

Promoting equalities and inclusiveness

POLICY DEVELOPMENT **STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN**  FRANCE

Timeline

2016 **Approved/Agreed** 2017 **Implementation** 2018 **Implementation**
2019 **Implementation** 2020 **Implementation** 2021 **Implementation**
2022 **Implementation** 2023 **Implementation** 2024 **Implementation**
2025 **Implementation**

ID number 28225

Objectives

The aim is to support NEETS and low-qualified young people in access to training and to acquire a qualification at EQF levels 3 and 4 and contribute to equality of opportunity.

Description

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. The aim is to support NEETS and low-qualified young people in access to training and acquire a qualification at EQF levels 3 and 4. At least 11 sectors have expressed interest in the approach, including the construction, temporary work, metalwork, plastics and do-it-yourself sectors.

Following the 2016 Labour Law, young people who left education and training without any qualifications are also entitled to traineeships, which gives them the right to a period of training that leads to a qualification. Funding is ensured by regional authorities.

Since 1 January 2017, the Youth guarantee, which was piloted at local level since 2013, is available across the country and enshrined in the French labour code. It is targeted at the less qualified young people (16-25) not in education, employment or training (NEETs) at risk of exclusion from the labour market.

Equality between girls and boys is based on education against stereotypical representations, support for paths to success and career choices that promote diversity, sex education and preventing and fighting against sexist and sexual violence.

2016 Approved/Agreed
2017 Implementation
2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

In 2019, the implementation continued.

2020 Implementation

The open school system in upper secondary VET – summer school courses for VET learners (*L'Été du pro*).

Among upper secondary school learners, those in VET schools are a priority audience due to the great difficulty of completing practical vocational courses and the dropout rate observed during the lockdown period. Proposed during the 2020 summer holidays, the scheme has targeted specifically VET learners who:

- (a) were enrolled in a vocational training programme in 2019/20, with the aim of strengthening vocational and/or general skills and competences;
- (b) had not obtained their vocational qualification at the June 2020 examination session and for whom the examination panel suggested they attend the September 2020 session;
- (c) were at the end of their training pathway and considering further training for professional integration (including higher education programmes linked to the trades and qualifications campuses or an apprenticeship contract);
- (d) wished to discover a new professional sector within the 'reorientation project' scheme or to benefit from a career planning module (introduction to professions); in particular, those upper secondary VET learners in the first year of studies.

VET learners were hosted in their school of origin or in a school offering access to the technical facilities necessary for their initial training. The trades and qualifications campuses were able to facilitate this network organisation and, where necessary, offer up their accommodation capacity (boarding school, residence).

2021 Implementation

The report of the youth policy guidance council on the development of the Youth Guarantee was submitted on 7 January 2021 to the Minister for Labour, Employment and Integration and to the Secretary of State for Youth and Engagement by the President of the Youth Integration Commission of the guidance council. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss the outline of a universal Youth Guarantee (*Garantie Jeunes Universelle*). As part of the '1 young person, 1 solution' measure of the recovery plan, the government is increasing the financial resources allocated to the Youth Guarantee. The number of potential beneficiaries increased to 200 000 accompanied young people in 2021.

The scheme 'Education Cities' (*Cités Educatives*), is a system created from initiatives carried out on the ground by local elected officials, State services and associations (Law 1901). It aims to intensify the educational care of children from the age of three, and to young adults aged up to 25, before, during and after school. The *Cité Educative* label is part of the government roadmap for the development of priority areas (urban policy) led by the Ministry of Territorial Cohesion. Altogether, 126 *Cités Educatives* have already been selected (80 in 2019 and 24 in 2020); they will serve more than 700 000 children and young people aged 3 to 24, i.e. a third of young people who live in the localities concerned. The target is to reach 200 *Cités Educatives* by 2022. They represent an unprecedented State investment of EUR 230 million over the period 2019-22.

A training obligation for young people aged 16 to 18, instituted by the 2019 Law for a School of Trust, is being rolled out with the implementation of a set of dedicated schemes:

The *Promo 16.18* programme entrusted to the National agency for adult vocational training (*Agence nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes, AFPA*) is financed by *France Relance* and integrated into the *1 young person, 1 solution youth plan*. The scheme will allow 35 000 young people to benefit from support during 2021.

