


# Apprenticeship contract

Contrat d'apprentissage  
 France

## 1 Target group

**Q6. Does the legal basis define the minimum and maximum age limits for enrolment of the target group of this scheme?**

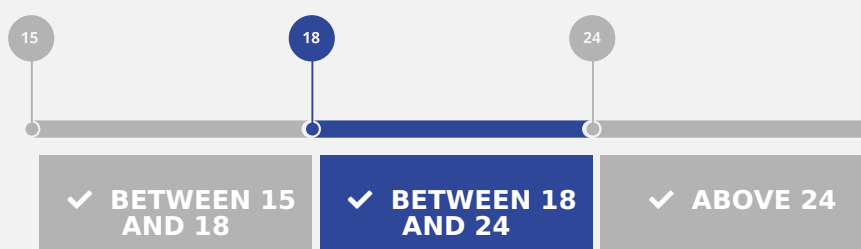


It is possible to sign an apprenticeship contract when a person is at least 16 years old and maximum 29 years old.

Young people aged at least 15 may start an apprenticeship contract if they have completed lower secondary education.

Source : Article L6222-1 of the Labour Code :  
[https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article\\_lc/LEGIARTI000037385936/](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/article_lc/LEGIARTI000037385936/)

**Q7. What is the average age of learners in practice?**



In 2018, young people under 18 years of age represented more than one third of new entrants (36.0%); 60.9 % were between 18 and 25 years old.

Source : Dares Résultats 2020-017 - Les contrats d'apprentissage en 2018  
<https://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/publications/les-contrats-d-apprentissage-en-2018>

## 2 Overview of the scheme

### Q8. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?

The form for Q8 consists of two columns. The left column features a grey circle with 'ISCED' at the top and 'scheme' in the center, positioned above a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES'. The right column features a blue circle with 'scheme' in the center and a white circle with 'ISCED' at the top, positioned above a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'NO'.

The scheme is not explicitly referred to in the ISCED 2011 mapping but reference to ISCED is made transversally in the corresponding VET qualifications, e.g. VET secondary education pathways leading to CAP (Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle) qualifications, short higher programmes leading to BTS (Brevet de technicien supérieur) qualifications, etc.

### Q9. Is there any organization at the national level with roles in co-ordinating the scheme?

The form for Q9 consists of two columns. The left column features a large blue checkmark above a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'YES'. The right column features a large grey 'X' above a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'NO'.

A new public body has been created by the 2018 law for the freedom to choose one's professional future, France compétences, which is responsible for regulating apprenticeships. It ensures financial equalisation, contributes to the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of training activities, and observes the costs and levels of funding for training. It draws up and updates the national directory of professional qualifications (repertoire national des certifications professionnelles, RNCP). Its strategic orientations are determined by a quadripartite governance made up of the State, the regions, representative trade unions and employers' organisations at national and cross-industry level, and experts.

### Q10. When was the scheme introduced?

The form for Q10 features a horizontal timeline with two markers: a blue circle with '2000' and a grey circle with '2012'. Below the timeline are three buttons: a blue button with a white checkmark and the text 'LONG HISTORY (BEFORE 2000)', a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'RECENTLY INTRODUCED (BETWEEN 2000-2012)', and a grey button with a white checkmark and the text 'NEW PATHWAY (AFTER 2012)'.

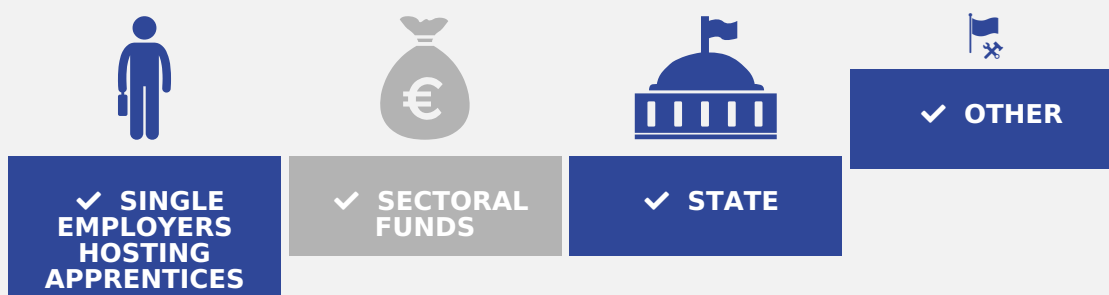
The 'contrat d'apprentissage' has a long history as it was introduced in 1919.

### Q11. How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?



Originally developed in line with traditional craftsmanship (master-apprentice relation) to prepare apprentices for craft occupations, the scheme has progressively expanded over the years to be now present in most fields and occupational sectors (ranging from agriculture to industry and services). Initially centred on the VET sector, the 'contrat d'apprentissage' can be now accessed for a range of higher education programmes too (ranging from short professional-oriented cycles to longer academic-oriented ones such as Master programmes in engineering or business fields for instance).

### Q12. What are the sources of financing of the direct costs for the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?

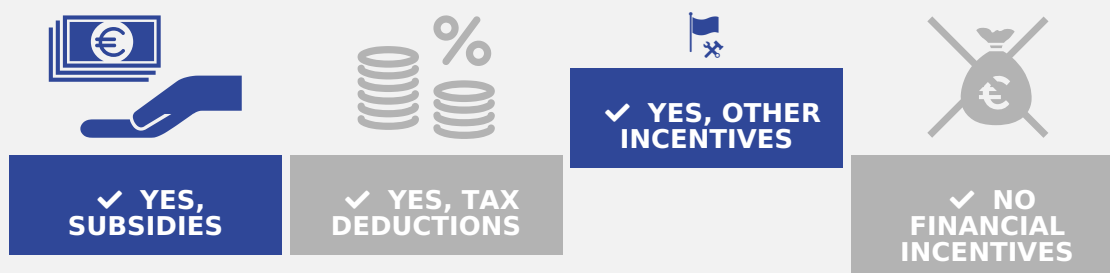


Funding for apprenticeship comes mainly from:

- Companies: in addition to the apprentice salary, they contribute by paying a lifelong learning tax;
- The skills operators (OPCO)\* pay for apprentice training, according to the level of coverage determined by the professional branches and regulated by France compétences;
- The State e.g. partial or full coverage of apprentices' social security fees, financial incentives.
- The Regions, which provide funding for the training providers CFAs.

\* Eleven skills operators (OCPO), are responsible for supporting vocational training. These skills operators are responsible for financing apprenticeships, helping branches to develop professional qualifications and assisting SMEs to define their training needs. They are approved by the State. Approval is subject to the existence of an agreement concluded between the employees' trade unions and the representative professional organisations.

**Q13. Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?**



There are various government subsidies to support the take up of apprenticeship contracts. The main one is the one-off subsidy for employers of apprentices, which is intended for companies with fewer than 250 employees for the conclusion of an apprenticeship contract for a diploma or professional qualification equivalent to a level no higher than the baccalaureate.

In addition to this subsidy, apprenticeship contracts are fully or partially exempted from social security charges, and specific subsidies are granted for the recruitment of apprentices with disabilities.

