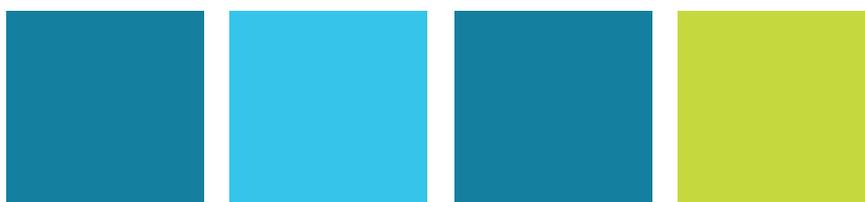
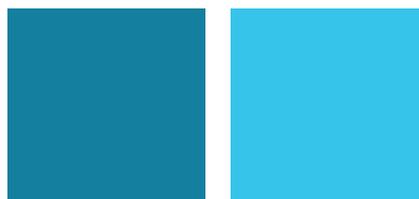

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE

FRANCE





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This VET in Europe report is part of a series prepared by Cedefop's ReferNet network. VET in Europe reports provide an overview of national vocational education and training (VET) systems of the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. The reports help to understand VET's main features and role within countries' overall education and training systems from a lifelong learning perspective, and VET's relevance to and interaction with the labour market.

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ReferNet is a network of institutions across Europe representing the 28 Member States, plus Iceland and Norway. The network provides Cedefop with information and analysis on national vocational education and training. ReferNet also disseminates information on European VET and Cedefop's work to stakeholders in the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway.

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Editorial

In France, people can access education as part of lifelong learning. In 2015-16, 73% of people aged 14-22 were in education, i.e. a little more than 15 million learners in total ⁽¹⁾. In 2016, one in two employees participated in a training programme. Lifelong learning encompasses all education levels and includes initial and continuing vocational education and training (VET). All funding sources combined, expenses for general, technological and vocational education were estimated, in 2016, at EUR 149.9 billion and accounted for 6.7 per cent of GDP ⁽²⁾. In 2015, the national expenditure for continuing vocational training was 1.1% of GDP ⁽³⁾.

Lifelong learning is a national obligation. It covers the whole spectrum of initial and continuing education and training, all age groups, including vocational and alternate training, in a school or under an employment contract:

- initial vocational training for young people, including apprenticeship; it is offered from upper secondary to tertiary education enabling young people to obtain qualifications for the labour market;
- continuing vocational training for young people who have left or completed initial education ⁽⁴⁾ and to adult employees, job seekers, civil servants, self-employed workers and business owners. It promotes and supports labour market (re)integration, encourages skills and career development through acquiring new qualifications and contributes to economic and cultural development and social advancement.
- a scheme that allows adults gain vocational qualifications through knowledge and skills acquired at work ⁽⁵⁾.

⁽¹⁾ INSEE Bilan Formation-Emploi, 2018, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2526273>

⁽²⁾ Repères et références statistiques 2018, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, p 320 http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/RERS_2018/83/2/depp-2018-RERS-web_986832.pdf

⁽³⁾ Appendix to the finance White Paper 2018 – Vocational training https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ Initial education includes pre-elementary to higher education levels

⁽⁵⁾ <http://skillpass-game.com/sites/default/files/doc/assembleenationale.pdf>

Table of contents

CHAPTER 1.	External factors influencing VET	5
1.1.	Demographics	6
1.2.	Economy and labour market indicators	7
1.2.1.	Labour market.....	7
1.2.2.	Educational attainment.....	9
1.3.	Employment policies influencing VET	10
1.3.1	Employment policies relevant to VET.....	10
1.3.2	Value of VET qualifications on the labour market.....	12
CHAPTER 2.	Providing VET in a lifelong learning perspective.....	14
2.1.	Government-regulated VET provision	15
2.1.1.	Initial vocational training	16
2.1.2.	Continuing vocational training.....	21
2.2.	Other forms of VET: Sectoral qualifications recognised by social partners.....	24
2.2.1.	Certificates of professional qualifications (CQPs)	24
2.2.2.	the qualified engineer master degree (<i>Titre d'ingénieur diplômé</i>).....	24
2.2.3.	Business and management qualifications -state labelled	25
2.2.4.	other sectoral qualifications associated or not with the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP)	25
2.3	VET funding.....	26
2.3.1	IVET Funding.....	26
2.3.2	CVET Funding	26
2.4	VET Governance	27
2.4.1	Governance of initial vocational education and training	27
2.4.2	Governance of continuing vocational training.....	28
2.5.	Teachers and trainers.....	29
2.6.	IVET and CVET providers.....	30
2.6.1.	IVET providers.....	30
2.6.2.	CVET providers	31
CHAPTER 3.	Shaping VET qualifications	33
3.1.	The development of qualifications awarded on behalf of the State.....	35
3.1.1.	Developing IVET qualifications - the role of the vocational advisory committees (CPC).....	35
3.1.2.	Developing higher education vocational qualifications awarded on behalf of the State	36
3.2.	Qualifications issued by professional sectors.....	37
3.2.1.	The joint employment and vocational training committees (CPNEF).....	37
3.2.2.	Sectoral observatories of trades and qualifications (OPMQ).....	38
3.3.	The national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP).....	39
3.4	Recognition of prior learning	40
3.5	Quality	40
CHAPTER 4.	Promoting participation in VET	42
4.1.	Incentives for VET learners.....	42

4.2	Incentives for enterprises.....	43
4.2.1.	Public subsidies.....	43
4.2.2.	The role of Skill operators (Opérateurs de compétences).....	43
4.3.	Lifelong career guidance.....	44
4.3.1.	Career guidance for young learners.....	44
4.3.2.	Career guidance for adults, employees or jobseekers	45
4.3.3.	Information on employment and training	45
Annexe 1 –	Bibliography: Background references and Websites.....	48
List of abbreviations	64

List of tables, figures and boxes

Tables

Table 1.	Activity rate by age and sex (%).....	8
Table 2.	Unemployment rates by the highest education level attained one to eleven years after graduation (2016).....	9
Table 3	Breakdown of young people at the end of initial training according to their highest diploma.....	20
Table 4	Target populations, objectives and funding sources by programme	22
Table 5	Funding of initial education and training, 2016	26
Table 6	Overall expenditure by main financers (2015)	27

Figures

Figure 1	VET in France’s education and training system	14
Figure 2	Breakdown of the number of training providers, learners and annual turnover by status of training providers (%).....	31
Figure 3	Professions benefiting from the greatest amount of job creation between 2012 and 2022 in the central scenario (in thousands)	34

CHAPTER 1.

External factors influencing VET

France is an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic. Its institutions are currently governed by the Constitution of 4 October 1958. The legislative power is held by the Parliament that draws up and passes laws, and monitors Governments.

Executive power is shared between the President of the Republic and the Government. The President of the Republic, who is elected for five years at a time by direct voting, appoints the Prime Minister and the members of the Government ⁽⁶⁾.

The Government, led by the Prime Minister, decides and conducts the national policies. Each member of the Government is placed at the head of a group of services, which constitute his or her ministerial department and over which (s)he exercises hierarchical authority ⁽⁷⁾. Primary, secondary, and higher education are under the responsibility of the Minister of National Education Higher Education and Research. Continuing vocational training is the responsibility of the Minister of Labour, Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue.

There are three levels of decentralised authorities: the municipalities (35 357 in mainland France as of 1 January 2018) ⁽⁸⁾, the departments (101 including five overseas) ⁽⁹⁾ and the regions (12 in mainland France), plus five overseas regions, a territorial authority with a special status the Corse. In January 2016, the number of regions went from 22 to 13 to ensure a close and more efficient operation of the territorial services of the state. The new regions are larger, stronger, with new strategic competences.

The decentralised authorities are public structures that enjoy legal and financial autonomy. They are administered by councils or deliberative assemblies elected by direct voting, and by executive bodies generally drawn from the public service ⁽¹⁰⁾. The Government is also represented at departmental and regional levels by the prefects ⁽¹¹⁾.

The status of French overseas territories differs. Some of them, like Guadeloupe, La Réunion and Mayotte, are departments and regions. Others have the status of Overseas authorities, with varying degrees of jurisdiction and autonomy¹². Since the 1980s, the local authorities (at regional, departmental and municipal level) have had responsibilities for the

⁽⁶⁾ <http://www.conseil-constitutionnel.fr/conseil-constitutionnel/francais/la-constitution/laconstitution-du-4-octobre-1958/la-constitution-du-4-octobre-1958.5071.html>

⁽⁷⁾ http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/connaissance/fiches_synthese/fiche_1.asp

⁽⁸⁾ https://www.collectivites-locales.gouv.fr/files/files/statistiques/brochures/les_cl_en_chiffres_2018.pdf

⁽⁹⁾ <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/categories-collectivites-territoriales/qu-est-ce-que-departement.html>

⁽¹⁰⁾ <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/categories-collectivites-territoriales/qu-est-ce-que-collectivite-territoriale-ou-collectivite-locale.html>

⁽¹¹⁾ http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/connaissance/fiches_synthese/fiche_11.asp

⁽¹²⁾ <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/categories-collectivites-territoriales/que-sont-departements-regions-ou-mer.html>

implementation of national policies, in particular relating to vocational training and the management of educational premises ⁽¹³⁾.

1.1. Demographics

France is the biggest EU28 country, with a total surface area of 633 208 km². Most of its territory (543 965 km²) and population is in Western Europe, but it also includes several regions and territories spread around the Americas, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

As of 1 January 2018, the population of France was 67.1 million, with 65 million living on the mainland, and 2.1 million in overseas departments (including Mayotte): that is 10 million more people than 30 years ago and 20 million more than 50 years ago ⁽¹⁴⁾. With 13.1% of the population of Europe, France is the continent's second most populous nation (after Germany 16,2%) and ahead of the UK and Italy ⁽¹⁵⁾.

France's demographic dynamism is primarily based on a high birth rate and a still relatively low death rate. The natural surplus in 2017, estimated at 164 000, tends to reduce slightly every year. In 2017, the fertility rate was 1.88 (children per woman): within the European Union, only Ireland, United Kingdom and Sweden have a similar fertility rate, with 1.92, 1.80 and 1.85 ⁽¹⁶⁾. As people live longer, population is ageing. People aged 65 or more are 19% of the population (this proportion has increased by four points in 20 years, and places France at the average level of the European Union), and 9.3% are aged 75 or over. Since 1980, the number of people aged 60 or more has grown from 17% to 25.9%, and their proportion in the French population as a whole is almost the same as that of young people aged under 20 (respectively 24.1% and 25.9%) ⁽¹⁷⁾. According to Insee's demographic projections, the proportion of the 65+ age group in the population will increase steadily until 2040, when it is expected to reach around 25% ⁽¹⁸⁾.

As a result of these two observations, the rate of unemployed young people is high. France needs specific measures on the one hand, to facilitate the inclusion of young people and on the other hand to develop skills of older one.

The positive net migration of 69 000 in 2017 also contributed, to the population increase ⁽¹⁹⁾. In 2015, there were 6.17 million immigrants living in France (9.2% of the population), of whom 43.8%, i.e. 2.61 million people were from Africa. The proportion of immigrants from Europe remains large, though falling: it was 36.1% in 2014, as compared with 50% in 1990. 14.5% of France's immigrants are from Asia ⁽²⁰⁾.

⁽¹³⁾ https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/France_fr:Contexte_et_tendances_d%27ordre_politique,_social_et_%C3%A9conomique

⁽¹⁴⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽¹⁵⁾ Eurostat, Population en pourcentage de la population UE28, 2018
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=fr&pcode=tps00005&plugin=1>

⁽¹⁶⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽¹⁷⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽¹⁸⁾ Insee - France, social portrait - Insee Références - 2017 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3197289>

⁽¹⁹⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽²⁰⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

1.2. Economy and labour market indicators

In 2017, France's gross domestic product (GDP) was EUR 2291.7 billion ⁽²¹⁾, making it the world's seventh ranked economic power after the USA, China, Japan and Germany, the United Kingdom and India ⁽²²⁾.

In 2000-07, France's GDP grew by an average of 2.1% a year. In 2008, and especially 2009, the French economy suffered from the effects of the world financial crisis: its GDP shrank by 0.2% in 2008, then by 3.1% in 2009, a contraction unprecedented since the World War II ⁽²³⁾. In 2017, in constant prices gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 2.2% following the 1.2% increase in 2016. However, the OECD predicts a better situation in France's growth, which is expected to reach 2% in 2019 ⁽²⁴⁾.

The economy depends primarily on the tertiary sector: indeed, services (commercial and non-commercial) accounted for almost 77.3% of the gross added value generated nationally in 2016, way ahead of industry (14.1%), construction (5.5%) and agriculture (1.6%). Within the service sector, the main branches of activity are: real estate (13.2%), wholesale and retail trade (17.6%), and nonmarket services (22.7%).

Wholesale and retail trade is the branch with the largest number of enterprises. In fact, 19.26% of the 4 365 347 enterprises listed in 2016 (excluding agriculture and non-commercial activities) belonged to this sector. This was followed by 'Professional, scientific and technical activities and administrative and support service activities' (17.79%), construction (13.49%) and 'Public administration, education, human health and social work activities' (13.79%). According to the same source, most French companies are very small: 72% have no employees and 23% have between 1 and 9 employees ⁽²⁵⁾.

1.2.1. Labour market

In 2016, the working population of mainland France was 29.6 million aged 15 or more (employment rate of 71.4%) and has increased by 1.5 million in ten years.

The increase in the activity rate of 15-64 year olds is supported by the older ones. On average in 2014, the employment rate in the 15-64 age group was stable (71.4%; 75.4% men and 67.6% women). With a dynamic workplace training, employment rates in the 15-64 age group increased for women (+5% since 2000) and for men (+0.1%). The rates of access to training for men and women are similar. With the measures gradually increasing the legal retirement age, the number of older workers in the labour market continues to expand and the rate of workers aged 50 to 64 thus increased from 57.2% in 2010 to 64.9% in 2016, i.e. by 7.7 percentage points in six years ⁽²⁶⁾.

