

# EPIDE (Etablissement Public d'Insertion)

## Beneficiaries

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- ⇒ **Early leavers from education and training**
- ⇒ **Unemployed young people**
- ⇒ **Young people with complex needs (e.g. health issues, in poverty, with caring responsibilities, socially disadvantaged, living in a remote location)**

Young people aged 18-25 who are early leavers, unemployed and/or at risk of exclusion. Young people from disadvantaged urban areas are a priority target group.

The target group is very heterogeneous and includes young people affected by (multiple) challenges, most participants have left education and training for a long period (often more than a year) before joining the EPIDE.

## Countries

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## Education level and sector

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- ⇒ **Upper secondary education**
- ⇒ **Upper secondary vocational education and training (school-based)**

Not connected to the formal education and training system - no qualifications are delivered.

Most of participants come from upper secondary Vocational Education and Training (VET).

## Type of policy/initiative

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- ⇒ **Compensation**

Compensation (temporary support in preparation for a return to education and training, or employment).

## Level of implementation / Scope

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- ⇒ **National level**

National (18 centres across France, offering a total of 2,000 places and welcoming 3,500 new participants per year).

## Stage of implementation

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Ongoing (since 2005)

## Aims of policy/initiative

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EPIDE aims to empower young 'volunteers' to successfully integrate in society and in the labour market by helping them to consolidate basic skills, to develop their self-esteem and to build a professional project.

The ultimate objective is to guide them towards quality employment.

## Features and types of activities implemented

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All participants are volunteers and commit to attend the activities. Participants are referred to the EPIDE by local missions, other partners working with young people, or apply spontaneously.

Participants are provided with accommodation, food and uniforms and receive a monthly allowance of 300 euros.

The activities aim at preparing young people to reintegrate into regular formal education or employment and include the following:

- **Socialisation** and integration in a group of up to 15 individuals.
- Training in **literacy and numeracy**, based on individual needs - each learner works at his/her own pace until they manage to complete the intended learning outcomes, which depend on their starting point and their desired professional project.
- **Vocational guidance** and development of an individual professional project, via one-to-one meetings with a counsellor, starting as early as possible - guidance may include the identification of a suitable further education/training programme, a shorter training course, or a direct insertion into employment.
- **Training** in job search techniques, preparation for interviews, ICT, etc.
- Sport.
- Civic education.

## Resources

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In 2014, according to the national activity report of EPIDE, the total budget for was €80 million. €67 million came from Ministerial sources, €7.5 million from the European Social Fund and

€5.5 million from other sources (private partners and taxes on vocational training paid by employers).

## Evaluation of the measure

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No external evaluation has been carried out. The results are monitored internally and some

data is available.

## **Evidence of effectiveness of the measure**

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For those participants without a diploma, whenever possible, EPIDE prepares them for a test to obtain a general training certificate (certificat de formation générale, CFG)[1]. In 2014, as many as 95% of participants who took the exam obtained the certificate.

According to the EPIDE 2014 National activity report and interviews with staff and participants, 51.2% of supported volunteers moved to employment or further training.

[1] The CGP show a basic level of achievement and knowledge in three areas: French, math as well as social and professional life. It is not directly linked to a specific level of educational attainment.

## **Success factors**

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The following success factors are based on the testimonies of participants in the measure interviewed for the Cedefop study:

1. Holistic support, different types of activities and support provided in one place: the provision of multi-disciplinary support within a sheltered environment helps to cater for the needs of a very heterogeneous target group. Participants face very different barriers that they need to overcome; some need first and foremost to overcome personal issues, others need to improve their basic skills; while others are better prepared but have no clear professional project. The combination of general training and vocational guidance, the level of personal support provided (via one-to-one interviews), the small size of groups and the close ties between participants and staff are key success factors. Sport is also highlighted by participants as a key motivating factor. The boarding school is also a significant advantage for some young people with complex personal trajectories (especially young men), as it helps them to adhere to the schedule and to make a new start.
2. Pedagogy centred on the learner: due to the low entry threshold, participants have very heterogeneous skill levels. Most need to develop and consolidate their skills in literacy and numeracy, as they have left education and training for a long period and would not be able to meet the standards for integration into a formal education and training programme, including apprenticeship training. The scheme offers an alternative learning environment (emphasis on individual learning outcomes rather than on testing and grades, use of ICT and digital boards, etc.) for participants who have previously experienced failure within the formal education and training system. Performance is assessed qualitatively. Teachers enjoy a high level of autonomy to choose the most adapted pedagogy. Each participant has an individual programme with a list of learning outcomes to be achieved according to their starting point, and the requirements of their personal professional project.
3. Individual and flexible pathways: the fact that admission cycles take place every two months and the flexible duration of support are key assets, given the complex trajectories of participants. The objectives to achieve are set individually. Not all participants are oriented towards a formal education and training programme, but those who are have high chances to succeed, thanks to their preparation at the centre.
4. Staff motivation and celebration of achievement: the professionalism and commitment of management and staff (counsellors, teachers and social workers) is crucial to the success of the scheme. The positive feedback from former participants (who are in touch with the centre for a short follow-up period) and the sharing of success stories is essential to maintaining staff morale and commitment.

## Contact details for further information

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