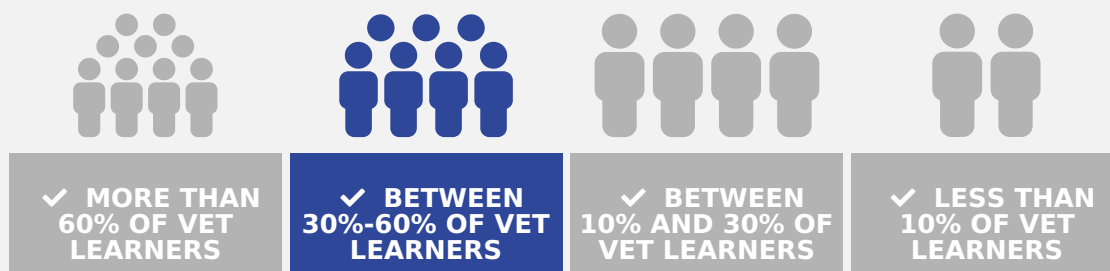
**Q14. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?**

With 495,000 contracts signed in 2020 compared with 353,000 in 2019, apprenticeships grew by 40%, with an even increase across all regions. Recent statistics show that the positive trend in apprenticeship starts (since 2018) includes all levels and types of qualification apprenticeship prepares for.

Although this increase partly reflects a shift in the balance between apprenticeship and professionalization contracts, it can be estimated that there was a net creation of 60,000 additional apprenticeship places in 2020.

Source : <https://www.vie-publique.fr/en-bref/278452-lapprentissage-en-france-progression-record-en-2020>

**Q15. What is the share of apprentices enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level(s) as reported in Q3?**



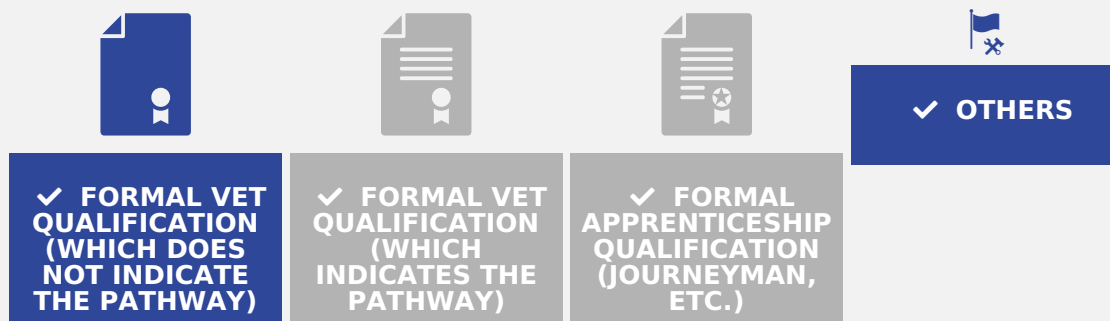
In 2018, 15% of 14-17-year-olds are enrolled in apprenticeships<sup>1</sup>.

In 2018-2019, among all young people aged 16 to 25, 5.3% are enrolled in apprenticeships. In 2018-2019, 54.9% of young people taking Level V training (16-25 years old target) had an apprentice status. This is the case for 54.3% of young people preparing for a CAP (VET, see Q16), 14.7% for level IV training<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education, Statistical Benchmarks and References, p133, <https://www.education.gouv.fr/reperes-et-references-statistiques-2020-1316>

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Education, Repères et références statistiques, p139, <https://www.education.gouv.fr/reperes-et-references-statistiques-2020-1316>

### Q16. Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



The 'contrat d'apprentissage' leads to qualifications formally registered by France compétences in the national repertory of professional qualifications ([Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles \(RNCP\)](#)). Such qualifications do not indicate the pathway.

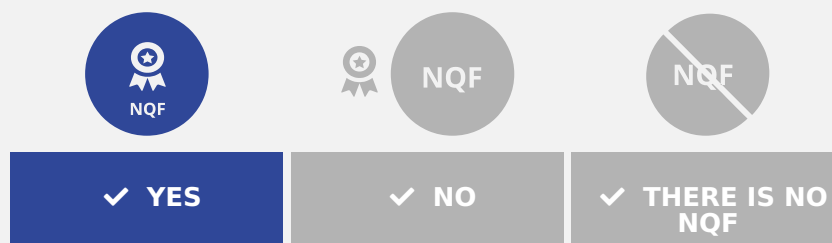
Among the qualifications that are accessible via the scheme three main categories can be outlined:

- **VET secondary qualifications (CAP, CAPA, BEP, Bac Pro, BP, BTM)**
- **Higher education qualifications (Brevet de Maîtrise (BM), Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS), Diplôme (DUT, Bachelor's and Master's degrees)**
- **Professional certifications (*titre professionnel inscrit au RNCP*) recognised by the State in given occupational sectors such as hotel and catering, tourism, building, trade, etc.**

Overall, the qualifications obtained through this scheme are very diverse in scope as well as in regard to the profile of the learners they attract. Further information available at: [https://www.francecompetences.fr/app/uploads/2020/09/Notice\\_aide-au-d%C3%A9p%C3%BAt\\_RS\\_04092020.pdf](https://www.francecompetences.fr/app/uploads/2020/09/Notice_aide-au-d%C3%A9p%C3%BAt_RS_04092020.pdf)

And <https://www.francecompetences.fr>

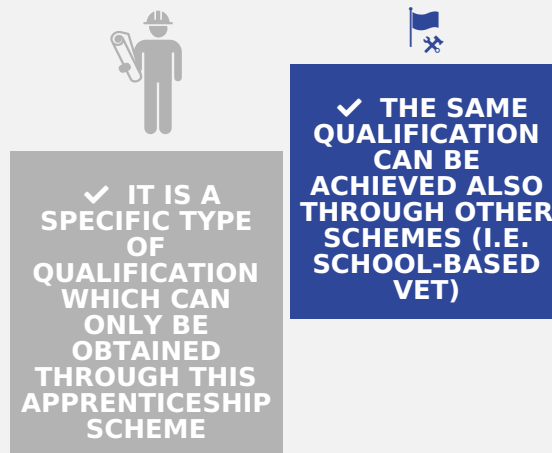
### Q17. Is the qualification included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)?



The 'contrat d'apprentissage' leads to qualifications formally recognised by France compétences (in the [Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles \(RNCP\)](#), which is the NQF).

Further information available at: <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/8611>

### Q18. How does the qualification link to the scheme?



Whatever the pathway, the same certification may be obtained – and always have the same value – through apprenticeship, professionalisation contract, validation of prior learning (VAE) etc.

France compétences, 10 février 2021, Note relative aux principaux effets juridiques d'un enregistrement aux répertoires nationaux : [https://www.francecompetences.fr/app/uploads/2021/02/NOTE\\_ANALYSE\\_effets-juridiques-de-lenregistrement-aux-r%C3%A9pertoires-nationaux.pdf](https://www.francecompetences.fr/app/uploads/2021/02/NOTE_ANALYSE_effets-juridiques-de-lenregistrement-aux-r%C3%A9pertoires-nationaux.pdf)

### Q19. Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?




37.9% of new contracts prepare for a certification at Level 8-5 (EQF levels).


Source : Dares Résultats 2020-017 - Les contrats d'apprentissage en 2018 <https://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/publications/les-contrats-d-apprentissage-en-2018>

## 3 Programme


### Q20. How is the scheme linked to a training programme?




✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED VIA A SPECIFIC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED ON THE BASIS OF THE SCHOOL-BASED VET PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED BASED ON THE VET STANDARDS (VALID GENERALLY FOR ALL VET SCHEMES)



✓ OTHER


The apprenticeship training programme is implemented in accordance with pre-defined 'certification frameworks'. Such frameworks of professional activities and skills are included in the final qualification and describe the work situations and activities carried out, the trades or jobs targeted, the skills and knowledge, including cross-cutting skills, which should be learnt.