⁽²¹⁾ Insee, le PIB en volume - <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3545412>

⁽²²⁾ Worldbank <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf>

⁽²³⁾ Insee - The French economy - Insee Références - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽²⁴⁾ <http://www.oecd.org/fr/economie/france-projections-economiques.html>

⁽²⁵⁾ Tableaux de l'économie française Édition 2018, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽²⁶⁾ insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

Table 1. Activity rate by age and sex (%)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Activity rate 15-64 year olds	63.8	63.8	64.2	64.7
Sex				
Women	60.4	60.6	60.9	61.2
Men	67.3	67.1	67.6	68.4
Age				
15 - 24	28.0	27.9	27.8	28.7
25 - 49	79.7	79.3	79.7	80.1
50 - 64	58.5	59.5	60.3	61.2
<i>Including 55 – 64 year olds</i>	<i>46.9</i>	<i>48.7</i>	<i>49.8</i>	<i>51.3</i>

Source: Insee 2018. Employment Surveys
<https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/fichier/3573746/ecr18-f1-2-emploi.pdf>

According to INSEE's projections for the working population, the employment rate will increase slowly until 2020 and then will remain stable. It is then projected to stay stable from 2070, if fertility rates remain high. Because of population ageing, it is predicted to be on average only 1.4 people in employment for each unemployed over age 60 by 2070, as compared with 1.9 in 2015 ⁽²⁷⁾.

In the last 30 years, France had high unemployment: from 3.5% in 1975 to 5.4% in 1980, to 9% in 1985 and to nearly 10% since then ⁽²⁸⁾. It is generally higher than that in the neighboring countries: between 1998 and 2009, with the exception of 2001 and 2002, the average unemployment rate in the European Union was always lower than in France ⁽²⁹⁾. In end-2016, more than 3 million people were unemployed in mainland France, signifying an unemployment rate of 10.1% of the working age population. In general, fewer women than men were affected by unemployment: in 2016, the unemployment rate among women was 0.3 percentage points below than that of men in mainland France (10.2% compared with 9.9%) ⁽³⁰⁾. Although people with a higher level of education usually have higher employment opportunities ⁽³¹⁾, structural reasons are those that mainly account for the high unemployment rate ⁽³²⁾. Unemployment appears to be less sensitive to the business cycle and is expected to decline only slowly in the medium term. Several factors seem to have made the labour market in France less adaptable to the evolution of the world economy: collective agreements centralized for more than 700 branches of activity; lengthy and uncertain judicial procedures for dismissal; relatively easy access to unemployment benefits and social protection; a relatively high minimum wage and an important tax wedge on work. Negative effects affect the general population, but are particularly pronounced for youth, low-skilled workers and immigrants.

Another feature of the labour market is that both young and older people are relatively disadvantaged in unemployment terms. Young people experience lasting problems in finding work and frequent periods of unemployment. People over 50 find it hard to remain in work.

⁽²⁷⁾ Insee, Projections à l'horizon 2070- 2017 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2844302>

⁽²⁸⁾ As defined by the International Labour Office (ILO). Unless otherwise specified, valid for all references to the unemployment rate in this text

⁽²⁹⁾ Centre for strategic analysis - Labour and employment in 20 years - July 2011

⁽³⁰⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽³¹⁾ Insee - Charts of the French economy - 2018 edition, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

⁽³²⁾ FMI, FRANCE: Conclusions de la mission de consultation de 2016 au titre de l'article IV <https://www.imf.org/fr/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/52/mcs052416>

There is also a high level of long-term unemployment ⁽³³⁾. On average at the end of 2016, the unemployment rate in the 15-24 age group was 24.6%, in the 25-49 age group 9.3% and among 50+ age group less than 7%. Although the rise in unemployment since the second half of 2012 affected all age groups, it affected young people the most. Since 2010, the unemployment rate in the 25-49 age group increased by 0.1 percentage points and among 50+ age group by 0.8 percentage points, whereas youth unemployment decreased by 0.9 percentage points ⁽³⁴⁾.

1.2.2. Educational attainment

Educational attainment level plays a decisive role when entering the labour market for the first time: independently of the economic circumstances, the employment prospects of people who have a post-secondary or tertiary education qualification is markedly better than that of young people with a secondary level qualification (CAP-BEP, baccalaureate or equivalent) or those leaving education with a basic (ISCED 2) or no qualification at all (see Table 2 below).

In 2016, 17.9 % of unqualified people were unemployed, as compared to 5.7 % of those having a BAC + 2 degree (post-secondary or higher level qualification).

The situation of low-skilled youngsters in the labour market is markedly worse: it takes them longer to find a job, and uncertainty throughout their working life is higher: in 2016, after five years on the labour market, the unemployment rate amongst low-skilled workers was 36.1%, the unemployment rate for the labour force with few or no qualifications is 52%, while that of university graduates is 11%. For older people on the labour market, the differences by qualification are smaller: after more than 10 years of seniority, the unemployment rate is 15% for those with few or no qualifications compared to 4% for those with higher education qualifications ⁽³⁵⁾.

Table 2. **Unemployment rates by the highest education level attained one to eleven years after graduation (2016)**

	1 to 4 years	5 to 10 years	11 years or more	all
Without diploma, CAP, Brevet	52.4%	36.1%	14.7%	17.9%
BAC, CAP, BEP	25.5%	16.0%	8.0%	10.7%
BAC + 2	11.0%	5.5%	4.3%	5.7%
All	19.8%	12.5%	8.0%	10.1%

Source: tableau de l'économie française INSEE 2018, p.45, INSEE. <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3353488>

Until the mid-1990s, young people became better qualified. On average, amongst youngsters leaving initial education in 2013, 2014 or 2015, 44% were post-secondary or tertiary education graduates, 42% had at most a secondary school qualification and 7% left school without any diploma. In the end of the 1970s they were respectively 16%, 44% and

⁽³³⁾ Centre for strategic analysis - Labour and employment in 20 years - July 2011

⁽³⁴⁾ Insee - The French economy - Insee Références - 2018 edition <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3547180>

⁽³⁵⁾ Insee, formation et emploi, 2018 <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3526086>

40%. The qualification levels of youngsters leaving initial education have not changed substantially since the 2000s ⁽³⁶⁾.

Obtaining an upper secondary school qualification corresponds to the minimum qualification threshold set by the European Union (identified in the Lisbon strategy's reference criteria). In 2017, in mainland France, the proportion of young people aged 20 - 24 without upper secondary education and not in further education and training is 8.9% ⁽³⁷⁾.

1.3. Employment policies influencing VET

1.3.1 Employment policies relevant to VET

According to the most recent employment survey ⁽³⁸⁾ at the time of drafting the report, 51.8% of people aged 25-64 had undertaken a training course in the previous 12 months, whether for professional or personal reasons. Amongst the working age population, the unemployed undertake less frequently - but longer training programmes than employed people. The state has left itself the possibility of intervention in the form of national programmes. The Great Investment Plan for a Skills society 2018-2022 aims to train one million low-skilled jobseekers. This plan is implemented in the form of 'Regional Skills Investment Pacts'. It follows the '500 000 additional training' plan of 2016, with which the employment agency became the majority sponsor of training for job seekers ⁽³⁹⁾.

Amongst employed people, the self-employed take fewer courses than employees receiving a salary. Managers and technicians have more access to training than other employees, with 55.3 % of them in 2014 stating that they had taken a course in the previous 12 months, which rate is 1.6 times higher than that of factory workers (33.6%) or employees (36.1%) ⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Training schemes without qualifications

Since 2010, France promoted the acquisition of key competences and career management skills in VET. There are a certain number of training schemes managed by the State or other public bodies, which do not award qualifications.

The purpose of these schemes is generally to facilitate integration or reintegration into work for certain categories of people for whom employment is a problem. There are many measures of this kind, three of which are presented by way of example.

Early leavers from education and training and youth guarantee scheme

The authorities have an obligation to support the youth aged 16 to 18 without a diploma and unemployed. The aim is to (keep or) reintegrate young people in the education and training

⁽³⁶⁾ Insee, l'école et ses sortants <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2522723?sommaire=2526273>

⁽³⁷⁾ Repères et références statistiques 2018, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research p248 http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/RERS_2018/83/2/depp-2018-RERS-web_986832.pdf; http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php/File:Share_of_young_people_neither_in_employment_nor_in_education_and_training,_by_sex_and_age,_2015%25.png

⁽³⁸⁾ Insee- France, Bilan Formation-Emploi – dec 2018 <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2526273>

⁽³⁹⁾ <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/actualites/l-actualite-du-ministere/article/plan-d-investissement-2018-2022-former-2-millions-de-demandeurs-d-emploi>

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Appendix to the 2018 finance White Paper. Vocational training https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2_018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

system and provide guidance and support in improving their employability. Beneficiaries have a personalised interview to assess their needs, skills and level of education. A training solution is offered to them and they are accompanied by a tutor of National Education during the training course.

Between 2010 and 2017, the number of people leaving initial training without a diploma was reduced by 42.85% ⁽⁴¹⁾. The target of passing below the 10% threshold of young people of 18 to 24 years of age with no qualifications have been reached in 2013 and stands at 8.9% in 2017 ⁽⁴²⁾.

The missions and skills of the staff involved in the initiative to fight drop outs from education and training (*Mission de lutte contre le décrochage – MLCD*) have been redefined as part of a new national reference framework of activities and skills. Relevant training leading to a certificate of MLCD professionalisation has been organized. The certificate recognises and values the skills acquired by the staff involved in the initiative, in line with the missions carried out in all academic and departmental services in upper secondary schools ⁽⁴³⁾.

In particular, the Youth guarantee initiative, endorsed by the EU countries in 2013, aims to provide a solution (employment or training) for young people who are 'neither in employment nor in training, nor studying', within four months of joining this scheme. The national youth guarantee initiative (*garantie jeunes*) entrusted to the network of local youth integration centers in December 2016, has been generalised in all regions of France. It builds around a territorial partnership which includes the State, the local authorities and integration, health, housing, youth and training players, as well as companies. The aim was that by 2017 100 000 young people with low education and/or disadvantaged socio-economic background should join this scheme. The Youth guarantee consists of (a) the guarantee of a first professional experience: a pathway combining collective support, repeated experience of being placed in a professional situation and training and individual support throughout the year; and (b) a guarantee of resources (lump sum monthly allocation). Although reaching out and attract eligible young people to the youth guarantee scheme has been uneven across the territories, at the end of September 2017, the number of beneficiaries entered since the beginning of the scheme reached approximately 152 000 ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Since 2018, the national youth guarantee scheme has been integrated into the Great Investment Plan for a Skills society 2018-2020, which will result in an increase of funds allocated to the scheme ⁽⁴⁵⁾.

⁽⁴¹⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid55632/la-lutte-contre-le-decrochage-scolaire.html#Les_chiffres_du_decrochage

⁽⁴²⁾ Repères et références statistiques 2018, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, p.249 http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/RERS_2018/31/0/depp-2018-RERS-web_1007310.pdf

⁽⁴³⁾ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid55115/mission-de-lutte-contre-le-decrochage.html>;
decree n° 2017-791 of 5th may 2017
<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/decret/2017/5/5/MENE1710930D/jo/texte/fr>

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Youth Guarantee Evaluation Final Report, 2018 https://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/1-rapport_final_corps_fev2018.docx.pdf

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Appendix to the 2018 finance White Paper. Vocational training https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

The key competences scheme consists of tailored training modules designed to help people develop one of the five basic skills (written comprehension and expression, initiation to a foreign language, mathematics and basic scientific and technological skills, numeracy, the ability to develop knowledge and skills). The aim is to facilitate access to employment, a work study contract or training for qualifications, success in an examination or professional advancement. Such schemes can take place in parallel with a subsidised contract or training for a qualification. The key skills scheme is primarily aimed at the following groups: job-seekers; young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who are unemployed and no longer in education; employees in work reintegration schemes or in subsidised contracts. It comes in addition to the employer's training obligations ⁽⁴⁶⁾. Implementation of the key competences scheme has been transferred to the regions. The European framework of key competences has been recast ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

The national Inter-professional Committee for Employment and Training (Copanef - *Comité paritaire interprofessionnel pour l'emploi et la formation*) has been entrusted with the task of creating a training programme for the acquisition of basic skills. The Copanef introduced the **CléA, an inter-professional certificate attesting to proficiency in basic knowledge and vocational skills**. In 2016, a nationwide publicity campaign is being used to promote the qualification and a call for tenders has been sent out for training bodies to obtain certification for providing training towards this qualification.

In 2015, the Joint Fund for professional career security (Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels - FPSPP) produced specifications and calls for proposals from stakeholders offering CléA qualification training. The specifications relate to support for certification of assessment and training providers. In the call for proposals, attention is drawn to the fact that the 'personal training account' and 'vocational training period' can be used for CléA qualification training, in other words indicating that the training can be funded by OPCOs (skill operators, former 'approved joint collecting bodies'). Depending on the individual situation, the training provided in this context may also be funded by employers under their training plan, or by the regional council or other bodies ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

In 2019, France Compétences absorbs the FPSPP and Copanef (see Section 2.4.2.1).

1.3.2 Value of VET qualifications on the labour market

Vocational qualifications include professional skills and competences which are necessary to perform a specific job. The development of skills and vocational qualifications is perceived as a major lever for the access, retention and return to employment of people and competitiveness of companies. Qualifications appear to be a key factor for employability and social promotion, but also a factor of social identification for individuals.

At the end of initial education and training, the rate of unemployment is all the higher the lower the level of education, which shows the correlation between level of qualifications and employability. The impact of certification processes on access to training and qualifications,

⁽⁴⁶⁾ <http://www.emploi.gouv.fr/dispositif/competences-cles>

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Centre-Info : Refonte du cadre européen de compétences clés https://www.centre-info.fr/refernet/spip.php?page=articleactu&id_article=40539

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Centre Info (2016). Key competences in vocational education and training – France. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/keycompetences-vocational-education-and-training-france>

access to employment and job retention, is measured by the generation survey. The survey allows to produce detailed indicators and monitor professional integration of young people (early career or employability in the long run ⁽⁴⁹⁾).

In CVET, research on the value of professional qualifications for employment has been carried out. Recommendations from a 2016 survey on the use of certificates of professional qualification (*Certificats de qualification professionnelle* – CQP, see also Section 2.2) support social partners' involvement in the development and quality of professional qualifications ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Another example, the professional titles (*Titres professionnels*) issued by the ministry of labour are widely recognized for the benefits they provide in terms of access to employment (see also Section 3.). They are also recognized for their modular and evolutionary engineering based on certificates of professional competences (*certificat de compétences professionnelles* - CCPs), which are the precursors to the blocks of competencies ⁽⁵¹⁾.

