illiteracy in work situations

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 FRANCE

## Timeline



ID number 28239

## Background

According to an INSEE survey in 2011-12, six million people were experiencing difficulties mastering the French language, half of whom were in the labour market. Difficulties in reading, writing and understanding simple messages in everyday life can hinder access to employment, professionalisation and qualification. They can also be an obstacle to employee mobility and job retention.

## Objectives

The aim is to combat illiteracy and promote proficiency in the French language in three ways: partnerships between the State and local authorities, social partners, public institutions and the voluntary sector; preventative actions for those not subject to compulsory schooling and specific actions within the remit of vocational training policies; State assistance for the pooling of teaching resources and best practice.

## Description

In 2015, social partners created a professional certificate which recognises basic knowledge and skills needed for the workplace (*Certificat de connaissances et de compétences professionnelles*). To enhance training for illiterate individuals seeking to earn this certificate, nationally referred to as Cléa, the national agency for literacy (*Agence nationale de lutte contre l'illettrisme*, ANLCI) created a correspondence chart. This chart effectively links the competences from the ANLCI framework with those in the Cléa framework, thereby improving the clarity and accessibility of training pathways for learners. In 2016, ANLCI developed a key competences framework for work situations. The framework proposes a list of key competences which can be used to describe work situations and to design training programmes.

 2016 Implementation

## 2017 Implementation

An interministerial working group on the French language for social cohesion (*Délégation interministérielle à la langue française pour la cohésion sociale*) was set up in 2017. It contributed to the government's major undertakings (e.g. the Investment in skills plan), mobilised national-level players in connection with the issues of illiteracy and digital illiteracy, coordinated initiatives across the territories and carried out awareness-raising initiatives aimed at the general public. It was targeted at groups having difficulties in learning French.

## 2018 Implementation

## 2019 Implementation

The interministerial working group on the French language for social cohesion completed its work in February 2019.

The role of the national agency for literacy, a public interest group (GIP), was renewed and strengthened in 2019 to respond better to the needs identified by the national committee against illiteracy (*mission relative à la lutte contre l'illettrisme*).

## 2020 Implementation

The measures related to the PD are operational and run as regular practices.

## 2021 Implementation

The General Assembly of the public interest group ANLCI adopted an action programme in December 2021. One line of action refers to the production of a table of correspondence highlighting interconnections between the existing reference frameworks in place, developed and recognised at national and European levels:

- (a) the European framework of key competences;
- (b) the European reference framework of digital competences
- (c) the common base of knowledge, competences and culture (*socle commun de connaissances, de compétences et de culture*);
- (d) the set of basic professional knowledge and competences (*socle de connaissances et compétences, CléA and CléA numérique*);
- (e) the reference framework of key competences in professional situations (*référentiel des compétences clés en situation professionnelle, RCCSP*) and the national reference framework (*Cadre national de référence*), both developed by ANLCI.

## 2022 Implementation

From 2022 this policy development is part of the national implementation plan (NIP) under 'Measure Contributing to equal opportunities in all areas', Action: 'the policy to combat illiteracy'.

The national agency for literacy (*Agence nationale de lutte contre l'illettrisme, ANLCI*), which also works on digital illiteracy, launched a number of ambitious projects in 2022: recruitment of regional project managers in all regions, including in French overseas territories; the implementation of a tool to detect the risk of digital illiteracy in companies (EV@GILL) the introduction of a tool to detect digital illiteracy among young people, jobseekers and employees (EVA), which is based on gamification approach; and the launch of a scheme to tackle digital illiteracy (DUPLEX).

ANLCI, in partnership with the association Certif'Pro and the National association of HR Directors ("*Association Nationale des Directeurs de Ressources Humaines*", ANDRH) and the association Certif'Pro, has published a plea to combat illiteracy in companies. The plea urges to:

- (a) enhancing awareness of the reading problem in corporate environments;
- (b) supporting and equipping companies in their design and implementation plans against illiteracy;
- (c) securing budget for supporting actions for employees training in order to obtain the CléA certificate or to become more autonomous in their work.