An 'assessment reference framework' is also associated to the qualifications, which defines the criteria and procedures for assessing what has been acquired. Article L6113-1 code of labour.


In practice, apprenticeships envisage training and professional activities directly related to the final qualification (and related certification), registered in the national register of professional qualifications, that is the object of the apprenticeship contract (Article L6211-2 of the French Labour Code).

#### 4 Duration


**Q22. If the scheme is not implemented via specific apprenticeship programme, how is duration of apprenticeships defined in the regulation?**




✓ IT IS DEFINED AS MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM SHARE OF A VET PROGRAMME




✓ IS DEFINED AS MINIMUM SHARE OF A VET PROGRAMME



✓ IS DEFINED AS MAXIMUM SHARE OF A VET PROGRAMME



✓ IS NOT DEFINED BY REGULATION



✓ OTHER

It varies between six months and three years.

It is always the certificate awarding body (certifier) that decides the minimum duration.

France Competence oversees these certifications.

**Q23. Is there a distinction between the training time and working time for the period spent at workplace, as per regulation?**



✓ YES, THE  
LEGAL  
FRAMEWORK  
MAKES THIS  
DISTINCTION

✓ NO, THE  
LEGAL  
FRAMEWORK  
MAKES NO  
DISTINCTION

## 5 Alternation of work-based (in-company) training and school-based training

**Q24. Is it compulsory to alternate training between two learning venues (school and company)?**



✓ YES

✓ NO

Apprenticeship involve:

- 1) Training in one or more companies, based on the exercise of one or more professional activities directly related to the qualification which is the purpose of the contract.
- 2) Teaching given during working hours in an apprentice training centre (Article L6211-2 of the French Labour Code).

The employer undertakes to provide the apprentice with vocational training, partly in the company and partly in an apprentice training centre.

**Q25. Is the in-company training defined as minimum share of the apprenticeship scheme duration?**





✓ YES, EQUIVALENT OR MORE THAN 50% OF SCHEME DURATION



✓ YES, BETWEEN 20% AND 50% OF THE SCHEME DURATION



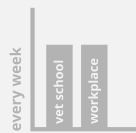
✓ YES, LESS THAN 20% OF THE SCHEME DURATION



✓ NO, NO MINIMUM SHARE IS COMPULSORY

The French Labour Code requires that, subject to the rules set by the certification awarding body (certifier) for the certification in question, the duration of apprenticeship training in the training center may not be less than 25% of the total duration of the contract (Article L6211-2 of the French Labour Code). In this case, the Ministry of Labour determines a standard that applies in the event that the certifier has not imposed its own standard.

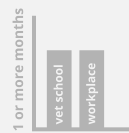
**Q26. What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school?**



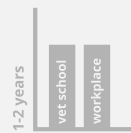
✓ EVERY WEEK INCLUDES BOTH VENUES



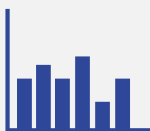
✓ ONE OR MORE WEEKS (LESS THAN 1 MONTH) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY ONE OR MORE WEEKS AT WORKPLACE



✓ ONE OR MORE MONTHS (LESS THAN 1 YEAR) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY ONE OR MORE MONTHS AT WORKPLACE



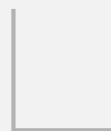
✓ A LONGER PERIOD (1-2 YEARS) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY A LONGER PERIOD SPENT TRAINING AT WORKPLACE



✓ VARIOUS - DEPENDS ON AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE COMPANY



✓ OTHER



✓ NOT SPECIFIED

The form of alternation varies according to the certification chosen. For example, 2 days at the CFA and 3 in the company, or 15 days at the CFA and 15 days in the company.

The distribution of training hours is not defined in the same way for different certifications.

- If the presence in the company requires a particular qualification (obtaining a specific permit prior to entering the company, for example), the apprenticeship contract may begin with this training in a training organisation for the time necessary to obtain this permit, then continue with an alternation of 2 days in the CFA and 3 days in the company.

- another case is if the company is experiencing a particularly important period for its annual activity during a month and the apprentice must take part in it. The apprenticeship contract can begin with this one-month period in the company, then continue with a one-week alternation in the CFA, 15 days in the company.

## 6 Formal relationship with the employer

**Q27. Is any contractual arrangement between the learner and company, required as per regulation?**



The contractual arrangement is one of the core principles of the scheme. Apprenticeships are the object of individual labour contracts signed between an apprentice and an employer. Through this, employers commit themselves to remunerate the apprentices and deliver effective training and tutoring to them during the duration of the contract. Apprentices commit themselves to effectively work for the signatory employer for the full duration of the contract.

**Q28. What is the nature of the contractual arrangement?**



The apprenticeship contract is a contract of employment of a particular type concluded between an apprentice and an employer (Article L6221-1 Of the Labour Code) which contains mandatory clauses and references (Article L6222-4 Of the Labour Code).

**Q29. Where is the contract or the formal agreement registered?**



✓ AT THE SCHOOL



✓ AT THE MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT



✓ AT THE CHAMBERS



✓ AT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



✓ OTHER

The contract is to be registered by the employer to his skills operator (Article D6224-1 of the Labour Code).

### Q30. What is the status of the learner?



✓ APPRENTICE IS A SPECIFIC STATUS



✓ STUDENT



✓ EMPLOYEE



✓ OTHER

During an apprenticeship contract, the learner has the status of an apprentice, i.e. is both an employee of a company and a student at the CFA.

## 7 Compensation

### Q31. Do apprentices receive a wage or allowance?



✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE A WAGE (TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE (NOT A FORM OF TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ APPRENTICES RECEIVE A REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES



✓ NO FORM OF COMPENSATION IS FORESEEN BY LAW

The salary paid to apprentices is determined by their age and the level of progression into the apprenticeship (i.e. yearly augmentation until the end of the contract)

### Q32. How is the apprentice wage (taxable income) set?



✓ **BY LAW  
(APPLYING FOR  
ALL)**



✓ **BY CROSS-  
SECTORAL  
COLLECTIVE  
AGREEMENTS AT  
NATIONAL OR  
LOCAL LEVEL**



✓ **BY SECTORAL  
COLLECTIVE  
AGREEMENTS AT  
NATIONAL OR  
LOCAL LEVEL**



✓ **BY FIRM-  
LEVEL  
COLLECTIVE  
AGREEMENTS OR  
INDIVIDUAL  
AGREEMENTS  
BETWEEN  
APPRENTICE AND  
COMPANY**



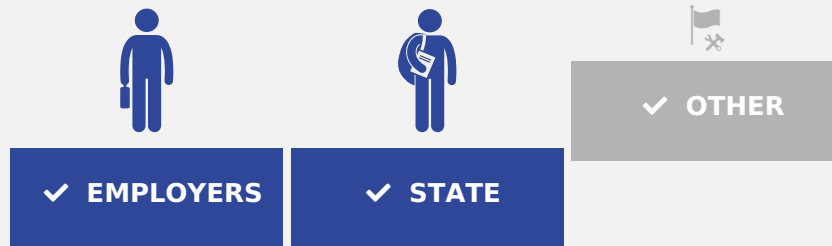
✓ **OTHER**

The salary paid to apprentices is determined by their age and the level of progression into the apprenticeship (Article L6222-27of the Labour Code). It is calculated based on a pre-determined percentage of the minimum salary (*salair minimum conventionnel de l'emploi occupé* (SMIC[1])) as follows:

	16/17 ANS	18/20 ANS	21/25 ANS	26 ANS
PREMIÈRE ANNÉE D'EXÉCUTION DU CONTRAT	27 % du Smic	43 % du Smic	53 % du Smic	100 % du Smic*
DEUXIÈME ANNÉE D'EXÉCUTION DU CONTRAT	39 % du Smic	51 % du Smic	61 % du Smic	100 % du Smic*
TROISIÈME ANNÉE D'EXÉCUTION DU CONTRAT	55 % du Smic	67 % du Smic	78 % du Smic	100 % du Smic*

[1] In 2021 SMIC corresponds to € 10,25 per hour. Further details available at: <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F2300>

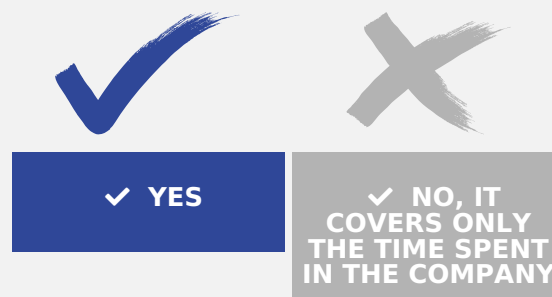
### Q33. Who covers the cost of the wage or allowance of the apprentice?