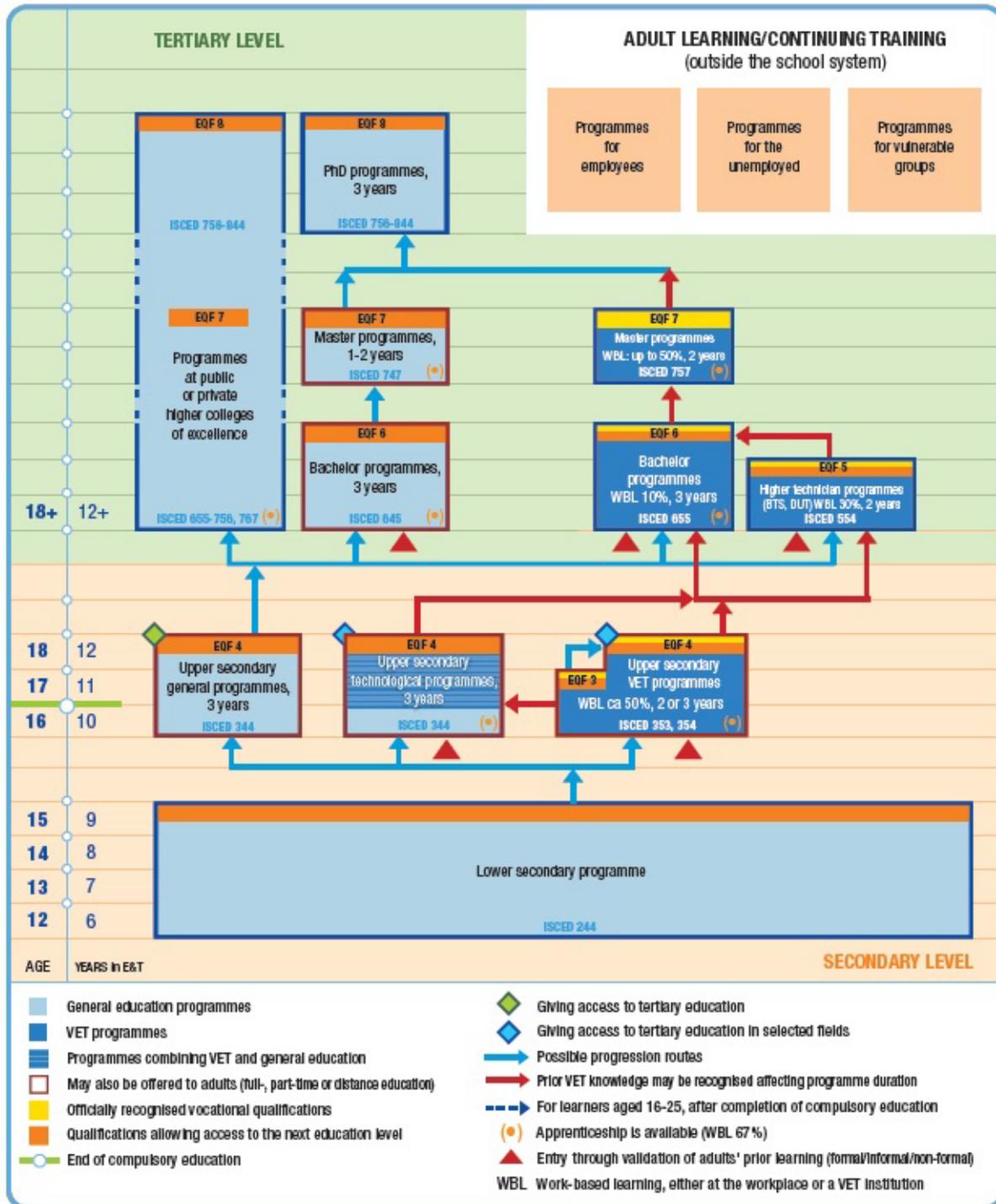
⁽⁴⁹⁾ <http://www.cereq.fr/publications/Cereq-Enquetes/Quand-l-ecole-est-finie.-Premiers-pas-dans-la-vie-active-de-la-Generation-2013>

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Les certificats de qualification professionnelle, CESE, 13/09/2016 <https://www.lecese.fr/travaux-publies/les-certificats-de-qualification-professionnelle>

⁽⁵¹⁾ Cereq, 18 octobre 2018 La politique du titre à l'épreuve du terrain : <http://www.cereq.fr/publications/Cereq-Bref/La-politique-du-titre-a-l-epreuve-du-terrain>

CHAPTER 2. Providing VET in a lifelong learning perspective

Figure 1 VET in France's education and training system



NB: ISCED-P 2011. The French qualifications framework is not linked to European qualifications framework levels 1 and 2.
Source: Cedefop and ReferNet France.

Lifelong learning (*formation tout au long de la vie*) includes initial training (general, professional and vocational education, including apprenticeship) and continuing vocational training for adults and young people already engaged in working life ⁽⁵²⁾.

Since 2009 ⁽⁵³⁾, every working person has a right to a professional qualification. Under this right, (self-) employed and job seekers may choose a training course that enables them to progress in career by at least one level, by acquiring a qualification corresponding to the short- or medium-term needs of the economy. This qualification should either be included in the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP - *Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles*); recognised in the professional sector classifications, or a certificate of professional qualification (CQP).

The State is the only body that develops qualifications that can be accessed through initial education (see Figure 1). All the qualifications developed by the State can also be accessed via lifelong learning and validation of non-formal and informal learning (*VAE-validation des acquis de l'expérience*).

Beside formal IVET programmes leading to qualifications issued and recognized by the state (see Section 2.1), different bodies offer training programmes leading to sectoral vocational qualifications and certificates issued by them (see Section 2.2.).

The methods for accessing different qualifications are flexible. They can be accessed through the initial education system, but also through apprenticeship, continuing vocational training, validation of non-formal and informal learning ⁽⁵⁴⁾. A qualification acquired through continuing vocational training has exactly the same value as one obtained in initial education.

2.1. Government-regulated VET provision

Initial vocational education and training, including apprenticeships, is offered from upper secondary to tertiary education. At the end of the training programme, learners take an exam to obtain a qualification. After IVET, continuing VET (CVET) provides young people and adults with qualifications for the labour market. In initial education, each pathway prepares students for an exam to obtain a qualification. Altogether, there are around 15 000 VET qualifications referenced in the RNCP (see Section 4.3.3) ⁽⁵⁵⁾ and more than 500 000 CVET training programmes referenced by information centres ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

Learners having completed lower secondary general education, with or without the end of lower secondary certificate (*Brevet des collèges*) may move on to upper secondary general, technological or vocational pathways. The ongoing reform of the upper secondary vocational path created to some extent horizontal permeability between VET and general/technological education programmes ⁽⁵⁷⁾ (see Figure 1).

⁽⁵²⁾ <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid217/la-formation-tout-au-long-de-la-vie.html>

⁽⁵³⁾ Act No 2009-1437 of 24 November 2009 on lifelong career guidance and vocational training, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000021312490>

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Art L335-5 du Code de l'éducation, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006071191&idArticle=LEGIARTI000006524828>

⁽⁵⁵⁾ <http://www.intercariforef.org/formations/recherche-formations.html>;
http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/media/projet_ra2017ga2.pdf

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Database managed by a network of regional information centers
<http://www.intercariforef.org/formations/recherche-formations.html>

⁽⁵⁷⁾ <https://www.lyc-allies-pezenas.ac-montpellier.fr/l-orientation/parcours-passerelles-positionnement-et-changement-de-voie-d-orientation>

At tertiary level, VET programmes are offered at EQF levels 5-7 ⁽⁵⁸⁾ alongside vocationally oriented general education programmes available among different training providers, such as business schools, health and social establishments as well as the *Grandes écoles* (see Section 2.2.). An example of the main vocational qualifications developed by the Ministry of Higher Education is the Advanced technician certificate (*Brevet de technicien supérieur* - BTS) at EQF level 5 (see Section 2.1.1).

Initial vocational education and continuing vocational training are managed by different ministries, have different funding sources and even different objectives. There are qualifying requirements for VET teachers and trainers, and various funding IVET schemes.

Continuing vocational training comprises lifelong learning programmes and training schemes for vulnerable groups. There are various routes and progression opportunities while training is offered from a range of VET providers.

2.1.1. Initial vocational training

Initial vocational training is offered from upper secondary to higher education. It is a training path that prepares young people for skilled employment, engineer to worker. The system is flexible. After obtaining a vocational qualification, further education is also possible.

Ministries develop and award qualifications, university degrees and vocational certificates on behalf of the State; i.e. mainly, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, but also the ministries responsible for agriculture, employment, social affairs, youth and sport, health and culture ⁽⁵⁹⁾. All the qualifications awarded by the State are nationally recognised and do not expire.

2.1.1.1. Levels and qualifications in initial vocational training

Initial education and training comprises three levels: pre-primary (optional, but in practice attended by all children aged 3-6) and primary (compulsory) education for children aged 6-11; lower and upper secondary education (ISCED levels 2 and 3 respectively); and higher education (ISCED levels 5-8). Education is compulsory till age 16. Secondary and higher education programmes include entire curricula or periods of vocational training, of varying lengths (see Figure 1).

Secondary education

In 2017, 5 629 800 pupils were in public and private secondary institutions in mainland France and in the overseas territories ⁽⁶⁰⁾. Secondary education is provided mainly in *collèges* (junior high school) and *lycées* (senior high school).

Lower secondary four-year school-based programmes are provided in *collèges*, junior high school for learners aged 11-15. Vocational courses preparing students to enter an apprenticeship are also offered. In the final year, pupils choose their further educational pathway. At the end of *collège*, students pass the end of year exam to take their general certificate of end of lower secondary education (*diplôme national du brevet*), which is not a

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Levels III to I of the French national qualifications framework
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/france_-_european_inventory_on_nqf_2016.pdf

⁽⁵⁹⁾ <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/site/cncp/Accueil35701/Enregistrement-de-droit>

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Repères et références statistiques 2018, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research p.86, http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/RERS_2018/31/0/depp-2018-RERS-web_1007310.pdf

pre-condition to continue to upper secondary education. After *collège*, pupils can choose from three paths in upper secondary education (*lycées*) for three years (age 15 to 18):

- the general curriculum path leads to the end of secondary education general degree (baccalaureat - BAC) (EQF level 4) and allows the continuation of studies in tertiary education, including technology;
- the technological curriculum leads to the end of secondary education technological degree (*baccalaureat technique*) (EQF level 4). This degree opens up access to two-year studies in higher education to obtain a higher technician certificate (BTS) or a technological university diploma (DUT) (EQF level 5), and moving on to engineering bachelor and master studies (respectively, EQF levels 6 and 7). Those with a good high school record (*baccalaureat technique* - EQF 4) may access also engineering studies (EQF level 6), on the condition they follow a preparatory class ⁽⁶¹⁾ (figure 1).
- the vocational curriculum prepares students mainly for the following two qualifications: the CAP (Professional skills certificate, EQF 3) in two years or the Vocational Baccalaureate (BAC-pro, EQF 4) in three-year programmes. Those with a CAP certificate may take also an additional one-year programme leading to the *brevet des métiers d'arts* (BMA-Applied Arts certificates) (EQF 4). The CAP allows to enter employment or to study further towards a Vocational Baccalaureate. The Vocational Baccalaureate also allows to enter employment or to study further ⁽⁶²⁾.

Lycées are state schools and have the status of local public education establishments (*établissements publics locaux d'enseignement* - EPLE). They are built and maintained by the regional authorities. Gateways are possible between:

- vocational education and general and technological education, in both directions;
- the CAP (professional skills certificate) and the vocational baccalaureate;
- full-time education in school and apprenticeships.

The professional skills certificate- CAP (*Certificat d' aptitude professionnelle*) (EQF 3) ⁽⁶³⁾ demonstrates a first level of qualification to its holder as qualified worker or employee in a given employment sector. There are around 200 CAP specialities relevant to the industrial, commercial and service sectors. CAP provides direct access to employment and/or to upper secondary vocational studies (EQF level 4) in order to prepare for a *brevet de maitrise* (BM – advanced diploma) or a baccalaureate, either at school or through an apprenticeship (see Section 2.1.1.3).

The vocational baccalaureate (*Baccalauréat professionnelle*– (EQF 4) is a qualification that allows successful candidates to enter a profession. It lasts three years (age 15-18) and offers almost 90 specialties ⁽⁶⁴⁾. In 2018, one-third of upper-secondary students (665 000) are enrolled in the vocational stream. The organisation of the vocational baccalaureate will evolve in September 2019. Whatever the specialty, a set of key skills will be common.

⁽⁶¹⁾ <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid2604/la-voie-technologique-au-lycee.html>

⁽⁶²⁾ <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid2552/le-baccalaureat-professionnel.html>

⁽⁶³⁾ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid47637/le-certificat-d-aptitude-professionnelle-cap.html>

⁽⁶⁴⁾ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid47640/le-baccalaureat-professionnel.html>

Concerning guidance, 54 hours per year are planned for the design of the continuation of the training project in order to allow this project to be developed in a more progressive way ⁽⁶⁵⁾. Personalised support focuses on written and oral expression and guidance. It includes in particular:

- two weeks of orientation dedicated to the discovery of professional sectors;
- training in higher education;
- personalised guidance interviews.

BMA (*Brevet des métiers d'arts* - Applied Arts certificate) ⁽⁶⁶⁾ is a national qualification in a specific skill, which aims to preserve and pass on traditional techniques while promoting innovation. It is available to holders of a CAP in the same professional sector. The programme consists of vocational training specific to each BMA speciality, general education, and work placements lasting between 12 and 16 weeks. There are currently 23 BMA specialties ⁽⁶⁷⁾.

Higher education

As part of the process of harmonizing higher education curricula in Europe, the national framework for higher education degrees is structured around three levels: Bachelor degree, Master degree and PhD (*Licence-Master-Doctorat* -LMD in French). Alongside, there are also two-year technology degrees: the DUT and the BTS.

DUT: (*Diplôme universitaire technologique* - Undergraduate certificate of technology) ⁽⁶⁸⁾ (EQF level 5) is a two-year vocational degree open to people with a baccalaureate or equivalent. It offers training in 24 specialities. Preparation for a DUT is provided by IUTs (university technology institutes) attached to universities. These qualifications prepare people for technical and professional management roles in certain sectors of production, applied research and the service sector. It is also possible for students to pursue their education, for example towards a Bachelor degree.

BTS: (*Brevet de technicien supérieur* – advanced technician certificate) (EQF level 5) ⁽⁶⁹⁾. Study for the BTS takes place in the advanced technician section of a so-called vocational *lycée*. This course, open to people with a baccalaureate or equivalent, provides specialist education and training. It includes one or more internships. It gives access to a two-year professional qualification. It offers training in 88 BTS specialities, across all fields. While the purpose of the BTS is immediate entry into work, it is nevertheless possible to continue studying, in particular towards a vocational Bachelor's degree.

