



Youth Wiki national description

Youth policies in France

2018

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. For the updated version of this national description, please visit

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/youthwiki>

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Overview

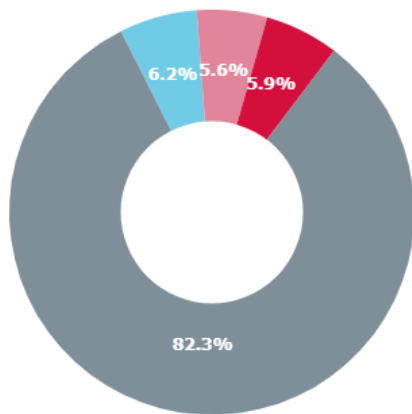
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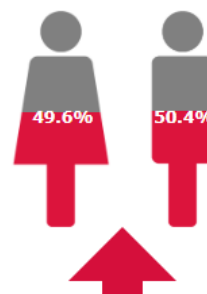
1. Young People in France
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Young People in France

Ratio of young people in the total population on 1st January

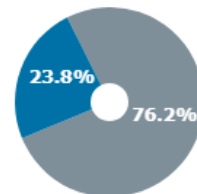


- Age group 15-19
- Age group 20-24
- Age group 25-29
- Other age groups



Ratio of men and women in the youth population

Ratio of young immigrants in all immigrants from non-EU countries



- Age group 15-29
- Other age groups

Total number of young people:

References:

Ratio (%) of young people in the total population (2017): Eurostat, yth_demo_020 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Absolute number of young people on 1 January for the age group 15-29 (2017): Eurostat, yth_demo_010 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Ratio (%) of men and women in the youth population (2017): Eurostat, yth_demo_020 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

Young immigrants from non-EU countries (2016): Eurostat, yth_demo_070 [data extracted on 4/09/2018].

France

Youth Policy in France

Social, professional and civic inclusion of young people along with protection and educational development of youth have long been key themes of French public policies. Although there is **no definitive or permanent model for political strategy on youth**, as its form very much depends on successive governments, youth policies are nonetheless a constant in public action, whether they are promoted by a ministry responsible for youth affairs or by the Ministry of National Education, all the more so as youth policies are not only decided at **national and territorial (regional) level** but are also implemented at **local level** by the authorities concerned (Regions, *Départements* and municipalities).

Local authorities are key stakeholders in youth policies. Drafting and implementing public policies, they act in **complementarity** and interdependence with State policies. Implementation of youth policies relies on overlapping the various levels of public action and upon **interministerial, intersectoral and multi-partner** operation.

Between 2012 and 2017, youth was regarded as a “national priority” and was the subject of an interministerial plan on behalf of which all ministries were mobilised (Ministries of Health, Labour, etc.). The plan was promoted by a ministry responsible for youth affairs (Ministry of Urban Affairs, Youth and Sports) and was the subject of a status report in 2016. Since May 2017, youth policies have been the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education, which, in particular through its [Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisation](#) (DJEPVA – Direction de la Jeunesse, de l'Education Populaire et de la Vie Associative), focuses on the design and implementation of youth policies.

Combating youth unemployment (26.2% of under 25 y/o in 2016 according to Eurostat) and the **precarity** that affects some of France's young people is one of the public authorities' major concerns. It should be emphasised, however, that such phenomena do not affect all young people and do not have the same consequences on their individual life paths. **Continued inequalities** between young people themselves and the **resulting fragmentation of French youth** is another challenge to be taken into account in youth policies.

1. YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE

Public action in favor of youth is the responsibility of **both public authorities** (State, local authorities) but involves also many **stakeholders from different fields**: associations, NGOs, youth movements, research institutes or the business sector. All these actors can work both independently and jointly. This **multiplicity of interveners** implies a diversity of modes of governance of youth policies. However the State plays a key role, by drawing up policies, setting public schemes for youth and financially supporting the projects and associations that can carry them. It should be noted, however, that in France there is no **systematic model of public action in favor of young people**, which can be carried out by a specific ministry such as a ministry of Youth with its own youth national strategy or on the contrary be carried by other ministries concerned (Ministry of National Education), the structure of public policy making is depending on governmental choices.

Otherwise, youth is seen as an **inter-ministerial issue**. The policies in its favor are then transversal, covering education and vocational training, health and well-being, leisure, mobility, civic commitment, culture and so on. Furthermore, if they are part of a national framework, public actions in favor of young people are also **territorialised**, implemented in local and regional authorities, but also in some cases, within the framework of **European policies**.

1.1 Target population of youth policy

There is no official, objective or quantified definition of "youth" in France.

Previously described as a "[transition period](#)" marked by a crossing of thresholds charactering "adulthood" (stable job, own accommodation, building a household, etc.), **youth is now regarded as a process of identity construction** made up of "discontinuous and reversible" experiences and tests.

Statistical and demographic study institutes in various countries nonetheless retain the **16 to 25** age bracket, which is consequently the one most used by public authorities. **25 is considered to be the age of "[social majority](#)"** in so far as it is the age at which young people are entitled to make full use of certain rights, social rights in particular (including minimum wage and supplementary health insurance).

This period of life is marked both **by the end of a legal obligation**:

- End of compulsory schooling at age 16
- **and access to new social rights and benefits (non-exhaustive list)**:
- majority and the right to vote at age 18;
- possibility of receiving various social benefits from age 25 onwards: *Revenu de Solidarité Active* (RSA – minimum income);
- eligibility to the *prime d'activité* (activity bonus) introduced on 1 January 2016, which concerns all "modest income" workers over 18: students with jobs, apprentices and the self-employed, who can benefit from it according to their resources;
- access to mobility programmes, whose age-limits vary depending on operator: 30 for the *Office Franco-Allemand pour la Jeunesse* (OFAJ – Franco-German Youth Office [FGYO]), and 35 for the *Office Franco-Québécois pour la Jeunesse* (OFQJ – Franco-Québécois Youth Office), for example.

Prolongation of duration of studies and later entry on to the job market – and the job stabilisation period – tend to extend this period beyond age 25. Faced with this, the public authorities favour the notion of a "**journey towards autonomy**" when drafting their youth policies.

1.2 National youth law

Existence of a National Youth Law

Although the French State **has no general law on youth**, it is the subject of **specific laws** drawn up by various ministries working on behalf of young people, including the ministry in charge of youth, the Ministry of National Education or also the Ministry of Justice.

In addition, the French State ratified the [1989 International Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). (Decree no.90-917 of 8 October 1990 bearing on publication of the convention on children's rights) in 1990, which establishes a [protective legal framework](#) for all children and provides them with acknowledged rights.

Scope and contents

While being varied in content, laws bearing on youth and implemented by the ministries concerned focus on protection, social and professional inclusion, and training.

Youth laws

Ministry of National Education

One of the main legislative corpuses on youth is the *Code de l'éducation* (French education code) set by **Order no.2000-549 of 15 June 2000**. The Code is a compilation of all laws and regulations in force in the field of education. It defines the [general principles of education](#), its administration and organisation. It is divided into two parts, one legislative and the other regulatory.

The Code includes the:

- The Framework law on the future of schools (*Loi d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'École de la République"* of 8 July 2013). Above all, this law seeks to foster [success at school](#).
- [The Law of 22 July 2013 bearing on higher education and research](#), which aims above all to contribute to student success and enable 50% of each age group to obtain higher education qualifications, specifies action to be taken to develop student and researcher mobility through promoting study and activity periods abroad.

Ministry in charge of youth

The Ministry in charge of youth oversees regulations governing **collective reception of minors** outside the parental home and outside school hours. It ensures compliance with legislation on reception of minors. Numerous decrees, memorandums and orders are also contained in the *Code de l'Action Sociale et des Familles* (Social Action and Family Code) regulating protection of minors and setting safety standards for collective reception of minors and young people, including the following ministerial orders:

- [Order of 21 May 2007](#) (supervision of scouting activities);
- [Order of 25 April 2012](#) (supervision and organisation of certain physical activities);
- [Order of 12 December 2013](#) (supervision of extracurricular activities);
- [Order of 3 November 2014](#) (declaration prior to reception of minors).

Ministry in charge of social affairs and health

Social Action and Family Code

The **Social Action and Family Code** was created in 1953 by Decree no.56-149 of 24 January 1956. Formerly known as the Family and Social Aid Code, it compiles **all legislative and regulatory provisions bearing on social action and the family**. The corpus also includes major texts from the Ministries responsible for youth, education and health.

It specifies and defines the main objectives of social measures intended, among other things, for “disabled children and teenagers”. It describes the various **forms of social aid and action** (family associations, social aid to families, family education and counselling, reception of young children, social inclusion actions, *départemental* social inclusion schemes, support funds for young people in difficulty, etc.). Among these legislations:

- The [Law no. 2016-41 of 26 January 2016 bearing on modernisation of the healthcare system](#) is designed to “support equal opportunities for [young people in healthcare](#)” and promote access and education. Promotion of good health should start as early as possible and continue throughout children’s schooldays, constituting a genuine “health education programme”.

Ministry of Justice

Laws relating to the Ministry of Justice are mainly designed **to protect young people, minors in particular, combat [juvenile delinquency](#) and foster social integration of young delinquents**.

Juvenile justice has long been a concern of France’s public authorities, which, in 1945, adopted an order bearing on “[delinquent childhood](#)” – [Order no.45-174 of 2 February 1945](#) – that sought to limit repressive measures and replace them with educational measures.

Since 1945, a whole series of orders, decrees and [laws](#) bearing on protection of children and teenagers have been adopted, setting the legal framework for protection of minors

Ministry in charge of labour

The [Law of 5 March 2014 bearing on vocational training, employment and social democracy](#) Enacted on 5 March 2014, the law provides employees with qualification, training and career progression prospects throughout their working lives. The law is set to make far-reaching changes in the sphere of vocational training by reorientating funds allocated to training and ensuring job security. It also introduced the *Compte Personnel de Formation* (CPF – Personal Training Account), which aims to increase levels of qualification among all individuals. It has been in operation since 1 January 2015.

Youth rights

Young French people’s [rights and obligations](#) differ depending on their situation. They arise either from children’s rights, when they are minors, or common law once they have reached the age of majority.

Only a **few individual “youth-specific” rights exist**; young French people **generally benefit from (social) rights as their parents’ “assignees”** (family benefits, social security membership, tax incentives, etc.) and enjoy few direct rights of their own. A study published by the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education in 2013, entitled [Young people’s access to social rights \(Accès des jeunes aux droits sociaux\)](#), emphasises this point, explaining it partly by the overall “[familialisation](#)” of young people’s benefits.

Young people can nonetheless **be informed on their rights**. Ensuring that young people know their rights is one among many focuses of public youth policies, largely because they are all too often ignorant of them.

Amenities providing information on rights have been in existence since the 1980s, House of Justice and Rights and Access to Rights Points, alongside collaborative work between associations promoting young people’s education and access to their rights and local public stakeholders (municipalities and schools). Reliable, objective, non-specialised information on all aspects of young people’s daily lives is also provided by a network of youth information facilities (around 1,500 of them across the country) financed by the State and local authorities.

Revisions/updates

One regulatory text on youth that has undergone [numerous revisions](#) is the Order of 2 February 1945 bearing on delinquent children. Its various modifications have resulted in introduction of repressive and educational measures alike. These have partly drawn on [statistical and qualitative](#) studies of recidivism and “desistance” among delinquent minors (“desistance” means ending delinquent or criminal behaviour).

In order to **promote and to reinforce the participation** of young people, the government has created by the decree [n° 2016-1377 du 12 octobre 2016](#) an Orientation council of youth policies, a new framework for the dialogue with the youth organisation.

1.3 National youth strategy

Existence of a National Youth Strategy

The elections of May 2017 and the its governmental mark **numerous evolutions in youth policies governance**. The elaboration, the control and the implementation of youth policies are attributed by decree to **the Ministry of National Education** whose portfolio is composed of youth and NGOs policies.

From 2013 to (may) 2017, a youth strategy has been created: the [Priority Youth Plan](#) (“*Plan Priorité Jeunesse*”), adopted by the CIJ – Cross-Ministerial Committee for Youth (*Comité Interministériel de la Jeunesse*) on 21 February 2013. This strategy **has been the subject of a review**. Several policies of this plan are **still relevant**.

Current public policies in favor of youth are articulated mainly around education, training, commitment and autonomy. It should be pointed out that these public policies do not form, strictly speaking, a “strategy” since **they are not formalized in plan or road map**, but nevertheless they must meet objectives.

Youth policies mainly articulates with education, training, participation and autonomy.

Scope and contents

The objective of youth policies is to create a “Trustworthy society”*:

The main focus areas:

- Education and training
- the youth engagement
- the autonomy of young people

Education and training

The training of young people is at the heart of governmental youth policies which wants to build a [“school of trust”](#) to ensure pupils'success. Several measures concerning primary and secondary schools were implemented.

At primary school:

- The lowering of the [compulsory education](#) to three years
- The gradual splitting of first-grade class in schools located in disadvantaged urban areas.
- The adaptation of school time by leaving municipalities (with teachers representatives of parents pupils...) the choice to move to the “four-day” school week.

At secondary school:

- The introduction of the [“Homework done”](#) program which offers pupils free study time to do their homework outside school time. The supervision of pupils is voluntary and

can be done by teachers, advisers of education, educational assistants, NGOs and volunteers.

- The reform of the secondary school governance which must increase school autonomy

Higher education is also affected by deep reforms:

- The national [plan "Students"](#) was presented by the government in October 2017. This plan aims at transforming the first cycle of higher education in its entirety

The youth engagement

Strengthening youth engagement in the service of the society is one of the objectives of the government. This ambition is concretized by the development of the service civic (See [Voluntary activities](#)).

The autonomy of young people

The autonomy Policies aim at developing the young people's autonomy are articulated around three axes:

1. the fight against the non-use of social rights;
2. the territorialisation of youth policies;
3. the synergy of the actors *.

* Source: [speech by the Minister of National Education](#) to the Youth Policy Orientation Council, June 29, 2017

Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

The responsible authority and coordinator of youth policies is the Ministry of Education, which is also responsible for the implementation of youth policies, under the decree "N ° 2017-1080 of May 24, 2017 relating to the powers of the Minister national education ". The [Minister's Decree of Attribution](#) specifies that he is responsible "for preparing and implementing the Government's policy bearing on actions in favour of youth".

Revisions/updates

From 2013 to 2017, a national youth strategy, the ["Youth Priority Plan"](#), was adopted by the Interministerial Committee of Youth of 21 February 2013, chaired by the Prime Minister.

This plan defined the National Youth Strategy as a "government priority". It was an official roadmap that presented the challenges of youth policies and the various measures that the government should implement to improve the living conditions of young people. The Youth Priority Plan was a continuation of the projects carried out by the Government in 2012. More than a planning of measures in favor of youth, the Youth Priority plan had to renew public action by encouraging partnership work between the ministries, local authorities, associations, social partners, but also with young people themselves.

Since the spring 2017 elections, the Government's strategy has been based on the measures taken from the Youth Priority Plan and is part of the desire to create a "trustworthy society" by acting on training, engaging young people and promoting their autonomy,

1.4 Youth policy decision-making

Structure of Decision-making

Youth policies defined and encouraged by the central authority, the Government are implemented regionally. But local authorities are also involved in drafting public youth

policies and work in partnership with the ministry responsible for youth. It should be borne in mind that, at local level, the **French administrative system depends on the State and local authorities** alike. Moreover, it exists various local administrative authorities as the **Region, the *Departement*, the municipality and the intermunicipality**, each has its own political areas.

National (central) authority: The Ministry in charge of youth and and its deconcentrated department

1) The Ministry responsible for youth

The main authority which has the general competence of definition of the national strategy, regulation and control of the youth policy is the Ministry of Education, also responsible for youth.

The [decree of May 24, 2017](#) relating to the powers of the Minister of National Education sets its competences.

The **ministry is made up of several administrative departments including the DJEPVA** – Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisation ([Direction de la Jeunesse, de l'Éducation Populaire et de la Vie Associative](#)) which draws up and implements youth policy. [The Order of 24 December 2015 amending the order of 30 December 2005](#) sets "the organisation of directorate and sub-directorate of the ministry in charge of youth".

The structure of the DJEPVA

The DJEPVA comprises:

- the Sub-directorate for Cross-ministerial Youth and Voluntary Organisations Policies;
- the Sub-directorate for Non-Formal Education;
- the INJEP - National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education, a [body with national authority](#) under the aegis of the Director of Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations.

The Director of the DJEPVA is also ["cross-ministerial delegate for youth"](#) (Decree no.2014-18 of 9 January 2014). He coordinates implementation of actions carried out by the various ministries in favour of youth.

The role of the DJEPVA

The DJEPVA **supports actions on the part of youth and non-formal education associations**, which act as its special interlocutors. Other bodies also under its aegis include the Civic Service Agency ([Agence du Service Civique](#)) and it serves as national authority for application of the ["Erasmus + Youth"](#) European programme.

The DJEPVA **takes part in drafting and implementing non-profit sector development policy**, seeking among other things to simplify the legal framework within which NGOs develop by promoting community actions, "*bénévolat*" (charity, voluntary work) in particular, and acknowledging the importance of those involved in voluntary organisations and non-formal education, which it also lends financial support to.

As regards best use and development of civic commitment, the Department oversees **mainstreaming of civic service** (general interest missions proposed to young people between 16 and 25 years old). It also **oversees the educational quality of stays and the safety of minors** at ACMs – children's summer camps (*Accueils Collectifs de Mineurs*).

2) Deconcentrated departments

The Decree of 1 July 1992 bears on application of **deconcentration**, defined in its first Article as "*the general rule of division of powers and resources between the various echelons of the State's civil service.*" **Deconcentration is a system of administrative organisation** in which the central power (that of the State) is delegated or transferred to regional departments known as deconcentrated departments ([services déconcentrés](#))

or external departments. The process aims to improve the State's efficiency by **decongesting the central administration and speeding up decision-making at local level**.

As regards youth policies, [deconcentrated departments](#) are DR(D)JSCS – [Regional/ Departmental Departments of Youth, Sport and Social Cohesion](#), present in **each regional "capital"** and responsible for **managing and coordinating implementation of national youth policy**, in compliance with [Decree no.215-1867 of 30 December 2015](#), which defines their organisation and missions.

Local authorities

Since enactment of Law no.82-213 of 2 March 1982 bearing on the rights and liberties of municipalities, departments and regions, the French State has reinforced and developed the **decentralisation process by transferring some of its administrative competences to various local authorities**: regions (13 in all since January 2016), departments (101), municipalities (36,700) and intermunicipalities (2,600).

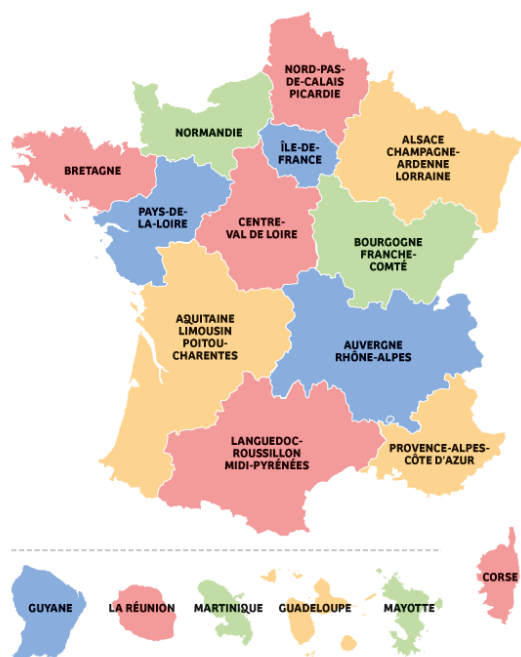
Such bodies have a measure of local autonomy ([Art. 72 s. of the Constitution; European Charter of Local Autonomy, 1985](#)), although such autonomy is exercised in compliance with the law and under State control. This "control of [legality](#)" may also be carried out by the departmental or regional [Prefect](#).

Regarded as **pertinent echelons of action, local authorities are of key importance to the success of youth policies**. Their various levels (regional, departmental, municipal and intermunicipal) make them all the more likely to implement actions designed to benefit young people.

Such local-level decision-making relies on complementarity and cooperation between the ministry in charge of youth, the DR(D)JSCSs. **Local youth policies are implemented in partnership** (collaboration between local authorities) and are **intersectorial**. They are characterised by their wide diversity and depend, among other things, on each area's stakeholders, resources and specificities.

1) Regions

France is composed by [13 "metropolitan" Regions" and 5 "Overseas" Regions and Departements](#).



Source: [French Ministry of Agriculture and Food](#)

Between 2013 and 2014, all regions drew up youth action plans along with actions developed through work carried out at local level in line with regional priorities.

By reason of their competences and the financial resources at their disposal, Regional Councils are key decision-makers when it comes to education and vocational training.

They are responsible **for the creation, construction and maintenance of** upper secondary schools (*lycées*) as well as for **implementation of vocational training** for young people **and apprenticeship schemes**. Looking to the professional future, young people's in particular, **regions have gained in competences and authority in the field of vocational training** since the 2000s and application of Decree no.2002-658 of 29 April 2002 bearing on [the CCREFP](#) – Regional Committee for Coordination of Employment and Vocational Training (the *Comité de Coordination Régional de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle*). In a context where professional integration of young people is a ministerial priority, the role played by **France's regions in youth vocational training and their related competences continue to increase**.

The [Equality & Citizenship Law of 27 January 2017](#) designated the region as the "leader" of local authorities on youth policies. This law also enshrines the principle of a "territorial structured dialogue" on youth policies between public authorities (state and region), civil society and young people.

2) Departements

Departements are responsible for so-called "solidarity" and specialised preventive actions (in particular on behalf of minors placed under judicial protection).

Departemental Councils act on behalf of youth through their **role in the building and maintenance** of lower secondary schools (*collèges*) and drafting of local social policy, implementation of child welfare services in particular. "Child welfare" refers to social action on behalf of families experiencing major material or educational problems with regard to their children. Departements implement the RSA – minimum income scheme, which young people of 25 and over can apply for, as well as providing them with ad hoc financial assistance. Young people between the ages of 18 and 25 experiencing social and/or financial problems may make use of the FAJ – Youth Assistance Fund (*Fonds d'Aide aux Jeunes*). This *départemental* fund finances aid to social and professional integration of young people in economic difficulty and, if necessary, provides them with temporary financial help.

3) Municipalities and intermunicipalities

Municipalities and [intermunicipalities](#) (intermunicipalities are groups of municipalities that pool management of public services) are the smaller local administrations.

(Inter)municipal youth polices bear largely on **social and educational action, prevention of delinquency and civic commitment**. Among other things, municipalities' social services, (with the Departement's agreement) grant aid from the FAJ and can decide on social accompaniment of young people in major difficulty. **Municipalities also provide young people with information on existing schemes related to employment, healthcare, accommodation, mobility and social rights** via dedicated information facilities.

Main Themes

France's youth policy, falls within the *Cadre Européen de Coopération en Matière de Jeunesse* (European Framework for Cooperation on Youth Affairs) for the period 2010-2018, renewed on 27 November 2009, which sets two general major goals: **"creating more opportunities and ensuring equality in education as well as on the job market, and promoting active citizenship, social integration and solidarity for all young people"**. It is also one of France's responses in the context of the "European Youth Guarantee" adopted by the countries of the European Union in April 2013.