- The employer pays a salary (Article L6221-1 of the Labour Code)
- Exemption from social security contributions for apprenticeship contracts is financed by the State with an annual budget of €594.9 million.

Source : [Annexe Formation professionnelle au PLF 2021](https://www.budget.gouv.fr/documentation/documents-budgetaires/exercice-2021/le-projet-de-loi-de-finances-et-les-documents-annexes-pour-2021)  
 (<https://www.budget.gouv.fr/documentation/documents-budgetaires/exercice-2021/le-projet-de-loi-de-finances-et-les-documents-annexes-pour-2021>)

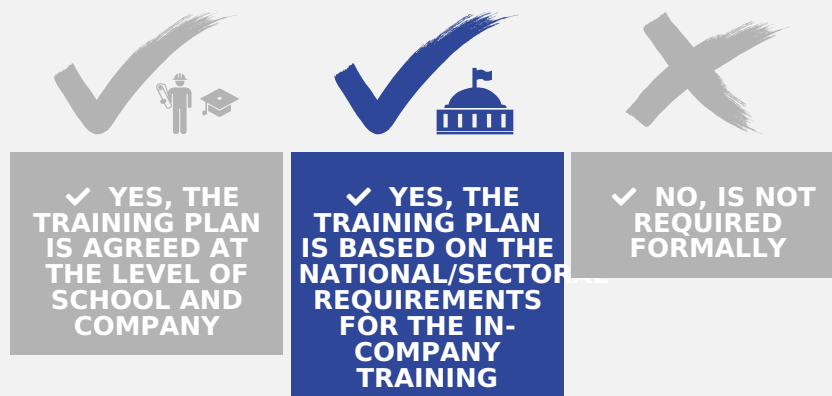
**Q34. Does the wage or allowance of the apprentice cover both the time spent at school and in the company?**



The time spent by the apprentice both in the company and at the training centres is included in the work hours (Article L6222-24 of the Labour Code).

## 8 Responsibility of employers

**Q35. Is the company hosting apprentices required by regulation to follow a training plan at the workplace?**



The legislation sets that the training plan is agreed at the level of the school and the company. In agreement with the company, the training provider (CFA) must agree in advance with the learner the training objectives in the short, medium and long term. The training provider and company representatives define and agree an annual progression plan too.

The object of the contract is a qualification-certification set at national level. Hence, the individual training plans have to reflect the content of the relevant qualification-certification.

### Q36. What are the requirements on companies to provide placements, as per regulation?



Any enterprise (private or public) can hire an apprentice if the employer commits him/herself to effectively organize and support the apprenticeship. The employer undertakes to provide the apprentice with vocational training, partly in the company and partly in an apprentice training centre.

For this purpose, the employer must notably ensure adequate conditions (appropriate infrastructure, equipment and techniques used, working conditions, sanitation and security, etc.) to allow the apprenticeship to be carried out in a satisfactory manner.

Article L6221-1 of the Labour Code

The employer gives the apprentices tasks or occupations enabling them to carry out operations or work in accordance with an annual progression defined by agreement between the CFA and company representatives.

Art. L6223-3 of the Labour Code

Recruiting an apprentice requires the employer to choose a volunteer apprentice master among skilled workforce to accompany him/her during his/her training at the company.

The conditions of professional competence required of an apprenticeship master are determined by collective sector agreement.

In the absence of such an agreement, the conditions of professional competence required of an apprenticeship master are determined by regulation (Article L6223-8-1 code of labour):

1. Persons who hold a diploma or title in the professional field corresponding to the purpose of the diploma or title being prepared by the apprentice and of at least an equivalent level, and who can prove that they have been working for one year in a professional activity related to the qualification being prepared by the apprentice;
2. Persons who can prove that they have been working for two years in a professional activity related to the qualification prepared by the apprentice.

Article R6223-22 code of labour

The employer guarantees that the company's equipment, the techniques used, the working, health and safety conditions, the professional and pedagogical skills and the morality of the persons responsible for the training are such as to permit a satisfactory training.

Article L6223-1 of the Labour Code

**Q37. Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?**



✓ YES



✓ NO

Sanctions exist in case employers do not fulfil their commitment to train the apprentice. For instance, in the event the employer or the working conditions/environment offered are considered to endanger the apprentice (e.g. representing a risk for his or her health, physical or moral integrity) a monitoring visit can be carried out by a work Inspector. If this results in a negative evaluation, sanctions can take the form of a suspension or termination of the apprenticeship contract. If this leads to a termination of the contract, the CFA has the responsibility to look for another employer where the apprentice can effectively pursue the apprenticeship.

**Q38. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives, sectoral councils (if existent), in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation?**



✓ ROLE IN DESIGNING QUALIFICATION



✓ ROLE IN DESIGNING CURRICULA



✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

To include a new certification or to revise an existing regulation in the RNCP, an advice of the representatives of the labour market (employers, unions and professional branches) is needed.

France compétences, whose managing board includes representatives of the social partners, regulates the national register of qualifications RNCP, ensuring that they meet the needs of the economy and is responsible for registering them (Article L6113-5 of the French Labour Code).

**Q39. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives in implementing the apprenticeship scheme, as per regulation?**

**ROLE IN FINAL ASSESSMENT OF APPRENTICES**  
 **ROLE IN ACCREDITATION OF COMPANIES**  
 **ROLE IN MONITORING OF THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING**  
 **OTHER**  
 **NO ROLE**

The professional branches are responsible for setting the level of support for each certification and the training needs for the sectors they represent.

The social partners are present in the National Joint Employment Commissions, which are also competent for the final certification.

France Compétences monitors and assesses the apprenticeship system.

## ① Target group

**Q7. What is the target group of this scheme?**

**YOUNG PEOPLE IN INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (15-16 YEAR-OLDS)**  
 **YOUNG ADULTS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ABOVE 16 YEAR-OLDS)**  
 **UNEMPLOYED**  
 **OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY IN THE DESCRIPTION)**

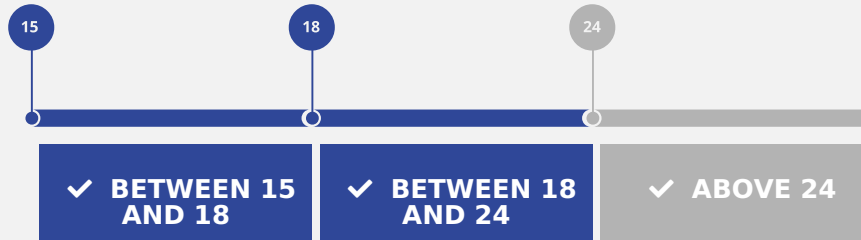
The objective of the 'contrat d'apprentissage' is to enable young people aged **16 to 25 years old** to follow a general education curriculum, both theoretical and practical, in order to acquire a professional qualification based on a diploma or a professional credential. This contract alternates periods of learning in training centres (centres de formation par apprentissage - CFA) and periods of work to develop 'know-how'.