The **Bachelor degree** (*Licence*) ⁽⁷⁰⁾ -EQF level 6 is a national higher education qualification awarded after six semesters (3 years) at university, following the baccalaureate or via validation of non-formal and informal learning (VAE). It is available in virtually all disciplines

⁽⁶⁵⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid2604/la-voie-technologique-au-lycee.html#Vers_le_nouveau_baccalaureat_2021

⁽⁶⁶⁾ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid47643/le-brevet-des-metiers-d-art-bma.html>

⁽⁶⁷⁾ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid47643/le-brevet-des-metiers-d-art-bma.html>

⁽⁶⁸⁾ <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid20192/diplome-universitairetechnologie.html#specialites-dut>

⁽⁶⁹⁾ <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid20183/brevet-de-techniciensuperieur-b.t.s.html>

⁽⁷⁰⁾ <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid20277/la-licence.html>

and sectors of activity. The academic and vocational programmes begin with a common multidisciplinary core subjects. The curriculum then becomes gradually more specialised. Students have the option to make a final choice on their educational direction at several stages in the course. Once they have obtained their degree, students can then apply to enter the Master programme.

The **vocational Bachelor degree** (*Licence Professionnelle*)⁽⁷¹⁾ (EQF 6) is a national qualification issued by a university. It is open to people with a baccalaureate, but also those who have obtained post-baccalaureate qualifications, such as a BTS or a DUT. It requires two semesters of study (one year), and combines theoretical and practical learning, learning about methods and tools, a 12-16 week work placement and the completion of a supervised project.

The vocational Bachelor degree was designed to allow people to move directly into a profession. It relates to European undertakings on the provision of a degree course that reflects the demands of the labour market in Europe and to the need for new qualifications between advanced technician level and advanced executive-engineer level. It enables students who wish to acquire quickly a professional qualification corresponding to clearly identified needs and jobs. It offers training in 173 specialties, across all fields.

Master degree - EQF level 7⁽⁷²⁾; the national Master degree requires the acquisition of 120 ECTS credits, spread over four semesters. It is open to people with a Bachelor degree or through validation of non-formal and informal learning (VAE).

The course content includes theoretical, methodological and applied (vocational) elements and, when required, one or more internships. It also includes an initiation to research and, in particular, the completion of a dissertation or other original research work. The Master degree provides access to high-level jobs for people with five years of education following the baccalaureate or access to PhD studies. Some regulated professions, i.e. professions which can only be exercised with certain qualifications, require Master degree. Master degree holders can enrol in PhD programmes.

The EPSCP (scientific, cultural and professional public institutions - *établissements publics à caractère scientifique, culturel et professionnel scientifique, cultural and professional public institutions*)⁽⁷³⁾. Bachelor or Master degrees can only be awarded by legally authorised EPSCPs, whether under the standard educational curriculum or through a lifelong learning programme. The EPSCPs consist of universities and some 71 other establishments (mainly public engineering schools). This means that private educational bodies cannot award Bachelor or Master degrees, unless they have signed a partnership agreement with an EPSCP. In the standard educational curriculum, people can study for a vocational Bachelor and Master degree:

- with student status, through a full-time degree programme within the EPSCP, combined with one or more internships, where applicable;
- with apprentice status, through a sandwich course, partly at the EPSCP and partly within a company

⁽⁷¹⁾ <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid20181/licence-professionnelle.html>

⁽⁷²⁾ <http://m.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid20184/master-son-evolution-ses-objectifs.html>

⁽⁷³⁾ <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid49705/liste-des-etablissements-d-enseignement-superieur-et-de-recherche.html>

Table 3 **Breakdown of young people at the end of initial training according to their highest diploma**

Years of leaving 2014-2015-2016			
	Average in %		
	Total	Men	Women
Master, PhD	14	10	17
Advanced schools	7	7	7
Bachelors	9	8	11
DEUG, BTS, DUT and equivalent	13	14	12
Paramedical et social	2	0	3
Total with higher education degrees	45	40	49
General baccalaureate	9	9	9
Technological baccalaureate	6	5	6
Vocational baccalaureate and equivalent	17	18	16
CAP, BEP or equivalent	11	13	10
Total with upper secondary qualifications (including delivered as apprenticeships)	43	45	41
National lower secondary diploma (<i>Brevet</i>)	7	8	6
No qualifications	6	8	5
Total <i>Brevet</i> and no qualifications	13	15	10
Total leaving initial education	100	100	100

Source: Repères et références statistiques 2018, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, p. 253
http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/RERS_2018/31/0/depp-2018-RERS-web_1007310.pdf

The rise in level of qualification at departure from initial education is the effect of public education policies aiming to tackle the challenge of quality in school education. This enhanced the success of young people in secondary education and, more broadly, of everyone leaving initial education.

The ***Titre professionnel*** (professional diploma) is a state certificate designed and issued by the Ministry of Labour. It certifies that his holder masters the skills, abilities and knowledge necessary to perform a job. It enables the acquisition of specific professional skills to support employability and professional development of workers. In 2017, 7 out of 10 job seekers found a job after obtaining a *titre professionnel*. This qualification is made up of modules (blocks of competencies, see also Section 1.3.2) ⁽⁷⁴⁾. They cover all sectors (building, human services, transport, catering, commerce, industry, etc.) and different levels of qualification (EQF levels 3 to 6). The credential may be granted by apprenticeship, continuing training and VAE.

2.1.1.2. **VET provision, main features of apprenticeships and similar schemes**

Young people can study for IVET qualifications in a vocational *lycée* or as apprentices in an Apprentice Training Centre (CFA - *centre de formation des apprentis*). The 2018 Bill for the

⁽⁷⁴⁾ CCP - *certificats de compétences professionnelles*

freedom to choose one's professional future, define for CFAs the same obligations and quality standards as those for training centres ⁽⁷⁵⁾.

The vocational *lycée* (senior high school) programme includes general subjects, theoretical and practical vocational training, project work and internships in companies. The professional skills certificate (CAP) programme consists of a two-year preparatory course, include practical vocational training for more than half of the programme. Practical vocational training take place in the form of courses, practical work and workshop activity, indoors or outdoors, depending on the speciality of the CAP, with 12 to 16 weeks spent in a workplace.

The vocational baccalaureate three-year programme is based on training aimed at proficiency in professional techniques specific to each specialism; the workplace-based training covers 22 weeks, spread in the 3 years, during which learners put in practice skills learned in schools.

The apprenticeship combines alternatively training with an employer and training at a CFA. The apprenticeship contract is directed at young people of 16 to 29 years of age, leaving school and continuing their initial training up to the level of a qualification or diploma registered in the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP). Moreover it enables a course of studies to be undertaken through a succession of contracts, up to the higher level.

The apprentice spends 60% to 75% of his or her time in a company. Apprentices are supervised by an apprentice supervisor, who is responsible for passing on knowledge and expertise and assigning jobs. The period of training in a CFA is at least 25% for the two-year CAP and at least 25% for the three-year vocational baccalaureate. The curriculum is organised by the CFA. The course focuses on general and technical training ⁽⁷⁶⁾.

2.1.2. Continuing vocational training

The lifelong learning system provides several training possibilities for young people, people in work and jobseekers: state-recognised qualifications or other qualifications, for example those recognised by a professional sector, such as CQPs –certificates of professional qualification.

Access to qualifications is possible via training programmes, but also by validation of non-formal and informal learning (VAE, *validation des acquis de l'expérience*; <http://www.vae.gouv.fr/>). Training programmes to acquire a (set of) specific skill(s) exist, but they do not lead to a qualification or partial qualification (see Table 4).

⁽⁷⁵⁾ Loi n° 2018-771 du 5 septembre 2018 pour la liberté de choisir son avenir professionnel https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=A6446FA6AF9D1ED55743DC8A12894157.tplgfr36_s_2?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000037367660&categorieLien=id

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Cedefop, 2014, Apprenticeship-type schemes and structured work-based learning programmes – France; <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/fr/publications-and-resources/countryreports/apprenticeships-WBL-France-2014>

2.1.2.1. Main lifelong learning programmes

Table 4 Target populations, objectives and funding sources by programme

Programme name	Target population	Target qualification	Funding sources
Professional development contract	Young people Jobseekers People on basic welfare benefits	RNCP registered diploma or qualification 74% other than: - Certificats de qualification professionnelle (CQP – certificates of professional qualifications): 11.8% - Or Qualification recognised in the classification of a non-RNCP registered collective agreement: 14.2%	Social partners, employers and State
skills development plan	Employees	These training initiatives mainly aim to adapt, develop, acquire, maintain or enhance skills.	Mainly employers and social partners
Promotion or transition through apprenticeship (new in 2019)	Mainly employees	This programme lead to a recognised diploma, title or qualification	Mainly social partners, employers
Personal training account with professional transition (new in 2019)	Employees, Jobseekers who have previously held a temporary contract	This programme lead to a recognised diploma, title or qualification	Mainly social partners
Personal training account	Employees, Jobseekers Unqualified young people	Notably: - Courses providing basic knowledge and skills; - Courses leading to a RNCP registered qualification or to an identified part of a vocational qualification, classified in the list, for the purpose of acquiring a set of skills; - CQP; - work experience accreditation (VAE) support initiatives	All funding sources: Regions, local job centres, social partners, learners, etc.
Courses funded by the Region	Mainly jobseekers, sometimes employees	Courses leading to and preparing for qualifications, professional development courses 85.4% Social and professional integration courses 16.6%	Regions, joint funding by state social partners is possible
Courses funded by local job centers	Jobseekers	Courses for qualifications, Professional development, Job adaptation	Regions, joint funding by state, social partners is possible

Source: Appendix to the finance White Paper 2018 – Vocational training
http://www.performancepublique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2015/pap/pdf/jaunes/jaune2015_formation_professionnelle.pdf

2.1.2.2. Learning opportunities for vulnerable groups

Schemes for detainees and people in prison

Broadly speaking, these vocational training schemes form part of integration processes designed to give qualifications to people in prison, and prepare them for release and return to working life. The prison administration is responsible for analysing their needs, designing and implementing training programmes, and monitoring and assessing their effectiveness in establishments under its control.

Since 1st January of 2015, by application of the VET law (law n° 2014-288 of 5 March 2014 of vocational training, employment and social democracy), the Regional councils are responsible for the training of people in prison. Regional councils will finance and plan the training programmes. A convention with the state specifies the operating of the public regional council of vocational training within the prison establishments ⁽⁷⁷⁾.

In 2017, as a result of funding from the European Social Fund, the Government, the Regional Councils, the National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equality of Opportunity (ACSE - *agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l'égalité des chances*) 15% of detainees received a training. Regions spend 0.9% of their training expenditure on detainees of prison ⁽⁷⁸⁾.

Schemes for people with disabilities

Since 1 January 2015, the region has been responsible for the vocational training policy for people with disabilities: remuneration of trained people with disabilities, access to key competences programme.

In addition, under the '500 000 training' plan, disabled jobseekers accounted for 81 439 training entries in 2016, or 9% of total training entries. In 2016, the Regional Councils trained 26 927 disabled workers and mobilised a budget of 232.7 million euros. Agefiph and Fiphfp ⁽⁷⁹⁾ financed 34 672 training actions for disabled workers. Overall, in 2016, 62 125 training actions were financed ⁽⁸⁰⁾.

The development of vocational training is among the objectives pursued by the national agreement relating to the employment of disabled workers concluded on 27 November 2013, in particular between the State, the Job Centre, the Agefiph, etc. The regional plans for the integration of disabled workers (*Plan Régional d'Insertion des Travailleurs Handicapés - PRITH*) bring together, at the regional level, the commitments of all those involved in professional integration of disabled workers.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ For an example in the Region Bretagne : <http://www.gref-bretagne.com/Actualites/Breves/Formation-des-detenus.-La-Region-signe-une-convention>

⁽⁷⁸⁾ Appendix to the 2018 finance White Paper. Vocational training https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

⁽⁷⁹⁾ *Association de Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des Personnes Handicapées* – Agefiph and *Fonds pour l'Insertion des Personnes Handicapées dans la Fonction Publique* – Fiphfp, public bodies for the professional integration of people with disabilities, operating respectively in the private and the public sectors.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Appendix to the 2018 finance White Paper. Vocational training https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

2.2. Other forms of VET: Sectoral qualifications recognised by social partners

Alongside the diplomas, university degrees and vocational qualifications awarded on behalf of the State, there are also vocational training schemes that can either deliver qualifications created and awarded by players other than the State, or that can meet specific needs for the acquisition or development of professional skills. In France, the training market is free; this means that training bodies have no obligation to consult the State about the way they organise their courses and/or qualifications ⁽⁸¹⁾.

The three main sectoral qualifications, are the certificates of professional qualification (*certificats de qualification professionnelle* – CQP), the qualified engineer degree (*titres d'ingénieur diplômé*) ⁽⁸²⁾, and Business and management qualifications issued by elite higher education institutions (*Grandes écoles*) ⁽⁸³⁾

2.2.1. Certificates of professional qualifications (CQPs)

Certificates of professional qualifications (CQP) enable employees to acquire an operational qualification. The CQP, recognised by the collective or branch agreement it relates to, is thus created and issued within an industry sector by a joint industry body, usually the CPNE (National Joint Employment Committee) ⁽⁸⁴⁾. It should be noted that CQPs are not attached to a level of qualification, but are classified separately in the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP), by sector of activity ⁽⁸⁵⁾. They can only be accessed through lifelong learning programmes and training is usually provided by a body created and managed by the branch in question. As of 2019, these certificates are under the responsibility of France compétences (see Section 2.4.2.1).

2.2.2. The qualified engineer master degree (*Titre d'ingénieur diplômé*)

Possessing the title 'qualified engineer' (*titre d'ingénieur diplômé*) allows a person to work as an engineer. The education required to reach this level generally lasts 5 years after baccalaureate (EQF level 7) ⁽⁸⁶⁾. It can be provided by public or private engineering schools. The title of 'qualified engineer', which has both an academic and professional quality, is protected and controlled by the CTI (*commission des titres d'ingénieur* – engineering

⁽⁸¹⁾ European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2014, country report: France, https://cumulus.cedefop.europa.eu/files/vetelib/2014/87058_FR.pdf

⁽⁸²⁾ issued by France Ecoles recognised by the State: *Instituts polytechniques, École nationale supérieure or Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM) - Ecole d'ingénieurs du CNAM*

⁽⁸³⁾ *Grance ecoles* are tertiary education institutions of excellence operating in limited fields (public administration, science and engineering, humanities and business administration). Access to *Grandes Ecoles* programmes is possible through a very competitive and selective admission procedure (upper-secondary –*Baccalaureate*- graduates, pre-selected based on their school profile and grades, must undertake preparatory classes in a two-year programme with eliminatory examinations at the end of each year).