The current Government give importance to **the education and training of young people**, which are the main themes of youth policies which concern both autonomy, youth mobility and their participation in society.

Youth public policies have to:

- Enable the school and academic success of young people;
- Promote youth autonomy;
- Enhance the ability of youth to act in society;
- Promote the mobility of all young people;
- Engage youth in public policy development.

Policy-making is, to the greatest extent possible, **based on data**, including statistics, produced by different institutions such as the [Directorate of Evaluation, long-term and Performance](#) of National Education but also on conducted by the National Institute for Youth and Popular Education (INJEP), attached to the DJEPVA as well as on the analysis of data produced by INSEE and the ministerial statistical services (SSM). Since 2013, an [annual report](#) “The state of youth” on the condition of youth, based on these data is prepared by INJEP in consultation with the different ministries.

Moreover Since 2016, the DJEPVA / INJEP have conducted an annual survey of more than 4,000 young people aged 18 to 30 living in France to obtain qualitative data on youth. This work provides youth policy actors with objective, quantitative and qualitative data highlighting the difficulties faced by young people.

The National Agency for Youth

France **does not have a specific youth “agency”**. Public policies bearing on youth are implemented and coordinated by the various **DJEPVA**(Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations) departments. However it exist a SCN – Department with National Competence (*Service à Compétence Nationale*): the INJEP – (National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education), initially set up in 1953, was placed under the authority of the Director of the DJEPVA on 1 January 2016. Its missions are set by [Decree no.2015-1771 of 24 December 2015 bearing on a department with national authority entitled “Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Education Populaire”](#).

The Institute comprises five “Missions”:

1. a Mission responsible **for studies, observation and statistics**;
2. a Mission responsible **for observation and assessment**;
3. a Mission responsible **for promotion and dissemination**;
4. a Mission responsible **for documentation and management of a resource centre**;
5. a Mission responsible for **running the FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund** (*Fonds d'Expérimentation pour la Jeunesse*)

The Institute plays a **key role in knowledge and analysis of youth policies**, as “a resource and expert assessment centre for all stakeholders in youth affairs, non-formal education and voluntary organisations, for parliamentary assemblies and bodies representing civil society”.

[INJEP's role](#) is “to observe and analyse young people’s situations and youth policies at all territorial levels from local to European”. **At the Prime Minister’s request**, it carries out studies and drafts assessments relating to cross-ministerial youth policy, and oversees specific activities of observation or expert assessment of public action in favour of youth.

INJEP also runs the FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund ([Fonds d'Expérimentation pour la Jeunesse](#)), which finances experimental projects concerning young people. The observatory assesses the youth component of the Erasmus+ European programme, on the basis of a partnership with the “Erasmus + Youth” Agency. Consequently, INJEP belongs to the [RAY](#) (Research based Analysis of Youth) network.

Policy monitoring and evaluation

The **evaluation and analysis of youth public policies in France has been developing** and systematising over the past dozen years. Evaluations, which may be quantitative, statistical or qualitative, are carried out by various public and private bodies (laboratories and academic research centres). Among other things, they aim to monitor and take account of the **impact of schemes** and programmes and make **consequent recommendations**. Evaluations are regular and most frequently annual.

Different institutions and structures can participate to the policy evaluation and monitoring such as ministerial Statistical Departments, the National agency for youth, the [Secretariat-General for Government Modernisation](#) but also the ministerial inspection departments. Moreover, public authorities also call on policies evaluation external agencies.

Ministerial evaluation and statistical departments

Each ministry also has its own ministerial evaluation and statistical department, which may produce data and evaluate public policies. (See **1.6 Evidence-based youth policy**)

At the ministry in charge of youth, the [MEOS – Analysis, Reports and Statistics Section](#) is responsible for producing and disseminating public statistics and reports on youth, non-formal education and sport.

Besides MEOS, the main Ministerial Statistical Departments that collect statistics on “youth” are:

- [the DESL – Department of Studies and Local Statistics at the Ministry of the Interior;](#)
- [the Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies at the Ministry of Justice,](#)
- [the DEPS – Department of Studies, Forward-looking Analysis and Statistics at the Ministry of Culture,](#)
- [the DEPP – Department for Evaluation, Forward-looking Analysis and Performance at the Ministry of National Education,](#)
- [the DREES – Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics at the ministry in charge of social affairs,](#)
- [the DARES – Department for Research, Studies and Statistics at the ministry in charge of labour.](#)

The National Agency for Youth

The Institute plays a key role in knowledge and analysis of youth policies, as a resource and expert assessment centre for all stakeholders in youth affairs: non-formal education and voluntary organisations, for parliamentary assemblies and bodies representing civil society.

[INJEP's role](#) is “to observe and analyse young people’s situations and youth policies at all territorial levels from local to European and to evaluate the public action in favour of youth”.

The Youth Policy Orientation Council

At the national level, in 2016, the Youth Policy Orientation Council (COJ) was created by [Decree No. 2016-1377 of 12 October 2016](#). It is an administrative advisory body, placed under the authority of the Prime Minister.

The COJ has three main missions:

- it can be consulted on legislative or regulatory projects related to youth and discuss any question of general interest concerning youth policy;
- it can make proposals to the Government to improve the situation of young people;
- it must send an annual report to the Government.

This Council is composed of 79 members including representatives of youth organizations.

The Secretariat-General for Government Modernisation

The [Secretariat-General for Government Modernisation](#) is a prime ministerial department that provides assistance to the French Government for the implementation and evaluation of public policies.

Ministerial inspection departments

Several administrations (ministries) have an inspection service or inspection body responsible for carrying out inspections or evaluation studies. In the field of youth public policies, the [inspectors of youth and sports](#) of the minister in charge of youth form a body of civil servants of the State. They participate in the implementation and evaluation of the public policies adopted by the ministers. They may be required to carry out missions of counseling, study and research in the fields of youth, non-formal education, physical and sports activities, collective leisure activities and associations (NGOs).

1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

Mechanisms and actors

The ministry in charge of youth would like to develop a interministerial partnership and to create complementarity between policies and ministries and especially between youth and educational policies.

The implementation of youth policies is based on multi-stakeholder work involving the State and its ministries, local authorities, NGOs, youth NGOs and, in some cases, young people themselves.

This joint work can be achieved through the use of forums for debate and consultation bringing together different institutional actors of youth policies, such as the **cross-ministerial committee of youth** (CIJ), a body that brings together all ministries developing youth policies or the regional structured dialogue.

The cross-ministerial committee of youth

The Decree No. 82-367 of 30 April 1982 defines the CIJ as "an interministerial committee for the consideration of youth issues [with] the purpose of proposing to the Government any measures to improve the living conditions of young people"

The CIJ is an interministerial coordination led by the services of the DJEPVA, under the authority of its director, who is also the interministerial delegate for youth (DIJ) which is under the authority of the Minister in charge of Youth, ([decree n° 2014 -18 of 9 January 2014](#) on the creation of an interministerial delegate for youth).

The director/delegate must convene the CIJ and "coordinate the implementation of the actions carried out by the various ministries in favor of young people, taking care to involve all the actors and partners". The committee is based on a work of exchange, sharing of information that leads to a shared diagnosis between the various ministerial stakeholders, that can jointly define measures for young people.

The interministerial delegate for Youth Affairs is tasked with:

- ensuring implementation of cross-ministerial measures decided upon;
- overseeing the coherence of the various ministries' actions;
- fostering exchanges between the State and stakeholders in national and local youth policies, including local authorities, young people's organisations, and youth and non-formal education associations;
- accompanying processes of public policy co-construction with young people;
- ensuring follow-up and preparation of Cross-Ministerial Committee for Youth meetings;
- carrying out and disseminating studies and research on youth, in particular via the *Observatoire de la jeunesse* (Youth Observatory) set up by the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education.

It should be noted that the installation and organization of **these bodies is not mandatory and systematic** and depends on the will of the government.

Cross-Ministerial Committee for Youth reports:

- CIJ of 21 February 2013
(http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/CIJ_Rapport_21_fevrier_2013.pdf)
- CIJ of 4 March 2014
(http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/tome_1_bilan_priorite_jeunesse_def.pdf)
- CIJ of 3 July 2015
(http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/BAT_PrioriteJeunesse_12pages_24-08.pdf)

1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

Scientific experimentation and assessment of public policies is on the increase in France, above all in the sphere of youth policy. **Experimentation is regarded as a new decision-making tool, key to transforming public action and making it more effective.**

The National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (INJEP) in its role as a youth observatory is tasked with drafting the annual report on “the state of youth”. The choice is guided by an overall **“evidence-based” policy” strategy**. INJEP’s *State of youth* report is designed **to aid dialogue with NGOs, local authorities and all stakeholders in youth affairs**, providing them with reliable hard data on youth.

In addition to this, the FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund **finances experimental projects bearing on youth**, so highlighting the public authorities’ interest in experiment

Cooperation between policy-making and research

INJEP – National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education

Cooperation between research and the public authorities finds concrete form in the action of the INJEP – National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education, under the aegis of the Director of the DJEPVA, which “draws up analyses via **the carrying out of research, studies and assessments, and produces statistical data, in collaboration** with the SSP Public Statistical Department, in the fields of youth, non-formal education, community life and sport”.

FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund

The FEJ organization

Cooperation between research and policy-making also found concrete expression in 2009 with setup of the FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund (*Fonds d’Expérimentation pour la Jeunesse*), to finance “innovative actions in favour of youth, implemented at a limited level and assessed”.

The [Article 25](#) of the law n° 2008-1249 of december 2008 is at the origin of the FEJ, which seeks to support experimental youth schemes. **Experiments consist of limited implementation of an action or scheme to be tested out before it is mainstreamed.**

The fund is “provided with contributions by the State and any legal entity under public or private law, which act together to define, finance and manage one or more experimental programmes designed to improve the social and professional integration of young people between sixteen and twenty-five years of age”.

The FEJ is overseen by a Management Committee that sets major guidelines and general themes, and is chaired by the minister responsible for youth affairs. Its day-to-day

administration and running are the responsibility of the Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations (DJEPVA), which prepares calls for projects and coordinates regional and national implementation of experiments selected.

The FEJ launches calls for projects on a yearly basis. Experiments last an average of two years and are selected by qualified juries made up of researchers and institutional and community stakeholders.

The FEJ Mission

Assessment plays a major role in the social experiment initiative promoted by the FEJ. It is carried out by an independent external body and may be 100% financed by the FEJ. Assessment of experimental schemes must enable decisions to be taken on their effectiveness (in other words, their ability to achieve goals), and therefore on whether or not to mainstream them.

The FEJ's [main focuses](#) include:

- school dropout,
- professional integration,
- accommodation,
- healthcare,
- local and international mobility,
- civic commitment (**most experiments bear on youth commitment**),
- discrimination.

The FEJ also publishes an overall [activity report](#) summarising projects underway, their interest for the public authorities and the “capitalisation” of some among them. A total of 716 experimental projects have been initiated, 593 have been completed and are the subject of final reports, and 120 are still underway in 2016. Each completed project forms the subject of a report.

Example of FEJ experimental

Among these projects, the experimental Regional platforms for European and international mobility (“Plateformes régionales de mobilité européenne et internationale”) were extended to the whole of France following a call for projects launched by the Ministry responsible for the youth via the FEJ: the FEJ has funded 17 experiments bearing on international youth mobility. Implementation and assessment of these projects provided a good deal of useful knowledge in such areas as governance and accompaniment of young people, and they have consequently been extended to a number of regions, including Centre-Val de Loire.

National Statistics and available data sources

The French State has a SSP – Public Statistical Department (*Service Statistique Public*) that regularly produces data as a basis for **drafting public policies**. It develops indicators enabling assessments of French society and its population’s demographic, economic, social and environmental situations. The key text as far as public statistics are concerned is [Law no.51-711 of 7 June 1951](#).

The Public Statistical Department is made up of the INSEE – National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, and others SSMS – Ministerial Statistical Departments.

INSEE

INSEE is one of the ministry responsible for of the economy’s General Departments; it is tasked with collecting, analysing and disseminating information on French society across the country, and carrying out annual surveys.

INSEE has no specific youth division, but, through **its focuses on such themes as work, school education and higher education**, and surveys carried out in certain areas by its regional departments, it collects information on young people’s living

conditions. Such is the case with its *Portraits of Youth* ("*Portraits de Jeunesse*") , which are statistical studies (regular reports) bearing on young people's social conditions in given regions.

SSM – Ministerial Statistical Department

Each ministry also has its own SSM – Ministerial Statistical Department, which may produce data on ministry policies as seen by young people. Data collected on youth bears essentially on **education, school dropout, employment, accommodation, health and student mobility**.

At the ministry responsible for youth, the MEOS – Analysis, Reports and Statistics Section (Mission des Études, de l'Observation et des Statistiques) which was incorporated into INJEP is **responsible for producing and disseminating public statistics on youth, non-formal education, NGOs and sport**.

Besides INSEE and MEOS, the main Ministerial Statistical Departments that collect statistics on "youth" are:

- the DESL – Department of Studies and Local Statistics and the – Department of Statistics, Studies and Documentation at the Ministry of the Interior;
- the S/D SE – Sub-Department for Statistics and Studies at the Ministry of Justice ;
- the DEPS – Department of Studies, Forward-looking Analysis and Statistics at the Ministry of Culture;
- the DEPP – Department for Evaluation, Forward-looking Analysis and Performance at the Ministry of National Education;
- the SIES – Sub-Department for Information Systems and Statistical Studies at the Ministry of National Education;
- the DREES – Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics at the ministry in charge of social affairs
- the DARES – Department for Research, Studies and Statistics at the ministry in charge of labour.

The list may also be extended to include other public institutions that produce and disseminate data on youth, including:

- the CNAF – National Family Allowances Fund (*Caisse Nationale d'Allocations Familiales*),
- the Urban Policy Observatory's Bureau of Statistics,
- the CEREQ – Centre for Studies and Research on Qualifications (*Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Qualifications*), which collaborates regularly with the National Institute of Youth and Non-Formal Education (INJEP).

In addition to the **collection, study and production of statistics** on youth, **longitudinal qualitative surveys** were introduced in 1981, one example being the surveys on youth values (*enquêtes sur les valeurs des jeunes*) carried out four times (in 1981, 1990, 1999 and 2008).

Budgetary Allocations supporting research in the youth field

It is difficult to estimate total sums allocated to research on youth, as the research budget also finances such bodies as higher education institutions, as the CNRS – National Centre for Scientific Research, the ANR – National Research whose areas of study do not necessarily include youth.

According the project of the 2018 finance bill, the public resources allocated in 2018 for the production of data and the carrying out of studies by the Youth Experimentation Fund (See: Cooperation between policy-making and research) amounts to 1 millions euros.

In 2018, the National institute for Youth and Non-Formal education (INJEP) budget amounts to more than 900 000 euros.

Source: Draft Finance bill 2018, Ministry of National Education. Program 163 Youth

1.7 Funding youth policy

How Youth policy is funded

Youth policy budgeting is covered by “finance laws that determine the **nature, sum and allocation of State resources and charges as well as the resulting budgetary and financial balance**”. (Art.1 of the [Framework law](#) of 1 August 2001 bearing on finance laws). All [Finance laws](#) are voted on by the [Parliament](#), which is the budgetary authority.

Youth affairs are a focus of crosscutting cross-ministerial action and consequently affect budgets. Budgeting forms the subject of a DPT – Crosscutting Policy Document (*Document de Politique Transversale*) summarising the State’s budgetary effort (taking all ministries together) in various crosscutting fields.

For exemple:

The DPT “in favour of youth” presents the State’s total investment on behalf of 3- to 30-year-olds: **84.85 billion euros** for [2015](#) and **86 billion euros** for [2016](#)

A part of the total investment is allocated specifically to youth policies and development of voluntary organisations: the “*Programme 163 Jeunesse et Vie Associative*”, with a budget of **237 million euros in 2015** and **391 million euros in 2016**

What is funded

Priority investments mainly cover (2013-2017):

1) Development of civic service:

The civic commitment programme introduced in 2010 enables any young people who so wish to participate in “general interest missions” for which they are recompensed.

2) Development of non-profit (NGOs) sector, financing 5 schemes in all:

- the FDVA – Community Life Development Fund (*Fonds de Développement de la Vie Associative*); the fund is intended to support community life at national and local level and, more specifically, finance training of volunteers and innovative social action
- volunteer resource and information centres
- support for federations of national and regional associations
- national support for accredited “Youth and Non-Formal Education” associations

3) Actions in favour of youth and non-formal education:

- European and international mobility
- providing young people with information (subsidies for youth documentation and information bodies);
- developing a wider leisure-activity offer and setup of “new-generation holiday camps”;
- careers in non-formal education field;
- support for (JEP – Non-Formal Youth Education) organisations projects;
- support for studies on youth, non-formal education and voluntary organisations.

(Sources: Ministry’s Finance Law, 2015; Crosscutting Policy Document, 2015; Senate General Report no.164 2015-2016)

Financial accountability

In the field of youth policies these are the usual mechanisms governing financial responsibility and control relating to management of public funds that apply.

As regards allocation of subsidies to associations, the following rules apply:

In the context of actions in favour of youth and non-formal education, the Government has simplified associations' and foundations' dealings with government bodies ([Order of 23 July 2015 bearing on simplification of the system for associations and foundations](#)) and a Charter of Reciprocal Commitments between the State, associations and local authorities was signed by the Prime Minister on 14 February 2014.

The Order of 23 July 2015 led to modifications in the rules governing funding of associations. In addition:

- Allocation of subsidies must now comply with national law and European standards;
- Local authorities and public institutions must also provide the State with lists of all subsidies allocated to associations as well as to foundations registered as charities.

Moreover (numerous) Youth public schemes are subject to inspections and periodical audits made by the national [Court of Auditors](#).

Use of EU Funds

France receives **EU funding from European Structural Funds** and in the context of the 2014-2020 "Erasmus +" European programme, for its "Education and Training" component and its "Youth and Sport" component, which concerns the Ministry responsible for youth affairs.

The "Erasmus +" programme

The programme's "Youth" component is managed by the Erasmus+ "Youth & Sport" Agency France. The "Youth" component of the [Erasmus+ Programme](#) has a budget chapter of its own and is specifically dedicated to development of non-formal education activities. It is based on three key actions:

- Key Action 1: "Mobility for young people and youth workers in the interests of learning";
- Key Action 2: "Cooperation and partnerships for innovation and exchange of good practices";
- Key Action 3: "Support for policy reform";

The total budget allocated to the [ERASMUS +Agency](#) by the European Commission in 2016 to support projects stands at 13.2 million euros.

Funding of the 3 Key Actions is divided up as follows:

1) mobility for young people and youth workers (Key Action 1): 9.7 million euros. Comprising:

- Youth exchanges: 3.7 million euros;
- European voluntary service: 4.6 million euros;
- Youth worker mobility: 1.4 million euros;

2) strategic partnerships (Key Action 2): 2.2 million euros

- including the Training and Cooperation Plan: 0.7 million euros

3) support for youth policies, including structured dialogue (Key Action 3): 0.6 million euros.

As the Erasmus + Jeunesse & Sport Agency France comes under the DJEPVA, the Department is responsible for appointing an independent auditing body to audit the Agency's accounts and procedures.

European Structural Funds

France also benefits from allocations by [European Structural and Investment Funds](#) under the Europe 2020 strategy "for smart sustainable inclusive growth".

Two European funds are mobilised on behalf of the economic, social and territorial cohesion policy for the period 2014-2020:

- The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): 8.4 billion euros to fund the “investment for growth and employment” objective, and 1.1 billion for European Territorial Cooperation (ETC).
- The European Social Fund (ESF): 6.03 billion euros. For 2014-2015, the ESF is complemented by 310 million euros under the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), which seeks to foster young people’s integration into the job market, in particular young people “not in employment, education or training” (NEETs).

These **two funds do not specifically finance youth policies**; nonetheless their objectives include social inclusion and professional integration, and they may therefore finance projects that also bear on youth.

1.8 Cross-border cooperation

Cooperation with European countries

Ensuring successful cooperation, exchanges and partnerships with other EU Member States is one of French youth policies which seek to **increase and diversify mobility offers**, especially in Europe – in other words, encourage exchanges between Member States’ youth.

Such cooperation takes several forms:

Bilateral agreements

Bilateral agreements such as **the FGYO (Franco-German Youth Office)**, which was created by the Élysée Treaty in 1963. The [FGYO](#) is an international organization with its head office in Paris; its function is to support and develop all types of exchanges between the two States’ youth, helping consolidate Franco-German relations through a range of mobility and language exchange programmes intended for children and young people, including jobseekers.

The Council of Europe

France is also a founder Member State of the [Council of Europe](#), an intergovernmental organization in existence since 1949 that brings together 47 Member States with the main objective of promoting and ensuring respect for human rights. It monitors Member States’ progress in this area and makes recommendations via specialized independent monitoring bodies. The Council encourages greater youth participation in its “co-management” system. Representatives of youth NGOs (non-government organizations) sit alongside civil servants on committees tasked with defining youth priorities and coming up with recommendations and programs, in such decision-making [bodies](#) as the *Comité Directeur Européen pour la Jeunesse* (CDEJ – European Steering Committee for Youth), which fosters intergovernmental cooperation in the youth sector and serves as a means for comparing national policies, and the *Conseil Consultatif pour la Jeunesse* (CCJ – Advisory Council on Youth), which brings together thirty representatives of non-government youth organizations and networks.

Local partnerships between European Regions

Local authorities also play a significant role in the development of European partnerships. Some regions are trying to set up new cooperation activities between young Europeans.

The Hauts-de France Region has annually hosted the [Weimar Triangle Youth Summit \(*Sommet des Jeunes du Triangle de Weimar*\)](#) since 2001 – an event in which 45 young German, Polish and French participants get together to debate and brainstorm on a topic of current European concern. The summit is the result of a trilateral agreement between the Nord-Pas-de-Calais Region, the Province of Silesia in Poland, and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany.

In addition, there are exchange programmes designed for young graduates from member regions of the Assembly of European Regions. They include the [Eurodysse](#), which enables

participants to carry out 3- to 7-month internships at companies in other European regions. Everything is taken care of: living expenses, finding a host company and accommodation, internship monitoring, social security and insurance, and intensive language training.

Mutual learning sessions between European policy-makers

Participation of those involved in development and implementation of national youth policies in meetings, workgroups and mutual learning seminars organized by Member States in order to exchange viewpoints on practices and issues involved in youth policies, in the context of the **Open Coordination Method (OCM)**.

International cooperation

International cooperation in the youth field is characterized by cross-ministerial action, mainly on the part of the Ministries responsible for youth affairs and sport, national education, and foreign affairs, which have formed special partnerships with international institutions and organizations.

The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

The [OIF](#) Composed of **80 States and governments**, its activities focus on implementation of international policy and multilateral cooperation designed to “**promote the French language and cultural and linguistic diversity**” and “peace, democracy and human rights”, “support school education, training, higher education and research”, and “develop cooperation at the service of sustainable development”.