It targets those aged 16 to 18, qualified or not, who have dropped out of school and are not in employment or in education and training. An interministerial order and instruction (Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration, Ministry of Solidarity and Health) complete the existing legislative and regulatory framework. The training obligation is fulfilled when the young person does one of the following: continues his or her education in a public or private education establishment; follows an apprenticeship (in an apprenticeship training centre or as an intern); holds a job or performs a civic service; benefits from a system offering support or social and professional integration:

- (a) a support scheme of 13 weeks is offered to young people to establish a 'practical, professional and social integration plan' to access employment, to engage in one of the integration solutions (apprenticeship, civic service, Youth Guarantee) financed by the '1 young person, 1 solution plan' or to resume a school course;
- (b) the *Nouvelles Chances* website and a free telephone platform developed by ONISEP (the National Office for Information on Curricula and Professions) provide information on all the mechanisms that can be mobilised to comply with the training obligation for 16–18-year-olds.

Social utility missions for young people in search of meaning: these are enacted as part of the 1 young person, 1 solution youth plan. 100 000 additional civil service missions are being created and, in total, 245 000 missions are foreseen in 2021 to enable young people to engage with charities. The civil service can provide initial experience to young people who wish to engage with society. This is an opportunity to support a useful cause while acquiring experience that has value in the labour market.

The open school system for upper secondary VET learners (summer school courses, *L'Été du pro*) was renewed in 2020/21.

2022 Implementation

On the occasion of the Interministerial Committee of the Cities, the Prime Minister announced on January 2022, the *Cités Educatives* certification for 74 new territories, as well as the expansion of 8 others.

Including the already existing ones, that brings the total to 200.

At the start of the 2022 school year, nearly one million children and young people have benefited from this approach, which is an alliance of educational players in an urban priority area. These players include parents, national and local authorities, associations, citizens, deployed around 475 middle schools across the region.

The Finance Act of 30 December 2021 for 2022 created the youth engagement contract (*contrat engagement jeune*) starting from 1 March 2022. It replaces and improves the earlier youth guarantee scheme integrated within the PACEA contractualised support scheme (*parcours contractualisé d'accompagnement vers l'emploi et l'autonomie*). The youth engagement contract targets young NEETs 16 to 25 (up to 30 for people with disabilities) willing to sign up to an intensive support programme for career planning and employment. Its duration varies between of six to 12 months, or up to 18 months in exceptional cases. Beneficiaries follow a 15- to 20-hour per week programme with systematic job start activities: such as internships in a company, preparation for entering an apprenticeship, civic service. They receive personalised support by a counsellor throughout the programme, as well as financial allocation of up to EUR 500 per month.

The Summer of the pro (*L'été du Pro*) scheme targets vocational high school students wishing to discover a new professional sector as part of a reorientation or discovery of professions, while benefiting from outings and more fun activities allowing them to enjoy their summer. It also enables middle school students to discover the different trades open to them on their vocational path.

With a view to promoting equality of opportunity, mentoring in vocational schools is currently implemented by means of three national schemes: the '*Pathways to success*'

(Cordées de la réussite), '1 young person, 1 mentor' and 'P-TECH'.

Pathways to success (Corées de la réussite):

The aim of this scheme is to make career guidance a genuine instrument for promoting equality of opportunity by providing continuous support from Year nine to the end of secondary school, and sometimes beyond. The *Cordées de la réussite* scheme is based on partnerships between institutions of higher education and linked secondary schools.

Intended first and foremost for students enrolled in priority schools or from priority city districts (QPVs), secondary school students from rural and isolated areas and professional secondary school students, 'Pathways to success' (*Cordées de la réussite*) are designed to combat lack of self-confidence and to foster pupils' academic ambitions.

A comprehensive programme of support is available to students who wish to participate, involving a range of options. These include individual support (student tutoring, mentored by a professional) as well as collective social and cultural initiatives (visits to professional facilities and introductions to different sectors, visits to museums, public speaking, etc.). Students receive support over several years.

In 2021-2022, 14 873 vocational secondary school students received support under this scheme.

1 young person, 1 mentor (Un jeune, un mentor):

The '*1 young person, 1 mentor*' scheme was announced by the French President on 1 March 2021. Designed to complement the *1 young person, 1 solution* scheme, it aims to increase the number of young people who receive support from a more senior mentor (a student, a practising professional or a young retiree) in the course of their schooling, when making career planning decisions or when entering the labour market. The mentor is available for a few hours a month to put his or her experience and networks at the student's disposal, and thus helps to combat the lack of information that often affects young people from low-income backgrounds. As part of this process, the government has launched three annual calls for proposals to support new mentoring projects in France. The focus is on helping the most vulnerable: young people in priority urban areas or in remote rural areas, etc. The projects involve all levels of the education system, including vocational students.