⁽⁸⁴⁾ Article L6113-4 of the labour code:

https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do;jsessionid=80F0D87426DBC7277F61C5EF06EF7E4C.tplgfr37s_1?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006072050&idArticle=LEGIARTI000037374062&dateTexte=20181005&categorieLien=cid#LEGIARTI000037374062

⁽⁸⁵⁾ <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/site/cncp/Accueil35701/Repertoire>

⁽⁸⁶⁾ <http://www.enic-naric.net/france.aspx>;

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/france_-_european_inventory_on_nqf_2016.pdf

qualification committee): only institutions that are accredited by the CTI are allowed to award the title of 'qualified engineer' ⁽⁸⁷⁾.

2.2.3. Business and management qualifications -state labelled

Sixty business and management schools are authorised to award 'State approved' business and management qualifications of EQF level 6 to EQF level 7 after 3 to 5 years of training ⁽⁸⁸⁾. The 'state approved' label is a recognition procedure conducted by the Ministry of National Education which gives the diploma the value of a national qualification. The label is granted for a maximum renewable period of 6 years. *Grandes écoles* offering programmes leading to business and management qualifications are mainly private institutions managed by professional organisations. A 'State approved' qualification provides access to the LMD cycle (*Licence-Master-Doctorat*), whether in France or abroad ⁽⁸⁹⁾.

2.2.4. Other sectoral qualifications associated or not with the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP)

In addition to state qualifications, CQPs, qualified engineer titles and business schools, a training body can offer its own qualifications. Focusing on the skills required for the performance of a job identified on the labour market, a set of criteria is defined for assessing candidates' mastery of these skills.

Upon request of the issuing body, qualifications can be registered to the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP), following recommendation by the national committee on vocational qualifications (CNCP); and be referenced to the national nomenclature (at NQF levels V to I (EQF levels 3 to 8). Qualifications associated to the RNCP are nationally recognized by the State and also by the social partners' associations representing both employers and employees. Qualifications registered in the RNCP may also be obtained through validation of non-formal and informal learning (VAE). In both processes (completion of a training programme or validation of prior learning-VAE) the awarding decision (certification) is issued by a jury based on the respective assessment criteria set.

In the absence of RNCP registration, these qualifications are only recognized by the training body. However, they can be recognised by the professional community, i.e. to allow a holder to obtain a job corresponding to the qualification acquired.

As of 2019, the CNCP joins France Compétences (see Sections 2.4.4 and 3.3) to develop the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP), making it more agile and adapted to the needs of companies.

⁽⁸⁷⁾ <https://www.cti-commission.fr/>

⁽⁸⁸⁾ <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid70660/les-ecoles-de-commerce-et-de-gestion.html>

⁽⁸⁹⁾ holders of the state-approved qualifications may enter EQF 6 bachelor programmes and move on to further studies, along the LMD (bachelor-master-Phd) model

2.3 VET funding

2.3.1 IVET Funding

Education funding includes:

- teaching and training (including in apprenticeships);
- administration and educational research;
- catering and lodging, counselling and medical service;
- transportation, purchase of books and other educational materials, etc.

All funding sources combined, expenses for general, technological and vocational education were estimated, in 2016, at EUR 149.9 billion (state funds 54.6%, 23.8% regional funds, 1.3% household and 8.5 % company funds).

Table 5 Funding of initial education and training, 2016

Funding category	Percentage of funding
Teaching and training	85.3%
Catering and lodging	7.2%
Administration, guidance, transports and other expenses	7.5%

Source: Repères et références statistiques 2018, Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research, p. 316
http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/RERS_2018/31/0/depp-2018-RERS-web_1007310.pdf

2.3.2 CVET Funding

Companies, through their contributions to Skills operators (*Opérateur de compétences* - OPCO) and the tax of apprenticeship, remain the main funder of CVET and apprenticeship with 30.8% of total expenditure (Table 6). In 2015, their expenditure fell by 3.9%.

With an increase in expenditure compared to 2014 (+3.3%), the Regions are maintaining their position as the second largest funder. State intervention expenditure on continuing vocational training and apprenticeship decreased (-7.1%). The expenditure of other administrations or bodies with a public service mission, including Agefiph (association managing the fund for the professional integration of people with disabilities), Unédic⁽⁹⁰⁾ and Pôle Emploi, decreased by 1.5% and represented 8.4% of total expenditure.

The appropriations allocated to training (excluding public officials) by local and regional authorities other than the Regions (departments, municipalities, etc.) fell slightly in 2015 but had little impact on overall expenditure (less than 1%).

Individual spending, consisting of individual training purchases, was dynamic (+3.0%). It contributes 5.6% to overall expenditure.

Finally, the expenditure of the State, territorial and hospital public services for the training of their staff, representing 22%, is stable overall. Expenditure by the civil service is

⁽⁹⁰⁾ The Unédic (National Professional Union for employment in industry and trade - *Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce*) is managed by social partners. From consultancy to evaluation, to piloting and deployment, management or communication, Unédic implements unemployment insurance through support and sharing expertise services.

down (-4.0%); on the other hand, expenditure by civil servants in the territorial and hospital sectors is up by 2.3% and 3.1% respectively.

Table 6 Overall expenditure by main financers (2015)

	2014 (EUR millions)	2015 (EUR millions)	Structure 2015 (%)	Évolution 2015 / 2014 (%)
Companies (excluding direct expenses)	7 992	7 677	30.8 %	-3.9
Unédic/Pôle emploi and other public administrations	2 135	2 104	8.4%	-1.5
Regions	4 500	4 647	18.7%	3.3
State	3 748	3 483	14.0%	-7.1
Other local authorities	116	113	0.5%	-2.8
Private individual	1 362	1 403	5.6%	3.0
State, territorial and hospital public services	5 481	5 469	22%	-0.2
TOTAL	25 334	24 896	100.0	-1.7

Source : Annex of the draft finance law on vocational training 2018 https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance-publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2018_for_mation_professionnelle.pdf

In 2017 a major investment plan (2018-22, PIC - *Plan d'investissement dans les compétences*) aimed at mobilizing 57 billion over a five-year period has been set up. One of the objectives of this plan is to raise the level of employment by building a skills company: to this end, €15 billion, including €13.8 billion led by the Work and Employment mission, will make it possible to finance actions aimed at developing skills, in particular those of long-term jobseekers and young people without qualifications.

2.4 VET Governance

2.4.1 Governance of initial vocational education and training

The governance of IVET policy ⁽⁹¹⁾ involves numerous players, as vocational training in France is a matter of shared competences between the State, the regions and representatives of the business world.

a) The ministries responsible for initial and continuing vocational training are mainly those in charge of national education, higher education and employment. For its part, the Ministry of National Education is responsible for initial vocational training in secondary education. In this context, it carries out several missions entrusted to it by law, it:

- draws up the standards for professional diplomas in consultation with professional representatives, defines the examination regulations, and issues diplomas;
- offers a variety of training opportunities to students and apprentices,
- recruits, trains and pays teachers; controls the quality of training, and reports on the results and the means used.

Others Ministries develop and award qualifications, university degrees and vocational certificates on behalf of the State: the Ministry of Higher Education, but also the ministries responsible for agriculture, employment, social affairs, youth and sport, health and culture.

⁽⁹¹⁾ http://media.eduscol.education.fr/file/dossiers/61/5/formation_professionnelle_VF_151615.pdf

- b) The Regions are responsible for the planning and coherence of vocational training. In this context, they define their policies according to their economic and social priorities, in consultation with the State and the social partners. They thus draw up the contract for a regional vocational training development plan which defines, in the medium term, a coherent programme for the development of training courses for young people and adults in their territory. They also finance certain measures aimed at these groups in accordance with their priorities. They ensure the construction, maintenance and equipment of high schools as well as the financing of school transport.
- c) VET stakeholders (representatives of the business world) are systematically involved in the implementation of professional training. Thus, - they contribute to the elaboration of diplomas, - they participate in examination boards, - they welcome and train young people in companies, - they participate in the financing of initial technological and vocational training by paying a tax called 'apprenticeship tax'.

For example, ministerial consultative professional committees, composed of representatives of the social partners, may be created to support the revision of vocational qualifications.

A body, the National Commission for Collective Bargaining (CNNC), is responsible for issuing an opinion on draft laws, ordinances and decrees relating to general rules in the field of employment policy, guidance and initial and continuing vocational training, as well as on training plans organised by the State ⁽⁹²⁾.

2.4.2 Governance of continuing vocational training

The vocational training system is currently managed within the framework of the 'four-party system': the State, the Regions and the social partners (employee representatives and employer representatives) contribute to the development and implementation of continuing vocational training and apprenticeship policy in the country.

- a) the State is responsible for the development of standards and strategies for vocational training. It guides the policy of continuing vocational training and apprenticeship in a logic of securing professional careers and access to employment. Three ministries are particularly concerned by continuing vocational training and apprenticeship: the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of higher education, research and innovation. The Ministry of Labour prepares and implements the Government's policy in the fields of labour, employment and vocational training ⁽⁹³⁾. The National Education Department is also involved in CVET through public schools, which can pool their resources to provide a diversified offer for CVET.
- b) since 2014, the regions has been in charge of training specific audiences previously under the responsibility of the state. In addition, as part of the regional public guidance services, the region may appoint operators to provide professional development advice. Finally, it organises and finances the regional public service for vocational training ⁽⁹⁴⁾.

⁽⁹²⁾ Art. L2227-1 of the labour code, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?idArticle=LEGIARTI000019870676&idSectionTA=LEGISCTAO00006177940&cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006072050&dateTexte=20121101>

⁽⁹³⁾ <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/formation-professionnelle/acteurs-et-qualite-de-la-formation-professionnelle/article/gouvernance-quadrupartite-de-la-formation-professionnelle-continue-et-de-l>

⁽⁹⁴⁾ Art. L214-12 à L214-16-2 du Code de l'éducation

- c) social partners have an essential role in regulatory, policy and financial aspects of lifelong learning programmes (IVET and CVET). The inter-professional agreements they sign form the basis for the introduction of reforms and are generally reflected in legislative and regulatory documents. Social partners also manage the different bodies that collect compulsory company contributions to apprenticeship and vocational training, as well as the unemployment insurance system for job-seekers. Social partners also contribute to the development of diplomas; take part to boards of examiners.

2.4.2.1. France Compétences

In order to strengthen both national governance and monitoring and evaluation of vocational training, the 2018 Bill for the freedom to choose one's professional future establishes France Compétences, a single, four-party public institution, under the supervision of the Minister in charge of vocational training, as the main government body on VET implementation and financing⁽⁹⁵⁾. As the sole governance body for vocational training and apprenticeship, France compétences distributes mutual funds to the various actors, regulates the quality of training and ensures that the reform is properly implemented. A central and strategic role.

Representing the State, trade unions, employers and regions, France compétences thus replaces and absorbs several national instances on VET implementation and financing : Copanef (*Comité paritaire interprofessionnel national pour l'emploi et la formation*), Cnefop (*Conseil national de l'emploi, de la formation et de l'orientation professionnelle*), FPSPP (*Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels*) and CNCP (*Commission nationale de certification professionnelle*).

With new prerogatives and strengthened resources, this national public institution fulfils strategic missions as a funder, regulator and supervisor of vocational training and apprenticeship stakeholders.

It is the body that distributes the mutual fund envelopes and ensures the equalisation of apprenticeship funds to skills operators (OPCO - *Opérateurs de compétences*, formerly OPCA) and the regions. In close collaboration with the branches, it will participate in the development of vocational titles and diplomas. The CNCP joins France Compétences to develop the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP).

France Compétences will assess the efficiency of the newly established skills operators, the revamped VET funding scheme and the quality of training offered.

2.5. Teachers and trainers

The following categories of VET teachers and trainers are in place: VET school teachers; apprenticeship general courses teachers; apprenticeship technical, theoretical and practical courses teachers; and in-company apprenticeship mentors (in-company trainers)⁽⁹⁶⁾.

At upper secondary, there are three types of secondary school teachers (upper secondary teacher, technological path teacher and VET teacher in the vocational path (*lycée professionnel*, see also Section 2.1.1.1). A national entrance examination has been set up for

⁽⁹⁵⁾ <https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/ministere/acteurs/agences-et-operateurs/article/france-competences>

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Detailed information on this section is available online: Centre Inffo (2016). *Supporting teachers and trainers for successful reforms and quality of vocational education and training: mapping their professional development in the EU –France*. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_FR_TT.pdf

teachers wishing to work as vocational teachers in upper secondary vocational programmes (*lycée professionnel*) (see Section 2.1.1). To take part in it, candidates must demonstrate either a level of qualification in the subject to be taught or a number of years of professional practice in the relevant profession.

Teachers may benefit from continuing training schemes. Every year the Ministry of Education prepares a National training plan (*Plan national de formation- PNF*), which sets out guidelines for continuing training of state education staff⁽⁹⁷⁾. As an example, a 2018 circular for 2018/19 supports initiatives to get the regional education authorities involved in training for VET school teachers, contacts with the trades and professions around vocational training and assessment and strengthening the development of relationships between schools and businesses⁽⁹⁸⁾.

For apprenticeship, there is no national examination to become a teacher; each training center (CFA) does its own recruitment, and candidates should apply directly to it. The formal requirements for becoming a teacher in an apprenticeship training center are:

- VET teachers (general teaching roles) must demonstrate a qualification equivalent to that required for a similar post in a public establishment;
- In-company trainers, called apprenticeship mentors (*maîtres d'apprentissage*) (performing technical, theoretical and practical teaching roles) must have a relevant qualification that is at least at the same level of the qualification that the apprentices are working towards; and have several years of vocational experience in the relevant speciality/skills.

Teaching requirements of higher education teachers (in both, universities and *Grandes écoles*) are subject to rules specific to each sector and participants come from wide-ranging backgrounds, such as vocational teachers, lecturers (*maîtres de conférences*, permanent staff who have passed a competition), upper secondary education teachers who have been assigned to higher education, and so on.

2.6. IVET and CVET providers

2.6.1. IVET providers

The main IVET paths include upper secondary and higher education. Upper secondary is intended for pupils aged 15 to 18 and includes the general, technological and vocational paths. In 2017, there were 1456 *lycées professionnels* in 834 public and 622 private establishments.

Higher education comprises two coexisting sectors: universities, public establishments which do not have selection processes; and a non-university sector made up of *Grandes Ecoles*, higher education establishments which are only accessible via very competitive entrance competitions, and preparatory classes for those establishments.

