

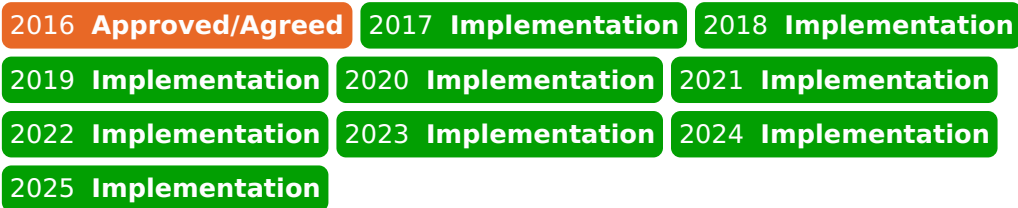
Training actions for jobseekers

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 FRANCE

Timeline



ID number 28224

Background

Training jobseekers is considered an essential element of active labour market policies. An increase in employment recorded between mid-2017 and mid-2019 did not benefit the entire population and has particularly left behind the least educated. Efforts to train jobseekers are being pursued and expanded.

Objectives

In the past, policies have been short-term, based on the sole criterion of gaining employment within six months after the end of the training. Currently, policies are focusing on the medium and long term to raise the overall level of qualification. This involves adapting the training offer and improving its quality, promoting individual autonomy, developing career guidance and counselling for jobseekers and ensuring effective funding.

Description

In January 2016, the government launched a plan to create 500 000 training places for jobseekers (*Plan 500 000 formations pour demandeurs d'emploi*). It included the provision of VET to people in long-term unemployment and training tailored for those unemployed aiming to set up or take over a business. The final total of beneficiaries in 2016 was 945 000. Building on its success, the plan was extended in the first semester of 2017 with 200 000 additional training courses specifically targeted at jobseekers. Two assessment reports on the 500 000 plan were published: one by the technical committee in charge of assessing the plan, and another by the Court of Auditors.

In 2017, a new 5-year training plan was launched, with the aim of training 1 million jobseekers and 1 million young people, known as the Skills Investment Plan (PIC). Support measures from the PIC complement other training programmes for jobseekers or individuals who have lost their jobs. Other key training schemes targeting jobseekers include:

- (a) the *Contrat de sécurisation professionnelle* (CSP), a personalised support scheme for workers who have been made redundant by small companies and companies in liquidation. Established in 2011, it aims to help employee transition to more secure employment;
- (b) the professionalisation contract (*Contrat de professionnalisation*), created by the Law of 4 May 2004. It aims to combine periods of training (to acquire a qualification) with periods of work experience in a company in the same professional field. It is intended for young people aged 16 to 25, job seekers and beneficiaries of minimum social benefits;
- (c) the *Grande école du numérique* (GEN) initiative, launched in 2015. The scheme aims to create a nationwide network of training programmes for IT occupations and targets priority jobseekers, including NEET youth and women. By 2018, 750 training courses were created, funded through the future investment programme.

2016 Approved/Agreed

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Implementation

The '500 000 training places for jobseekers' plan was completed and a new training programme for young people and jobseekers was launched in 2017, in the form of a multi-year skills investment plan. The apprenticeship for 30-year-olds scheme ended and was incorporated in the 2018 law reforming vocational training.

The implementation of the professionalisation contract is based on two types of assistance:

- (a) from the public employment service (Pôle Emploi) for hiring a jobseeker over the age of 26, of a maximum of EUR 2 000;
- (b) State assistance for hiring a jobseeker over the age of 45, of a maximum of EUR 2 000.

The duration of the professional training contract may be extended to 36 months for:

- (a) young people aged 16 to 25 who have not completed upper secondary education and do not hold a technological or vocational certificate;
- (b) those who have been registered for more than one year as jobseekers;
- (c) recipients of active solidarity income, specific solidarity allowance or adult disability allowance.

The training courses implemented under the GEN digital initiative in upper secondary schools are still being rolled out. According to the most recent figures (2018), more than 750 certified courses of an average duration of seven months and 975 hours have been offered; 8 621 learners have started such a course. The first profession being focused on is mobile web development. The *Grande Ecole du Numérique* has been successful, with 85% of participants entering a job, pursuing further training or opening a business.

2020 Implementation

The Skills Investment Plan 2018-2022 has taken over with a larger scope for 1 million unemployed with little or no qualifications and 1 million young people far from the labour market (cf measure: 'the Skills Investment Plan').

In 2019, the number of new Professionalisation contracts stood at 218,700, down for the first time since 2014, against a background of a sharp increase in apprenticeship contracts. However, the number of new recruits continues to rise among older people (+6.9% for those aged 30-44 and +9.6% for those aged over 45).

2021 Implementation

A new aid for hiring long-term job seekers on professionalisation contracts applies to those who are aged 30 and over between 1 November 2021 and 30 June 2022 and, from 1 July 2022, regardless of age (Decree 2021-1404 of 29 October). The amount is a maximum of EUR 8 000 for the first year of each contract concluded between November 2021 and 31 December 2022. Its management is entrusted to the Public Employment Service body *Pôle emploi*.