P-Tech:

Mentoring for vocational secondary school pupils is also being promoted through a special programme called 'P-Tech', which has been piloted by the Ministry of Education since 2019, in conjunction with IBM, Orange, BNP and several other companies that have joined the scheme: the aim of the programme is to provide mentoring by company employees for students studying for a Vocational Baccalaureate, with a view to assisting them in developing digital and cross-cutting skills.

Various measures have been taken to promote equality of opportunity for young people, including measures at all levels of the education system, specific schemes for students in vocational education and programmes for young people between the ages of 16 and 18.

For instance, equality between girls and boys. In 2018, the French President announced that equality between women and men would be a "major national priority" during his five-year term. At the inter-ministerial committee meeting of 8 March 2018, key measures were identified in order to foster and promote a culture of equality: appointment of an 'Equality Officer' in each school; training of the entire educational community in the deconstruction of prejudices and the prevention of bullying and gender-based and sexual violence; providing a parent toolkit including resources related to gender equality, Internet and digital use and the fight against cyber-bullying; introducing gender balance in student representative bodies, promoting

gender diversity in courses and professions from secondary school onwards as part of student guidance schemes. In addition, an Equality for Girls and Boys label for educational institutions was created and described in a circular of 10 March 2022 published in the Official Bulletin no. 11 of 17 March 2022: it is intended to make equality measures undertaken or planned in schools easier to understand as well as more consistent, both internally and externally. The label is applicable to all types of educational institutions, including vocational secondary schools.

The 'Sexist behaviour and sexual violence' guide is intended for secondary school education teams and is designed to help them prevent and act in situations related to sexist behaviour, sexual violence, as well as to their consequences.

As part of the Skills Investment Plan, 11 projects have been selected in the latest call for proposals 'Identifying and engaging with overlooked groups'. The aim is to explore new strategies for "reaching out" and identifying young people who are unqualified or without employment in the places where they can be found, through 'digital outreach campaigns': social networks, online gaming platforms, music and video distribution platforms.

2023 Implementation

The initiative to develop social diversity and ensure equal opportunities continues with a proactive policy aimed at strengthening social mix in lower and upper secondary schools. This approach reaffirms the priority given to school pupils coming from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds: they receive a financial aid to support their education and are excepted from school zoning regulations, which enables them to enrol in schools outside their designated geographical area, in institutions that can offer better resources, higher academic performance, or stronger industry partnerships in VET. The policy also applies to upper secondary VET schools, ensuring that those learners from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to institutions with high-quality vocational training, strong links to employers, and enhanced career guidance. This helps bridge social gaps and increases opportunities for further studies or employment. To achieve these goals, three priority axes have been established:

- (a) to guarantee equal opportunities by promoting social and school diversity;
- (b) to act on student assignments in lower and upper secondary schools;
- (c) to enrich the training provision available in the least favoured institutions.

Support for guidance is also enhanced throughout secondary education for all learners, from lower secondary to upper secondary (general, technological and vocational) programmes. This initiative aims to provide equal access to information about careers and training programmes, enabling school learners to make ambitious and informed choices. Central to these efforts are the promotion of gender equality, the fight against geographical determinism, and the prevention of social stereotypes related to disability or gender.

Over 95% of participating institutions in the *Cordées de la réussite* career guidance programme in schools reported continuing their involvement in 2023/24.

A mentoring plan is in place supporting 160 000 young people through associations, which are funded by the State to implement mentoring programmes. The initiative targets school learners from disadvantaged background by providing personalised guidance, motivation, and professional networking opportunities. It aims at reducing the impact of social and geographical determinism, supporting learners at risk of dropping out, and promoting equal access to career opportunities. By pairing students with mentors from various professional backgrounds, the programme fosters aspirations, self-confidence, and smoother transitions into further education or employment, particularly for VET learners. Notably, 90% of participants expressed satisfaction with the mentoring they received.