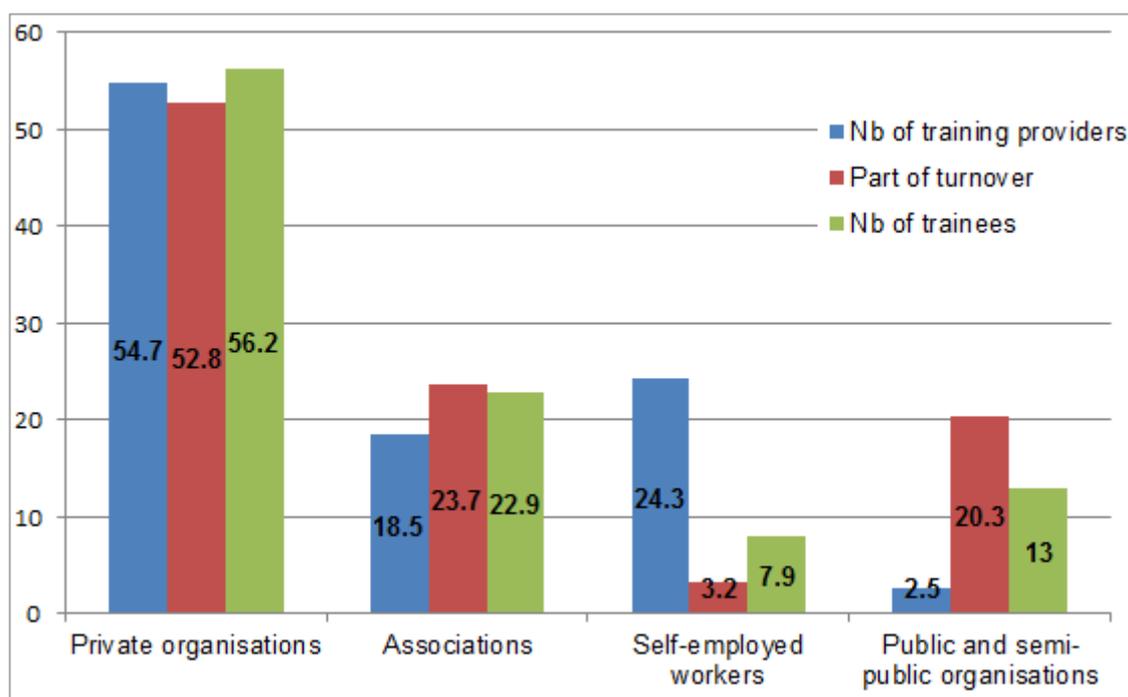
⁽⁹⁷⁾ http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid285/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=131780
http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/26/85/0/perso149_annexe_972850.pdf

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Education Ministry (MENESR) Circular No 2018-072 of 3 July 2018 ("new academic year circular")
https://www.education.gouv.fr/pid285/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=131780

2.6.2. CVET providers

In France, the training market is free. In 2016, 68 000 CVET providers had a turnover of 14.3 billion euro. Their number and turnover are relatively stable compared to 2015.

Figure 2 **Breakdown of the number of training providers, learners and annual turnover by status of training providers (%)**



Source : Appendix of the draft budget bill – November 2018

Public and semi-public bodies are 2.6% of all providers. However, they train 13.7% of people on courses and receive 21.4% of revenues in the sector ⁽⁹⁹⁾. The main public or semi-public bodies involved in lifelong learning programmes are:

- the GRETA (*GRoupements d'ETAblishements* – public educational establishment groups) created by the Ministry of National Education; the CNAM (*Conservatoire national des arts et métiers* – National Conservatory of Arts and trades): a public institution that falls within the remit of the minister responsible for Higher Education;
- the CCI consular schools, which are attached to the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, attached to the Ministry of Economics. The consular schools, operating in the field of vocational higher education, include 23 higher business schools (*écoles supérieures de commerce et de management*), and 8 engineering schools ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾;
- the AFPA (*Association pour la formation des adultes* – national association for adult vocational training) which mostly provides training for jobseekers, using regional or government funds. With 116 centres, the AFPA provides courses leading to one of the professional qualifications issued by the Ministry of Employment ⁽¹⁰¹⁾.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ Appendix to the finance White Paper 2018 – Vocational training https://www.performance-publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2_018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ <http://www.cci.fr/web/enseignement-superieur/choisir-votre-cursus>

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/projects/en/partners/afpa;>
<https://www.afpa.fr/actualites/la-mission-de-l-afpa-vous-former-pour-l-emploi>

In addition, all universities have a lifelong learning department, which offers adults access to most sectors of higher education.

The lifelong vocational training bodies, whether public or private, all operate in a competitive market.

CHAPTER 3.

Shaping VET qualifications

Professional certification process refers to a description of skills, abilities and knowledge associated with a qualification that is necessary to exercise this profession, function or professional activity. It's a document, obtained by an individual following a set procedure, which confirms these professional skills according to a given criterion. There are around 18 000 identified qualifications. More than 15 500 vocational qualifications are listed at the RNCP ⁽¹⁰²⁾.

Following the introduction of the 2018 Bill for the freedom to choose one's professional future, from 1 January 2019, professional qualifications registered in the RNCP, including certificates of professional qualifications (CQP), will systematically be associated with a level of qualification in the national nomenclature (NQF levels V to I/EQF levels 3 to 8). The law defines the components of professional qualifications registered with the RNCP:

- an activity framework that describes the job profile and activities carried out, the trades or jobs involved;
- a skills framework that identifies skills and knowledge, including transversal skills;
- an evaluation framework that defines the methods and criteria for evaluating learning outcomes; and
- blocks of skills.

Professional certification processes lead to IVET vocational qualifications and diplomas awarded on behalf of the State by ministries, but also CVET sectoral qualifications issued by other bodies such as:

- certificates of professional qualification (*certificat de qualification professionnelle* - CQP) created by the social partners of a branch (see Section 2.2.1);
- the title of 'qualified engineer' (*titre d'ingénieur diplômé*) created and controlled by the CTI (*Commission des titres d'ingénieur* – engineering qualification committee (see Section 2.2.2.) ⁽¹⁰³⁾);
- the professional certificate (*certificat professionnel*) created by public or private training providers such as:
 - o consular schools placed under the control of the chambers of trades and crafts or the chamber of commerce and industry;
 - o the National Conservatory of Arts and trades - CNAM (*Conservatoire national des arts et métiers* –) or the national association for adult vocational training - AFPA (*Association pour la formation des adultes*);
 - o private establishments awarding vocational qualifications and diplomas in their own name.

These certifying structures have set up specific organisations and procedures to develop their vocational qualifications, certificates and titles. Most of them are included and classified in the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP) and include key competences.

⁽¹⁰²⁾ Rapport d'activité 2017 de la CNCP http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/media/projet_ra2017ga2.pdf

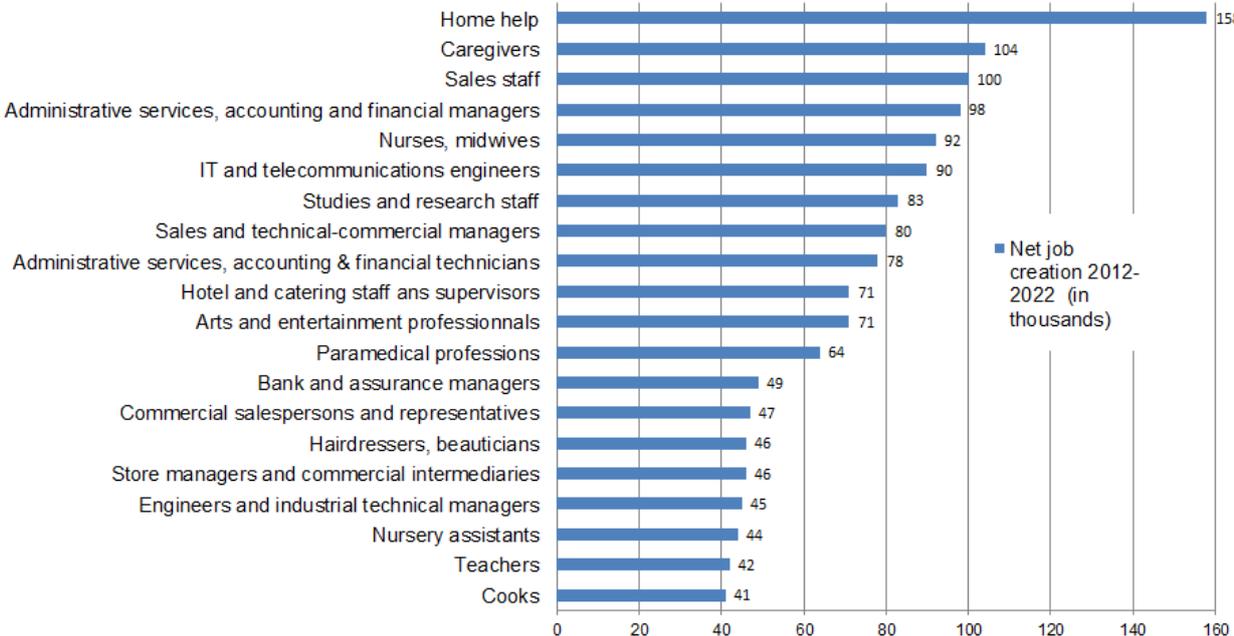
⁽¹⁰³⁾ <https://www.cti-commission.fr/>

Professionals (social partners) take part in the various development stages of vocational qualifications and mostly those awarded on behalf of the state, from submission of a feasibility study (*dossier d'opportunité*) through to the development of certification reference documents. With the assistance of their observatories, various branches of industry propose new sectoral-specific diplomas.

Social partners are actively involved in the development and update of all vocational and technological qualifications (EQF level 4) through participation in the vocational advisory committees (CPC) (see also Section 3.1.1.)⁽¹⁰⁴⁾. CPCs approval is mandatory to create, revise or delete vocational qualifications under the authority of the Ministry of education. This reflects the involvement of the social partners in the recognition of skills which are necessary for the exercise of the professions. France Compétence aims to strengthen the role of social partners in shaping VET qualifications.

Since the end of the 1990s, 'Jobs and qualifications forecasting' exercises are run by the General strategy and forecasting office – France Stratégie. These exercises bring together all VET stakeholders involved in the analysis of medium-term evolution of employment forecasts on skills and occupations. These exercises enable the public authorities, the social partners and the economic actors capture future trends and adapt training provision accordingly⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ (see Figure 2).

Figure 3 **Professions benefiting from the greatest amount of job creation between 2012 and 2022 in the central scenario (in thousands)**



NB : Concepts: employment according to BIT meaning; classification of professional categories (FAP 2009).
 Field: ordinary households; metropolitan France.
 Source: projections France Stratégie-Dares;
http://www.strategie.gouv.fr/sites/strategie.gouv.fr/files/atoms/files/cgsp_dares_les_metiers_en_2022_01072_014.pdf p.21

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ CEREQ, NETDOC n°89, Place et rôle des professionnels dans la conception des diplômes professionnels, mars 2012`
⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ CEREQ NETDOC 89, Place and role of professionals in the design of vocational qualifications, March 2012;
<http://www.strategie.gouv.fr/publications/metiers-2022-prospective-metiersqualifications>

3.1. The development of qualifications awarded on behalf of the State

Qualifications developed by ministries are created on the basis of opinions by consultative bodies, which may be vocational advisory committees (CPC - *commissions professionnelles consultatives*), which is the case in particular for the Ministry of National Education, but also for the Ministries of Employment, of Social Affairs, of Agriculture, of Youth and Sport, and of Culture; and national bodies responsible for assessing training courses on behalf of the Ministry of Higher Education.

3.1.1. Developing IVET qualifications - the role of the vocational advisory committees (CPC)

Vocational advisory committees (*Commissions professionnelles consultatives-CPC*) are made up of representatives of employers, employees, the government and qualified individuals and are divided into major spheres of economic activity. They are a compulsory place of consultation between the social partners for all vocational qualifications issued on behalf of the State. The 2018 Bill for the freedom to choose one's professional future has strengthened their role. They must validate the creation, revision and deletion of vocational qualifications issued under the responsibility of their ministry. The law provides that all Ministries may set up their vocational advisory committee.

All ministries with an interest in training were invited to form vocational advisory committees. At the time of drafting this report, six ministries had set up such committees ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾. The Ministry of National Education (14 CPCs, each with a defined scope according to a professional logic), the Ministry of Employment (seven) while the Ministries of Social Affairs, of Agriculture, of Youth and Sport and of Culture each have one CPC. Under the Ministry of Employment, seven vocational advisory committees operate in the following fields: construction and public works; wholesale and retail trade; industry; management and data processing; the tourism, leisure, hotel and restaurant sectors; transport and logistics; and 'other services to businesses, local authorities and individuals' ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾.

CPCs decide on the needs for diplomas given the evolution of the professions.

The Ministry of National Education manages the largest number of certification processes and has the most sophisticated procedure. For the purpose of developing and updating its professional qualifications, the Ministry relies on 14 vocational advisory committees, corresponding to the main business sectors in the economy ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. It was the first ministry to set up a vocational advisory committee, already in the 1970s, and to make publicly available its certification processes. These are formally set out in two guides:

- the *Guidelines for the development of professional qualifications* and
- the *Guidelines for members of the vocational advisory committees*.

At the Ministry, any plan to update or create a qualification is preceded by a study, to analyse economic data and sectoral trends and to define needs and necessary developments in jobs and qualifications. On this basis, outside research bodies can be

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Rapport de diagnostic, tome 1 - Évaluation de la politique de certification professionnelle, Juillet 2016

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Décret n° 2016-2000 du 30 décembre 2016

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000033749404&categorieLien=id>

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid46815/cpc.html>

commissioned to pursue the work. As soon as the relevant vocational advisory committee reaches a decision:

- a directory of professional activities is drawn up on the basis of an analysis of actual jobs and job trends, together with
- a certification directory which defines the expected skills outcomes, associated knowledge and assessment and approval procedures ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾.

Over 560 members of the vocational advisory committees of the Ministry of National Education, include professionals (employers and employees). Vocational advisory committees are places of institutional representation (large companies, business federations, trade union organisations in the sectors concerned, teachers, etc.). To enhance the activities of their sector and to attract young people to their professions, professional branches must have a sector-specific vocational qualification. The creation by the Ministry of National Education of a (national) pool of qualified young people is an important objective for companies and they pay particular attention to the attractiveness of their diplomas ⁽¹¹⁰⁾.

Moreover, any plan to update or create a national education general and vocational qualification is submitted to other official advisory bodies:

- the higher council for education (CSE - *conseil supérieur de l'éducation*) which is chaired by the education Minister or his/her representatives and made up of representatives of teachers, parents, *lycée* pupils, students, local authorities and voluntary organisations. It is a consultative body giving opinions on education-related issues, such as the objectives and operation of the public education service, programmes, examinations and qualifications ⁽¹¹¹⁾;
- the advisory inter-professional committee (CIC - *comité interprofessionnel consultatif*) is consulted on general questions relating to upper secondary vocational and technological qualifications (EQF 4). It also works on future trends in education (in upper secondary general, technical and vocational streams). The Committee also works on crosscutting issues affecting all the vocational advisory committees. The advisory inter-professional committee is made up of chairs and deputy chairs of the vocational advisory committees, the Ministry of National Education, government representatives, representatives of employer organisations, representatives of trade unions and qualified individuals. For vocational qualifications, its role is complementary to that of the higher council for education (CSE).