Various other types of aid are available to companies. For example, companies that recruit a job seeker aged 26 and over benefit from a EUR 2 000 subsidy paid by the public employment office.

Exceptional assistance has been provided for hiring employees under the age of 30, for any Professionalisation contract signed between 1 July 2020 and 31 December 2022.

On an experimental basis, for a period of 3 years, a Professionalisation contract may be used to set out a "tailor-made" training pathway that does not necessarily lead to a qualification or certification. In conjunction with the employee, employers and joint sectoral bodies (OPCO) may also specify the skills to be acquired under the contract. The flexibility of this contract allow people who have been out of work for a long time to obtain tailor-made training that is better suited to their needs. On the other hand, it will allow companies to be able to immediately hire an employee, who will be trained in line with the real needs on the ground. Initially scheduled to run until 31/12/2021 (and now extended until 31/12/2023), this experiment will be evaluated by a national monitoring committee made up of representatives from the State, the social partners and certain OPCOs.

The number of new Professionalisation contracts increased by 6.9% compared to 2020.

2022 Implementation

The government has implemented a methodology for setting up a local public service for professional integration and employment (*service public de l'insertion et de l'emploi*, SPIE) in 14 regions. The aim of the initiative is to strengthen the public system effectiveness to support people who face particular problems when entering the labour market. SPIE is being deployed through public calls for expression of interest, with 31 regions being engaged since April 2021. By early 2022, 80% of all territories had been involved in this initiative.

Regarding CVET, the professionalisation contract has been further enhanced. Two temporary support measures have been put in place to promote Professionalisation contract recruitment: support for the recruitment of long-term jobseekers on vocational training contracts until 31 December 2022; and support for the recruitment of employees under the age of 30 on Professionalisation contracts for all contracts entered into between 1 January and 31 December 2023.

In 2021, 120 562 new Professionalisation contracts were signed and 136 500 Professionalisation contracts were already underway. As of September 2022, 79 978 new contracts were signed and 128 500 were underway. So, a small decrease has been observed and several avenues are being explored to enhance the scheme.

Following developments can be reported on 'Great digital school' - GEN (*Grande école du numérique*): In May 2022, the GEN online database listed more than 15 000 digital training courses. The 2021 key figures, released in June 2022, showed that 13 612 individuals were receiving training, 26% of whom were women. Among the trainees, 51% were at level 4 or below and 74% had found employment within six months.

A consultative and preparatory process for the creation of a new entity called 'France Travail', involving all relevant stakeholders, was carried out in 2022. This project focuses on promoting training for jobseekers, in close collaboration with the regions, as well as on supporting those who currently find it most difficult to find work, in particular those receiving RSA benefits. France Travail is scheduled to become operational in 2023.

2023 Implementation

The government and the regions have agreed on a new cycle of additional funding from the State for the training of job seekers, amounting to EUR 3.9 billion over the next four years. This funding aims to enhance the support provided to individuals seeking employment and to improve their access to training programmes.

In April 2023, the working group on the transformation of the national PES service (Pôle Emploi) delivered its report that outlines the strategic framework and objectives for this initiative. The report serves as a foundation for the implementation of policies designed to better integrate job seekers into the workforce and to ensure that training programmes align with the needs of the labour market.

The Law n° 2023-1196 on full employment, enacted on 18 December 2023, marks a significant step forward in the progressive implementation of the new PES service (France Travail), with regulatory texts expected to be introduced until 2027.

2024 Implementation

In line with the provisions of the law No 2023-1196 on full employment, as of January 1, 2024, the new operator, France Travail, replaced the former public employment service (Pôle Emploi), positioning itself at the heart of a newly established employment network. The government's objective is to enhance support for individuals distanced from the job market and to strengthen assistance for businesses in their recruitment processes. The transition to a new PES service aims to provide tailored support and services that meet the needs of the unemployed as well as that of recruiting companies across the national territory. This shift involves robust collaboration with all stakeholders involved in employment, training, and professional integration schemes to ensure effective service delivery.

In 2024, all jobseekers will have to register with France Travail. This includes not only those who apply for registration but also recipients of the Active Welfare Scheme (RSA), their partners or spouses, young individuals registered with *Missions Locales* (guidance services of the public employment service for young people aged 16 to 25) seeking employment, and individuals with disabilities receiving support from Cap Emploi (the national network for employment for disabled persons). This comprehensive registration process takes effect from January 1, 2025.

In the new system, which will be gradually implemented by 2027, each person shall receive an in-depth diagnostic assessment conducted by the competent guidance and orientation service (different services are in place for different target groups) and orientation toward the support structure most appropriate to their profile and needs. Registered persons have to sign a commitment contract that outlines a specific action plan (*projet professionnel*) that includes all necessary measures and/or associated training to facilitate return to employment. The contract will be regularly updated to serve as a practical reference tool for the individual and his/her advisor.