Under specific derogations, the contrat d'apprentissage is also open to the following target groups:



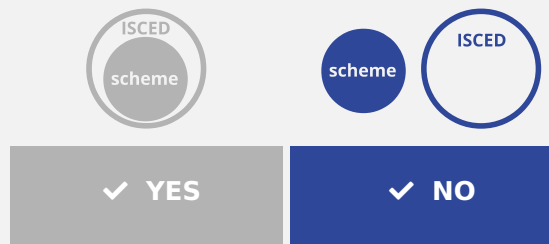
- younger people (aged 15 years old) who have completed lower secondary education. These are called 'dispositif d'initiation aux métiers en alternance' (DIMA);
- young adults above 26 years old;
- disabled learners;
- self-/prospective entrepreneurs.

#### Q8. What is the age of learners?



## 2 Overview of the scheme

#### Q9. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?



The scheme is not explicitly referred to in the ISCED 2011 mapping but reference is made transversally across several qualifications (e.g. VET secondary education pathways leading to CAP (Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle) qualifications, short higher programmes leading to BTS (Brevet de technicien supérieur) qualifications, etc.).

#### Q10 - Is the scheme part of the VET system?

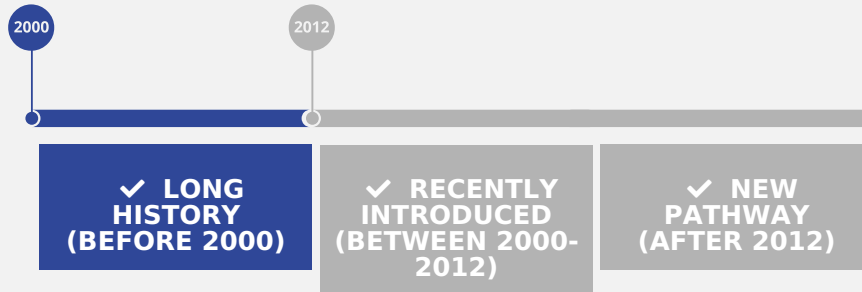


Offered alongside school-based education, the apprenticeship scheme is not strictly speaking

the main route across the whole VET system. IVET qualifications are in practice accessible via studies in a vocational lycée, or as apprentices in an Apprentice Training Centre (CFA).

The 'contrat d'apprentissage' is accessible from a range of VET programmes such as those leading to the 'Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle' (CAP - Professional skills Certificate); Professional baccalaureate (Bac Pro), professional or technical brevets (Brevet Professionnel (BP) or Brevet Technique des Métiers (BTM), etc.

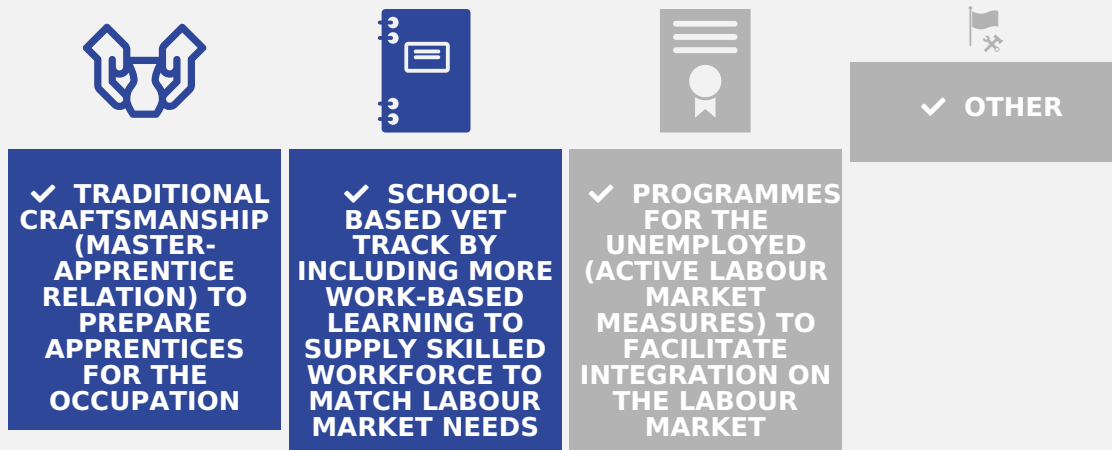
**Q11 - When was the scheme introduced?**



As noted above, the 'contrat d'apprentissage' has a long history as it was introduced in 1919.

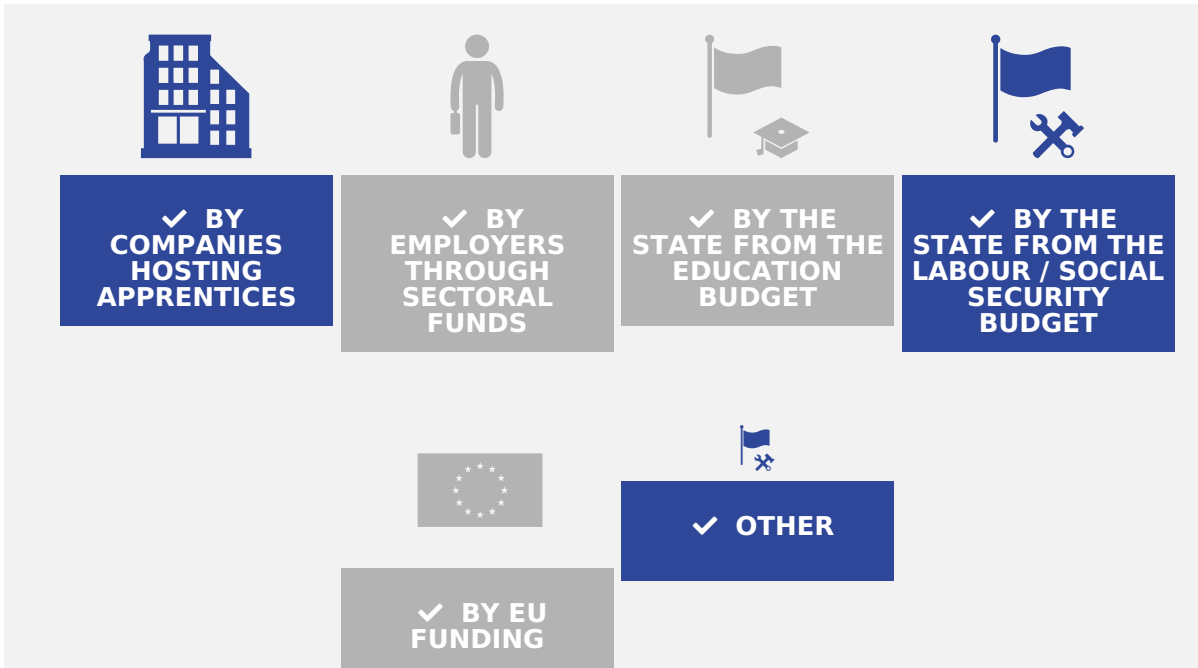
Originally developed in line with traditional craftsmanship (master-apprentice relation) to prepare apprentices for the occupation, the scheme has progressively expanded over the years to be now present in most fields and occupational sectors (ranging from agriculture to industry and services). Initially centred on the VET sector, the 'contrat d'apprentissage' can be now accessed from a range of higher education programmes, too (ranging from short professional-oriented cycles to longer academic-oriented ones such as Master programmes in engineering or business fields for instance).