L'été du pro, an 'open school' scheme for upper secondary VET learners is aimed particular at learners:

- (a) enrolled in a vocational course in 2023/24 with the aim of improving their vocational and/or general skills and competences;
- (b) who did not obtain their vocational diploma in the June session and who must sit the September session;
- (c) who are at the end of a vocational pathway, with a view to preparing for employment, further studies, including higher education programmes in conjunction with the Campuses for trades and qualifications, or an apprenticeship contract;
- (d) wishing to be informed about different occupations; possibly as part of a planned career change, and in particular, those who have completed a vocational preparatory course (*troisième prépa métier*) in lower secondary.

In line with the VET schools reform, as from 2023/24, a new internship monthly allowance has been introduced for all upper secondary VET learners, to motivate and reward student engagement. The amounts vary based on the year of study (EUR 50 per week in the first year of the CAP (EQF level 3) and second year of the Bac-pro (EQF level 4) programmes; EUR 75 per week in the second year of CAP and first year of Bac-pro programmes and EUR 100 in the final year of Bac-pro).

Three new schemes aim to prevent the risk of early leaving from education and training during and after upper secondary education:

- (a) all rights open (*parcours tous droits ouverts*): this new coordinated approach to the prevention of early school leaving is implemented since 2023/24 to support the work of educational and teaching teams with the most vulnerable pupils, with priority being given to those in VET schools. The approach is based on the mobilisation of all local players involved in career guidance, support, professional integration and training schemes for young people.
- (b) a new 4-month school-based programme, *Ambition emploi*, designed to secure access to employment or further studies for all VET learners who have just completed their school programme. During the programme young people retain their pupil status and receive tailored-made support within the school in conjunction with local public employment services;
- (c) the *Parcours de consolidation en BTS - voie professionnelle* programme is created to support the success of vocational baccalaureate holders continuing their studies at tertiary level. It is designed for those preparing the advanced technician's certificate (BTS, EQF 5 level), which is the most common option for continuing studies. The programme provides personalised support and, if necessary, an additional year of preparation for the BTS diploma in 3 years instead of 2. Piloted in 2022/23, it is being mainstreamed across the board as from 2024/25.

2024 Implementation

A number of measures have been running in 2024 with the aim to developing a social mix to guarantee equal opportunities:

- (a) as part of the national objective to increase social diversity in schools by 20%, local education authorities, *Académies*, are called upon to develop an action plan in cooperation with local authorities and devise all necessary support measures: providing more educational options and incentives, covering school transportation costs, supporting learners and engaging in dialogue with families; as well as improving the coordination of existing programmes;
- (b) the ongoing *Cordées de la réussite* programme is a major initiative aimed at promoting equal opportunities, offering continuous support to young learners from grade 4 up to graduation from upper secondary. The programme is designed to empower learners to progressively build their individual path to success, whether through higher education or professional integration. The National Week of *Cordées de la réussite* took place from 15 to 20 January 2024 with participation of all schools and higher education institutions involved in the initiative, as well as various partners operating in urban and rural areas. The event highlighted the testimonials of benefiting students, mentoring students, and teaching teams, showcasing the diversity of support actions offered;

- (c) the mentoring initiative, One young person, one mentor, is implemented in the academic year 2024/25, tailored to specific training specialities for VET learners, with a focus on the fields of mobility, energy, and digital technology.
- (d) the summer support programme, *les vacances apprenantes*, took place in 2024 allowing school-age learners from kindergarten through upper secondary (VET) to benefit from academic support and educational activities, supervised by professionals. Within the initiative, learners participating in the open school programme l'été du Pro targeting those in the vocational programmes, receive additional learning opportunities to strengthen their VET and general skills and support in case they need to retake exams and continue to employment or further studies.

In 2024/24, a new support scheme in grade 10 (*classe prépa seconde*) is established in at least one upper secondary school (whether general, technological, or vocational) per department. Participation is voluntary, as the class is intended for lower secondary graduates who do not possess the end of lower secondary national diploma (*Diplôme national du brevet*, DNB; holding the DNB is not a prerequisite to continue studying). During grade 10 (which is a non-renewable academic year), VET learners have the possibility to reinforce knowledge acquired in the previous learning cycle (*Cycle 4*, in French) and consolidate the 'common core of knowledge, skills, and culture' before advancing to grade 11. VET learners entering 3-year vocational baccalaureate programmes through a *classe prépa seconde* get extra support and guidance to secure their career choice (job specialisation programme) and boost their confidence by participating in innovative projects.