3.1.2. Developing higher education vocational qualifications awarded on behalf of the State

With the exception of the advanced technician certificate-BTS (*Brevets de technicien supérieur*) and the undergraduate certificate of technology-DUT (*Diplôme universitaire de technologie*) (see Section 2.1.1.1), there are no models of qualifications in the national higher education system, there is no standardised description of the content and duration of courses or the procedures for assessing students.

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Place and role of professionals in the development of vocational qualifications. Céreq. Net.Doc , n° 89, 2012, <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid46815/nouvelle-architecture-descpc.html>

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ CEREC, NETDOC n°89, Place et rôle des professionnels dans la conception des diplômes professionnels, mars 2012 www.cereq.fr/content/download/4009/38843/file/Net-doc-89.pdf

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Advisory bodies : <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid56490/organismesconsultatifs.html>

The higher education qualification system is exclusively regulated by an assessment process, conceived as an evaluation of the quality of training content, i.e. the quality of training programmes in terms of aims and objectives, the level of education, the quality of the education teams, the job prospects of students, etc. Initially, the training or qualification plans of training institutions are assessed by different national bodies, depending on the educational sector:

- the high council for the evaluation of research and higher education for training programmes provided by universities and certain schools ⁽¹¹²⁾;
- the engineering qualification committee (CTI) for engineering courses and qualifications (see Section 2.2.2) ⁽¹¹³⁾; and
- the management training and qualification assessment committee for business and management schools ⁽¹¹⁴⁾.

In the next phase and on the basis of this assessment, the decision on approval of a course is taken by the Ministry of Higher Education, after an appraisal by scientific advisers working with the Director general higher education and employment. The appraisal takes into account a number of criteria, notably the link with research, the relevance of the course to the establishment's overall training opportunities and subsequent professional opportunities. With regard to engineering qualifications, a 'decision' is taken by the CTI for private engineering schools, and a notice is given for state engineering schools.

Generally speaking, approval is given for a period corresponding to the frequency of the appraisal. The decision is published in the Official Journal of Higher Education and Research.

It may be said that the assessment of training programmes and qualifications, at several levels and by several bodies, constitutes the 'quality assurance procedure' of the French higher education system ⁽¹¹⁵⁾.

3.2. Qualifications issued by professional sectors

To create their own certifications, the professional bodies generally rely on work done by the joint employment and vocational training committees (*CPNEF -commission paritaire nationale de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle*); and the observatories of trades and qualifications (*OPMQ - observatoires prospectifs des métiers et des qualifications*).

3.2.1. The joint employment and vocational training committees (CPNEF)

The CPNEF were created by employers and unions under the National Inter-professional Agreement on job security of 10th February 1969. Initially, their role was to work on the redeployment of employees made redundant for economic reasons, but their scope rapidly widened to vocational training. Today, the role of the CPNEF is:

- to produce recommendations on employment and training;

⁽¹¹²⁾ La recherche en France <http://extranet.inserm.fr/informations-juridiques/larecherche-en-France> , <https://www.hceres.fr/PRESENTATION/Missions>

⁽¹¹³⁾ CTI (*Commission des titres d'ingénieur*) <http://www.cti-commission.fr/>

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ Commission d'Evaluation des Formations et Diplômes de Gestion (CEFDG) <https://www.cefdg.fr/>

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ The French national accreditation framework, towards the European lifelong learning accreditation framework. CNCP. October 2010

- to study quantitative and qualitative trends in employment. For this purpose, they generally rely on work by the Employment and Qualifications Observatories;
- to make decisions on identifying priorities for training and defining specific sectoral qualifications ⁽¹¹⁶⁾. It is in this capacity that certain branches have delegated to their CPNEs the responsibility for creating, if necessary, their own certificates of professional qualification (*CQP - Certificats de qualification professionnelle*) ⁽¹¹⁷⁾. It should also be noted that it is the CPNEs, and not the professional branches, that can request that a CQP should be registered with the RNCP ⁽¹¹⁸⁾.

3.2.2. Sectoral observatories of trades and qualifications (OPMQ)

The 2004 law on lifelong learning and social dialogue made the creation of an observatory of trades and qualifications (OPMQ- *Observatoires Prospectifs des Métiers et des Qualifications*) compulsory for each industrial sector. One or more professional branches or groups of branches may set up, by collective agreement, an observatory, which role is to assist businesses in defining their training policies and employees in developing their skills (establishing their professional project – *project professionnel* in the national context). These bodies generally produce three main types of output:

- studies on topics associated with the management of jobs and skills in the sector (diversity and gender equality, training, aged management, skills replacement, etc.);
- statistical databases on sectoral economics, jobs and workforce, basic or lifelong training, etc.;
- job maps or directories (job descriptions, job lists, etc.).

The results from the studies carried out by the observatories provide the joint employment and vocational training committees with research they can use to investigate qualitative and quantitative trends in employment and qualifications, in order to decide on training priorities. This is the framework within which the work of the observatories of trades and qualifications can be used by the vocational advisory committees (CPC) or the joint employment and vocational training committees (CPNE) to identify qualification development requirements in a specific sector ⁽¹¹⁹⁾.

Professional organisations are free to implement the method that suits them best to develop sectoral qualifications. However, in March 2012, the national joint committee for professional Training (CPNFP) published a ‘methodological guide for use by the joint employment and vocational training committees’ for the creation of certificates of professional qualification (CQP). The proposed approach is to:

- conduct a study to confirm the relevance of creating the certificates of professional qualification (CQP);
- draw up activity, qualification and (possibly) training lists (*référentiels* in the national context) which describe the set of competences and skills (and possibly relevant training

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ CPNEF-SV Commission Paritaire Nationale Emploi Formation Spectacle Vivant, <http://www.cpnefsv.org/nav:cpnefsv-missions>

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Collective bargaining in 2012. Ministry of Employment <http://travailemploi.gouv.fr/actualite-presse,42/dossiers-de-presse,2141/bilan-de-la-negociationcollective.16475.html>

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ Procédure de demande d’enregistrement au RNCP, <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/site/cncp/Accueil35701/Enregistrement-sur-demande>

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Report on forward surveys on professions and qualifications. Céreq. 2012

content) a learner should possess to be awarded a vocational certificate in the specific sector;

- develop tools and procedures for assessing applicants; and
- formalise the process for implementing the different training courses (sometimes including practical training) leading to the acquisition of the CQP (¹²⁰).

France competences (see Section 2.4.2.1) must consolidate, animate and make public the work of the observatories.

3.3. The national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP)

Since 2002, all vocational qualifications recognised by the State and the social partners, at national level, have been registered in the national register of vocational qualifications (*Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles* - RNCP). As a single reference source, the RNCP is a centralised repository of competences providing individuals and companies with up-to-date data on vocational qualifications. It includes public and private qualifications, based on initial and continuing vocational training, provided that they are vocational in nature. This means that the RNCP does not include general qualifications such as the national *brevet* qualification, general qualifications (baccalaureates or doctorates) (¹²¹). France compétences will be in charge of managing certifications processes leading to qualification award and establishing the RNCP. Three main categories of vocational qualifications are listed in the register:

- vocational qualifications (certifications and diplomas) awarded on behalf of the State by ministries (see Sections 2.2 and 3.1.1) awarded on behalf of the State, developed by ministries with the support of vocational advisory committees (CPC). These qualifications are legally registered in the RNCP;
- Sector-specific certificates of professional qualification (*certificats de qualification professionnelle* - CQP), developed by and under the responsibility of the social partners. These qualifications are not automatically registered in the national register of vocational qualifications. The professional body concerned must make a request (by filing an application form), which is subject to CNCP approval;
- other vocational qualifications, described as 'qualifications voluntarily registered with the RNCP', produced by training organisations, professional bodies and ministers without CPC backing. The registration of qualifications in the RNCP is subject to approval by the national committee on vocational qualifications (CNCP).

Qualifications in the RNCP register are nationally recognised. Vocational qualifications and diplomas are classified by field of activity and level of qualification. It should be noted that private training organisations have no obligation to register their professional qualifications in the RNCP, provided that they do not use terms in the description such as '*licence*', '*master*' or '*diplôme d'État*' (¹²²).

(¹²⁰) <http://www.fpspp.org/portail/portal/action/SimpleDownloadActionEvent/oid/00q-00001p-04e>

(¹²¹) The French national accreditation framework, towards the European lifelong learning accreditation framework. CNCP. October 2010

(¹²²) *Commission nationale de la certification professionnelle Rapport au Premier ministre*, 2015, http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/media/rapport_premier_ministre_cncp_2015_0.pdf

From 1 January 2019, structuring into skills sets becomes mandatory only for vocational qualifications registered in the national register of vocational qualifications (RNCP). Vocational qualifications are made up of skills set (*blocs de compétences*), homogeneous and coherent sets of competences contributing to the autonomous exercise of a professional activity and which can be evaluated and validated. The skill blocks constitution must facilitate the implementation of equivalences and bridges between qualifications.

These blocks can be certified and validated through validation of prior learning. The vocational aptitude certificate (CAP), the vocational Baccalaureate and the advanced technical diploma (BTS) are already offered in skills set in adult education.

A database dedicated to the referencing of qualifications in skill blocks has been created: www.certifications-blocs-competences.fr/inscription

3.4 Recognition of prior learning

Validation of non-formal and informal learning (*Validation des acquis de l'expérience* – VAE) Since the social modernisation act of 17th January 2002, VAE has offered a third route of access to qualifications and vocational certificates, alongside initial education and training and lifelong learning. Through the VAE, anybody can obtain a full qualification or certificate based on his or her professional experience⁽¹²³⁾. In order to obtain accreditation, the applicant (self-employed, employees or volunteers) must submit a dossier and perhaps undergo an interview with the jury for the relevant qualification, which then decides whether to award the chosen qualification fully or partially. The interview is used to complete and clarify the information contained in the application dossier. It allows the jury to check the authenticity of the file, to check the level of proficiency of all the skills required to obtain the (partial) qualification and to discuss the experience and practice acquired in respect of the activities or functions that the applicant has exercised or held.

3.5 Quality

France Compétences is the only body responsible for the quality and governance of vocational training and apprenticeship. It will evaluate the actions carried out by skills operators, the evolution of costs and the quality of training. The 2018 Bill for the freedom to choose one's professional future has put emphasis on transparency and efficiency through new obligations for all training providers using mutual funds to inform and monitor their training actions. France Competence can alert the State to possible malfunctions.

France Competences shall monitor implementation of quality arrangements. All training organisations, including apprenticeship training centers, will have to be quality certified by 2021, as long as the training they offer is financed by public funds and mutual funds.

The objective is to strengthen and enhance the quality of the training offered; clarify the offer of 'quality' certification for training providers, and bring more flexibility in the individual approaches of workers to training. The certification will be issued by an accredited body or by

⁽¹²³⁾ VAE in 2015 in the accrediting ministries, around 24 600 qualifications and degrees awarded. Dares Analyses-Dares, Juin 2017, n° 038 <https://dares.travail-emploi.gouv.fr/dares-etudes-et-statistiques/etudes-et-syntheses/dares-analyses-dares-indicateurs-dares-resultats/article/la-validation-des-acquis-de-l-experience-en-2015-dans-les-ministeres>

a certification body recognised by the new 'France Compétences' agency on the basis of an ad hoc national reference framework expected to be created in January 2019.

This national standard will set indicators for assessing the criteria to be met by training providers and the associated audit procedures, taking into account the target groups concerned and respective training actions ⁽¹²⁴⁾.

Another element that guarantees quality is the methodology for developing certification processes. For example, each ministry that develops standards for professional diplomas in consultation with professional circles, defines examination regulations, awards diplomas, offers various types of training in its institutions, recruits, trains and pays teachers, monitors the quality of training and reports on the results and resources used ⁽¹²⁵⁾. The need for the training organisation to be accredited or recognised by the awarding authority responsible for the diplomas or titles prepared was analysed as an important element of quality ⁽¹²⁶⁾.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ The 2018 Bill for the freedom to choose one's professional future,
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=A6446FA6AF9D1ED55743DC8A12894157.tplgfr36s_2?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000037367660&categorieLien=id

⁽¹²⁵⁾ Bref historique du RNCP
http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/media/fr_nqf-eqfv.pdf

⁽¹²⁶⁾ 6 septembre 2018 : Les opérateurs de compétences : transformer la formation professionnelle pour répondre aux enjeux de compétences par MM. Jean-Marie Marx et René Bagorski
<https://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/ministere/documentation-et-publications-officielles/rapports/article/rapport-les-operateurs-de-competences-transformer-la-formation-professionnelle>

CHAPTER 4.

Promoting participation in VET

At national level, education and training policies are supported by an overarching set of policies ⁽¹²⁷⁾ with three priorities:

- providing professionals and the public with the resources/tools they need to make decisions about their education and career choices;
- giving every citizen, whatever their age and status, clear, objective and accessible information about careers and training opportunities, and the qualifications they need to access these careers, and the organisations that provide such training; and
- promoting the development of vocational training, jobs and skills by offering specific financial incentives to companies and professional organisations.

4.1. Incentives for VET learners

Development of training is also fostered by public and private initiatives that seek to support evaluation, forecasts and initiatives of vocational training.

The personal training account scheme is a personal right to training (CPF - *compte personnel de formation*) that can be used by any employee, throughout his working life, to follow qualifying training. From 2019 onwards, the account will be funded in euros at the end of each year and by additional financing, also fixed in euros. The amount of acquired rights will no longer be fixed by law but by decree, which should make it possible to regulate the new system. Part-time employees have the same rights as full-time employees. The amount of the fees should be 500 euros/year for a maximum of 5000 euros over a period of 10 years. Entitlements will always be increased for employees with low qualifications (below NQF level V/ EQF level 3) (800 euros/year for a maximum of 8 000 euros).

The 2018 Bill sets up a new mechanism, the personal training account scheme (CPF) for career transition. An employee may use his CPF account to enroll in training actions intended to change ,including by benefiting from a specific leave if the training is carried out, in whole or in part over working time. The remuneration of the beneficiary of the career transition project is then paid by the employer, who is reimbursed by his Skills Operator (OPCO) ⁽¹²⁸⁾.