The new Regional Investment Pact Cycle 2024-27 aims to achieve critical objectives such as enhancing basic skills, improving qualification levels among targeted populations, and facilitating access to jobs in sectors that actively recruit—particularly those in tension, emerging sectors, or affected by the digital and ecological transition. The new cycle follows several key principles, namely: expansion of the beneficiary audience to more target groups (such as job seekers with low or no qualifications, RSA beneficiaries, persons with disabilities, seniors etc.); implementation of quantitative targets and annual tracking of priority groups; provision of upskilling and reskilling schemes towards certification in sectors with skill demand from employers; better monitoring of registered beneficiaries (through the dedicated platform, Agora) and better coordination of all relevant regional services involved (financers, guidance services, training providers and employers) from planning (skills assessment) to the end result (professional integration of the beneficiary).

Additional financial incentives are foreseen to increase participation in training: beneficiaries will receive EUR 100 when utilising their CPF (personal training account)

credits (exemptions apply for those with a greater need for training, including job seekers).

The POEI support scheme (*préparation opérationnelle à l'emploi individuelle*), as established by the law No 2023-1196 on full employment, is expanding to allow employers and job seekers to sign short-term contracts upon completion of the training. The POEI serves as financing aid that provides training for candidates to acquire the necessary skills for jobs corresponding to offers submitted by employers to France Travail. A decree from June 18 clarifies and extends the types of contracts that can now be signed after completing the POEI, including indefinite contracts, fixed-term contracts (minimum of six months), professionalization contracts (minimum of six months), apprenticeship contracts (minimum of six months), seasonal employment contracts of at least four months, and temporary work assignments of at least six months. Given the expansion of the POEI, the Pre-Recruitment Training Action (AFPR) has been eliminated.

The statistical department of the labour ministry (DARES) and *France Stratégie* published an interim report from the scientific committee in charge of the second evaluation of the 2021-2026 Zero long-term unemployment areas (*Territoires zéro chômeur de longue durée, TZCLD*) experiment. Chaired by Yannick L'Horty, the committee examined the effects of this scheme, which offered open-ended contracts to any long-term unemployed person willing to work within locally created employment enterprises (*Entreprises à but d'emploi, EBE*).

Drawing on qualitative and quantitative analyses, the evaluation highlighted significant diversity among the pilot areas—many having below-average living standards and a high proportion of recipients of the French minimum-income allowance for jobseekers and low-income individuals (*Revenu de Solidarité Active, RSA*). It also emphasised the importance of local actor dynamics—local authorities, associations and inclusion bodies—in tailoring jobs to territorial needs and strengthening social cohesion.

Initial results confirmed that TZCLD is a lever for sustainable integration of people distant from employment, while fostering social innovation and the territorial implementation of policies against long-term unemployment.

2025 Implementation

Since January 2025, *France Travail* has new missions:

- Registering and supporting one million recipients of the national minimum-income allowance for jobseekers and low-income individuals (*Revenu de Solidarité Active, RSA*);
- Tripling claimant checks to reach 1.5 million;
- Increasing employer outreach from 200 000 to 600 000;
- Directly routing jobseekers with disabilities;
- Supporting workers dismissed for incapacity (100 000 people); and
- Rolling out the *Avenir professionnel* scheme for 100 000 upper-secondary VET learners.

Results from RSA pilots already conducted in 49 territories are positive: 42% of supported recipients exited the RSA.

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

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)

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Acquiring key competences

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

Lifelong guidance

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Press release of the Ministry of Education about the plan to create 500 000 training places](#)

[Information published on the Government webpage about its decision to carry on the plan](#)

[Instruction from Ministry of Employment, No DGEFP/MPFQ/2017/37 of 31 January 2017, to carry on the plan to the first semester 2017](#)

[Report on the training for jobseekers, May 2018](#)

[Order of 17 January 2017 of the Ministry of Employment, vocational education and social dialogue](#)

[List of the nine regions: Decrees No 2016-1998 of 30 December 2016 and No 2017-255 of 20 March 2017](#)

[Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration/aid for the recruitment of long-term jobseekers on professionalisation contracts](#)

[Ministry of Labour, Employment and Integration/Public Service for Integration and Employment \(SPIE\)](#)

[Appendix to the 2023 Finance Law: vocational training:](#)

[Ministry of Labour, Full Employment and Integration. 'The Public Service for Integration and Employment \(SPIE\): 34 new regions involved in the SPIE programme' - Press kit](#)

[Law No 2023-1196 of 18 December 2023 on full employment](#)

Related policy developments

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

2025 Implementation

Investment in skills plan: building a skills society

The Skills Investment plan (*Plan d'investissement dna les compétences*, PIC) is a government initiative aimed at improving job related skills and employability of 1 million job seekers and 1 million young people.

 FRANCE

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 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

2025 Implementation**Strengthening apprenticeships in the public sector**

A 2015 circular established conditions for apprenticeship contracts within the non-industrial and non-commercial public sector.

 FRANCE**Type of development**

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2025 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

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” Cite as

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28224>