A study by the Labour Economics and Sociology Laboratory (LEST, Aix-Marseille University) conducted as part of the Investment in Skills Plan analyses how Second Chance Schools (*Écoles de la deuxième chance*, E2C) operate and their effects. Based on qualitative fieldwork at seven sites, the report highlights the decisive role of individualised support and tailored pedagogy in learner success. By combining centre-based training with company placements, E2Cs provide a flexible learning environment that helps young people without qualifications rebuild confidence and develop transferable skills. The study emphasised the need to balance institutional requirements with personalised support, and the importance of teamwork between trainers and employer-relations staff to remove barriers to employment and promote lasting inclusion of disadvantaged youth.

2025 Implementation

On 16 July, the government presented its youth employment strategy to the National Employment Committee (CNE). Proposed measures aim to support integration and prevent dropout, including the creation of 50 000 alternating training places. The strategy built on the *1 young person, 1 solution* youth plan and was scheduled for debate before finalisation in autumn. Key proposals included three axes:

- Guidance and training towards in-demand occupations;
- Stronger links between young people and enterprises;
- Prevention of dropouts and tailored support for vulnerable youth.

Most measures did not require regulatory changes. Among the proposals were:

- Developing, over two years, 50 000 one-year work-study specialisation programmes at entry qualification levels in partnership with sectoral branches;
- Increasing budgets for youth-integration structures (*EPIDE*, *E2C* and production schools);
- Enhancing *InserJeunes* and *InserSup* data systems;
- Generalising the *Avenir Pro* pilot for vocational upper secondary learners;
- Targeting mentoring towards priority groups (young people with disabilities or those under child-protection services).

Bodies responsible

- Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research
- Ministry of Labour, Full Employment and Inclusion
- Ministry of Labour, Employment and Professional Integration (until 2022)
- Ministry of National Education and Youth (until 2024)
- Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports (from 2020 till 2022)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
 Young people (15-29 years old)
 Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
 Learners with migrant background, including refugees
 Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers
 Learners with disabilities
 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

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses
 Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies
 Lifelong guidance
 Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Law No 2016-1088 of 8 August 2016 on labour, modernisation of social dialogue and securing career paths. Article 39 of Law No 2016-1088 of 8 August 2016, amending article L. 6323-7 of the Labour Code](#)

[Summer school courses for VET learners \(L'Ete du pro\)](#)

[Youth Policy Guidance Council \(2020\), report on the development of the Youth guarantee](#)

[Towards a 'universal' Youth guarantee](#)

[The Cites Educatives national project](#)

[Decree No 2020-978 of 5 August 2020 relating to the training obligation for 16-18-year-olds](#)

[Decree No 2020-978 of 5 August 2020 relating to the training obligation for 16-18-year-olds](#)

[Nouvelles Chances website](#)

[Ministry of Labour/the youth engagement contract](#)

[Decree No 2022-199 of 18 February 2022 on the youth engagement contract](#)

[Ministry of National Education and Youth, 2022 - The Summer of the pro \(L'ete du Pro\) / "Let's build a committed education system, together !", pages 52](#)

[Ministry of National Education and Youth, Mentoring in Vocational High Schools](#)

[Ministry of National Education and Youth - Parent toolkit including resources related to gender equality, Internet and digital use and the fight against cyber-bullying](#)

[Circular of 10 March 2022 / Equality for Girls and Boys label for educational institutions](#)

[Ministry of National Education and Youth, Guide for Gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence](#)

[The Challenges of Initial Guidance](#)

[The "Cordees de la Reussite" Program](#)

[Open School Charter](#)

[Internship Allowance for Vocational High Schools](#)

[Learning Holidays - Open School Summer 2024](#)

[Perez, P.; Joutard, X.; Sabuco, P.; Laboratoire d'economie et de sociologie du travail \(LEST\). \(2024, December\).](#)

Related policy developments

2025 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

2025 Implementation

France Relance: plan to relaunch activity, cohesion priority

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:

 FRANCE

Type of development

Strategy/Action
plan

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2016 Approved/Agreed

Common base of knowledge, competences and culture

In 2016-17, a 'common base of knowledge, competences and culture', to be acquired by all learners, was defined.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

2025 Implementation

Transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary VET

A circular from the Ministry of Education issued in March 2016 allows students who made a wrong choice of VET programme to change their mind and move to another programme, whether in VET or general or technological education.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET

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

2025 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

“ ... ” **Cite as**

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28225>