There are many training aids for job seekers. For example, Pôle emploi regularly buys training places in different training organisations. It selects and finances training programmes that support skills development at local level, in targeted sectors of the economy where there is insufficient demand for employment (jobs in tension) ⁽¹²⁹⁾.

The individual training aid (AIF, *aide individuelle à la formation*) provided by Pôle emploi indirectly helps to finance vocational training. The training must have a direct professional aim (BTS, Master) and be of a duration between 1 and 3 years maximum. Depending on the

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Law of 24 November 2009; 2013 law on reforming schools; Circular No 2016-053 of 29 March 2016, http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid285/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=100542

⁽¹²⁸⁾ <https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F10705>

⁽¹²⁹⁾ <https://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/l-action-de-formation-conventionnee-par-pole-emploi-afc--@/article.jspz?id=60683>

cost of the training, Pôle emploi reimburses the educational costs directly to the training organization where it takes place ⁽¹³⁰⁾.

4.2 Incentives for enterprises

The government provides public subsidies for companies, primarily small and very small companies, and for professional organisations, to promote training, employment and skills.

4.2.1. Public subsidies

The purpose of these subsidies varies. National credits can be granted for:

- encouraging and helping VSE-SMEs to anticipate their human resources management needs;
- PES support to job seekers in accompanying economic change and securing career paths;
- training and adaptation agreements of the National Employment Fund (FNE-Formation). Vocational training measures are implemented to support employability of the workforce in a changing work environment;
- support for employees to adapt in new jobs due to technological innovation, technical developments or changes in the production sector ⁽¹³¹⁾.

In addition, there are numerous regional or government subsidies to encourage apprenticeship contracts, a major priority of public youth employment policy. The three main subsidies are (i) a one-off lump sum payment made by the state, under certain conditions, to employers who take on an apprentice; and (ii) the internship bonus, a subsidy granted to companies employing 250 people or more, which go beyond the minimum threshold for employees on work study contracts.

In addition to these subsidies, apprenticeship contracts are fully or partially exempt from social security charges, the costs of training apprentice supervisors are supported by the skills operators (*Opérateurs de compétences-Opc*), and specific subsidies are granted for the recruitment of apprentices with disabilities.

In some cases, an employer who undertakes to hire a jobseeker who needs training to carry out the requested tasks may benefit from training aid financed by Pôle emploi. Operational Employment Preparation (POE – *préparation opérationnelle à l'emploi*) is a financial assistance allowing job seekers to be trained in order to be able to respond to a job offer. This assistance may be granted to the employer who undertakes to recruit the jobseeker after the training period ⁽¹³²⁾.

4.2.2. The role of Skill operators (Opérateurs de compétences)

Following the 2018 reform (the 2018 Bill), the former OPCA become skill operators (OPCO), managed by social partners. The reform gives them new responsibilities: supporting companies and professional sectors to anticipate the transformation of professions and build forward-looking management of jobs and skills.

⁽¹³⁰⁾ <https://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/l-aide-individuelle-a-la-formation-aif--@/article.jspz?id=60856>

⁽¹³¹⁾ Annexe au projet de loi de finances pour formation professionnelle 2018, publique.budget.gouv.fr/sites/performance_publique/files/farandole/ressources/2018/pap/pdf/jaunes/Jaune2018_formation_professionnelle.pdf

⁽¹³²⁾ <https://www.service-public.fr/professionnels-entreprises/vosdroits/F17485>

They will provide technical support to professional branches and a local service to very small and medium-sized businesses. These new operators will help companies and industries to anticipate their technological changes. They will also have to support them in exercising their new responsibilities in the field of vocational (education and) training: co-construction of vocational diplomas, definition of the cost of the contract for diplomas and professional titles, payment of CFAs, etc.).

Skills operators will manage two envelopes, the financing of alternance training programmes (apprenticeship contracts and professionalization contracts) and the financing of the training plan for companies ⁽¹³³⁾ with less than 50 employees. This monitoring will be done in conjunction with the participating branches of the skill operators who will have to determine the level of support for apprenticeship contracts and determine priorities for the use of the TPPME envelope ⁽¹³⁴⁾.

They also help to construct a society of dynamic knowledge within the framework of the Lisbon strategy for economic development, efficient employment markets, professional and geographical mobility, and social cohesion and equity.

4.3. Lifelong career guidance

Guidance is an important stage in deciding one's career. The framework training law of 24 November 2009 including the principle of a universal and lifelong right to career guidance created a public career information and guidance service (SPO - *service public de l'orientation*). Today, everyone has the right to career information, counselling and guidance. This career information and guidance service has two main components:

- an online *guidance for all* service at www.orientation-pour-tous.fr combined with a telephone scheme (single national number 08 11 70 39 39);
- local career information and advice services based on regionally approved partnership agreements backed by the Regional Council.

The right to career guidance depends on different organisations and instruments, depending on age and individual status.

4.3.1. Career guidance for young learners

Several schemes are implemented to help students in initial vocational training to discover different professions and the world of work, providing information on professions, training leading to it and the business sector. Throughout secondary education, an individualised vocational guidance service is offered to every learner.

The 2018 Bill allows easier access to the rates of integration into employment and success of diplomas from all apprenticeship training centers (CFAs) and vocational high schools. The role of the Regions is strengthened by the organisation of discoveries of sectors and professions. In addition, in the last year of lower secondary programmes (grade 9) a preparatory vocational guidance subject has been added to raise awareness on the upper-secondary vocational pathway and apprenticeship opportunities offered ⁽¹³⁵⁾.

⁽¹³³⁾ French employers can organize collective training for their employees. All these training sessions are presented in a specific document, the skill development or training plans

⁽¹³⁴⁾ SMEs financing scheme TPPME (*très petites, petites et moyennes entreprises*)

⁽¹³⁵⁾ LOI n° 2018-771 du 5 septembre 2018 pour la liberté de choisir son avenir professionnel
<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/loi/2018/9/5/MTRX1808061L/jo/texte>

In order to provide career guidance service for young people, there are dedicated structures such as Onisep (office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions - national office for education and career information) or CIDJ (centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse - youth information and documentation centre). The 2018 'professional future' law makes it possible to establish a relationship between ONISEP and the Regions for the development and distribution of documentation necessary for educational and professional guidance

A support programme has been set up for pupils and their families to inform and guide them on education choices and ensure a smoother transition from lower secondary general programmes to the vocational high school: *le parcours avenir* ⁽¹³⁶⁾.

4.3.2. Career guidance for adults, employees or jobseekers

The public lifelong career guidance service guarantees a universal access to free, full and objective information on careers, training, qualifications, outlets and pay scales and access to high-quality, network-based career advice and support services.

To guarantee this right to career information and guidance for everyone, systems are provided both within and outside companies: compulsory professional development interviews every two years in companies which with the 2018 Bill for the freedom to choose one's professional future contains information on validation of non-formal and informal learning (VAE), the personal training account scheme (CPF), the professional development counselling service (CEP). There is also career development interviews, career assessment reports, appraisals, etc., all of which are used to evaluate career prospects. These career guidance services are provided by career information and guidance bodies such as local support services, career advice institutions, employment and training centres, the *Pôle emploi*, the joint collecting bodies, etc.

The objective of the professional development counselling service (CEP - *conseil en évolution professionnelle*), in place since 2013, is to assist career development and security for all individuals engaged into working life. The CEP provides information on the work environment and the evolution of jobs in the territory, on the necessary skills to acquire and develop, and on available training schemes. A set of specifications adopted by the Minister of Labour will specify the evolution of the CEP, which will always be free of charge.

Counselling is provided by the four national operators for specific audiences (disabled, managers, young people and job seekers) In January 2020, employees will be advised by new operators, selected at regional level, on the basis of the national specifications. The selection of these new operators will be orchestrated by France Compétences.

It helps, throughout the working life of the individual to improve the individual's ability to make his own career choices and evolve professionally, including by increasing his abilities, skills and qualifications.

4.3.3. Information on employment and training

Career guidance assumes the availability of clear, comprehensible, accessible and objective information on jobs, the qualifications needed to do them, the training courses available to

⁽¹³⁶⁾ <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid83948/le-parcours-avenir.html>

access them, the bodies that provide such training and the recruitment needs of companies. Lifelong access to such information, both nationally and locally, is a key factor in the success of each person's career experience. This information is provided by numerous public and private structures.

At national level

Job-related information : Public bodies produce quantitative and qualitative studies on employment and training: *France Stratégie* ⁽¹³⁷⁾, the Centre for studies and research on certifications (*centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications* - Céreq), the Centre for employment and labour research (*Centre d'études de l'emploi et du travail* - Ceet) ⁽¹³⁸⁾, the national institute for statistics and economic research – INSEE; and the research and statistics management department – Darès (*La direction de l'animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques*). The purpose of this research is to support public debate and to assist public authorities and VET stakeholders in developing and implementing policies on vocational and educational training at national and regional level, ministries and social and economic actors in the development of employment, the labor market, vocational training and technology and company policies (see also Section 3.2. the observatories of trades and qualifications - OPMQ).

The **national online 'career guidance for all'** a platform www.orientation-pour-tous.fr, is run by the *Centre Inffo* in partnership with the main support, information and guidance providers, i.e. the different ministries, the regions, the professional bodies, the CARIF-OREF, *Pôle emploi*, the national office for education and career information (Onisep) or the youth information and documentation center (CIDJ). With real-time data, this platform provides information on careers, jobs, training courses, events, and includes videos and personal stories. It offers more than 2 000 job descriptions, 200 000 basic education and lifelong learning courses, directory of approved structures, practical information on schemes, entitlements and procedures.

Information on training sources

Such information is subject to new requirements for clarity and visibility. Since May 2012, the Government publishes and updates the list of registered and approved training structures. It is available on the website <https://www.data.gouv.fr>

The Carif-Oref (*Centre Animation Ressources d'Information sur la Formation / Observatoire Régional Emploi Formation*) have also created a portal called 'offre-info', which provides a national reference for training center and training: <http://www.intercariforef.org/formations/recherche-formations.html>

At regional and sub-regional level

Carif – Training management, resource and information centers: These Centers provide information in all the regions on training options and entitlement and access to training; they assist local information providers in their role of providing information, guidance and training. By producing, collecting and sharing useful information on employment and training, they

⁽¹³⁷⁾ <http://www.strategie.gouv.fr>

⁽¹³⁸⁾ <http://recherche.cnam.fr/ceet/centre-d-etudes-de-l-emploi-et-du-travail-ceet--859105.kjsp>

help the public, as well as training providers and operators, to understand and implement the right tools and systems for each situation.

Oref – Regional employment and training observatories: These organisations provide regionally based systems for analysis and research on the relationship between employment, training and qualification requirements. Using data provided by their national and regional partners, they conduct research and provide expertise in order to anticipate economic changes and adjust skills to the forthcoming employment needs. Their scope of observation relates to training needs, job trends, the link between employment and training, sectoral approaches, professional mobility, economic development.

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List of abbreviations

ACSE	Agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l'égalité des chances [National agency for social cohesion and equality of opportunity]
AFPA	Association pour la formation des adultes [National association of adult vocational training]
AGEFIPH	Association pour la gestion de l'emploi de la formation et de l'insertion des personnes handicapées [Association managing the fund for the professional integration of people with disabilities]
BEP	Brevet d'études professionnelles [Vocational studies certificate]
BEPA	Brevet d'études professionnelles agricoles [Professional diploma in agricultural studies]
BMA	Brevet des métiers d'art [Art's profession certificate]
BP	Brevet professionnel [Vocational Certificate]
BTM	Brevet technique des métiers [Profession's technical certificate]
BTS	Brevet de technicien supérieur [Advanced Technician Certificate]
BTSA	Brevet de technicien supérieur agricole [advanced agricultural technician diploma]
CAP	Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle [Professional skills Certificate]
CAPA	Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle agricole [Professional skills certificate in agriculture]
Carif	Centre d'animation, de ressources et d'information sur la formation [Training management, resource and information centres]
CBC	Congé de bilan de compétences [Skills audit leave]
CCI	Chambre de commerce et d'industrie [Chamber of Commerce and Industry]
CCP	Certificats de compétences professionnelles [Certificates of Professional Competences]
CEC	Cadre européen de certification [European Qualifications Framework]
CEP	Conseil en évolution professionnelle [Professional development counselling]

CFA	Centre de formation des apprentis [Apprentices training centre]
CIDJ	Centre d'information et de documentation jeunesse [Youth information and documentation centre]
Cite / Isced	Classification internationale type de l'éducation [International standard classification of education]
CNAM	Conservatoire national des arts et métiers [National conservatory of arts and trades]
CNCP	Commission nationale de la certification professionnelle [National commission for vocational qualifications]
CPC	Commission professionnelle consultative [Professional consultative committee]
Cnefop	Conseil national de l'emploi, de la formation et de l'orientation professionnelle [National council for employment, vocational training and guidance]
CPF	Compte Personnel de Formation [Personal training account]
COPANEF	Comité paritaire interprofessionnel pour l'emploi et la formation [National inter-professional committee for employment and training]
CPNEF	Commission paritaire nationale de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle [National joint employment and vocational training committee]
CPRDFOP	Contrat de Plan régional de développement de la formation et de l'orientation professionnelles [Contract of regional development plans for vocational training and guidance]
CQP	Certificat de qualification professionnelle [Certificate of professional qualification]
CSE	Conseil supérieur de l'éducation [Higher council for education]
CTI	Commission des titres d'ingénieur [Engineering qualification committee]
CVAE	Congé de validation des acquis de l'expérience [work experience accreditation leave]
DIF	Droit individuel de formation [individual training right]
DUT	Diplôme universitaire de technologie [University technological diploma]
EFP / VET	Éducation et Formation professionnelles [Vocational education and training]

EPSCP	Etablissements publics à caractère scientifique, culturel et professionnel [Public scientific, cultural and professional establishments]
EQF	See CEC
FPSPP	Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels [Joint Fund for professional career security]
OPCA	Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés [Approved joint collecting bodies]
OPCO	Opérateur de compétences [Skills operator]
OPMQ	Observatories of trades and qualifications [Qualifications and employment prospective's observatories]
Oref	Observatoire régional de l'emploi et de la formation [Regional employment and training observatories]
PIC	Plan d'investissement dans les compétences [Investment plan for skills]
POE	Préparation opérationnelle à l'emploi [Operational employment preparation]
PRITH	Plan Régional d'Insertion des Travailleurs Handicapés [Regional plans for the integration of disabled workers]
RNCP	Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles [National register of vocational qualifications]
SPRO	Service public régional de l'orientation [Regional public utility of lifelong guidance]
UNÉDIC	Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce [National professional union for employment in industry and trade]
VAE	Validation des acquis de l'expérience [work experience accreditation or validation of informal and non-formal learning]