Among other bodies, the OIF cooperates with the CONFES – French-Speaking World Conference of Ministries in charge of Youth and Sports (*Conférence des Ministres de la Jeunesse et des Sports de la Francophonie*), whose role is to “work for promotion of youth, sports and recreational activities in the Francophone world”. CONFES policies are designed to benefit its Member States’ youth and form part of the [Francophone Youth Strategy 2015-2022](#) (*Stratégie Jeunesse de la Francophonie 2015-2022*), whose aims are “empowerment and self-fulfilment”, “accountability, participation and civic commitment based on democratic values”, “equality of the sexes”, “accompaniment and support of all stakeholders in Francophony”, “Francophone commitment and solidarity, the promotion of the French language”, and “appropriation of the concepts of sustainable development”.

The strategy is based on “partnership, subsidiarity and measurability” (projects are assessed according to indicators defined by OIF Member States).

the OFQJ - Franco-Québécois Youth Office

As a OIF member, the government of Quebec signed a memorandum of understanding with the French government on 9 February 1968, which led to setup of the OFQJ - Franco-Québécois Youth Office.

The OFQJ is a bi-governmental body active in France and Quebec, governed by a Board of Directors chaired by the French minister responsible for Youth. **The Office participates in bringing together young French and Québécois citizens between the ages of 18 and 35 through mobility programmes designed to increase student employability by complementing and improving on their training** (through placements in professional environments), as well as developing networks of partners and raising awareness on entrepreneurial values. “France-Canada” and “France-Quebec” [mobility agreements](#) facilitate exchanges and mobility of “young professionals, jobseekers, students, apprentices, artists and culture professionals”.

Local partnerships

Local authorities also undertake action targeting youth, in particular in regions that encourage French youth’s international commitment through international cooperation agreements.

Since 2015 the ministry responsible for foreign affairs and the DAECT – Delegation for External Action by Local Authorities (*Délégation pour l'Action Extérieure des Collectivités Territoriales*) annually launch a call for projects in support of decentralised cooperation, Youth and European and international mobility ("*Jeunesse et mobilité européenne et internationale*") intended for local authorities and concerning young people between the ages of 16 and 30. It mobilises several French and foreign local authorities and provided more than 100 young people with the opportunity to commit to decentralised cooperation projects.

At regional level, **Regions also have a range of aids to mobility on offer to young people** (apprentices, upper secondary and university students, and jobseekers). They enable beneficiaries to set up projects in "southern countries" or go on language study stays there to round out their training. Some regions have their own **European and international mobility platforms** bringing together international mobility developers from NGOs, local authorities and government departments tasked with promoting French youth mobility on the international scene.

1.9 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

The year 2018 is marked by the implementation by the Government of measures to transform in depth the education system of secondary and higher education

The reform of the baccalaureate and high school

The Minister of Education entrusted in November 2017, a **mission of reflection on the transformation of the baccalaureate (exam)**. This mission was responsible for rethinking and "simplifying the organization of the baccalaureate" and "to affirm [its] function of access to higher education" as well as "to strengthen the link between the baccalaureate and the continuation of the curriculum of students in higher education". The mission has given its [report](#) on January 24, 2018.

Following the submission of the report, the Minister of National Education presented his reform project in the Council of Ministers on 14 February 2018. The first edition of this "deeply renewed" baccalaureate is scheduled to take place in 2021.

The [changes in the baccalaureate](#) envisaged by the report lead to a new organization of the high school where the student **orientation project is to be built**. Among these changes (non-exhaustive list):

- The establishment of functioning in teaching units and no longer in general and technological fields;
- The implementation of a "regulated autonomy" within the institutions;
- The valorization of "computing and digital, [considered as] a major priority";
- The reduction in the number of examinations on the baccalaureate exam.
- The creation of a new platform for access to higher education "**Parcoursup**" which replaces the "Admission Post Bac (APB)" platform, created in 2009.

Parcoursup

The [Parcoursup](#) platform was set up in January 2018. It allows high school students (final class), and apprentices to pre-register, submit their wishes for further studies and respond to proposals for admission to higher education.

The platform introduces the concept and the **principle of "expectations" from higher education institutions** based on the charter "*For a shared implementation of training for student success*" established by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

The charter defines expectations as "the knowledge and skills necessary for success in each sector". The "expectations" correspond to what teachers expect as knowledge or entry skills into the different higher education fields. " In addition, the expectations must be "formalized by the institutions" and "facilitate and improve exchanges between the actors of higher education and secondary education".

The construction of the orientation project is one of the **basis of the reforms** of the high school and the baccalaureate whose objectives is the preparation of young people for their access to higher education. These reforms of the high school are also part of the reform of higher education.

Reform of higher education: the Student Plan and the law on student orientation and success known as "ORE"

On October 30, 2017, the Government presented the "Student Plan", which is part of the "[Orientation and Student Success](#)" bill, known as the **ORE Law**, which was adopted at first reading by the Senate in February 2018.

The Students Plan aims to "transform the first cycle of higher education and to promote student success" and to implement a complementarity between high schools and higher education institutions. It concerns at the same time the modalities of access to the higher formations but also the conditions of life of the students.

The Students Plan articulates around 5 areas of intervention:

1. "Better support high school guidance"
2. "More fair and transparent access in the higher education system"
3. "A tailor-made and renovated postgraduate training offer"
4. "Student living conditions at the service of success"
5. "A massive financial commitment of the State of nearly one billion euros to accompany the reform"

The measures of the Students Plan will be effective from the beginning of the start 2018 school year.

Ongoing debates

National universal service

In addition to the reform of the education systems, the President of the Republic announced his desire to create a "national universal service" in particular around two central themes: "[Republican cohesion and the resilience of French society](#)". This measure arouse several debates especially among the civil society.

The Government commissioned a working group to formulate proposals. An information mission on the national service composed of 10 deputies was created by the Defense Committee of the National Assembly and made its recommendations on February 14, 2018. The Youth Policy Orientation Council (COJ), a body of expertise and evaluation of youth policies, decided to self-initiate and produce [an opinion](#), which was delivered to the Prime Minister in January 2018.

2. VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

According to a study conducted by the France Bénévolat association in 2016 (*The evolution of volunteer involvement in France, from 2010 to 2016*, France Bénévolat-IFOP-Crédit mutuel), France has 20.4 million volunteers, among which the young people aged 15 to 35 years are 3 341 000, or 25.3%.

The data from the study also show that youth engagement is strongest among all age groups surveyed.

Voluntary activities are also popular with the public authorities, particularly because they enable young people to take part in society, to experience citizenship, develop qualities while participating in the autonomy of young people and social cohesion.

The State intervenes in favor of volunteering, through the promotion of these activities, financial support to associations and the development of voluntary schemes both in France and abroad. Policies relating to voluntary activities are based on a joint effort between various stakeholders in the perimeters of different actions: ministries, public operators, local authorities, associations, companies...

However, volunteering and voluntary involvement is marked by inequalities: volunteering practice is associated with the social category and/or degree level. In 2016, 34% of people without a diploma volunteered against 42% of those with tertiary education. Facilitating access to volunteering and democratizing it for all young people, especially the less socially advantaged young people, are therefore issues for the public authorities and associations involved in the development of volunteering.

2.1 General context

Historical developments

The **history of voluntary commitment is closely associated with that of NGOs** recognised and authorised by the [Law of 1 July 1901](#), which defines an NGO as "**the agreement whereby two or more persons pool together, on a permanent basis, their knowledge or activity for a purpose other than sharing profits**" (Article 1). This "republican" act enshrines the right of "**freedom of association**", which played a fundamental role in the development of *bénévolat* (volunteering).

Political organisations (unions, workers' movement, etc.) and religious organisations (religious scouting) played a key role in the creation of the first French network of *bénévoles*, whose profiles have adapted with social changes.

In the 19th century, the many wars and their wounded contributed to the creation of associations following the example of [La Croix-Rouge française](#) (The French Red Cross), founded in 1863, along with the first committees of *bénévoles* and first-aid organisations: relief societies for wounded soldiers (the Red Cross) that were initially largely composed of men but gradually opened to aristocratic women who, in the late 19th century, set up their own voluntary associations (*Union des Femmes de France* [Women's Union of France], 1882).

World War II and the post-war period also played a significant role in the evolution of *bénévolat*, in particular by democratising and increasing the presence of women and young people, who started to join non-profit organisations.

After 1945, the need to rebuild society and French territory generated the birth of large "public utility NGOs" ("**reconnues d'utilités publiques**") such as [Secours Catholique](#), the [Petits Frères des Pauvres](#) (1946) and [Emmaüs](#) (1949), for which *bénévolat* was underpinned by the **principle of charity and selflessness**. The post-war period also saw construction of the "**non-formal education movement**" for young people. These

movements and organisations, which set themselves the goal of training "emancipated citizens", enabled young people to practise recreational, sports, cultural and educational activities as well as to commit in various ways (environmental volunteering, archaeological sites, environment, etc.), participating in creation of a **"bénévolat culture"** more deeply rooted in French society and based on the values of **solidarity, democracy and "active" citizenship**.

In the 1950s, the ideals of non-formal education infused the public authorities responsible for youth and specifically the ministries responsible for culture, youth and sport. They began to support the non-formal education movement financially, as well as developing legal, administrative and legislative frameworks for non-profit organisations and promoting "bénévolat" among French youth, especially for the values associated with it.

Since the 1980s, the non-profit sector and *bénévolat* have grown in France. The sector has undergone many changes, including a gradual professionalisation involving recruitment of "professional *bénévoles*" and the desire to promote *bénévoles*' "skills" and thus consider *bénévolat* as a preliminary professionalising commitment.

According to a study conducted by the *France Bénévole* organisation in 2013 (*Enquête France Bénévolat-IFOP-Crédit mutuel*) and a survey carried out in 2012 by the Sorbonne Economics Centre, France **has 1.3 million non-profit organisations**, 20.4 million *bénévoles*, including 13.2 million that carry out their missions in associations, and 4.4 million in other types of structure. Among *bénévoles* in non-profit organisations, there are 3,341,000 young people (aged 15-35), i.e. 25.3%.

Voluntary work has made **substantial progress in the 15-35 age group**, with an increase of 33.6% in six years, although most growth was recorded between 2010 and 2013. The survey shows that young people show **the strongest commitment** for all age brackets surveyed.

Main concepts

Two types of civic commitments coexist in France: *bénévolat* and volunteering, which is a specifically French distinction. Although there are two commitment concepts, it is important to stress that they are both based on **the same values of (voluntary) solidarity and commitment**.

1) Bénévolat

There is no legal or contractual definition of the *bénévolat* status in French law. The commonly accepted definition is that of [the opinion of the Conseil Économique et social](#) (EESC – Economic and Social Council) rendered at its meeting of 24 February 1993 which defines the *bénévole* as anyone who freely commits to non-salaried action to help other people outside their professional and family time (this definition applies to all volunteers, youth, elderly people, etc.).

A *bénévole* acts in his/her organisation without being bound to its structure by any duration or frequency other than the rules that may have been optionally and freely consented to in a mutual agreement. The *bénévole* is not subject to **any subordination**.

Bénévoles participate in their organisations' activities without receiving **any financial compensation**. However, they may be reimbursed for the costs incurred by their activity. **A *bénévole* does not receive a salary**.

There are two types of *bénévolat*: "formal", exerted in an organisation, and "informal", also known as "direct *bénévolat*" or "proximity *bénévolat*", which is expressed by one-shot, non-permanent help (collecting toys, helping neighbours, etc.).

2) Volunteering

Volunteering is another form of commitment (in a more formal legal framework defined by the public authorities, unlike *bénévolat*). A volunteer's status lies somewhere between

"employee" and "*bénévole*", in particular because, unlike the *bénévole*, **volunteers are compensated (financial compensation)**.

The various schemes are governed by rules of their own. Law no.2010-241 of 10 March 2010 bearing on the civic service has however brought together several civic service schemes: charitable volunteering, international administrative volunteering, international business volunteering, international solidarity volunteering and European voluntary service. This form of commitment often responds to a general interest mission and is usually exercised in non-profit organisations or with legal entities governed by public law. **In addition, volunteer status is governed by regulatory texts (laws and decrees) providing a restrictive legal framework.**

2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

Governance

It is necessary to look first at relations between non-profit organisations and the State to identify the governance of *bénévolat* and volunteering: non-profit organisations are regarded as **interlocutors**, autonomous organisations representing civil society, as well as **partners** of the State with which they fulfil general interest missions.

The public authorities participate in development of the non-profit sector by supporting it financially and regulating its legal, legislative and administrative framework, as well as by promoting *bénévolat* and developing tools (*bénévolat* guides, etc.) that are useful and necessary to non-profit organisations.

Main actors

The Ministry in charge of Youth

In France, the public authority with final responsibility for the non-profit and *bénévolat* sector is the ministry in charge of youth which also covers "voluntary organisations and non-formal education" (Decree no. 2014-409 of 16 April 2014 and Decree no.2012-782 of May 2012). Currently, the Ministry in charge of youth is the Ministry of national Education.

- The ministry **defines and impulses financial and administrative support policies** bearing on *bénévolat* and volunteering.

Under the aegis of the ministry, the DJEPVA - Department (directorate) for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations and in particular the **Sub-Division for Cross-Ministerial Youth Policies and Voluntary Organisations** implements guidelines for non-profit organisations and *bénévolat*/volunteering and coordinates cross-ministerial actions for non-profit organisations and *bénévolat*.

- The Sub-directorate for Cross-Ministerial Youth Policies and Voluntary Organisations ([Sous-Direction des Politiques Interministérielles de Jeunesse et de Vie Associative](#)) is in charge of "coordination of actions to promote voluntary organisations, European and international mobility of young people, volunteering and *bénévolat*".

This sub-directorate **operates a fund dedicated to voluntary organisations**, the FDVA – Voluntary Organisation Development Fund.

- the **FDVA** is set up by [Decree no.2011-2121 of 30 December 2011](#), which is designed to **contribute to the development of non-profit organisations**, with the exception of sports organisations.

The **fund finances training of bénévoles through grants to NGOs** and promotes long-term *bénévolat*. Financing is allocated in the context of calls for projects, by decision of the Minister after consulting an advisory committee "bearing on the composition and jurisdiction of the advisory committee on funds for the development of voluntary organisations" ([Order of 7 February 2012](#)). The FDVA is present in the French regions

through decentralised departments of the ministry for youth and voluntary organisations: regional and departmental directorates for youth, sport and social cohesion.

Following the adoption of the [law of 15 September](#) which abolished the parliamentary reservation (available funds for the elected members to subsidize associations), 25 millions were allocated to the FDVA. As such, the FDVA now supports the functioning of NGOs as well as innovative NGOs projects.

Others ministries

As far as international volunteering, international business and administrative volunteering are concerned, other government departments are involved in their implementation among them:

- The Ministry in charge of foreign affairs
- The Ministry of National Education
- The Ministry in charge of labour
- The Ministry responsible for overseas France
- The Ministry in charge of defence
- The Ministry of the Interior
- The Secretariat of State for Development and Francophonie
- The Secretariat of State for European Affairs

Public operator in the field of volunteering

The Civic Service Agency

Civic Service Agency, ([The Agence du Service Civique](#)) manages the setup and development of the civic service. Created on 12 May 2010, it is supervised by the ministry in charge of youth and is a public interest group. It enables public and private partners to pool resources for implementation of general interest missions, in compliance with Decree no.2012-91 of 26 January 2012 bearing on public interest groups.

The Agency's role includes:

- **defining strategic guidelines and priority missions for Civic Service** in compliance with the provisions of Article L. 120-2 of the *Code du Service National* (National Service Code).
- **promoting and making best use of Civic Service among particular target groups**, host and youth guidance organisations, educational institutions and professional sectors;
- **ensuring equal access for all citizens to Civic Service**;
- monitoring and assessing implementation of the Civic Service;
- **implementing and monitoring conditions for ensuring social diversity** among Civic Service beneficiaries;
- defining the content of civic and citizen training courses provided for in Article L. 120-14 of the [Law of 10 March 2010 bearing on civic service](#);
- Implementing the youth component of the European Erasmus+ Programme. Since 1 January 2016, **the Civic Service Agency has been responsible for implementation of the youth component of the European Commission's Erasmus+ Programme and specifically for European Voluntary Service (EVS)**, which supports the sending and hosting of young volunteers on general interest missions. The Agency is under the responsibility of the ministry of youth.

France Volontaires

[France Volontaires](#) is an organisation set up in 2009 that aims to promote and develop different forms of international solidarity volunteering. It brings together 34 French organisations engaged in non-formal education and international solidarity and is supported by many partners: governments, communities and associations. The organisation also sends out international solidarity and civic service volunteers. It contributes to the public interest grouping of the *Agence du Service Civique* (Civic

Service Agency). **France Volontaires is also supported by the ministry of foreign affairs.**

the NGO seeks to:

- Work towards better knowledge and recognition of volunteering programmes;
- Contribute to the quantitative and qualitative development of volunteering;
- Support volunteer organisations in their missions (training, support of volunteers, etc.);
- Participate in the consolidation of French public policy on volunteering.

Main non-profit stakeholders:

[France Bénévolat](#) is a public utility organisation set up on 22 January 2010 with the aim of developing voluntary work, promoting general interest, putting people interested in *bénévolat* assignment with voluntary organisations in touch with one another, as well as supporting such organisations by reinforcing recognition and promotion of their *bénévoles*.

Formerly called the "*Centre National de Volontariat*", the organisation was established in 1974 and merged in 2003 with "*Planète Solidarité*", one of the first websites for linking *bénévoles* with non-profit organisations. It has a very strong non-profit network at both national (80 national organisations) and *départemental* (6000 *départementa* organisations) level. The organisation has three main areas of action: intergenerational solidarity, inclusion of young people, and upgrading of skills.

[The Mouvement Associatif](#) (Non-Profit Movement) is a federation bringing together 600,000 organisations. Its role is to act as a mouthpiece for voluntary organisations and set up permanent dialogue with public authorities. The *Mouvement Associatif* is also a workgroup whose discussions focus on commitment, employment, economics and civil dialogue. In July 2001, the *Mouvement Associatif* and representatives of the Government signed [a Charter of Reciprocal Commitments](#) specifying the two stakeholders' reciprocal obligations. The Charter was renewed in 2014. Its signing was a major step in redefinition of the relationship between the State and the non-profit sector, in particular by encouraging a culture of dialogue.

[La Fonda](#) is a public utility organisation set up in the 1980s. Its role is also to "equip" non-profit stakeholders by conducting surveys, drafting reports and surveys on the non-profit sector and organizing participative events;

The [CNAJEP](#) - Committee for National and International Relations between Youth and Non-Formal Education Organisations (Comité pour les relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Éducation populaire) promotes youth commitment to local and non-profit action. It brings together over 70 youth movements and ensures that associations are represented in dealings with the public authorities and in joint bodies. The CNAJEP also acts as an observatory and "laboratory for ideas" on youth, non-formal education and public policies, as well as being a vehicle for proactive dialogue with the public authorities on all these questions. The CNAJEP contributes to co-construction of public policies, managing national implementation of the "structured dialogue" decided upon by the Council of European Ministers, which adopted a resolution on 23 November 2015 aiming to "improve youth political participation in democratic life in Europe".

The Ligue de l'Enseignement (Education League) is a confederation of over 40,000 lay and non-formal education organisations, grouping together about 2,500,000 members and hundreds of thousands of *bénévoles*. Founded in 1866, it is one of the oldest non-formal education organisations still active in France. It encourages and supports local initiatives that enable general access to "education and culture in the recognition of cultural diversity" and encourage voluntary work. It is one of the public authorities' special interlocutors.

The list may also be extended to include the main associations that encourage *bénévolat* and implement commitment schemes that **cater to young people only (incomplete list)**:

[The Forum Français de la Jeunesse](#) (FFJ – French Youth Forum) is one of the main stakeholders in youth participation. Set up in 2012, it is “an autonomous forum where France’s youth can express their ideas”, bringing together the main youth-led bodies (associations, unions, political parties’ youth branches, student insurance companies, etc.).

[Animafac](#), is a national organisation that assists students in their non-profit projects, promotes involvement in higher education and has a non-profit network consisting of 5000 student organisations. It is a [major stakeholder in civic service volunteering](#) and has contributed considerably to work on the subject since 2001. It is a member of the High Council of Voluntary Organisations and the Civic Service Agency. Since 2007, Animafac has received nearly 2000 volunteers, mainly students, who have committed to the various student organisations in its network.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

Voluntary policies are based on the joint work of several actors. Among the stakeholders, a distinction should be made between agencies and institutions under the ministry responsible for youth which elaborate and financially support volunteering programmes and schemes for young people and non-profit organisations which offer voluntary missions to young people. The High Council for Voluntary Organisation concretizes the cross-sectorial cooperation between public and NGOs stakeholders.

The High Council for Voluntary Organisations

The High Council for Voluntary Organisations (*Haut-Conseil à la Vie Associative*) is an **advisory body** to which draft laws and decrees relating to the financing and organisation of non-profit organisations must be referred. The Council may “formulate objectives and make recommendations” on the non-profit sector, *bénévolat* in particular. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and is composed of 25 members (from the world of voluntary organisations) appointed for five years by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the Minister responsible for voluntary organisations. It is responsible for drafting [assessments](#) – appraisals of inventories on the non-profit sector, highlighting trends and issues involved in voluntary organisations and *bénévolat*.

2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering

Existence of a National Strategy

Promoting volunteering activities is a recurrent measure of youth policies especially because the NGOs that allow the development of volunteering are considered as both the “leaven of the social cohesion” and “major economic actors”*. Policies in favor of volunteering and volunteering are most often part of the broader framework of policies supporting and developing NGOs.

In November 2017, the Prime minister and the Minister of national education, in charge of the development of NGOs have launched a consultation in order to create a NGOs development and support strategy which should be announced in the second half 2018.

*Source: Draft Finance Law 2018

Scope and contents

The purpose of this strategy is to build a “society of commitment”.

The measures are not specifically aimed at young people themselves, although they may also concern them. Among the measures supporting the development of volunteering activities we can mention some measures already taken:

- The implementation of the ' Citizen commitment Account', created by [Article 39 of the Act of 8 August 2016](#) on labor, the modernization of social dialogue and the securing of career paths. The implementation of the account has been started on January 1, 2017.

This Citizen commitment Account'" aims at identifying and valorizing volunteering activities. It also allows to acquire training rights under certain conditions: for example, people who volunteer or are heavily invested in the management of NGOs as volunteers (more than 200 hours per year) will receive, as of 2018, a credit of 20 hours of training.

- The deployment of the "social innovation accelerator", launched in January 2018. The accelerator is a tool to support and encourage social innovations elaborated by associations or companies and social start-ups. It must allow among other things to federate a community of actors and mobilize public and private funding.
- The creation of numeric services in order to simplify administrative procedures and the development of numeric platforms.

Responsible authority

National (central) authority

Although the authority responsible for definition of [volunteering and bénévolat policies](#) is the **ministry in charge of youth policies**, such policies are not drafted within the **same administrative framework according to type of commitment: bénévolat "policies"** are not necessarily drawn up by the public authorities, which, out of respect for **non-profit organisations' independence**, only intervene to support them (financially) and promote *bénévolat* through various initiatives. "The State certifies, authorises, provides expert advice, accompanies, monitors and evaluates the action of non-profit organisations" as pointed out in the [Document de Politique Transversale \(DPT - Crosscutting Policy Document\) for Youth](#), associated with the 2016 Finance Law.