**Q12 - How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?**



See above.

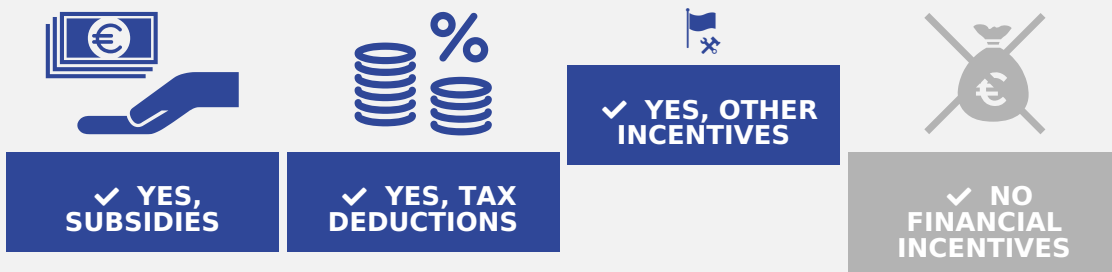
**Q13 - What are the major sources of financing of the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?**



Funding for apprenticeship comes mainly from:

- companies, which, in addition to the salary, pay the apprentice, participate directly by paying the lifelong learning tax;
- the Regions, which provide funding for the CFAs, on top of the lifelong learning tax they collect, by paying a balancing subsidy;
- the State (e.g. partial or full coverage of apprentices' social security fees).

**Q14 - Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?**



There are various regional or government subsidies to encourage apprenticeship contracts. The main ones are:

- a one-off lump sum payment made by the region, under certain conditions, to employers who take on an apprentice;
- the Bonus alternance (in the form of 1,000 EUR/year or more allocated to SMEs of less than 11 employees until the apprentice graduates or 1,000 EUR to all enterprises of less than 250 employees that sign an apprenticeship contract) offered since 2005 to companies that employ apprentices.

In addition to these subsidies, apprenticeship contracts are fully or partially exempt from social security charges, the costs of training apprentice supervisors are included in the legal training costs, and specific subsidies are granted for the recruitment of apprentices with

disabilities. There is also a special financial support (aide TPE jeunes apprentis) addressed to small enterprises that enrol young apprentices under the age of 18.

### Q15 - Is the scheme temporary, meaning that it is financed for a limited period of time?



✓ YES

✓ NO

### Q16. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

385,000

According to latest data available[1], there were 385,000 learners enrolled in this scheme. It can be noted that there are major regional differences in the numbers of apprentices in France. Data from 2011 revealed that there were more than 20,000 apprentices in regions attached to the following cities (regional division of the French national education): Créteil, Lille, Lyon, Paris, Versailles and less than 10,000 apprentices in Auvergne (Clermont Ferrand), Corsica, Champagne-Ardenne (Reims), Limousin (Limoges)[2].

[1] Cedefop, REFERNET country report France, 2014.

[2] European Parliament, Dual education: a bridge over troubled waters?, 2014.  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/529072/IPOL\\_STU\(2014\)529072\\_FR.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/529072/IPOL_STU(2014)529072_FR.pdf)

### Q17 - How many learners are enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students?



✓ THE MAIN VET TRACK (MAJORITY OF VET LEARNERS - MORE THAN 60% OF VET LEARNERS)



✓ STRONG VET TRACK (IMPORTANT SHARE OF VET LEARNERS - BETWEEN 30%-60%)



✓ MINOR TRACK (SMALL SHARE OF LEARNERS - BETWEEN 10% AND 30%)



✓ VERY SMALL TRACK (LESS THAN 10%)



✓ APPRENTICES ARE NOT CONSIDERED AS LEARNERS (THEY ARE EMPLOYEES)

No clear data was found on the share of this scheme in relation to all VET students. However, it can be fairly estimated that this represents a minor track (between 10% and 30%). Data set out in the 2013 ReferNet country report for France e.g. shows that in 2011, the two main apprenticeship schemes represented around 23% of pupils and students.

**Q18 - How many learners are enrolled in the scheme in relation to all programmes for learners of the same age group?**



✓ THE MAIN TRACK (MAJORITY OF LEARNERS - MORE THAN 60% OF ALL LEARNERS)



✓ STRONG TRACK (IMPORTANT SHARE OF ALL LEARNERS - BETWEEN 30%-60%)



✓ MINOR TRACK (SMALL SHARE OF LEARNERS - BETWEEN 10% AND 30%)



✓ VERY SMALL TRACK (LESS THAN 10%)

No data could be found on this.

**Q19 - Does the apprenticeship scheme result in a qualification?**



✓ YES



✓ NO

**Q20 - Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?**



✓ EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION



✓ OCCUPATIONAL / SECTORAL QUALIFICATION

The 'contrat d'apprentissage' leads to qualifications formally recognised by the States (in the [Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles \(RNCP\)](#)).

Among the qualifications that are accessible via the scheme three main categories can be outlined:

- **VET secondary qualifications (CAP, CAPA, BEP, Bac Pro, BP, BTM)**
- **Higher education qualifications (Brevet de Maîtrise (BM), Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS), Diplôme (DUT, Bachelor's and Master's degrees)**
- **Professional certifications ( *titre professionnel inscrit au RNCP*) recognised by the State in given occupational sectors such as hotel and catering, tourism, building, trade, etc.**

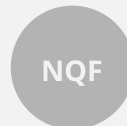
Overall, the qualifications obtained through this scheme are very diverse in scope as well as in regard to the profile of the learners they attract. Further information available at: <http://www.alternance.fr/lalternance/diplomes-apprenti-707.php>.

### 3 Qualifications

**Q21 - Is the qualification included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)**



✓ YES



✓ NO



✓ THERE IS NO NQF

The qualifications obtained through the scheme are included in the NQF. They range from level V (CAP, BEP) to level I (Master and Engineering degrees ('titres d'ingénieurs')).

**Q22 - How does the qualification link to the scheme?**



✓ IT IS A SPECIFIC TYPE OF QUALIFICATION WHICH CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THIS APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

✓ THE SAME QUALIFICATION CAN BE ACHIEVED ALSO THROUGH OTHER PROGRAMMES (I.E. SCHOOL-BASED VET)

See above.

### Q23 - Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



✓ YES

✓ NO

Considering the formally recognised qualifications that can be obtained via the scheme, apprentices may (based on the qualification obtained) access higher education. According to research[1], a small share of apprentices progress to higher education in France. Besides, apprenticeships are also offered at higher education levels. The latter is a relatively recent phenomenon and it shows that the potential of apprenticeships to develop higher level skills is being recognised.

[1] European Parliament, Dual education: a bridge over troubled waters?, 2014.  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/529072/IPOL\\_STU\(2014\)529072\\_FR.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/529072/IPOL_STU(2014)529072_FR.pdf)

## ④ Duration

### Q24. What is the duration of the VET pathway? (please refer to the typical duration)

3

Typically addressed to young people aged between 15 and 18 years old.

### Q25 - How is the length of stay in apprenticeships defined in the regulation?



✓ IS DEFINED AS MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM



✓ IS DEFINED AS MINIMUM



✓ IS DEFINED AS MAXIMUM



✓ IS NOT DEFINED BY REGULATION

The length of the 'contrat d'apprentissage' generally varies from **one to three years** depending on the qualification aimed at.