### 2023 Implementation

In 2023, the ANLCI agency introduced a new tool, *Les Incontournables*, a resource kit aimed at companies, sectoral skills operators (OPCOs), and training organisations. This tool is designed to guide employees facing illiteracy towards training opportunities, providing a framework for a secure, supportive training path.

Additionally, ANLCI established a National Observatory of Illiteracy and Illectronism, a centralised body for reliable data on illiteracy that promotes a regionalised approach. This observatory will correlate illiteracy indicators with socioeconomic and geographical variables to identify high-risk zones and conduct regular data analysis based on the latest INSEE (National Statistical Office) surveys. It will also act as a coordinating hub for research on basic skills, ensuring that stakeholders have up-to-date evidence to inform targeted intervention strategies.

### 2024 Implementation

In April 2024, INSEE released findings from the Lifelong Learning Survey, revealing that 4% of adults aged 18 to 64 who began their schooling in France are considered to be in a situation of illiteracy—equivalent to approximately 1.4 million individuals. While the 2011 survey indicated a 7% illiteracy rate, methodological and scope differences between the two studies make direct comparison challenging. These updated figures underscore the ongoing need for tailored interventions, as highlighted by the national agency for literacy's renewed efforts to monitor and address literacy challenges across France.

The cooperative *La Mednum* published the second edition of the Digital Inclusion Observatory. Based on 400 contributions from digital-mediation actors and covering 304 organisations, the survey provides an overview of the sector in 2024. It highlights the diversity of actions supporting people who struggle with digital uses, including in workplace contexts. The report notes the growing role of local authorities and proposes fourteen recommendations to strengthen mediators' skills and resources when assisting adults facing illiteracy or digital exclusion.

### 2025 Implementation

The general assembly of the National Agency for Combating Illiteracy (*Agence nationale de lutte contre l'illettrisme - ANLCI*) adopted new strategic orientations for 2025–30 and a 2025–26 work programme. Strategic axis No 4 specifically targets the world of work.

Planned actions include promoting pathways out of illiteracy for employees leading to a vocational qualification (such as *CléA*, aimed at low-qualified adults), through targeted communication campaigns and mobilisation of sectoral joint bodies and the skills operators (*Opérateurs de compétences, Opco*).

## Bodies responsible

- National agency for literacy (ANLCI)

## Target group

Learners

Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
Adult learners  
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)  
Unemployed and jobseekers  
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment  
Low-skilled/qualified persons  
Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

### **Entities providing VET**

Companies  
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)  
VET providers (all kinds)

## **Thematic categories**

### **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Acquiring key competences

### **Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications**

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

### **Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation**

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

## **European priorities in VET**

### **VET Recommendation**

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

VET promoting equality of opportunities

### **Osnabrück Declaration**

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

## **Subsystem**

CVET

## **Further reading**

[ANLCI - Key competences framework for work situations](#)

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[Table of correspondence between the reference framework of key competences in professional situations and the reference framework of key professional knowledge and skills](#)

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[Illiteracy risk detection tool for businesses - EvV@GILL](#)

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[Tool for detecting illiteracy \(among young people, jobseekers and employees\) - EVA](#)

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[DUPLEX anti-digital illiteracy scheme](#)

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[ANLCI, Certif\\*Pro and ANDRH launch a campaign to combat illiteracy in the workplace](#)

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[ANLCI Review 2022](#)

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[Essential Steps: Training Employees Facing Illiteracy](#)

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[New Illiteracy Figures in France - 2024](#)

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[La Mednum. \(2024, September\). Digital inclusion observatory 2024 \[Observatoire de l'inclusion numerique 2024\]. Paris](#)

## Related policy developments

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### 2025 Implementation

#### CléA certificates for developing and assessing key competences of work force

In 2015, the social partners through the national cross-sector jobs and training committee (*Comité interprofessionnel pour l'emploi et la formation, COPANEF*) created the CléA certificate (*Certificat de connaissances et de compétences professionnelles, CléA*) for adults willing to

 FRANCE

##### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

##### Subsystem

CVET

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### 2025 Implementation

#### Training actions in work situations (AFEST)

In July 2018, a report was published detailing the results of a pilot initiative launched in 2015 that explored new approaches for work-based learning through scheduled and guided on-the-job training.

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28239>