The situation is **different for the volunteering policies**, which are supported, defined, managed and controlled by the State and various ministries.

The DIJ is also the Director of the DJEPVA- Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations, under the aegis of the ministry in charge of Youth. In the commitment field, the Department (DJEPVA) develops and coordinates youth commitment (volunteering/*bénévolat*) projects, ensures they are properly implemented, and monitors various schemes.

The DJEPVA itself includes two sub-directorates responsible (among other things) for management of actions promoting *bénévolat* and volunteering:

- The Sub-directorate for Cross-Ministerial Youth and Voluntary Organisation Policies

It manages actions targeting youth when they fall within the scope of several ministerial departments. It coordinates actions in favour of voluntary organisations, European and international youth mobility, volunteering and *bénévolat* work, and is also responsible for strategic supervision of the Civic Service Agency

As such and in the field of volunteering and *benévolat*:

- It ensures in conjunction with the ministries concerned (finance, Interior, labour, ...) the development and monitoring of the regulations for NGOs;
- It follows and it implements the Government's policy on the development of associations and volunteering;
- It ensures the strategic supervision of the civic service agency, the main vector of volunteering in France.

- The Sub-directorate for Non-Formal Education (*Sous-Direction de l'Education Populaire*)

This sub-directorate promotes and monitors non-formal education. It contributes to the development of educational practices and coordinates the network of decentralised services in the areas of youth, non-formal education and volunteer organisations. In the context of volunteering and *bénévolat* policies, its role includes:

- Ensuring recognition of prior experience and development of the economic facilitation sectors;
- facilitating relations with federations and national organisations for youth and non-formal education as well as with correspondents in decentralised networks;
- providing the Minister with a list of national organisations likely to obtain youth and non-formal education approval;
- and managing, negotiating and assessing partnerships and objectives agreements with national youth and non-formal education federations and organisations.

Furthermore, as with other youth policies, implementation of youth policies on volunteering and *bénévolat* is based on **partnership and cross-ministerial work**. Other ministries contribute to the development of youth commitment, including the **ministry of the Interior for firefighter volunteering and the Ministry of National Education and the ministry in charge of higher education** which promotes youth commitment of young people through a range of schemes (including the National Education Civic Reserve (*Réserve Citoyenne National Education*) and educational validation of prior *bénévole* experience.

Among these ministries, the ministry in charge of foreign affairs plays an important coordinating role in implementation and management of **international solidarity volunteering (VSI) and international administrative volunteering (VIA)**. It is responsible for issuing authorisations to organisations implementing volunteering missions ([Law no.2005-159 of 23 February 2005 bearing on the contract for international solidarity volunteering](#)), and as such works in close partnership with the DJEPVA.

Local authorities

Youth policies **including those promoting commitment are also implemented by local authorities**, which contribute to the development of volunteering and *bénévolat* by promoting them *via* such local structures such as local missions, youth information offices and information points. **Some local authorities, particularly regions and départements, have their own international volunteering schemes**. They play an important role in mobility within a non-formal educational framework.

Revisions/ Updates

The former Youth National Strategy, the Youth Priority Plan (**2013-2017**) had for one of its objectives: the "promotion and enhancement of youth engagement",. Although the Youth Priority plan is no longer applied in 2018 as such, this policy of promoting commitment is still relevant today. The development and the valorization of the commitment were concretized by a budgetary increase:

- Credits for civic service in 2018 are up from 2017 (Source: 2018 Finance Bill, Program 163)

Moreover the Government has announced a target of **150 000 young people** welcomed in Civic Service (volunteering scheme). This increase is due to the Government's desire to promote the social impact of this system, which promotes gender diversity and social cohesion, combined with, its notoriety, which has led to an increase of volunteering requests from young people.

2.4 Youth volunteering at national level

National Programme for Youth Volunteering

As the State's role is to financially support non-profit organisations in their actions and promote voluntary work, **there is no public national *bénévolat* programme**. Nevertheless, owing to their independence, non-profit organisations have the possibility of developing and implementing their own *bénévolat* schemes and programmes.

The situation is different for **volunteering programmes and schemes**, which are defined, developed and supervised by such public authorities as the ministry in charge of youth, the ministry responsible for foreign affairs.

Civic Service

Definition of the civic service

One of the key commitment programmes set up by the State is Civic Service ([Service Civique](#)). This cross-ministerial and crosscutting system plays a pre-eminent role in youth policy. Established by [Law 2010-2041 of 10 March 2010 bearing on civic service](#), enacted on 13 May 2010, it has two forms:

Civic Service is a programme designed to encourage civic commitment by young people **aged 16 to 25, as well as by young people with disabilities aged 16 to 30, without any qualification conditions**. Missions typically last between 6 to 12 months with at least 24 hours per week, for "**non-profit organisations or legal entities governed by public law**" **having received civic service approval** to accomplish general interest missions of educational, environmental, scientific, social, sporting, family or civil security or prevention, Francophonie and French language promotion...". Commitment leads to **payment of an allowance of €472,97 net per month** paid by the State, and additional support in cash or kind paid for by the host organisation (€107,58). It entitles the volunteer to social protection funded by the State. Commitment is compatible with continuation of education or a part-time job.

Civic service missions are characterised by their great **diversity** in terms of location and activities on offer. [Missions](#) include (examples):

- the organisation of the [Conference On Youth](#) (COY11) connected with the 2015 COP21 held in Paris,
- the facilitation of language support workshops in voluntary organisations,
- the support to elderly people losing their autonomy in hospital,
- the support for access to and development and promotion of women's sports.

The objective of civic service is to reinforce **national cohesion by encouraging youth commitment to general interest service**. It provides a new form of commitment whereby young people can increase their self-confidence, professional skills and experience citizenship. Civic service is promoted by the Government, in particular because it is considered as an [instrument for cohesion](#) and social diversity insofar as all young people, **regardless of their background and education, can benefit from it**.

The system fits in with the history of National Service and civic commitment. After [suspension of military service](#) on 28 October 1997 ([Law no.97-1019 of 28 October 1997 bearing on reform of national service](#), which came into full effect in the 2000s, various volunteering schemes made their appearance with the objective of integrating young people into society, including the voluntary civil service created in 2006 by [Law no.2006-396 of 31 March 2006 on equality of opportunities](#), which was open to all young people aged 16 to 25 who wanted to fulfil a general interest mission for a period of 6 to 12 months. Civil service has been replaced by Civic Service (Law no.2010-241 of 10 March 2010).

Governance

The authority that administers the commitment scheme is the Civic Service Agency (*Agence du Service Civique*), which is under the **supervision of the ministry in charge of youth**, which is a [GIP](#) (an organisation that brings together public and private partners that pool resources to implement general interest missions). The Civic Service Agency is tasked with defining, managing and monitoring civic service. (See 2.3)

The Civic Service Agency is chaired by a director and has a Board of Directors composed of representatives of the Ministry of Youth, the [Commissariat Général à l'Égalité des Territoires](#) (CGET – General Secretariat for Territorial Equality territories), the *France Volontaires* non-profit organisation and qualified stakeholders from the field of volunteering.

It also has a Strategic Committee that includes representatives of host organisations, young volunteers and parliamentarians, whose role is to deal with all matters relating to development of Civic Service and provide the Board of Directors with guidance. Implementation of missions is based on partnership between public and non-profit stakeholders.

Since its inception in 2010, Civic Service has become increasingly well-known among NGOs, non-profit organisations and young people themselves, as well as more important within youth policy, as is evidenced by the Government's determination to see significant increases in numbers of Civic Service participants.

The extent of youth participation in the Civic service

The Civic service became "[universal](#)" on 1 June 2015, which means that all young people who apply are able to sign up to a Civic Service. The consequence of such universalisation has been an increase in human and financial resources and greater mobilisation of commitment stakeholders: non-profit organisations which receive 84% of volunteers), organisations of elected representatives, ministries that have committed to developing Civic Service through the creation of civic service programmes in line with their areas of action (health, environment, national education, etc..)

Since its creation, in 2010, more than 200 000 have volunteered in the framework of the civic service

In 2016, the dynamic of development has grown with nearly 92,000 young people who have achieved a mission, that is to say: an increase of 75% over one year, and 123,000 young people in 2017. This dynamic continues with a target of 150,000 young people volunteers on mission in 2018

Information and data on Civic Service

The Civic Service Agency has conducted a number of studies and surveys on its system, in particular on its visibility, with a view to expanding its development.

A survey carried out by [TNS Sofres](#) (a market research company) in June 2014, on the relationship with citizenship, commitment and the vote of young people performing a Civic Service compared with that to all of French youth in general, showed that Civic Service volunteers were more committed and more politicised than the young French population as a whole.

Other studies were also implemented by Civic Service Agency, including an [October 2015](#) survey with the IFOP on 1000 young people aged 16-25, and a survey with MEDIAPOST on users of the www.service-civique.gouv.fr website.

These various surveys have shown how satisfied and supportive young people are with regard to the system and their willingness to find out more: "96% of young people between 16 and 25 years know about Civic Service and 85% of them have a high opinion of it. 89% of them state that Civic Service is not mandatory and 83% that it encourages social diversity".

Volunteering of young firefighters

In addition to Civic Service volunteering, young people also have the opportunity to be volunteer [Jeunes sapeurs-pompiers](#) (JSPs-Young firefighters). The volunteering status of firefighters is defined by the [Law no. 96-370 of 3 May 1996 and Law no. 2002-276 of 27 February 2002](#), included in the *Code Général des Collectivités Territoriales* (General Local Authorities Code).

The scheme is designed for young people aged 11 to 18 who want to discover the profession of firefighter. They must have a medical certificate proving their fitness delivered by a fire service doctor, parental permission if they are minors, and a valid tetanus vaccination certificate. They receive training alongside their schooling, on rescue, firefighting and protection of property and the environment, as well as sports training. ([Decree no.2002-1480 of 20 December 2002 amending Decree no.2000-825 of 28 August 2000 bearing on training of young firefighters and organisation of the national fire service cadet diploma](#)). From the age of 16 onwards, JSPs have the opportunity to sit for the national young firefighters diploma, which is an asset for anyone interested in becoming a voluntary or professional firefighter. In January 2016, there were 27,800 young firefighters (JSPs) (girls and boys together).

The Ministry of the Interior manages the scheme in partnership with the ministry responsible for youth and non-profit partners: the [Unions Départementales et Régionales de Sapeurs-pompiers](#) (*Départemental* and Regional firefighter organisations)

Stand-alone law

Bénévolat and **volunteering** are not subject to the same legal framework.

Bénévolat

There is no specific legal framework for *bénévolat*, which, legally speaking, is a free commitment, implying that the *bénévole* does not benefit from social protection or have obligatory working hours. However, when volunteering is exercised within a voluntary organisation, ***bénévoles act in the context of a specific organisation*** which has its own rules, determined by the statutes and possible internal rules established by its governing body. ***Bénévoles must respect the organisation's purpose and operating rules.***

If volunteers are members of an organisation, **the legal rules** for non-profit organisations set by the [Law of 1 July 1901](#) also apply to them: freedom of membership and participation in the operation, but also obligations which can be sanctioned (compliance with statutes, payment of membership fees, etc.).

Some organisations, such as France Bénévolat, advocate the signing of a ["Convention de Bénévolat"](#) between the *bénévole* and the organisation. **This is not a contract but a moral commitment**, a document that sets out the *bénévole's* rights and obligations (e.g. the right to be received and regarded as a colleague in his/her own right, to consider each *bénévole* as indispensable, the obligation to adhere to "the purpose and ethics of the organisation and meet its objectives").

The *France Bénévolat* organisation has developed two standard documents that can be used as the basis for clarifying the rules governing relations between *bénévoles* and organisations, and so enable development of best practices: the Charter of *Bénévolat* in the Association ([the Charte du Bénévolat dans l'Association](#).)

Concerning young people, [the law of 27 January 2017 on equality and citizenship](#) clarifies and expands the conditions under which a minor can volunteer in NGOs:

- Before the age of 18, young people can freely join an association and invest in it on a voluntary basis;
- Before the age of 16, a minor may create or manage an association if he has a prior written authorization from his parents;

- Between the ages of 16 and 18, a minor may create or manage an association without prior authorization from his parents. However, its legal representatives must be informed by letter of this commitment by one of the members of the association.
- Young people under 18 have the opportunity to create a "junior association". This association does not have an administrative existence, but the national network known as "Juniors associations" provides support to young people who want to set up projects from the age of 12. It guarantees and facilitates the obtaining of an insurance and the opening of a bank account. 1000 "junior associations" are spread throughout France.

Volunteering

Volunteering is governed by a number of legal frameworks, depending on type of volunteering.

Civic Service

Civic Service was created by [Law no.2010-241 of 10 March 2010](#) bearing on civic service, which is included in the [Code du Service National](#) (National Service Code).

Pursuant to Articles **L120-7, 9 and 15 of the National Service Code**, civic service contracts **exclude any subordination between host organisations and volunteers**. However, volunteers are subject to the rules of the approved structure in which they perform their civic service. Volunteers must not replace employees, trainees or *bénévoles*, but be complementary to them. **The National Service Code** specifically states that tasks entrusted to volunteers shall not be performed by an employee of the structure within a year prior to the signing of the civic service contract.

In addition, the civic service contract must be concluded for a period of at least 24 hours per week, without exceeding 48 hours spread over a maximum of 6 days ([Article L 120-8 of the National Service Code](#)). For volunteers aged 16 to 18, contract duration cannot exceed 35 hours spread over a maximum of 5 days. Volunteers are entitled to 2 days' leave per month of service completed, 3 days a month for minors. Leave not taken does not entitle them to monetary compensation ([Articles R.121-17 to 21 of the National Service Code](#)).

Regarding social security, volunteers' social cover is fully supported by the **State**. The entire civic service period allows pension entitlements.

Hosting organisations also have **duties with respect to civic service volunteers**:

- they are obliged to appoint a mentor for the volunteer and organise a preparation phase for the mission,
- they must assist volunteers in definition of future projects to promote their employability at the end of their missions.
- They should also ensure that civic and citizenship training includes mandatory first aid training.

International solidarity volunteering

International Solidarity Volunteering is governed by [Law no.2005-159 of 23 February 2005](#) bearing on international solidarity volunteering, which **stipulates that the volunteer does not have the status of employee of the organisation since there is no work contract**. However, they do enjoy a certain number of rights recognised by the same Law.

They are entitled to:

- At least two days' leave per month;
- Social welfare. Under Article 5 of the Law of 23 February 2005, the association affiliates the volunteer to a social security system guaranteeing rights to a level identical to that of the **general French social security system**: the CFE – **Fund for French Citizens Abroad** system (*Caisse des Français de l'Etranger*). The social

security scheme provides insurance cover for sickness, maternity, disability, death, old age, accidents at work and occupational diseases.

- **An allowance to enable them to accomplish their mission in decent living conditions.** This allowance is not a salary, nor is it subject to income tax or social contributions. The amount and conditions under which it is payable are set for each volunteer in their contract. It cannot be less than €100 per month (excluding housing and food).

It should be noted **that international solidarity volunteering is now one of the forms that civic service may take.** In this case, as provided for in Article 1 of the Law of 23 February 2005, the international solidarity volunteering contract "is a civic service performed abroad and governed by the rules of this Law".

European Voluntary Service

European voluntary service EVS is defined by Regulation (EU) no.1288/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council meeting of 11 December 2013 establishing "Erasmus", the Union's education and sports programme, and repealing decisions nos.1719/2006/EC, 1720/2006/EC and 1298/2006/EC. The Chapter devoted to Youth specifies that the programme's three key actions enable development of individual or collective projects in the short, medium or long term, including **youth exchanges, European voluntary service**, training and networking (including seminars) activities. EVS funding rules cover:

- Travel expenses for volunteers and the planning visit, upstream preparation of the young person's volunteering mission,
- The costs of the voluntary activity,
- The volunteer's pocket money for personal expenses,
- In part, language support before and/or after departure for volunteers from 2 to 12 months,
- 100% of costs associated with specific needs of volunteers with disabilities,
- Exceptional costs, i.e. cost of visas, residence permits, vaccinations, costs related to reinforced mentoring and preparation for the departure of a young person with fewer opportunities, and transport expenses for outermost regions and overseas countries and territories.

The [Law of 10 March 2010](#) on the EVS Civic Service, [one of the forms of Civic Service](#).

International business and administrative volunteering

International Business Volunteering (IBV) and International Administrative Volunteering (IAV) are two International Volunteering schemes that, under certain conditions, enable young people **to carry out scientific, technical or commercial missions at a French business abroad** (IBV) or a **French Government department** located abroad (IAV). These schemes are regulated by several legislative texts including the [Law of 14 March 2000](#) bearing on civil volunteering instituted by Article L.111 - 2 of the National Service Code and the [Decree in Council of State no.2000-1159 of 30 November 2000](#).

IBV and IAV **volunteers benefit from social protection** ([Decree no.2000-1160 of 30 November 2000](#) setting the conditions under which the State contributes to the social protection of civilian volunteers assigned through voluntary organisations) and annual leave ([Decree no. 2000-1161 30 November 2000](#) laying down the rules for volunteers' annual leave).

The Law of 10 March 2010 on IBV and IAV Civic Service, [one of the forms of Civic Service](#).

Other official documents containing guidelines on youth volunteering

The question of volunteering is not only limited to the domain of voluntary associations and youth. Other areas of public action participate in its definition and development. **The following documents also relate to volunteering:**

The Minister of National Education

The Minister of National Education's [Memorandum no.2015-077 of 12 May 2015](#) which contributes to development of *bénévole* commitment through creation of a "*Réserve citoyenne*" (Civic Reserve) in each education authority. Intended for schools, the text was sent to all public stakeholders in national education and higher education and stipulates the objectives of this pool of volunteers, who work alongside teachers and educational teams to transmit the Republican values of freedom, equality and secularism.

The Memorandum states that the Reserve is "complementary to voluntary work or civic service and is a means of reliably satisfying the many demands of citizens, men and women alike, members or not of non-profit organisations, wishing to share their professional and personal experiences and make a contribution to education for the transmission of the Republic's values". It is open to all adults, young people including students.

The Labour Code

[The Labour Code](#), which includes major legislative and regulatory texts clarifying the situation of jobseekers who work as *bénévoles* in [Article L. 5425-8 of the Labour](#). The Article states that "**any job seeker may perform *bénévole* activity. Such activity cannot be carried out with a previous employer or replace paid employment**, and must remain compatible with the obligation to find a job".

General Tax Code (Code Général des Impôts)

The [General Tax Code \(Code Général des Impôts\)](#), which brings together all the provisions relating to tax law, states that volunteers can benefit from tax reductions under certain conditions: "Article 41 of Law no.2000-627 of 6 July 2000 amending Law no.84-610 of 16 July 1984 bearing on organisation and promotion of physical and sporting activities complements (1) of Article 200 of the General Tax Code by enabling *bénévoles*, under certain conditions, to **benefit from tax reductions** relating to donations, for expenses incurred by them personally in the context of their volunteer work activity". The costs incurred by *bénévoles* using their own vehicles, for example, may therefore, when not refunded by the organisation, be considered as donations and as such benefit from tax reductions.

The conditions enabling *bénévoles* to benefit from tax reduction for costs incurred by them were specified in the *Instruction Fiscale* (Tax Directive) of 23 February 2001, published in the [Official Tax Bulletin under reference 5 B-11-01](#).

Funding

National funding

The various financial efforts made by the State in implementing crosscutting (cross-ministerial) youth policy are the subject of a document appended to the annual draft Finance Law, with planned public expenditure and amounts of budgets allocated to the various action programmes. This is the *Crosscutting Policy Document* provided for by [Article 128 of amended Finance Law no.2005-1720 of 30 December 2005](#).

Youth commitment programmes (volunteering and *bénévolat*) are funded by the "163 youth and voluntary organisations programme". This includes a percentage of funding allocated to youth policies and development of voluntary organisations.

The 163 Programme includes **3 actions** to which funds are allocated:

For 2018, the total budget for all 3 actions amounted to € 540 million (voted intervention budget).

1. "Actions in favour of youth and non-formal education": €69 million
2. "Development of voluntary organisations" €23 million
3. "Development of the service civic": €447 million

Actions to which funds are allocated:

1) Funds allocated to "Development of voluntary organisations"

It finances five schemes to promote and develop non-profit organisations including *bénévolat*:

1. the FDVA – Non-profit Organisation Development Fund.
2. CRIBs - *Bénévole* Resource and Information Centres.
3. support to national and regional federations (of organisations).
4. the support to non-profit organisation *départemental* delegates
5. national support to accredited Youth and Non-Formal Education non-profit organisations.
6. The creation of the citizen commitment account

2) Funds allocated to "actions in favour of youth and non-formal education"

It finances schemes, including international youth exchanges. The Ministry for Youth promotes international volunteering, intercultural exchanges and mobility of young people, mainly through the **OFAJ** – Franco-German Youth Office and the **OFOJ** – Franco-Quebecois Youth Office.

3) Funds allocated for "developing Civic Service"

the budget is €447 million It must enable the Agency to cover civic service expenses (allowances paid to young people and social security).

European funding

France receives European funding under the European "Erasmus +" Programme 2014-2020 "Youth and Sport", managed by the *Erasmus + France Jeunesse & Sport* Agency. The youth component of *Erasmus+* is dedicated to development of **non-formal education activities including volunteering**.

In 2018, the total amount allocated to the [Erasmus + France Jeunesse et Sport](#) Agency by the European Commission to support its various "key actions" is: €15.7 million

It funds the "Youth mobility and youth stakeholders" action (key action 1): €9.7 million

- youth exchanges: €3.7 million
- European Voluntary Service: €3.7 million
- the mobility of youth stakeholders: €1.4 million

Source: *Draft finance law. Policies in favor of youth 2018*.

Characteristics of youth volunteering

INJEP-National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education

The [Barometer of Youth](#) report drafted by the INJEP-National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education and the [CREDOC](#) compiles official statistics on which youth policy can be based. Such data from among others different Ministerial Statistical Departments (SSMs) covers levels of commitment (*bénévole* and volunteering) of young French people, and identifies characteristics (social, values etc.) of young volunteers and their interest in *bénévolat* and volunteering.

France bénévolat

The survey of the association France Bénévolat, "The evolution of the voluntary commitment in France from 2010 to 2016" underlines that in 2016, the volunteers aged 15-35 years are 3,341,000 and that their rate of commitment amounts to 21%. By way of comparison, people over 65 have a commitment rate of 34.6% and those aged 36-64 23.3%. Another report *La France bénévolat* published in 2016 by France Bénévolat shows that:

- "The clearest differences between men and women are for the benefit of the men in terms of sport, culture, environment and training; and for the benefit of women in the youth and non formal education sector and in the field of international solidarity".
- It also reports that the under-35s are particularly motivated by the environment sector as well as by youth and non formal education and international solidarity.

Civic Service Agency

Regarding Civic Service, the Civic Service Agency has its own statistical information (gender, age, etc.), mainly collected through the [contracts](#) concluded between young people and Agency-approved reception organisations, which enable identification of the demographic, social and territorial characteristics of young people benefiting from the scheme (e.g. average age and level of education):

- the average age of young Civic Service volunteers is 21.
- Girls represent 59% of volunteers in civic service.