In given circumstances this may vary from six months to one year. This applies in cases when the scheme is used for enabling the apprentices to obtain a qualification (or a certification):

- at the same or lower level than another qualification previously obtained by the latter in the same remit;
- whose part has been already validated through recognition of non-formal and informal learning processes (*validation des acquis de l'expérience (VAE)*);
- whose has been started in another remit than 'contrat d'apprentissage'.

The duration of the contract can be extended to up to four years for disabled apprentices.

**Q26 - Is there a distinction between the training and working period for the time spent at workplace, as per regulation?**



✓ YES, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK MAKES THIS DISTINCTION



✓ NO, THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK MAKES NO DISTINCTION

The legal framework stipulates that the time spent at workplace should account for at least **400 hours/year**. This is to be considered as a basis as for apprenticeships at upper level, this is much higher. For apprenticeships leading to Bac Pro or BTS qualifications for instance, the minimum number of hours/year increases to **750**.

Then, a further distinction (between the training and working period at workplace) is agreed between the Region and individual CFAs. This is the subject of a formal agreement ('convention') between both parties in accordance with the labour code (article R. 6233-54 of the labour code).

Further details about the alternation and time spent more specifically at the CFA and in the enterprise are determined by the individual CFA.

## 5 Alternation of work-based (in-company) training and school-based training



**Q27 - Is in-company training a compulsory part of the scheme, as per regulation?**



✓ YES

✓ NO

**Q28 - Is there a minimum share of time of the apprenticeship spent in in-company training compulsory as per regulation?**



✓ YES,  
EQUIVALENT OR  
MORE THAN 50%



✓ YES,  
BETWEEN 20%  
AND 50%



✓ YES, LESS  
THAN 20%



✓ NO, NO  
MINIMUM SHARE  
IS COMPULSORY

In France, it is the qualification aimed at that defines the share of learning that is spent in an employer; the share of time spent in company can last from about 20 % to 25 % of the total study time for the certificate of professional skills (CAP) and 22 % for the vocational baccalaureate<sup>[1]</sup>.

[1] European Parliament, Dual education: a bridge over troubled waters?, 2014.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/529072/IPOL\\_STU\(2014\)529072\\_FR.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/529072/IPOL_STU(2014)529072_FR.pdf)

**Q29 - What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school / training centre?**



✓ EVERY WEEK  
INCLUDES BOTH  
VENUES



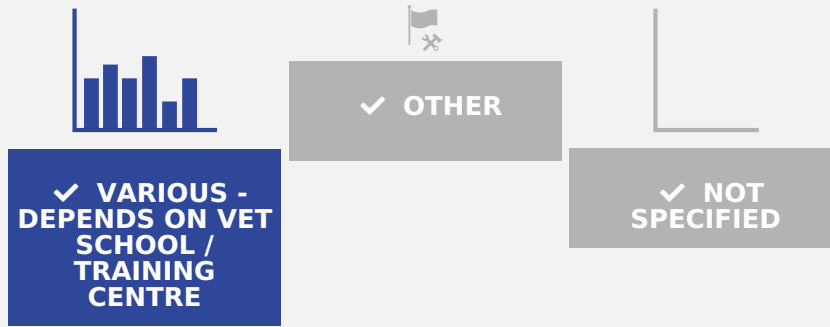
✓ ONE OR  
MORE WEEKS  
(LESS THAN 1  
MONTH) SPENT  
AT VET SCHOOL  
FOLLOWED BY  
ONE OR MORE  
WEEKS AT  
WORKPLACE



✓ ONE OR  
MORE MONTHS  
(LESS THAN 1  
YEAR) SPENT  
AT VET SCHOOL  
FOLLOWED BY  
ONE OR MORE  
MONTHS AT  
WORKPLACE



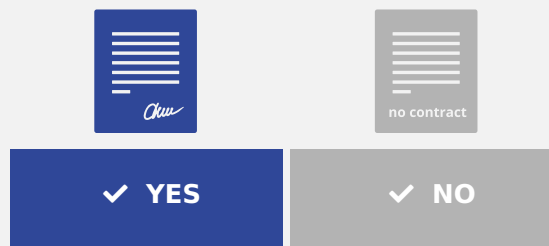
✓ A LONGER  
PERIOD (1-2  
YEARS) SPENT  
AT VET SCHOOL  
FOLLOWED BY A  
LONGER PERIOD  
SPENT TRAINING  
AT WORKPLACE



As noted above, this is defined by the CFA and the hosting enterprise. This hence varies in practice (from one week in both venues to two weeks or may even go up to every three months in both venues).

## 6 Formal relationship with the employer

**Q30 - Is any contractual arrangement between the learner, company and/or education and training provider, required as per regulation?**



The contractual arrangement is one of the core principles of the scheme. As noted above, the apprenticeships are the subject of individual labour contracts signed between an apprentice (or legal representative) and an employer. Through this, employers commit themselves to remunerate the apprentices and deliver effective training and tutoring to them during the duration of the contract. Apprenticeships can be held fully or partly (i.e. jointly shared with training centres for apprentices (*centres de formation d'apprentis*, CFAs) at the employers. Through this contract, apprentices commit themselves to effectively work for the signatory employer within the full duration of the contract.

**Q31 - Which parties enter a contractual relationship?**





✓ NO  
CONTRACT IS  
REQUIRED

The 'contrat d'apprentissage' is the subject of individual labour contracts signed between an apprentice (or his/her legal representative) and an employer.

### Q32 - What is the nature of the contract?



✓ APPRENTICESH  
ARE A SPECIFIC  
CONTRACT  
COVERED BY THE  
LABOUR CODE



✓ APPRENTICESH  
ARE A FORM OF  
EMPLOYMENT  
CONTRACT



✓ FORMAL  
AGREEMENT,  
NOT COVERED BY  
THE LABOUR  
CODE

### Q33 - Where is the contract registered?



✓ AT THE  
EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING  
INSTITUTION



✓ AT THE  
EMPLOYMENT  
OFFICE



✓ AT THE  
CHAMBERS



✓ AT THE  
MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION



✓ OTHER

The contract is to be registered at the chambers (i.e. Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Crafts of Chamber of Agriculture).

### Q34 - What is the status of the learner?

✓ APPRENTICE IS A SPECIFIC STATUS

✓ STUDENT

✓ EMPLOYEE

✓ OTHER

During an apprenticeship contract, the learner has the status of an apprentice, i.e. is both an employee of a company and a student at the CFA.

## 7 Remuneration

**Q35 - Do apprentices receive a salary, allowance or compensation?**

✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE A SALARY (TAXABLE INCOME)

✓ YES, ALL APPRENTICES RECEIVE AN ALLOWANCE (NOT A FORM OF TAXABLE INCOME)

✓ APPRENTICES RECEIVE A REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

✓ COMPENSATION IS POSSIBLE BUT NOT REQUIRED

✓ NO FORM OF COMPENSATION IS FORESEEN BY LAW

The salary paid to apprentices is determined by their age and the level of progression into the apprenticeship (i.e. yearly augmentation until the end of the contract). It is calculated based on a pre-determined percentage of the minimum salary (*salair minimum conventionnel de l'emploi occupé* (SMIC[1])) as follows:

- Apprentices aged between 16 and 17 years old: 25% of SMIC in year 1, 37% in year 2, 53% in year 3.
- Apprentices aged between 18 and 20 years old: 41% of SMIC in year 1; 49 % in year 2, 65% in year 3.