Moreover, the 2017 [INJEP/CREDOC Survey, Barometer of youth](#) conducted among 4500 French citizens aged over 18 selected by the quota method (region, town size, age, gender and, socio-professional category) , stressed youth interest in commitment:

- "sports, health, medical research and patient care, and the environmental field are the causes that would most appeal to young people to become involved or more engaged".
- "32% of 18-30 year olds are willing to volunteer during a part of their time".
- "the commitment to the service of a social cause, solidarity knows a slight increase (+ 2 points) compared to 2016".
- "Interest in civic service remains strong between 2016 and 2017, 44% of young people are interested in the idea of doing one."

It also appears that the French consider commitment as "a lever for social inclusion, development of civic values and strengthening of social cohesion."

Support to young volunteers

Removing [obstacles](#) (economic and social alike) that prevent some young people from carrying out *bénévolat* work, and above all volunteer work, is a public goal which aims to increase volunteering of all young people, especially young people with fewer opportunities. When they exist, support measures for young people largely depend on type of commitment:

Bénévolat

There are very **few schemes designed to materially or financially** help young *bénévoles*, and none of them are mandatory. However, if volunteers are required to cover expenses themselves on behalf of the non-profit organisation, they may be reimbursed by the organisation responsible for defining the internal rules on [reimbursement](#) of expenses incurred by *bénévoles* (travel expenses). Non-profit organisations may reimburse expenses if they are:

- actual: the task must have been accomplished (no fictional assignments);
- supported by an invoice or miscellaneous receipts issued by retailers or service providers;
- proportional to the activity.

Faced with this situation, volunteers have two options: either they ask the organisation to refund expenses incurred or they decide to waive reimbursement and donate it to the organisation. Also, if a non-profit organisation has adopted the decision at a general meeting, it may give its *bénévole* staff special payment vouchers or meal vouchers "to enable them to fully or partly cover the cost of restaurant meals" ([Decree no.2006-1206 of 29 September 2006](#) sets the conditions for allocation of meal vouchers).

Bénévoles receive no social protection because they receive no financial compensation and do not contribute, unlike employees who benefit from the general

social security scheme to which they are compulsorily affiliated. In the event of an accident occurring during their non-profit activity, the *bénévole* can claim "work accident" benefits unless the organisation has taken out "work accident" insurance that includes [accident cover](#).

Civic Service

Civic Service commitment is eligible **for full social protection funded directly by the State**. Young volunteers can benefit from coverage of sickness. Furthermore, all completed Civic Service quarter-years are taken into account under pension insurance. The Civic Service does not provide entitlement to additional coverage for illness but, in order to facilitate access to voluntary supplementary health insurance, the Civic Service Agency has developed partnerships with two mutual benefit societies.

Reception organisations must give volunteers **an allowance necessary for their subsistence, equipment, accommodation and transport**. The minimum monthly allowance was set at €107.58 on 1 January 2018. An additional State grant of €107.68 per month can be paid to young people if they or their household receive the RSA – minimum income (*Revenu de Solidarité Active*) or are recipients of a Higher Education grant.

If the volunteer is a jobseeker at the time of signing the contract and has acquired rights to compensation (aid to return to employment paid by *Pôle Emploi*, (the National Employment Agency) prior to the Civic Service, payment is suspended for the duration of the mission and resumes at the end of it. However, volunteers can stay registered at *Pôle Emploi* for the duration of their missions.

Other Volunteering schemes

As regards other voluntary schemes (VSI, EVS, VIA, etc.), **social security cover and gratuities are included** so there are no additional financial or material measures for young people experiencing financial difficulties.

Local authority aid

Some [local authorities](#) (local authorities are French administrative structures, separate from State administration whose representatives are elected and must uphold the interests of the local population) **have set up their own aid or support schemes for young people who want to commit**. They usually take the form of financial aid granted to young people in the context of an international mobility and solidarity project.

Quality Assurance (QA)

Bénévolat

In the case of *bénévolat*, there is no "quality assurance system" to assess a mission's success. However, some organisations have developed their own *bénévolat* charter, which every member must commit to. The [Petits Frères des Pauvres](#) organisation, which combats poverty providing social support to people in precarious situations, has defined a "voluntary pact" whereby it sets the rules *bénévoles* must follow to "implement the support relationship" specific to their mission. Among other things, *bénévoles* agree to "comply with the charter, participate in the life of the organisation and uphold freely agreed commitments, work as a team, agree to train to better fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to them, and carefully observe the rules of confidentiality", while the organisation undertakes to "recruit and guide *bénévoles* according to their desires and skills, define roles and coordinate actions." Non-profit organisations have the freedom to set up quality assurance systems, but this is not mandatory.

Civic Service

The situation is different for volunteering, and more specifically for Civic Service, which has a mission monitoring and evaluation (including qualitative) system that is

implemented during the young person's commitment as well as the end of the Civic Service.

The Civic Service Agency seeks to track and monitor proper conduct of missions. The aim is to check:

- compliance of implementation of the Civic Service with current legislation (National Service Code, Law of 10 March 2010);
- compliance with the approved organisation's obligations;
- absence of a gap between actions performed and content of the approval;
- quality of programme implementation from the volunteers' point of view.

As regard the quality aspect, the aim is rather to assess:

- the value and utility of the mission to which young people commit, in particular its impact on their life projects and even on their social and professional inclusion;
- the value for organisations receiving volunteers and benefiting from reinforcement of their missions and general interest activities;
- the value for French society, as a whole, which ultimately benefits from general interest missions.

Quality assessment of the mission

During a mission, the young people involved are accompanied by a [mentor](#) the only person mentioned by name in the Civic Service agreement. The mentor must accompany the young people involved and facilitate their inclusion in the reception structure. The presence of a mentor is **a form of internal control**, to the extent that **he/she must ensure proper inclusion of young people in the structure** and accompany them on their mission.

In addition, organisations accredited under Civic Service commitment must provide and annual account of their Civic Service activities, in compliance with [Memorandum no. ASC/SG/2011/204 of 30 May 2011](#) bearing on the implementation of control under the provisions of Civic Service. **Their reports are submitted to the Civic Service Agency and to regional youth, sports and social cohesion departments** (See 1.3) and must describe missions carried out, their evolution and conditions of exercise. [These activity reports](#) must also enable Civic-Service approved organisations to indicate and identify difficulties encountered.

Quality assessment of missions is also carried out through distribution (by post or email) of satisfaction questionnaires to all volunteers at the end of their mission. Questionnaires, which are disseminated by the Civic Service Agency, provide information as to the overall level of volunteer satisfaction with regard to fulfilment of their mission, and the resulting feedback helps enrich Civic Service mission standards.

In 2014, addition to these questionnaires, the Civic Service agency commissioned [TNS Sofres](#) to conduct a major longitudinal survey among volunteers to **measure the impact of Civic Service on volunteers** in terms of employability, wellbeing and participation in the life of society. The survey was published and shows that Civic Service volunteers expressed "a strong need to help others (89% vs. 83%)" and are "more confident in their ability to act, especially where they live (80% vs. 62%)".

Regulations on standards of quality

Bénévolat

In the case of *bénévolat*, there is no official document establishing a list of quality criteria for *bénévole* missions, or setting strict standards on what a *bénévolat* mission should be.

Volunteering

The situation is different for Civic Service: the *Agence du Service Civique* (Civic Service Agency) has a [référentiel des missions](#) (mission standardss) for bodies wishing to set up

a civic service mission and **illustrating what can be implemented in line with the scheme's principles.**

The standards were implemented in May 2010 following enactment of the Law of 10 March 2010 bearing on Civic Service. They indicate that a "compliant mission, whose design and drafting respect the principles set out in this document, is one of the fundamental keys to obtaining service civic approval, needed to receive volunteers". They also remind interested parties what Civic Service consists of and specify what volunteers "may or may not do" depending on the 9 fields (themes) in which missions are performed:

solidarity,

health and education for all,

culture and leisure,

sport,

environment,

memory and citizenship,

international development,

humanitarian action

Emergency response.

For example, the standards state that civic service missions must focus on one of the 9 priority themes set by the Board of Directors of the Civic Service Agency.

However, the **mission standards are not limiting and remain indicative**: activities can be added, detailed or removed by reception bodies, which must be fully cognisant of the document.

Target groups

One of the ministry in charge of youth's policies is to promote international mobility of young people through volunteering, and diversify beneficiaries, including increasing access **to young people with fewer opportunities.**

Young people from rural and disadvantaged urban areas

Civic Service is based on a fundamental principle of social diversity. It is accessible to all without qualifications. In particular, it promotes commitment by rural youth, for whom the range of available missions and reception structures is insufficient, as well as by young people living in "priority" districts coming under the "urban policies" on "national urban cohesion and solidarity towards deprived neighbourhoods and their residents" ([Article 1 of Law no.2014-173 of 21 February 2014 on programming for urban areas and urban cohesion](#))

2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes

Increasing and diversifying young people's European and international mobility is a recurrent youth policy stake. Mobility policies aim to enable all young people to gain experience abroad, whether for training, study or engaging in solidarity projects, especially as the French mobility offer is one of the broadest in the world but still lacks visibility for young people. A varied range of programmes exists, including International Solidarity Volunteering, bilateral programmes, individual grants from local authorities and European schemes.

The ministry in charge of youth has introduced several instruments in order to achieve this objective:

- **at national level**, a [Comité Permanent de la Mobilité Européenne](#) et internationale des jeunes (Permanent European and international Mobility Committee – October 2013), which brings together all stakeholders involved in mobility: the State and its operators, local authorities, youth and non-formal education organisations, youth organisations and mobility programme beneficiaries.
- **at regional level**, *Comités Régionaux de la Mobilité Européenne et Internationale* (COREMOBs - Regional Committees for European and International Mobility), which are strategic and policy-making bodies involving all local stakeholders in youth mobility: decentralised State services, local authorities, non-profit organisations and young people. These regional committees are overseen and chaired jointly by representatives of the State within local authorities (Prefects and Chief Education Officers) and Presidents of Regional Councils. They base their decisions on prior territorial diagnoses.
- **regional platforms for European and international mobility** which are strategic tools at the service of the Regional Mobility Committees (COREMOBs), which coordinate all local mobility stakeholders. Specifically, these platforms are based on territorial analysis developed by COREMOBs and implement awareness-raising, information and training schemes for young people and youth workers.
- **the Internet portal "[Découvrir le Monde](#)"** (Discover the World), which targets young people and aims to "provide ideas, guide choices and help finalise projects to live abroad, including through volunteering".

EU programmes

France participates in the Erasmus+ Youth and Sports programme (2014-2020), managed by the Civic Service Agency which is under the authority of the ministry in charge of youth.

European Voluntary Service (EVS)

This being so, French youth can benefit from [European Voluntary Service](#) (EVS), which provides young people with "mobility and commitment experience in another country" including "active citizenship". EVS is for young people aged between 17 and 30, with no qualification requirements or required language level. Young people with fewer opportunities benefit from special conditions.

In France, the institutions responsible for collecting data on EVS are the Civic Service Agency and the ministry of youth's statistical department (integrated into the INJEP), which also produces studies on the scheme. Studies highlight the volunteers' social characteristics and the scheme's evolution. In "Barriers preventing young people's access to European Voluntary Service" (*Obstacles à l'accès des jeunes au service volontaire européen*) published in 2011, Nicolas Bouchaud reports on the existence and persistence of barriers to access to EVS for non-graduates and young people facing social difficulties. He stresses that "since its inception in 1996, European Voluntary Service has helped thousands of young French people to go abroad. Yet it is clear that this target group is not socially diversified: students and young people from affluent backgrounds largely predominate".

IVO 4 all (Volunteer Opportunities for All)

France has also participated in the European experiment *IVO 4 all (Volunteer Opportunities for All)* co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

This experiment, which also involved Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom, aimed to develop and improved access to volunteering for all young people, in particular those who are furthest removed from it: young people with fewer opportunities. **The experiment therefore targeted NEETs**(young people not in education, employment or training) with few or no qualifications (Baccalaureate level or lower) and/or receiving supplementary Civic Service compensation intended for young

grant-holders and beneficiaries of the RSA – Minimum Income residing in areas where inequalities persist.

In France, the experiment was carried out in two phases during each of which 50 young people were sent out, one beginning in 2015 and the other in 2016.

The experiment was carried out and coordinated by a consortium consisting of the ministry in charge of youth, the *France Volontaires* organisation and the Civic Service Agency, in partnership with other Member States involved in the project and civil society organisations.

Other Programmes

Volunteering as part of non-formal education

Other volunteer programmes are offered to young people:

Programmes resulting from bilateral agreements

Programmes resulting from bilateral agreements such as those provided by the OFAJ–Franco-German Youth Office, which was set up by the Elysée Treaty in 1963. The OFAJ is an international organisation with headquarters in Paris and aims to support and develop all types of exchanges between young people from France and Germany, and to consolidate Franco-German relations through a **range of mobility and language exchange programmes for children and young people, including jobseekers**.

In 2016, the OFAJ supported the mobility of 8 390 young people have participated to an exchange program. These were essentially collective exchanges managed by youth and non-formal education and sports organisations, etc.

Regarding young people with fewer opportunities, the OFAJ adopted a "diversity and participation" strategy in December 2015, which aims to increase social diversity of among OFAJ-scheme beneficiaries. The OFAJ has set a target of 20% of young people with fewer opportunities between now and 2020.

VSI – International Solidarity Volunteering

Volontariat de solidarité internationale (VSI – International Solidarity Volunteering) is a scheme governed by the Law of 23 February 2005. It aims to carry out full-time public interest missions overseas in the fields of cooperation, development and humanitarian action. The contract constitutes a civic service performed abroad (Law of 10 March 2010 on Civic Service). **VSI is a contractual commitment mutually binding to sending organisation and volunteer alike**. Any adult with no professional activity can sign up for VSI. Missions must be organised with international organisations approved by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which helps coordinates this scheme.

In 2018, 29 organisations were approved by the State for implementation of VSI contracts. Volunteers receive an allowance of between €106.06 and €710.10, plus a supplementary allowance linked to the foreign assignment (variable amount depending on country). The under-30s represent 62% of these volunteers (1180).

The host countries of volunteers are mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, with 45% of volunteers, followed by Asia, which hosts 30% of volunteers. International solidarity volunteers are characterized by being at a high qualification level (66% higher than BAC + 5). During their mission, they occupy 51% of the administrative and management functions, 12% of teaching and 11% of education missions.

In addition, solidarity programs are specifically dedicated to groups of young people.

“Jeunesse Solidarité Internationale” (International Youth Solidarity) is a international solidarity programme supporting short collective projects (maximum 3 weeks) for young people aged 16 to 25 and **“Ville Vie Solidarités Internationale** is a program for young people who are residents in disadvantaged urban territories.

Vocationally oriented volunteering

International Administrative Volunteering (IAV) and International Business Volunteering (IBV) are other forms of international volunteering; they have a professional vocation rather than a citizenship or solidarity aspect. They fall within the scope of international volunteering (IV) as defined by [Articles L122-1 to L122-9 of the National Service Code](#), which cover "international volunteers involved in the action of France worldwide in culture and environment, technical, scientific and economic and humanitarian action".

International Administrative Volunteering (IAV)

[International Administrative Volunteering](#) enables young people aged 18 to 28 to work abroad for French government departments. It can be performed in embassies, *Alliances Françaises*, research institutes, etc. Young people signing up for IAV receive allowances equivalent to compensation between €1,200 and €2,800 per month, depending on the country of assignment. Missions last between 6 and 24 months.

International Business Volunteering (IBA)

International Business Volunteering) enables young people aged 18 to 28 to carry out professional missions abroad for periods of 6 to 24 months. Volunteers are paid between €1,200 and €3000 net per month, depending on the country. All professional sectors are concerned, including finance, marketing, IT, construction, agronomy, tourism, law and human resources.

The "quality" and more precisely the good functioning of these schemes are assessed by several mechanisms. For more information about quality assurance and evaluation see "2.5 Quality Assurance".

Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

Young volunteers coming from abroad need Visas (non-EUcountries) to enter and stay in France. In the context of civic service volunteer missions abroad, organisations and structures approved by the Civic Service Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are responsible for management of visas and administrative documents relating to expatriation of young French and foreign volunteers.

2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

Information providers

Promoting *bénévolat* / volunteering is a major priority in the eyes of the public authorities, including the ministry responsible for youth. Several measures were implemented to meet this challenge, including informing young people on and educating them in all types of commitment throughout their education and outside formal education.

A number of public stakeholders, including the State (ministries) and local authorities, are involved in promoting volunteering and *bénévolat* opportunities for young people.

Information provided by the State

Institutional websites

The ministry in charge of youth and voluntary organisations plays a role in educating young people in volunteer work by centralising *bénévolat* offers and disseminating them through websites including: <http://www.associations.gouv.fr>, which provides news on voluntary organisations along with possibilities and conditions of *bénévolat* and volunteering, and refers internet users to websites of organisations that recruit and are looking for *bénévoles* or volunteers:

- <http://www.tousbenevoles.org/trouver-une-mission-benevole>
- <http://www.francebenevolat.org/benevoles>
- <http://www.service-civique.gouv.fr/>

On 8 October 2015, the Ministry of Youth launched an internet portal dedicated to European and international mobility: "[Découvrir le Monde](#)" (Discover the World) presenting mobility opportunities including those involving volunteering. Various volunteer missions (outside national soil) proposed by organisations and public institutions are described as well as how to apply. The portal comprises a search engine providing access to proposals.

Civic Service agency platform

The Civil Service Agency's role is to promote and make best use of the Civic Service "to the public concerned, youth reception and guidance organisations, educational institutions and professional branches", and it has its own resources for communication disseminating information on volunteering and commitment through Civic Service. Its "[jeunes / volontaires](#)" (youth / volunteer) platform lists all missions on offer from host bodies according to theme: culture and leisure, environment, education for all, health, emergency intervention, sports, memory and citizenship, solidarity, humanitarian and international development. Young people can choose missions according to their own criteria and apply directly through the platform.

Youth Information structures in local authorities

Dissemination of information on *bénévolat* opportunities and commitment is not only carried out *via* Internet; there is also a network of youth information points and offices (*Réseau Information Jeunesse* – Youth Information Network).

Youth information network

"Youth information" is a general mission guaranteed by the State, and as such, the ministry responsible for the youth coordinates and accredits information facilities in regions, *départements* and municipalities: the [Centre National d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse](#) (CIDJ-National Centre for Youth Information and Documentation) in Paris, [Centres d'Information Départementaux et Régionaux Jeunesse](#) (CRIJs and CIJs - *Départemental* and Regional Youth Information Centres) and [Bureaux information Jeunesse](#) (BIJs – Youth Information Offices) in municipalities. With these various amenities to hand, young people can find answers and information on *bénévolat* and volunteering.

Local missions

Also noteworthy is the role of local Missions, which serve as reception and information centres for young people living in municipalities, where they can benefit from personal monitoring of their efforts to find a job. Some local missions inform young people of Civic Service, as it can be a beneficial experience as far as future professional integration goes.

Key initiatives

Several major initiatives have been undertaken by public authorities with a view to popularising young people's commitment to *bénévolat* and volunteering.

The Report on associative and voluntary sector" For an ambitious association development policy and the elaboration of a society of commitment".

On the 8th of June, le "Mouvement associative" which represents the NGO professional sector has given the Prime Minister, the report of the voluntary sector "For an ambitious association development policy and the elaboration of a society of commitment" ..

This report is the result of a joint work between public authorities and the voluntary sector. It is used as a basis to create a strategy in favor of the development of the associative sector and the commitment in the society

In 2014, following a proposal by the [Mouvement Associatif](#) representing all French non-profit organisations, the Government proclaimed *bénévolat* to be a "[great national cause](#)" that enabled "highlighting of the non-profit momentum" and "publicising and recognition of the strength and diversity of non-profit commitments" to all French citizens, young people in particular.

Civic service

The Civic Service Agency uses a range of tools to publicise its actions and promote civic service, including such social networks as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *Dailymotion* and *YouTube*, which disseminate information and news on the civic service, and "[civic service recruitment forums](#)".

The presence of young Civic Service volunteers at cultural events such as music festivals, where they present the scheme, and at such national ceremonies as the [14 July](#) where they have paraded, contributes to knowledge of civic service.

On March 2018, the Civic Service Agency changed its graphic identity and launched a new communication campaign to support development of civic service. The campaign, entitled "[le pouvoir d'être utile](#)" ("the power to be useful") invites young people aged 16 to 25, and up to 30 for young people with disabilities, to sign up to civic service. It took the form of films presenting civic service broadcast on television and the *Internet*, a poster campaign in public areas (metro stations), and organisation of a photo competition on social networks (*Instagram*).

2.7 Skills recognition

Policy Framework

Recognition of (*bénévole* / volunteer) commitment is a priority both for the public authorities and leaders of non-profit organisations calling for better understanding of capabilities and skills acquired during *bénévolat* or volunteering missions, which are regarded as **vectors of non-formal education, acquisition of knowledge and skills** for young people.

There are several volunteer **skills recognition schemes** that are defined and governed by legislative documents or charters drawn up by the public authorities, including ministries, in partnership with civil society stakeholders, among these documents:

Legislative documents and charters on skills recognition

In 2001, [the Ministry of Higher Education's Memorandum on development of associative commitment and student initiatives](#) (no.2001-159 OF 29-8-2001) promoted recognition of students' voluntary commitments, which "help students set up and develop their projects", and set up an optional teaching unit "[that] is undoubtedly the best way to validate student action as part of training, and can also take the form of internships, a thesis or a report, a distinction or even a bonus."

VAEb - Recognition of *bénévole* experience (Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience Bénévole), provided for by [Law no.2002-73 of 17 January 2002](#), known as the "Social Modernisation Law" enables anyone, regardless of age, level of education or status, to validate their *bénévole* or voluntary experience in order to obtain a diploma, vocational qualification or certificate, or access to training without having to provide proof of the level of education required. The *bénévole* or volunteer must have completed three years of volunteering with the targeted certification content to obtain such recognition. Institutions delivering qualifications are responsible for recognition of prior learning.

VAEb was regarded as a "small revolution" because it asserted that it was possible to acquire skills outside professional contexts.

[Decree no.2011-1009 of 24 August 2011](#) pursuant to Section III of Article L. 120-1 of the National Service Code bearing on conditions for promoting Civic Service in post-baccalaureate training" sets out conditions for promotion and validation of skills acquired during civic service by students.

In addition, the article 29 of the law of 27 January 2017 on equality and citizenship generalizes the mechanisms for recognizing student commitment in higher education .

Since the start of the 2017/2018 academic year, all higher education institutions must set up a system for recognizing skills and aptitudes acquired as part of a voluntary activity within an association. These systems already **exist in 70%** of universities, notably through the attribution of ECTS credits or bonus points system. In addition, higher education institutions must facilitate the study planning of students strongly invested in volunteering;

Other policy framework: Experimentation in the field of skill recognition schemes

During 2010-2013, the FEJ – Youth Experimentation fund (*Fonds d'Expérimentation pour la Jeunesse*) financed an experiment on the possibility "[of improving use made of *bénévole* commitment in the professional integration of young people](#)", managed by the *Association des Scouts et Guides de France* in partnership with various French organisations. The experiment, which was developed in the context of European Youth Year, 2011, consisted of "promoting, through an outreach campaign, better recognition by employers of the skills developed by young *bénévoles*." It resulted in two trial campaigns to assess "perception of civic commitment in young people's CVs ". As do others, this project reflects the Ministry in charge of youth interest in knowing the effects of youth commitment.

Existing arrangements

Bénévolat recognition schemes and mechanisms are diverse and based on a partnership approach involving several ministries and public stakeholders:

Recognition of prior learning

In the context of VAE – accreditation of prior work experience (**validation des acquis de l'expérience**) candidates may obtain all or part of a certification: diploma, vocational or qualification certificate following evaluation by a jury of knowledge, skills and competences developed during such experience. There is a national directory of professional qualifications, ranking them by occupation and level, which lists qualifications that can be obtained through VAE. The VAE procedure involves a series of steps: definition of a project, advice from [advice relay points \(points conseil relais\)](#), certification bodies that inform and support candidates in preparing their application, submission of the application, preparation of the recognition, and final evaluation. *Bénévoles* and civic service volunteers are eligible for VAE.

Educational recognition of *bénévolat* and volunteering

Each higher education institution can choose how it implements educational recognition of commitments, based on its concerns, non-profit fabric, means and numbers of students enrolled. Some universities offer educational content that may involve the non-profit sector and which needs to be validated to obtain ECTS (European credit transfer system) units, a points system developed by the European Union to compare university courses in different European countries.

Educational recognition of commitment undergoes final evaluation based on the quality of a given submission, course attendance and the activities carried out within the organisation, and, above all, the investment made and personal benefits that the young person has gained from the experience.

Students completing a civic service mission enabling them to acquire knowledge and skills in the course of their studies can also **request recognition of their activities in order to obtain additional ECTS units**. To do so, they must provide their institution with a certificate of civic service delivered by the receiving organisation upon completion of their mission.

A [report by the Animafac](#) association published in 2010, entitled "*Educational recognition of student commitments in higher education institutions*" testifies to the variety of educational recognition methods implemented by universities.

Skills portfolio

Another tool for recognition of *bénévolat* is the Skills Portfolio ([Portefeuille de Compétences](#)), a booklet designed **to help bénévoles materialise crosscutting skills**, gained from their volunteer experience. The portfolio is a self-diagnosis tool set up in 2011 by the ministry in charge of voluntary organisations workgroup composed of representatives of major organisations along with experts on recognition and promotion of *bénévoles'* skills and a sociologist. Public stakeholders such as *Pôle Emploi* (national service for employment) also participated. The Ministry of National Education coordinated the workgroup.

Any organisation (public or non-profit) can set up and customise its skills passport, but the skills are defined and formalised in 18 identical fact sheets (some are covered by several sheets):

- Committing, taking a position
- Taking responsibilities
- Defining orientation strategies
- Facilitating a governing body
- Managing projects
- Mobilising around a project
- Coordinating teams
- Working as a team
- Managing and working in an intercultural or international team
- Negotiating means of action
- Organising
- Building and coordinating one or more networks
- Communicating
- Being source of initiative and proposals
- Being an innovative force
- Learning differently through practice

The **skills portfolio should reflect the degree of qualification of *bénévolat***, helping *bénévoles* to identify and formulate the skills implemented during their missions, and should also help organisations in their role to support volunteers. The document is not mandatory when hiring, but can be useful when *bénévoles* / volunteers are interviewed by a certifying board or employer.

The *bénévole* passport

The France *Bénévolat* organisation has developed its own skills portfolio, the "[Bénévole Passport](#)", which helps "detailed description of all missions carried out on a *bénévolat* basis, have each organisation certify that the mission was well performed, describe the training procedure followed through reception organisations and tie all these elements to the volunteer profile". The **Passeport Bénévole** is supported by [Pôle Emploi](#), **(a public body that helps jobseekers find employment and meet company recruitment needs)**, the Ministry of National Education, the ministry of health, and the ministry in charge of youth and is recognised as a supporting document in the context of the accreditation of prior work experience (VAE).

The civic service certificate

Under the provisions of Article L 120-1 of the National Service Code, each civic service volunteer must receive a civic service [certificate](#) at the end of their mission, along with an assessment of their activities, describing the skills acquired during their mission. It is the mentor's responsibility to assess the progressive acquisition of aptitudes and skills throughout the mission. The certificate may help a jobseeker find employment. Some companies have signed Civic the Service Certification Charter ([Charte de Valorisation de l'Engagement de Service Civique](#)).

The Civic Service Commitment Institute (Institut de l'Engagement du Service Civique)

[The Civic Service Commitment Institute \(Institut de l'Engagement du Service Civique\)](#) is an organisation that supports domestic and European service volunteers "**identified for their potential, quality of commitment and value** of their future project". Young people interested must submit an application in which they describe their project, their course and their expectations of the Institute. They are then invited for an oral interview which determines whether or not their application is successful. The Institute seeks to detect young talents and accompany them in their projects, towards three career paths in particular:

- **Training:** laureates are guided towards training courses at [partner institutions](#) that open specific paths for them.
- **Professional path:** laureates are accompanied in implementation of a professional project, with support from partner companies.
- **Business creation:** laureates who wish to create a non-profit organisation, business or project, receive special support.

Volunteering Management Training Certificate

Since 2008, any person of 16 and over engaged in a *bénévolat* activity who wishes to **receive additional training and recognition of their volunteer experience** can apply for a CFGA- Volunteering Management Training Certificate ([Certificat de Formation à la Gestion Associative](#)). Introduced by Decree no.2008-1083 of 1 October, the certificate is delivered to people who have received theoretical and practical training in order to exercise *bénévolat* responsibilities in administrative, financial and human management in a non-profit organisation. The course consists of two phases:

- theoretical training of 30 hours minimum, supervised by a pedagogical Manager;
- at least 20 days' practical training, carried out under pedagogical mentoring in a declared non-profit organisation.

The certificate is awarded by training organizations authorized by the Prefect (Prefects are the custodians of State authority in Regions and Departements).

The Youthpass

Young people participating in European voluntary programmes such as European Voluntary Service (EVS) may obtain the *Youthpass* certificate, **which they partly complete themselves after self-assessment of their learning**. The certificate is a validation and recognition tool for skills acquired in non-formal educational settings. It can be useful when looking for a job or in vocational training, above all because it reflects the holder's qualities, their ability to adapt to intercultural environments, commit to a project and be mobile.

2.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy development

The Report on associative and voluntary sector" For an ambitious association development policy and the elaboration of a society of commitment".

The Government has launched in November 2017 a consultation resulting in the elaboration of the report "For an ambitious association development policy and the elaboration of a society of commitment."

This report, which proposes measures to develop a society of commitment and the associative sector, is the result of a consultation work, jointly led by the Department of Youth, Non formal education and NGOs, the High Commissioner to the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation, and the "associative movement" that represents the association sector. It proposes 593 measures which are articulated around 3 axes:

- To make the potential of the 'law 1901" (see Glossary) alive;
- to build a policy of development, support and recognition of NGOs;
- to facilitate the general interest mission of associations.

This report is intended to serve as a working document for the Government in developing its future youth strategy.

Ongoing debates

The National Universal Service

The President of the Republic would like to implement a universal national service (SNU) whose "aim is to encourage the participation and commitment of every young person", to value citizenship and the feeling of belonging to a community gathered around its values "and" to strengthen social cohesion ". This new measure is considered as one of the most important measure of the current youth policies. The organisation and the aims of this national universal service arouses several questions especially from the civil society.

A working group has been set up to evaluate the implementation of the national universal service. This group finalized its *Report on the creation of a national universal service* in late April. The Government validated certain principles proposed by the working group:

It should have two distinct phases:

- The first, lasting a maximum of one month, will be the culmination of the "citizen pathway" started in primary school and continued in secondary which relies on moral and civic education, media education courses. This compulsory phase could include an experience of collective life allowing each young person "to create new links, to learn a new way of living in common",
- In the second phase, every young person would be encouraged to voluntarily pursue a commitment period of at least three months in order to preserve the heritage, the environment and help the most vulnerable people or in the field of defense and security.

In addition to the report, the working group was mandated by the Government to conduct a consultation phase on the National Universal Service.

This digital consultation could enable the participation of different actors in favor of youth.

On the basis of the results of the consultation, the working group should formulate additional recommendations to the Government and the President of the Republic so that the national universal service can be tested in the second half of the year, starting in 2019.

3. EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

According to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, in 2018, the unemployment rate was 9.2% in France. Youth is particularly affected by unemployment with a rate of 20.8% for 15-24 year olds (2018). While professional inclusion is growing in time for young people, in the face of the labor market, young people are still **unequal**: young people with few or no qualifications are more likely to be unemployed, as are those living in disadvantaged urban areas.

The professional integration of young people is therefore a **crucial challenge** for public policy, which must meet several issues: **to reduce the youth unemployment rate and the existing gaps** with regard to young people with few or no qualifications also to facilitate the transition between school, higher education and employment and support young people in the creation of their company.

As in the case of youth policies, employment policies are based on **inter-ministerial and intersectoral work** that mobilizes public operators, local authorities, associations and enterprises both in the development of employment policies than at the time of their implementation.

3.1 General Context

Labour market situation in the country

Evolution of the labour market

Over the last half century, the French [labour market](#) has undergone numerous far-reaching changes. Although employers and trade-union representations play preeminent roles in regulating the labour market by organising work relations, drawing up a regulatory framework and, in particular, through introduction and arbitration of rules and laws, the public authorities also play a part in regulation. Among other things, their position is expressed by **the promotion** of employment along with a **determination to limit** underemployment and unemployment.

The French labour market has seen a good many structural changes over the past 60 years, including an increase in numbers of salaried workers, major orientation towards the tertiary sector and a measure of feminisation. In 2014 (Last year available), employment was mostly salaried, to the tune of 90%, 75,7% tertiary, and approached parity, with 48,2% of the work force which is female, according to the [INSEE](#) – the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies 2016 « [Picture of the French economy \(Tableau de l'économie française\)](#) ».

Types of contracts

“Special forms of employment” (fixed-term contracts, temping, subsidised contracts and apprenticeships) have been developed and are the main form of occupation for young people. In 2016, over half of all jobs occupied by the 15-24 y/o age bracket were [“special forms of employment”](#), compared with one in six jobs in 1982.

The increase in numbers of limited-duration contracts (CDLs - *contrats à durée limitée*) expresses the dual nature of the French labour market, which is characterised by the presence of employees on “short” contracts and others on permanent contracts as well as by differences in characteristics of “stocks” and “flows” of employees. According to figures put out by DARES – the [Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics – the Ministry of Labour’s statistical directorate](#), in 2014, the percentage of fixed-term contracts in recruitments has increased sharply (86% and transition to a permanent contract and stable employment) is becoming increasingly difficult.

According to Eurostat data, in 2017, the labour force* (15-64 y/o) was estimated at 26.5 million in Metropolitan France, comprising 13.7 million men and 12,74 million women. The [activity rate* for 15-64 y/o](#) stands at 71.5% and the [total employment rate*](#) (20-64 y/o) is 69.5%. Nonetheless, there are variations in employment rates depending on age and sex: for [20-29 y/o](#) the rate is 60.9% and for women it is 66.6%, compared with 73.3% for men.

N.B.

***The labour force** comprises employed workers and the unemployed.

***The employment rate** measures the use of available workforce resources. It is calculated by dividing the number of employed workers by the working-age population. (OECD definition).

***The activity rate** corresponds to the number of workers compared with the whole working-age population. The indicator is expressed as a percentage of each age bracket. (OECD definition).

The situation of young people in France

The economic crisis that began in 2008 had an impact on the French [labour market](#), in particular on employment rates among young people. The [annual unemployment rate](#) reached 7.4% in 2008, while it increased to 9.0 % in 2018.

A similar development is also true for the unemployment rate for young people (15-24 y/o), which stood at 20.7% in 2018. Moreover, young people are not all faced with unemployment in the same way: those with few or no qualifications are a great deal more exposed to it, as are those living in disadvantaged urban areas. 34.9% of young person under 30 y/o living in districts under the “Urban policy” are jobseekers. the Urban Policy (See Glossary) seeks to reduce territorial inequalities and develop currently disadvantaged urban areas.

In the face of changes in the labour market and the difficulty young people have in integrating into the world of work, their integration has become a major issue in public action, which must meet several challenges: **reduce the unemployment rate** among young people, **lessen existing gaps** with regard to young people with few or no qualifications and/or living in disadvantaged urban areas, and finally, make **the transition** between school (Higher education) and employment easier.

Main concepts

Several notions, concepts and economic sector enable better understanding of the youth labour market including: labour legislation and, more specifically, the French Labour Code (*Code du travail*), **the notion of support** and, to a lesser extent, the **vocational sector of the Social and Solidarity Economy**.

Labour legislation

The French labour market stands out for the **important role** played by **the law**. The provisions and rules governing employment and professional relations are grouped together in the [Labour Code](#). Created by the Law of 28 December 1910, it comprises all legislative and regulatory texts applicable to labour law. Above all, it **organises individual and collective work conditions and relationships, social dialogue**, safety in the workplace, employees’ health, and professional training, and, because it does so, is constantly evolving in line with changes in the world of work, incorporating new laws, in particular ones resulting from collective negotiations.

The Labour Code specifies, for example, that differences in professional “treatment” based on age “do not constitute discrimination when they are objectively and reasonably justified by a legitimate goal, in particular by a concern to preserve workers’ health or safety or foster their professional integration [...]”.

By **setting minimum rights and “maximum” obligations** applicable to all employees, the Labour Code constitutes an essential and fundamental source of labour law.

The Labor Code was recently reformed by ordinance in September 2017.

Support (accompagnement)

Since the 2000s, this practice and concept have been used to draft employment policies targeting young people in particular. The notion of support covers a relationship with others whose aim is to foster the [“socialisation” and the “empowerment”](#). Support for “young people” is most often provided at a specific time, a period of rupture, difficulty or challenge that requires **assistance** or **support** of some kind. It is expressed by **personalisation of treatment** of young jobseekers, through construction of personalised professional projects and monitoring of the young people concerned. Support is based on a **reinforced partnership** between public and voluntary actors. This practice is regarded as **having positive and significant effects** on return to work and entry onto the labour market. A wide range of support schemes are on offer to French youth, including:

- **Personalised Employment Access Projects** ([Projets Personnalisés d'Accès à l'Emploi](#)) run by the government employment service: Pôle Emploi, which jobseekers draw up with the help of their advisors, who are responsible for assisting them until they return to work.
- **Integration via Economic Activity Structures** ([SIAEs – structures d'insertion par l'activité économique](#)), which are designed to encourage return to work on the part of the most fragile people, those furthest removed from the labour market, by providing them with the possibility of concluding a work contract involving personalised accompaniment.

The Social and Solidarity Economy

The other notion that takes account of the evolution of the youth labour market in France is that of the [Social and Solidarity Economy](#) (Economie sociale et solidaire ESS) **an expanding economic sector** that is progressively arousing young people’s interest and which is based on a number of important principles: “a purpose of general and **collective interest**, **democratic governance**, **free adherence**, **territorial anchoring**, citizen engagement and, above all, **limited profit motive**”. Recognised by [Law no.2014-856 of 31 July 2014](#) bearing on the SSE, the sector aims to develop jobs and participate in social cohesion. Surveys (CSA-Jeun’ESS) and [qualitative enquiries](#) show that young people believe in the values highlighted by the ESS, which is why the public authorities are keen to promote the sector in their eyes (See.3.11).

The social economy mainly includes three types of structures: mutuals, cooperatives, associations (NGOs). Associations remain the leading employers of the ESS (78% of jobs), followed by cooperatives (13%) *

Source: [Panorama de l'économie sociale et solidaire en France](#). Edition 2015, CNCRES.

3.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Combating youth unemployment and facilitating young people’s entry onto the labour market is one of the French State’s **top priorities**, requiring the mobilisation of a range of parties. Policies bearing on the employment of young people are cross-ministerial, cross-cutting, multi-partnerial and territorial.

Governance of youth employment policies is **carried out via a cross-cutting partnership between the State (ministries), central administrations and their “decentralised departments”**, **local authorities** such as Regions in particular, and

non-public partners. The role played by each of these parties differs depending on their fields of action and competences.

The Public Employment Service (SPE - *Service Public de l'Emploi*) in the territories is managed by **the State** and representatives of the **main operators responsible for implementation** of employment policies at local level: the national employment service *Pôle Emploi*, Local Missions and bodies specialising in the professional integration of the disabled. It brings together all public and private actors responsible for implementing policies bearing on employment and vocational training. The SPE is under the aegis of the [ministry in charge of labour](#), and more specifically under that of the [General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training](#) (DGEFP - *délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle*). In addition, as designer and manager of employment policies, the **Minister in charge of Labour plays a key role in this governance**.

Main authorities responsible for youth employment policies

Ministry in charge of labour

Although the Ministry for Youth and the DJEPVA coordinate the youth policies, as designer of employment policies, the [ministry of labour](#) and its various departments are the main actors in youth employment policies. The ministry of labour's departments include:

- The General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training ([DGEFP - délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle](#)), under the joint authority of the Minister for Urban Affairs, Youth and Sport and the Minister in charge of labour. The DGEFP draws up and implements government guidelines on employment and vocational training.
- The General Directorate for Labour ([DGT - direction générale du travail](#)), which "prepares, oversees and coordinates labour policy with a view to improving collective and individual work relations and conditions in companies as well as the quality and effectiveness of the laws that govern them" ([Decree no.2006-1033 of 22 August 2006](#)).
- **The Regional Directorates for Enterprises, Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs, Labour and Employment** ([DIRECCTEs – directions régionales des entreprises et de la concurrence, de la consommation, du travail et de l'emploi](#)), **which are decentralised State services acting as "single interlocutors at regional level for enterprises and socioeconomic actors (company heads, employees, social partners, jobseekers and consumers)".** They prepare regional employment strategies and ensure compliance with the provisions of the Labour Code.

Ministry in charge of education and youth policies

The [ministry in charge of Education and youth](#) can participate to the elaboration of employment policies for young people.

Apart from these State services, public stakeholders and operators also implement and coordinate employment policies designed for young people.

Other public actors: institutions, operators and local authorities

Pôle Emploi (National employment service)

Action on the part of the Ministry of Labour is **also relayed by public operators and institutions with national competence**, such as [Pôle Emploi](#), one of the **public employment service's leading operators**. Pôle Emploi is tasked with helping jobseekers find work and meeting companies' recruitment needs. It "registers jobseekers, pays out jobseeker allowances, and collects, processes, disseminates and makes available data on the labour market and jobseeker allowances". Pôle Emploi is an active participant in the professional integration of young people with indirect obstacles in the way of their employment (mobility, accommodation, etc.), in particular in

disadvantaged urban districts and rural areas, by assisting young people via professional integration schemes or company creation.

Local authorities: the Region

The Region along with local partners and State employment operators (Pôle Emploi) make up the **Public Employment Service (SPE – service public de l'emploi)**, whose missions are defined by Article L5311-1 of the Labour Code, which specifies that "the Public Employment Service is responsible for reception, guidance, training and integration.

The law n ° 2018-771 of September 5, 2018 "for the freedom to choose one's professional future" has transferred to the Regions (local authorities) missions in terms of professional orientation by entrusting them the organization of information on jobs and trainings for pupils, students and apprentices.

General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET)

A number of public institutions such as the General Commission for Territorial Equality ([CGET -commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires](#)) play a more specific role in the professional integration of people with fewer opportunities or faced with inequalities in terms of access to employment. The CGET drafts and implements policies countering territorial inequalities and contributes to entrepreneurship development in disadvantaged urban areas. It [supports and accompanies](#) those living in Districts under the "Urban policy" (QPVs - *quartiers prioritaires de la ville**) by coordinating the setup of schemes facilitating access to employment by young people in difficulty in such areas.

* *Quartiers prioritaires de la ville* (QPVs): Urban districts demarcated by the Urban Policy, which aims to reduce territorial and social inequalities.

Non-public actors

Social partners

Among those involved in implementation of (general) employment policies, "**social partners**" in particular play a major role, in particular in the context of collective negotiations leading to collective conventions. The term "**social partners**" refers to **representatives of the main employees'** unions and employer organisations who participate in "social dialogue" in the professional world. [Social dialogue](#) is defined by the [International Labour Organisation \(ILO\)](#) as "all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between or among representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy". Social partners, then, intervene on questions concerning such matters as work conditions, ongoing training and wage standards.

Five union confederations are recognised in France and have the right to negotiate and conclude agreements in all professional sectors:

- the CGT – General Labour Confederation ([Confédération générale du travail](#)),
- the CFDT – French Democratic Confederation of Labour ([Confédération française démocratique du travail](#)),
- the CGC – General Confederation of management ([Confédération française de l'encadrement](#)),
- the CFTC – French Confederation of Christian Workers ([Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens](#)),
- FO – Workers' Force ([Force ouvrière](#)).

At employer level, three unions are recognised as representative:

- the MEDEF – French Enterprises Movement (*Mouvement des entreprises de France*),
- the [CPME – Confederation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises \(Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises\)](#)
- the U2P – (l'Union des entreprises de proximité)

Other unions also exist, but are not representative at national level.

It should be borne in mind that all these bodies are stakeholders in regulation of the labour market in general, **not only of the youth labour market**. They **do not carry out specifically youth-oriented actions**. Not many young people are union members. Young people's involvement in unions is little developed in France, while generational renewal of employee and employer organisations is of crucial importance to them. Such underrepresentation of youth may partly be explained by ignorance of the role played by unions. Most youth unions are student unions, the two main organisations being:

- [the FAGE – Federation of General Student Associations \(*Fédération des associations générales étudiantes*\)](#). Founded in 1989, it does not claim to be a union, but acts as a “loudspeaker” for student associations.
- the [UNEF – National Union of Students of France \(*Union nationale des étudiants de France*\)](#), a longstanding union one of whose areas of commitment is employment. In 2012, UNEF published proposals on employment in the report: [Emploi_des_Jeunes](#) (Youth Employment).

Local Missions

Local Missions are leading public operators in the implementation of policies on integration and accompaniment of the most disadvantaged young people. There are **450** of them in all, located throughout France. **Local Missions** are [“Law of 1901” associations](#), created on 1 April 1998. They welcome all young people over 16 and under 26 years of age who have been out of the educational system for a year or more, and carry out a public **service mission focusing on professional and social integration of young people**. Such so-called **“proximity” public services** were created by the [Order of 26 March 1982 bearing on measures intended to ensure young people aged between sixteen and eighteen obtain a professional qualification and facilitate their social integration](#), in a context of economic crisis and rising unemployment among young people.

They are defined in Articles L5314-1 to 4 of the Labour Code. Local Missions assist young people by providing them with answers adapted to their situations, dealing with their social difficulties, and making them aware of the various schemes designed for them.

They form part of the Public Employment Service (SPE - *service public de l'emploi*). At local level, they contribute to the drafting of youth employment strategies and countering social exclusion, in particular by monitoring jobseekers entrusted to them by Pôle Emploi.