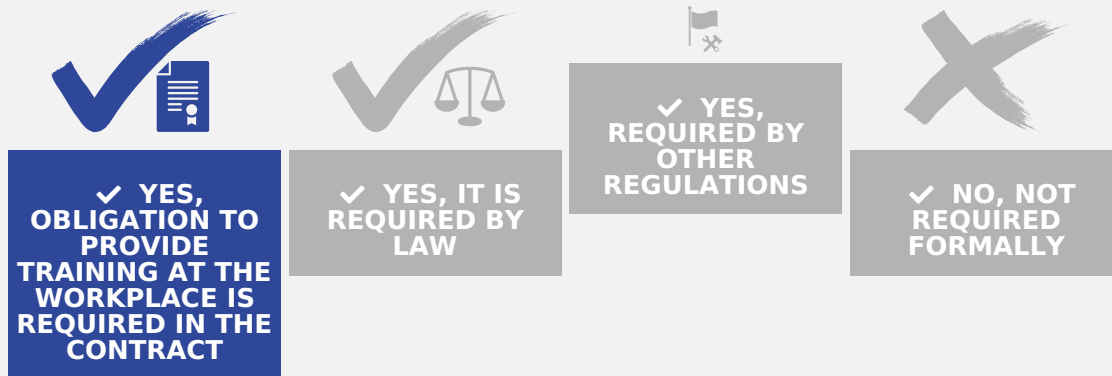
Apprentices over 21 years old: 53 % of SMIC in year 1, 61 % in year 2, 78 % in year 3.

[1] In 2016, monthly gross SMIC corresponds to € 1 466,62 (equivalent to circa € 1 144 net). Further details available at: <http://droit-finances.commentcamarche.net/faq/3567-smic-2016-taux-horaire-et-smic-mensuel-brut-et-net>

### Q36 - Who pays the salary / allowance of the apprentice?



### Q37 - Is the company hosting apprentices required to provide training at the workplace?



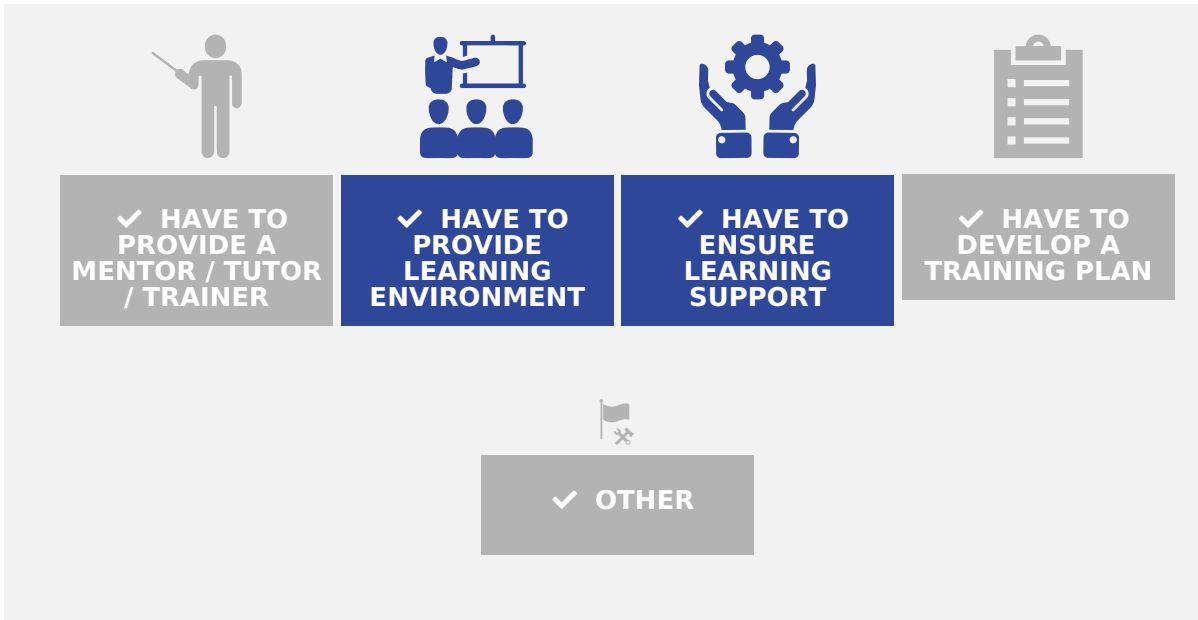
In substance, the legislation sets that any enterprise (private or public) can hire an apprentice if the employer commits him/herself to effectively organise and support the apprenticeship. For this purpose, the employer must notably ensure that the following conditions (appropriate infrastructure, equipment and techniques used, working conditions, sanitation and security, etc.) are met to allow the apprenticeship to be carried out in a satisfactory manner.

Extract from législation (Article L6221-1 of the Labour code<sup>[1]</sup>) '*L'employeur s'engage, outre le versement d'un salaire, à assurer à l'apprenti une formation professionnelle complète, dispensée pour partie en entreprise et pour partie en centre de formation d'apprentis ou section d'apprentissage*'.

[1] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?idArticle=LEGIARTI000006903996&cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006072050>

## 8 Responsibility of employers

### Q38 - What are the requirements on training companies, as per regulation?

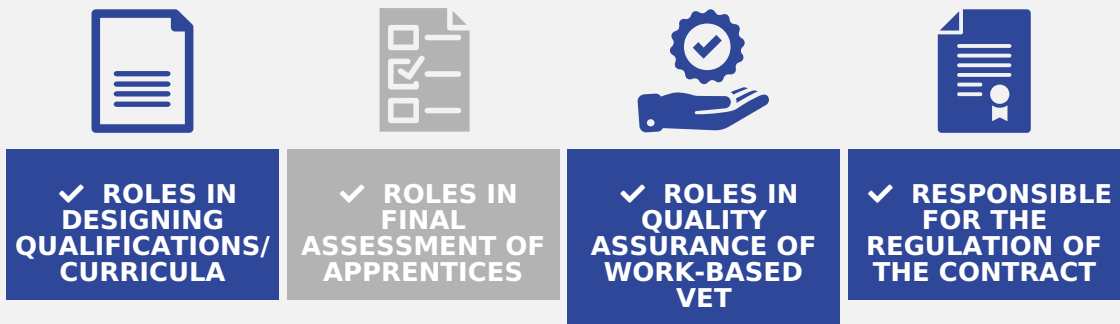


**Q39 - Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?**



Sanctions exist in case employers do not fulfil their commitment. For instance, in the event the employer or the working conditions/environment offered are considered to endanger the apprentice (e.g. representing a risk for his or her health, physical or moral integrity) a monitoring visit can be carried out by a work Inspector. If this results in a negative evaluation, sanction can take the form of a suspension or termination of the apprenticeship contract. If this leads to a termination of the contract, the CFA has the responsibility to look for another employer where the apprentice can effectively pursue the apprenticeship.

**Q40 - What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives (social partners), sectoral councils (if existent), in apprenticeships, as per regulation?**





✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

The scheme has been widely promoted by "Apprenticeship Developers" in the Chambers of Commerce, achieving contact with some 140,000 enterprises between 2009 and 2012. In France, the social partners are strongly involved in VET policy-making, and this role is clearly enshrined in the Labour Code.

In the enterprises linked to chambers (Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chamber of Crafts or Chamber of Agriculture), a mediator can be designated to resolve conflicts between employers and apprentices (or their family) about the implementation or termination of the apprenticeship contract.