Local Missions are financed by the State and local authorities and chaired by elected local government officials. Local Missions are represented by the National Union of Local Missions ([UNML - Union nationale et régionale des missions locales](#)).

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Counseling and career guidance policies are particularly based on intersectoral cooperation mechanisms. For more information [see section 3.4 Career guidance and counselling](#).

Intersectoral cooperation in the field of employment and training takes the form of various mechanisms or structures bringing together different actors working together such as:

The Public Employment Service (SPE - *Service Public de l'Emploi*) in the territories is managed by **the State** and representatives of the **main operators responsible for implementation** of employment policies at local level: the national employment service *Pôle Emploi*, Local Missions and bodies specialising in the professional integration of the disabled. It brings together all public and private actors responsible for implementing policies bearing on employment and vocational training. The SPE is under the aegis of the [ministry in charge of labour](#), and more specifically under that of the [General Delegation](#)

[for Employment and Vocational Training](#) (DGEFP - *délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle*). In addition, as designer and manager of employment policies, the **Minister in charge of Labour plays a key role in this governance**.

The Youth Policy Orientation Council (COJ)

The [Youth Policy Orientation Council \(COJ\)](#) is an administrative advisory body placed under the authority of the Prime Minister, created by Decree No. 2016-1377 of October 12, 2016. This Council officially installed on January 26, 2017, illustrates the transversal nature of youth policies;

It establishes a permanent dialogue between the different actors concerned: The State, local authorities, associations, young people themselves, trade union organizations. The COJ has three main missions: it can be consulted on legislative or regulatory projects related to youth and consider any question of general interest in youth policy, it can address to the Government proposals to improve the situation of young people and finally, it must send each year a report of activity to the Government. It has two thematic commissions, one of which focuses on **the professional integration of young people**.

3.3 Skills forecasting

Forecasting system(s)

In the 1990s, the French public authorities started giving thought to companies' needs in terms of skills rather than simply in terms of employment; this led to creation of the "Forward-looking management of jobs and skills"(GPEC – *Gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et des compétences*) concept. GPEC is a human resources management tool that enables medium- and long-term (from 3 to 5 years) anticipation of the consequences of a company's strategic choices and changes in its payroll. It has a range of objectives:

1. Apprehending the company's demographic problems;
2. Encouraging qualification of employees;
3. Controlling the consequences of technological and economic changes;
4. Staying competitive.

GPEC, for example, can lead to implementation of individual and collective actions and programmes, training courses, mobility, and recruitment drives. The scheme is defined by Article L.432-1.1 of the Labour Code and [Article L. 5121-3 of the Labour Code](#), which specifies that employers in companies with fewer than 300 employees **are obliged** to negotiate implementation of a **GPEC plan every three years**. Companies with fewer than 300 employees may benefit from State financial aid in order to do so.

Such job management is based on a multi-stage approach:

- **"analysis of required jobs"**, which aims to take account of jobs the organisation has or will have need of,
- **"analysis of available skills"**, which makes a quantitative assessment of the resources the company has available (analysis of the age pyramid, etc.),
- **"analysis of gaps"** between jobs and skills,
- **"the action plan"**, which seeks to reduce gaps between the jobs an organisation needs immediately or in the future and available skills.

At employment-area level, GPEC serves as a tool for "forward-looking management of jobs and skills" (*gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et compétences territoriale*), with the aim of "encouraging and supporting projects focusing on securing the professional paths of employed workers" and "optimising local employment possibilities [...] and fostering sustainable socio-professional integration". At local level, GPEC is based on a framework agreement, signed between the State, social partners, company representatives, local authorities and Pôle Emploi, which sets out the objectives, contents, operator(s) tasked

with its implementation, and mode of management and evaluation selected for the agreement.

In addition to GPEC, there are other schemes anticipating professions, qualifications and skills, including “employment and skills development actions” ([ADEC – actions de développement de l’emploi et des compétences](#)) and the “forward-looking studies and technical support contract” ([contrat d’études prospectives et appui technique](#)), which are both based on agreements signed by the State (Ministry of Labour) and social partners.

Employment and skills development actions (ADEC) have four objectives:

1. “preventing risks of skills becoming obsolete;
2. supporting professional mobility and evolution;
3. maintaining skills development;
4. having access to a recognised transferable qualification”.

They are based on framework agreements and funding conventions signed by the State (minister or regional prefect) professional and union organisations, which undertake to set up employment and skills development projects.

The forward-looking studies contract (CEP – contrat d’études prospectives) is a contract signed between the State and professional and union organisations represented in one or more activity sectors in the area concerned. The contract involves the carrying out of forward-looking studies providing wider knowledge of professions, jobs, qualifications and skills, and studying their evolutions.

The CEP is governed by Articles [L.5121-1](#) and [L.5121-2](#), and [D.5121-1](#) to [D. 5121-3](#) of the Labour Code. It is also based on a framework agreement signed by the State and a convention concluded between the State and the intermediary body mandated under the conditions provided for in the framework agreement.

Skills development

Development of all young people’s **professional skills** is one of the **Public Employment Service’s missions** as well as the responsibility of the Ministry in charge of Education and Higher Education, which has been developing a focus on “skills” within its system for several years now, expressed by initiatives and implementation of schemes designed to raise young people’s awareness of the skills required for their social integration and helping them develop them at home. A distinction should be drawn **between “key” and so-called “basic” skills**: specific skills that correspond to professions and jobs, but both of which are the subject of different schemes.

“Key” skills

In 2013, the Ministry of Education introduced the “common core of knowledge, skills and culture”, which redefined the “common core of knowledge and skills” established by [Framework law no.2005-380 for the future of schools of 23 April 2005](#). The **common core of knowledge brings together all skills, values and attitudes necessary to pupils’ personal development, sense of citizenship and social inclusion**. It is divided up into several skills, regarded as essential throughout life, and is incorporated into lower secondary and primary school curricula, with each pupil being provided with a personal skills booklet enabling them to monitor their progress and the validation of their skills.

The common core is acquired during compulsory schooling and proficiency in it is required for obtainment of the *Diplôme National du Brevet* (General Certificate of Lower Secondary Education); nonetheless, education and assessment by skills continues during upper secondary education even though it may no longer be a matter of common-core skills and skills booklets.

The ministries in charge of the economy and employment has also developed a policy fostering acquisition of “Key competences”, defined by [DGEFP circular 2008 of 3 January](#)

[2008](#) bearing on “The Ministry of Employment’s policy of action in favour of access to Key Competences by people in the process of professional integration” in compliance with the recommendations made by the European Parliament and Council meeting of 18 December 2006 on *key skills* for Education and Lifelong Learning. The various key skills and basic knowledge acquisition schemes are **specially designed for the most fragile citizens** who do not possess such knowledge. Unqualified young people are priority targets.

Special skills

The term “special skills” covers the knowhow and qualifications corresponding to a profession or specific training course. Several schemes and actors play an important role in the skill development:

Pôle emploi

Such skills are listed in Pôle Emploi’s [Operational Directory of Trades and Jobs](#) (Répertoire opérationnel des métiers et des emplois). A little over 10,000 trade and job appellations are described via 531 career information sheets.

They are also to be found in the [National Directory of Professional Certifications](#) (See [Glossary](#)), which compiles updated information on professional diplomas and credentials as well as qualification certificates.

These directories, which are available to everyone, provide **full information on the skills** required to access certain jobs as well as on training courses enabling development of such skills (National Directory of Certifications). They also facilitate human resources management, GPEC and professional mobilities. For managers of vocational and education training courses, such skills enable definition of training-course content and knowledge, and their consequent development among young people. In-school and professional young people are increasingly required to make the utmost of the special skills they acquire during their higher educational studies or traineeships to ensure their professional integration.

In November 2015, Pôle Emploi also launched a series of online training programmes, of [MOOCs](#) (Massive Open Online Courses), one of which, “constructing your professional project ([construire son projet professionnel](#))”, focuses on making best use of professional skills, and is designed to help people identify one or more professions in line with their skills and interests, as well as such professions’ situation on the labour market.

Establishment of Higher education

Establishment of Higher education have also developed tools enabling young people to develop and make best use of their skills, including **Portfolios of Experience and Competences** (PECs – *portefeuilles d’expériences et de compétences*), which have been integrated into 28 French universities.

The PEC – **Portfolio of Experience and Competences** (*portefeuille d’expériences et de compétences*) is a digital tool that compiles and maps all the experience and skills of students. It also aims to make the utmost of their educational paths and training, and contribute to young people’s career guidance. The PEC, which is used throughout a young person’s training, enables young people to assess their knowledge (knowhow) and construct their career plans.

The portfolio is a personal and confidential interactive digital resource booklet set up on students’ digital workspaces ([ENTs - espaces numériques de travail](#)) and composed of:

- **A full description of their experience** (vocational and academic training, salaried and leisure activities, etc.),
- **A database of their skills**, which they can modify, sort and hierarchize,
- **Documentary resources**: reflection sheets and project construction sheets,
- **Practical tools** to aid professional integration: CV models, interview guide, etc.

The PEC is a **project initiated by universities** (Grenoble 1, Poitiers, and Toulouse 1 and 3) and which has won support from such institutional bodies as the Youth Experimentation Fund (*FEJ – Fonds d'expérimentation pour la jeunesse*), which, in 2009, funded the experiment at thirteen universities in the context of a call for proposals. The FEJ has participated in the setup a number of experimental skills development schemes as well as in [evaluation of the skills booklets](#) introduced by the Ministry of National Education.

Moreover, the education and non-formal/informal learning sector is progressively **implementing “socially” and potentially professional skills development programme projects**. This “approach by competence” (APC - *approche par compétence*) is given concrete expression through creation of skills repositories and booklets. For example, the [Animafac](#) students' association has introduced the “skills [portfolio](#)”; a tool enabling identification of skills acquired via voluntary experience and raising awareness of the contribution that voluntary commitment can make in terms of knowhow and “soft skills”, which are useful in professional situations as well as when looking for a job.

Companies

Besides **schemes specifically designed for young people**, it is also possible for all employees to make “**skills audits**” (*bilans de compétences*). These are career development tools aiming to identify professional skills and take stock of an individual's professional development. A skills audit is requested:

- At the initiative of the worker committed to a professional development initiative;
- Or at the employee's initiative in the context of a special leave of absence (skills audit leave);
- Or at the employer's suggestion with the employee's agreement, in the context of a company training plan.”

Personal Training Account

Set up at the beginning of 2015 and modified by the law n ° 2018-771 of September 5, 2018 for the *freedom to choose one's professional future*, the Personal Training Account is an account supplied in euros usable by any employee, any throughout his active life, to follow a qualifying training.

The Personal Training Account ([CPF – Compte Personnel de Formation](#)) is a new vocational training scheme enabling employees (under private law) and jobseekers to follow training programmes in order to develop new professional skills. All workers **aged 16 and over** have the use of a CPF account throughout **their careers**; **it is** provisioned with euros usable for attending training courses. Among other things, such courses, developed by social partners at interprofessional, national, regional and professional sector level, enable obtainment of a diploma, job title or certification attesting to crosscutting skills exercised in the context of a job.

Forum and events

Complementing these skills development schemes, a wide range of public events presenting vocational training offers, as well as different career paths and the special skills they require, are held throughout France, organised by employment operators such as Pôle Emploi. Many such forums are aimed at young people, including the [Salon Jeunes d'avenir](#) and Paris métropole pour l'emploi des jeunes.

The 2018-2022 Skills Investment Plan

The Ministry of Labor has implemented the Skills Investment Plan (CIP) 2018-2022 which aims to fight against mass unemployment. The plan aims to train one million low-skilled young people and one million low-skilled, long-term jobseekers, through skills-building, including digital skills and the implementation of tools to develop training opportunities such as the call for projects “100% inclusion”.

The call for projects 100% inclusion

The 100% inclusion call for projects was launched in June 2018 by the Minister in charge of Labor and the High Commissioner for Skills Transformation to support experiments for training the least qualified people, particularly in the territories marked by inequalities. It must foster new territorial partnerships, collaborations between training organizations, companies, associations and local authorities.

Both private and public structures can apply. Expected projects must implement "integrated pathways from "remobilization" of beneficiaries to access to employment or sustainable activity". Young people and low-skilled jobseekers, particularly residents in the most disadvantaged areas, as well as people with disabilities are a targeted public through the call for projects. The initial allocation for this call for projects is 40M €.

3.4 Career guidance and counselling

Career guidance and counselling services

Provision of information, guidance and accompaniment in the context of professional integration is a national and territorial (local authority) mission, defined by the State, coordinated by regions and implemented in local areas by a range of public operators and private partners (associations).

Since the [Law no.2009-1437 of 24 November 2009](#) "bearing on professional information, guidance and qualification" everyone has the right to be informed and advised on vocational guidance.

The article 1 of this law confirms the existence of "a **right to information**, guidance and professional qualification" aiming to "enable each person to acquire and update knowledge and skills favouring their professional development". It confers French Regions with increased competences in the field of guidance and information, due in particular to their competences with regard to vocational and continuing training.

The Regional Public Guidance Service (SPRO - *service public régional d'orientation*)

The [Law no. 2014-288 of 5 March 2014](#) "bearing on vocational training, employment and social democracy " introduces the Regional Public Guidance Service (SPRO - *service public régional d'orientation*), which reaffirms the right of all people to be "informed, advised and accompanied throughout their lives with regard to professional orientation". The SPRO, which was introduced across the whole country on 1st January 2015, aims to simplify and clarify the various actors and offers of accompaniment and guidance towards employment, as France has a whole range of information structures and services that require greater visibility and coherence.

The [law n ° 2018-771 of September 5, 2018 "for the freedom to choose one's professional future"](#) modifies the SPRO. It entrusts the regions with the organization of information actions on jobs and trainings at regional, national and European levels for students and their families, apprentices and students.

Counseling in professional evolution

In addition, all the people in employment, irrespective of their status, and age, from entry into working life to retirement, can benefit voluntarily from the scheme of "**Counseling in professional evolution**" (CEP) implemented in 2014.

This is a free and personalized support measure that allows to build and formalize with the employee or the job seeker his project of evolution or professional transition. Four national operators deliver the CEP: Pôle Emploi, the network of local missions (See [Glossary](#)), Cap Emploi and APEC.

Guarantee for youth

In France, the " Guarantee for Youth " policy is therefore part of the dynamic of the European Youth Guarantee decided by the European Commission, which aims to rapidly propose solutions to young people coming out of the education system.

The [Guarantee for Youth](#) aims to support young NEETs in vulnerable situations by enabling them to gain professional experience over a 12-month period through training/support measures and a financial allowance. Support and counseling which are at the core of the scheme.

The French public employment service (Pôle emploi) works closely with local stakeholders to identify and select NEETs who would benefit most from taking part in the Guarantee for Youth. Young people who accept to take part in the measure are mentored by a dedicated counselor over a 12-month period in order to find appropriate workplace experience and improve their employability and workplace skills.

Funding

Currently the system of financing counseling and guidance structures is undergoing reform.

Quality assurance

There is no standardised procedure for evaluating the quality of guidance and professional integration bodies nonetheless, the structures but also the advisory and guidance systems can be analyzed and evaluated, usually resulting in the preparation of reports and studies.

Furthermore, Pôle Emploi's regional branches can carry out [surveys](#) enabling them to measure the quality of their services. In January 2016, [Pôle Emploi](#) launched an extensive satisfaction survey among jobseekers, carried out by the [Ipsos Loyalty](#) polling organisation.

3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships

Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

A number of training programmes combining practical experience at a company with more theoretical education are on offer to young people, who can opt for work/study courses or traineeships depending on their qualifications, diplomas and career choices. Such programmes, enabling acquisition of professional aptitudes and skills along with theoretical knowledge, enable young people to integrate the world of work more rapidly.

Work/study

There are **two types of work/study contracts**: the [apprenticeship contract](#) and the [professionalisation](#) contract

1) The apprenticeship contract

Apprenticeship is a work/study programme combining practical training at a company with theoretical classes delivered by an Apprentice Training Centre ([CFA – centre de formation d'apprentis](#)). It is not compulsory, but is matter of choice. Apprenticeship is based on a work contract that binds an employer and an apprentice who, as he/she is paid a wage, is subject to the rules of the Labour Code and the same collective conventions as other employees.

As regards social cover, apprentices (16 y/o and above) are affiliated to the General Social Security Scheme (RGSS - *régime général de la sécurité sociale*). They also have

the right to paid leave and maternity leave, and their pension and unemployment benefit rights come into effect.

Young people under 15 y/o can conclude an apprenticeship contract provided they have completed their lower secondary education. Over 25 y/o can also enter an apprenticeship under certain conditions, disabled young people in particular, for whom other provisions exist, including the “adjusted contract” ([contrat aménagé](#)), which facilitates their professional integration.

Apprenticeships are carried out in a wide variety of professional sectors, including foodstuffs, commerce, construction, the automobile industry and public works, as well as in service sectors. Apprenticeship is becoming increasingly important as a mode of training for careers in the tertiary sector. More than one in every two contracts prepares for a service profession.

During the programme, apprentices spend a third of their time at a CFA and the other two thirds at a company. CFA classes take up at least 400 hours a year, with apprentices following courses provided for and defined in school curricula. When at the company for which they work, apprentices are under the responsibility of a mentor who provides them with support and passes on his/her knowhow.

Reform the apprenticeship (See [Current debates and reforms](#))

The law n ° 2018-771 of September 5, 2018 for " the Freedom to choose one's professional future" modified in depth the [system apprenticeship](#) which was piloted by the regional authorities since the law of January 7th, 1983.

As of January 1, 2019, apprenticeship will now be piloted by the professional branches that will be involved in the construction of diplomas and will set the cost of apprenticeship contracts. In addition, the regions no longer decide on the opening of apprenticeship training centres (CFA).

The law provides in particular that:

- the apprenticeship age training limit goes from 25 to 30 years;
- the remuneration of apprentices increases;
- a new financing method is proposed: the financing of apprenticeship centres will be evaluated according to the number of contracts signed in 2020.
- the over 25s young people are paid at least at the minimum wage level;
- young apprentices whose contracts are interrupted during the course of the year may extend their training at the Apprentice Training Center for 6 months;
- young people have to benefit from several annual days of information on business sectors, apprenticeship jobs;
- pre-apprenticeship training is organized for young people wishing to move towards apprenticeship but lacking the necessary skills.

2) The professionalization contract

This is designed for a wider public than the apprenticeship contract. It is aimed at:

- young people 16-25 y/o;
- jobseekers 26 y/o and over;
- beneficiaries of the RSA – minimum income, ASS – special solidarity allowance (*allocation de solidarité spécifique*) or the AAH – disabled adults' allowance (*allocation aux adultes handicapés*) ;

Programmes last between 6 months and 1 or even 2 years. Remuneration of young people on professionalisation contracts varies according to level of initial training and age. Unlike apprenticeship contracts, the State, local authorities and their public administrative bodies may not conclude professionalization contracts.

Legal framework for work/study programmes

Work/study programmes are defined and regulated by a whole series of articles in the Labour Code which, among other things, stipulate:

- Taking of and preparation for exams: [Labour Code: Articles L6222-34 to L6222-36](#);
- Contributions and exemptions: [Labour Code: Articles L6243-2 to L6243-3](#);
- The remuneration provided for in the contract: [Labour Code: Articles R6222-2 to R6222-5](#);
- The reference rate compared with the SMIC: [Labour Code: Articles D6222-26 to D6222-35](#);
- Work prohibited and regulated for young people of at least 15 y/o: [Labour Code: Articles D4153-15 to D4153-37](#);

Traineeships

Students enrolled at higher education institutions can benefit from initial contact with the world of work via **traineeships, temporary periods of professional placement**, during which they acquire professional skills and use their learning outcomes with a view to obtaining a diploma or certification. When traineeships in a professional environment are incorporated into a training syllabus, they are compulsory; however, not all higher education courses require traineeship periods.

Traineeships are based on a compulsory tripartite convention between the student, the host organisation and the educational institution.

When they last more than two consecutive months, they are subject to a monthly bonus. Traineeships last for a maximum of six months. The bonus is set at 15% of the social security ceiling, i.e. €3.60 per hour worked; however, an activity sector convention or extended professional agreement may set a higher rate and pay out a larger sum in consequence.

Trainees do not enjoy employee status, in particular because they are not connected with host companies by a work contract.

Their experience in the public or private host organisation is gained for professionalising and educational purposes, even though they may carry out tasks of a professional nature. They are only at the company to learn and observe. No traineeship convention may be concluded for the carrying out of a regular task corresponding to a permanent position, seasonal job or replacement of an absent employee. During their traineeships, students are subject to dual supervision, by a designated supervisor at their university (Professor) and a tutor at the host company. The latter is responsible for receiving and assisting the trainee. He/she acts as guarantor of compliance with the tripartite convention. As regards social security, trainees remain affiliated to the social security health insurance scheme they are already members of (student schemes).

Legal framework

Conduct of traineeships is defined and supervised by a whole series of articles in the Education Code and Labour Code including:

- [Article L124-6](#) of the Education Code, *which governs bonus conditions*
- [The law of 10 July 2014 bearing on development and supervision of traineeships and improvement of trainee status](#) enacted on 26 October 2015, which complements trainees' rights and is intended to combat employers' abuse of traineeships. The law reinforces the educational aspect of traineeships along with trainees' status, in particular by increasing their monthly bonus (which was increased from €436 to €523 at the start of the 2015-2016 academic year)
- [Law no.2011-893 of 28 July 2011](#), known as the "Cherpion" law, on development of work/study programmes and the securing of vocational paths, which reinforces trainees' rights and protection by stating that "traineeships are only legal if they are the subject of a tripartite agreement between the trainee, the (public or private) host organisation and the higher education institute"

- [Law no.2013-660 of 22 July 2013](#) bearing on higher education and research, which reasserts the provisions of the "Cherpion" law and strengthens the legal framework, in particular by defining traineeships, their educational content, and bonuses involved.

Sequence of observation in professional environments for pupils in the final year of lower secondary education

Lower secondary students (11-15 y/o) get a **first taste of professional experience with the sequence of observation in professional environments** (séquence d'observation en milieu professionnel), which aims to "make pupils aware of the technological, economic and professional environment in conjunction with syllabuses". This short-term professional integration is compulsory for all pupils in their final year of lower secondary education, in application of the provisions of [Article D. 332-14 of the Education Code](#).

It may be carried out at **companies, associations, government agencies, public institutions or local authority** premises, in accordance with the conditions provided for by the Labour Code.

For pupils in their last year of lower secondary education preparing for vocational training ([troisième préparatoire à l'enseignement professionnel](#)), along with those in adapted general and vocational education sections (classes taking in pupils with major learning difficulties) and those benefiting from exemption schemes, it is incorporated into the placements in professional environments they have to carry out.

Where the sequence is carried out depends on the age of pupils concerned:

- Pupils aged 14 and over may carry out observation sequences in companies, associations, government agencies, public institutions or local authority premises (Article L. 4153-1 of the Labour Code)
- Pupils under 14 years of age cannot carry out observation sequences in establishments governed by private law, in compliance with Articles L. 4111-1 and L. 4153-1 of the Labour Code.

Article [L. 4153-5 of the Labour Code](#), however, provides for an exception: they are authorised to carry out observation sequences "[...] in companies where only family members are employed, under the authority of the father, mother or tutor [...]". Similarly, employers such as government agencies, public administrative institutions and local authorities can host pupils with no restrictions on age.

Sequences are organised within a legal framework defined by Articles D. 331-1 of the Education Code and the Circular of 8 September 2003 bearing on ways of hosting minors under 16 y/o in professional environments. Observation sequences may last for five consecutive days. It is the pupils themselves and their families who look for and choose observation sequence sites; they can seek help in doing so from educational teams.

Pupil supervision and monitoring must be **specified in a compulsory convention** signed by the educational institution and the host company or organisation.

Legal framework

Observation sequences are governed by the Education Code, which specifies:

- Observation sequence objectives: Article D. 332-14 of the Education Code.
- Ways of organising and carrying out observation sequences: [Articles D. 331-1 to D. 331-4, D. 331-6, D. 331- 8 and D. 331-9](#)

Traineeships and Guarantee for Youth

Although higher education traineeships are intended for young graduates, **young people with fewer opportunities** and further removed from the labour market **are targeted by a number of work/study schemes**, such as professionalisation contracts, which are intended for beneficiaries of minimum social benefits with no required level of qualification. As regards the **Guarantee for Youth scheme, which aims to integrate**

young people in highly precarious situations, professional placements of all possible kinds (traineeships and work/study programmes) are at its very heart. Young people benefiting from the scheme can also complete "[periods of placements in professional settings](#)", which are neither traineeships nor work/study programmes. They aim to enable young people to acquaint themselves with a profession or activity sector, or confirm a professional project.

During such periods, the young people concerned are not employed by the host organisations and therefore receive no payment from them.

Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

Work/Study

In addition, a number of [schemes assisting recruitment](#) of apprentices have been made available to companies with a view to promoting apprenticeship and work/study programmes; they include for example:

- Exemptions from social contributions and aid provided by [Agefiph](#), which works to foster professional integration of the disabled.

In February 2018, as part of the transformation of apprenticeship system, the Government conducted a new communication campaign "Start your story" which offers young apprentices to make video testimonials of their experiences.

This audiovisual campaign targeting young people consists of **disseminating the portraits of young apprentices** with a range of profiles and backgrounds. The campaign also **seeks to change the image** of apprenticeship in the eyes of young people and guidance professionals, as work/study courses have long been looked down on.

Among those involved in raising awareness of apprenticeship among young people, Local Missions play a key role, lending support to young people with fewer opportunities in their professional integration and orientating them towards such schemes as work/study and Youth Guarantee.

Traineeships

Traineeships incorporated into higher educational programmes have not been the subject of any special promotion, even though [the law of 10 July 2014 bearing on development and supervision of traineeships and improvement of trainees' status](#) also aims to develop "[quality](#)" traineeships within training programmes.

Recognition of learning outcomes

All these schemes aim to help young people familiarise themselves with the world of work, as well as develop professional skills and make the utmost of learning outcomes.

Work/Study

The professionalisation contract aims at acquisition of a recognised professional qualification (a diploma or professional title listed in the National Directory of Professional Certifications, a certificate of professional qualification (CQP) or a qualification recognised in the classifications of a collective national convention).

Apprenticeship enables preparation for a secondary education vocational diploma (certificate of professional aptitude, baccalaureate or *brevet professionnel* (vocational certificate)), a higher education degree or a professional title listed in the National Directory of Professional Certifications ([RNCP](#)). Training and contract duration may vary from one to three years.

Higher education traineeships

In the context of higher education traineeships, validation of a (Bachelor's or Master's) degree usually depends on the quality of the vocational thesis (*mémoire professionnelle*) or traineeship report that students have to produce. Such theses have to result from students' thoughts on their experience in professional environments. As a complement to examinations, they lead to validation of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and accumulation System) credits and consequent obtainment of their degrees. However, obtainment of ECTS credits through traineeships is by no means systematic and depends on institutions.

Sequence of observations in professional settings

As regards sequences of observations in professional settings carried out in the last year of lower secondary education, the pupils involved must write a report upon completion of their placements, which they hand in to their class teacher. They may also have to give an oral presentation during which they must share their professional experience. The report is marked, and the mark is included on the pupils' end-of-term report cards.

Funding

Apprenticeships

The apprenticeship reform initiated in 2018, modifies its financing system, especially that of apprentice training centers (CFA). Training centers will be financed under the contract that is to say the number of apprentices received. In addition, the law creates the unique contribution to vocational training and work-study which brings together the contribution to vocational training and the apprenticeship tax.

European Structural and Investment Funds

France benefits from **European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs)**. For the **2014-2020** period, the State was allocated **€15.5 billion of structural funds** (European Regional Development Fund_ERDF and European Social Fund_ESF), including **6.03 billion euros from the ESF**.

Regional councils are responsible for the management of 35% of the national ESF budget, in particular for funding vocational training, apprenticeship and guidance. Regional programmes are mobilising €2 billion in ESF appropriations for the 2014-2020 period.

Source: [The European Social Fund 2014-2020 and the Youth Employment Initiative 2014-2015](#).

Traineeship

Funding of traineeships incorporated into higher educational programmes differs from that of apprenticeships: it is the bodies hosting the trainees that pay them a bonus. Although remuneration does not exceed the minimum hourly wage, it is exempt from social contributions on the part of the host organisation.

Since the end of 2013, several laws have brought major modifications to apprenticeships, particularly to the ways in which they are funded:

- [Law no.2013-1278 of 29 December 2013 bearing on finances for 2014;](#)
- [Law no.2014-288 of 5 March 2014 bearing on vocational training, employment and social democracy;](#)
- [Law no.2014-891 of 8 August 2014 bearing on rectified finances for 2014;](#)
- [Law no.2014-1654 of 29 December 2014 bearing on finances for 2015.](#)

Quality assurance

There are no systems or schemes for qualitative evaluation of traineeships except evaluations and monitoring of the legality of a trainee's work conditions, which are carried out by inspectors from the [Labour Inspectorate \(inspection du travail\)](#), which is under the aegis of the ministry in charge of labour and employment.

Nonetheless, regions that coordinate and implement apprenticeship programmes and policies can create systems for evaluating the quality of apprenticeship schemes. Such is the case for the Île-de-France region, which launched the "work/study quality" (*qualité de l'alternance*) initiative, aiming to strengthen the capacities of schemes to support young apprentices, doing so via a range of projects such as:

- **The "ApprentiScènes" operation**, which enables 350 young people a year to advance and gain professional experience in company settings with the help of drama training and public performance of their sketches;

In addition, the 2018 the apprenticeship system reform modifies **the governance** of the apprenticeship training centers (CFA), particularly as regards the **quality of training offered**:

- CFA will have to disseminate information on the quality of their training including graduation rates, continuation of training courses and professional integration as a result of the training provided.
- The content of the published information by the CFA will be determined by order of the ministers responsible for vocational training and national education.
- The reform introduces a certification system for the apprenticeship training centers (CFA).

As of 1 January 2020, any new apprenticeship training center will need a quality certification to open. Providers who will work with CFA must be certified "quality" on the basis of criteria defined by decree in Council of State ([Article L6316-1 of the Labor Code](#)). A national reference system setting the "quality" criteria will be determined by decree after the consultation of the national agency *France Compétences*, the creation of which is envisaged by the law "Freedom to choose one's professional future" in order to "regulate the quality of training and their cost".

3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market

Youth employment measures

Youth employment is one of the public authorities' key priorities. The challenges involved include reducing numbers of young jobseekers, in particular by reducing existing disparities between young people with few qualifications, those from disadvantaged urban districts and young graduates, and by taking prior action to remove the obstacles to professional integration met with along school and university pathways as well as in young people's everyday lives.

Several youth employment policy schemes are aimed at the most fragile young people.

"Employment" schemes for young people finding professional integration difficult because of their social situations.

The Skills Investment Plan (PIC)

The Ministry of Labor has developed a plan for the period 2018-2022 to train young people especially low-skilled: the "Skills Investment Plan".

The plan aims at training "one million low-skilled young people and one million low-skilled long-term jobseekers" through skills development, including digital skills and the implementation of tools and experiments.

At the territorial level, the PIC will be take the form of regional pacts signed between, the State and the voluntary Regions (local authorities)

The objectives assigned to the regional variations of the plan are, among others:

- The development of transversal knowledge training (acquisition of basic knowledge),
- Increasing the number of places on training scheme dedicated to young people with social difficulties,
- Strengthening the program of innovative training in targeted territories (disadvantaged area).

Local missions ([See Glossary](#)) play an important role in the implementation of PIC measures Because of their knowledge about low-skilled young people situation.

- [The Guarantee for Youth \(Garantie Jeunes\)](#)

The Guarantee for Youth is a one of the public authorities' **key measures in favour of youth employment**. The scheme, introduced in January 2013, is France's response to the Council of the European Union's recommendation of 22 April 2013 to create a "Guarantee for young people" consisting of providing "a quality job, continuing training, an apprenticeship or a traineeship [...]", firstly to young people without qualifications and living in areas where the unemployment rate among under 25 y/o is over 25%.

In France, the Guarantee for Youth **is an innovative measure**, implemented in the form of a one-year contract of reciprocal commitments between a young person (NEET) and a [Local Mission](#), which provides a programme of **intensive personalised** accompaniment.

The Youth Guarantee is based on:

- Intensive collective support on the part of Local Missions;
- Repeated professional placement experiences taking a variety of possible forms;
- Individual accompaniment throughout the year;
- Monthly financial aid enabling young people to become more self-sufficient.

According to the reports, Statistical Evaluation Results of the Impact of the Guarantee for Youth "Between the beginning of the experiment and the end of 2017, around 178,000 young people have benefited this scheme.

For the year 2018, the Government plans to fund 100,000 Guarantee for Youth.

The [Guarantee for Youth](#) is jointly funded through the national budget and European funds (Youth Employment Initiative) and European Social Fund.

The total cost of the scheme for 2018 is € 514.60 million. This cost is part of the Skills Investment Plan (ICP).

Source: [Projet de loi de finances pour 2018 - Mission Travail et emploi. Programme 102 102 - Accès et retour à l'emploi](#)

- [EPIDE](#) Training Programmes

Employment integration establishments (EPIDEs *Établissements Pour l'Insertion dans l'Emploi*) are responsible for accompanying young people in difficulty in their social and professional projects through adapted individualised programmes. They are under the triple supervision of the ministries responsible for defence, employment and urban affairs.

EPIDEs are designed for young people 18-25 y/o with no diploma or other qualification or on the verge of marginalisation. EPIDEs provide them with free residency training. They enjoy special status and sign a volunteer contract for integration over a period of 8 months. The average duration of contracts is 10 months and cannot be extended beyond 24 months. **Young people concerned receive a monthly allowance** of 210 euros;

- *Service Militaire Adapté*

Service Militaire Adapté (SMA – Adapted military service) is under the aegis of the ministry in charge of overseas French territories. It is a military scheme for socio-professional integration designed for young people 18-26 y/o who are the furthest removed from the world of work in Overseas France. Lasting for six to eight months and renewable, such service is attested by obtainment of certificate of professional aptitude (CAPI *certificat d'aptitude personnelle à l'insertion*). Young people concerned have the status of army volunteers and receive military mentoring that includes training in interpersonal skills in professional environments, "second-chance" education leading to acquisition of basic knowledge, and a qualifying training programme.

Flexicurity measures focusing on young people

The public authorities have introduced **flexicurity measures** and, more specifically, schemes enabling easier professional transition, which, although not specifically intended for young people, are open to them all the same. Such is the case with the "[right to vocational training](#)" provided for in the [law bearing on employment security](#) of 14 June 2013, which imposes creation of a [CPF – Personal training account](#) (*compte personnel de formation*) that employees make use of throughout their lives, as well as with Professional development counselling (CEP [conseil en évolution professionnelle](#)), a free, personalised support scheme for anyone wishing to take stock of their professional situation.

Another scheme, the Activity bonus (*Prime d'activité*), introduced on 1 January 2016, provides **support to professional activity and to the purchasing power of employees earning under 1,500 euros a months**. It takes the form of a bonus complementing professional incomes, paid out by the Family allowance fund ([See Glossary](#)). Students and apprentices may also be eligible if they can show proof of adequate income from work for the quarter concerned. A million young people are eligible for this Activity bonus.

Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

In order to facilitate young peoples' professional integration, measures have been introduced that aim to reconcile their professional and home lives, covering the fields of accommodation, healthcare and family life, and including:

- [The guarantee Visale](#) is a public scheme that allows students, without conditions of resources, to obtain a free rental deposit for any type of housing.
- Day nurseries to aid professional integration ([Crèches à vocation d'insertion professionnelle](#)), which provide support and childminding facilities, in particular for single mothers and parents who need time to look for employment;
- Young workers ("[Jeunes travailleurs](#)") hostels: residences that rent out rooms to young people 16-25 (sometimes 30) y/o, in particular those in training programmes (apprenticeships, work/study or traineeships) and salaried students, those who are working their first (CDD/CDI) jobs or are looking for work following completion of their studies;
- Introduction of a gap year ([année de césure](#)), which allows students to suspend their studies for a period of between 6 months and a year in order to gain personal, professional or volunteer experience in France or abroad. Such "break" years contribute to maturation of career choices, personal development and acquisition of new skills.

Funding of existing schemes/initiatives

The public credits devoted to the funding of vocational training are included in the draft financial laws (see [Glossary](#)) under the [programs 102 "Access and return to employment"](#)

and [103 "Accompaniment of economic changes and development of employment"](#) which aim at developing skills, including for long-term job-seekers and unskilled youth, facilitating their access to employment and promote job-creating growth".

For the year 2018, the budget of these two programs amounts to € 13.8 billion.

Source: Draft financial Law 2018 « Labour and Employment »

European funds

France is also using European schemes to support its national employment policies: the Youth Employment Initiative one of the **main EU financial resources** to support the implementation of [Youth Guarantee](#) schemes (That is the *Guarantee for youth*) and the European Social Fund an another financial **instrument for supporting jobs**.

In 2014-2020, the ESF in France has a budget of 6 billion euros (24% of the total European structural investment funds), including 310 million euros dedicated to the Initiative for the youth employment.

Quality assurance

The only set procedures for monitoring or evaluating the quality of policy measures are the quantitative and qualitative evaluations carried out by observatories, laboratories, INSEE (See [1.7](#)) and ministerial statistics departments such as MEOS_studies, observation and statistics mission (*mission des études, de l'observation et des statistiques*) at the INJEP_ National institute for youth and non-formal education and DARES (See [3.2](#)), which produce studies on and analyses of the various employment schemes used by the public authorities in drawing up some of their programmes and schemes.

3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities

Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

France's young people can take advantage of programmes enabling them to work abroad. There are a number of institutional bodies to advise them on programmes and provide them with guidance in their search for employment abroad. They include:

- The ministry in charge of youth's "[Discover the world](#)" (*Découvrir le monde*) portal, which "directs [users] to bodies that can help young people define their projects, find funding and organise their departure" abroad. The website also lists opportunities for voluntary work and stays abroad;
- [Pôle Emploi International](#), which lists international job offers;
- The Ministry responsible for foreign and European affairs, which provides help with looking for employment via Consular Committees for employment and vocational training ;
- The [Eures platform](#) for European mobility.

There is a varied range of professional mobility programmes, including professional volunteering, traineeships abroad and youth exchange schemes resulting from bilateral agreements with partner countries. The main public schemes are:

- **The VPT – Working holiday visa** ([Vacances-Permis-Travail](#)) programme, which provides young French people 18-30 y/o with the opportunity to leave France for a year to get to know and work in another country via a simplified visa; France has signed agreements to this end with Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Argentina.
- **The OFQJ – Franco-Québécois Youth Office**_(See [Chapter 2](#)), which offers several mobility programmes to Quebec in a variety of professional fields (including the

economic, cultural, IT and social sectors). Possibilities include carrying out a traineeship, taking a temporary job or fulfilling a training mission, bearing in particular on entrepreneurship. Young people involved must be between 18 and 35 y/o and their projects must have a professional objective of some kind.

- **The OFAJ – Franco-German Youth Office** (See Chapter 2), which provides grants to young people from 16 to 30 y/o for practical placements carried out in Germany in the context of an apprenticeship or vocational training programme. The OFAJ also provides grants for traineeships or missions in a twin city or region in Germany, in a German company, institution or government agency. The *Praxes* programme also enables French and German young people from 18 to 30 y/o to carry out a one- to six-month placement independently of their (general, vocational or higher education) training or professional activity. It is designed above all for young people wishing to make a career change.
- Students, young workers and apprentices can take advantage of the “**Erasmus+**” programme to develop new professional skills (proficiency in languages) during placements in Europe.
- **International Administrative Volunteering** (See Chapter 2) is intended for young people 18-28 y/o interested in working for government departments abroad.
- **International Business Volunteering** enables young people to carry out a mission at a French company abroad.

Legal framework

The Ministry of National Education has issued a [guide to traineeships abroad](#), which details how traineeships and vocational training are carried out in other countries.

Trainees

Modalities for carrying out traineeships abroad may be governed by French legislation or by the laws of the countries in which they take place, in particular as regards conditions for entry and residence in the country, the social protection system, possible payment, and trainees’ specific rights and obligations.

In order for students to benefit from the application of French law, educational institutions are requested, under the terms of [Article L.124-19 of the Education Code](#), to propose to host bodies abroad that they apply the standard French traineeship convention. Traineeships abroad are systematically subject to prior exchanges between students’ educational institutions and host bodies, to negotiate and define the provisions governing them, which may be those of French or local regulations.

As concerns social protection, if the traineeship is carried out in a European Union or European Economic Area Member State, students benefit from social cover with regard to health insurance (students’ scheme, beneficiary of parents’ health insurance). They must also obtain a European health insurance card.

Apprentices

In the case of a placement in Europe, the terms of a placement agreement, known as a “mission contract” are defined by [Article R. 117-5-1-1 of the Labour Code](#), which allows an apprentice to carry out a training period at a company in a European Union Member State other than the signatory of the apprenticeship contract. As regards social protection, apprentices are obligatorily considered to be **seconded employees**. In addition to the **European health insurance card**, any company employing an apprentice should therefore be asked to obtain a secondment certificate.

Foreign trainees in France

European and non-European foreign students carrying out traineeships in France benefit from the same French regulations governing placements (tripartite convention, compensation, duration, etc.). Foreign students from the European Union can come to France in the context of [Erasmus+](#) and non-European students may obtain a [temporary](#)

[residence permit marked "Trainee"](#) (*carte de séjour temporaire mention stagiaire*). In addition, foreign students who have graduated from a French higher educational institution with a *licence* (Bachelor's degree) or equivalent may obtain authorisation for a 12-month stay if they undertake to stay in France throughout that time.

3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence

Policy Framework

Regarded as one of the solutions to the employment crisis that young people are faced with, **entrepreneurship and initiative are promoted by public decision-makers** via a range of actions including programmes implemented at educational institutions and universities. Such actions, carried out to encourage entrepreneurship, are not limited to the single goal of creating activities, but also aim to help young people acquire skills connected with this particular economic sector.

Over the last ten years, public support for business creation and the entrepreneurial spirit have been **developed at all territorial levels**: regions, municipalities and intermunicipalities alike.

The determination to **develop young people's entrepreneurial spirit is both national and international**, first of all in the context of the education and training 2020 strategy, which defines eight key skills, including "the spirit of initiative and enterprise", described as "the ability to turn ideas into action: the ability to create, innovate, take risks, and programme and manage projects in order to achieve goals", and finally the "Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan: Reigniting the entrepreneurial spirit in Europe" also recommended by the European Commission in 2013.

Encouragement of entrepreneurial skills is expressed by a whole range of public initiatives, including setting up experiments in the context of calls for proposals supported by the FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund (See [Chapter 1](#)), which has funded and evaluated experiments seeking to renew pedagogical approaches to raising awareness of entrepreneurship among young people and accompanying their entrepreneurial initiatives. The FEJ has measured the effects of providing young people with assistance in company creation by evaluating two schemes: ["Créajeunes"](#) and ["Groupements de créateurs"](#).

Formal learning

Higher education

Teaching of entrepreneurship at university level has been progressing over the last few years, in particular with creation of PEPITES – Student centres for innovation, transfer and entrepreneurship (*Pôles Etudiants pour l'Innovation, le Transfert et l'Entrepreneuriat*), which not only provide students with entrepreneurial paths in higher education but also help improve recognition and accompaniment of projects promoted by students and young graduates. [PEPITEs](#), which were introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESR), aim to universalise dissemination of a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation among young people in higher education, and foster commitment to entrepreneurial action by students and young graduates interested in creating businesses.

PEPITES enable young graduates wishing to set up their own businesses to acquire [student entrepreneur](#) status (*statut d'étudiant entrepreneur*). To do so, they must prepare the *diplôme d'étudiant entrepreneur* (D2E – student entrepreneur diploma), which confers student status upon them along with the social protection that goes with it.

PEPITES have an "entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial spirit" skills reference framework available to them, resulting from a workgroup whose members included the

Conference of University Presidents (CPU), the Ministry of Higher Education and Research's General Directorate for Higher Education and Professional Integration, the Movement of French Enterprises (MEDEF), and the France Entrepreneur Agency (AFE).

Secondary education

The Ministry in charge of education has also launched a number of entrepreneurial skills development initiatives in secondary schools, and has set up cooperation actions with its professional partners in the context of [“Entrepreneurial spirit” partnerships](#). In addition, various **National Education programmes and reference frameworks** incorporate the entrepreneurial spirit and company creation. This is particularly the case for vocational training and apprenticeship specialities and diplomas: in vocational *lycées*, **the multidisciplinary vocational project** is a lever for entrepreneurial spirit. It consists of total or partial creation of a product or service and aims to develop initiative, creativity and assumption of responsibilities within a team.

Every year for the last 10 years, the Ministry of National Education and the MEDEF have organised a School-Business Week ([Semaine école-entreprise](#)) in all local education authority areas, with pupils visiting companies, getting to know their environments and how they operate, and holding debates.

[Mini-enterprise](#) creation projects also introduce lower and upper secondary students to technological and vocational paths to company creation. They are set up in the context of a partnership between the Minister of National Education and the “*Entreprendre pour apprendre-France*” (Entrepreneurship as a way of learning – France) association, and bring together volunteer pupils under the supervision of a teacher and professional advisor from the [“Entreprendre pour apprendre-France”](#) association. They develop a product or service to be marketed. A championship rewards the best European, national and local education authority area Mini-enterprise projects.

Non-formal and informal learning

The [social modernisation law of 2002](#) instituted VAE - accreditation of prior work experience (*Validation des acquis de l'expérience*), enabling recognition and accreditation of informal and non-formal learning outcomes as counting totally or partly towards the obtainment of a certification listed in the RNCP – National Directory of Professional Certifications. Such certifications are the same and have the same value as if they had been obtained through a formal learning path.

Various experiments have been carried out, including the “experimental competences booklet” ([livret de compétences expérimentales](#)) following the [cross-ministerial circular 2009-192 du 28-12-2009](#) which launched a call for proposals among lower and upper secondary schools and apprentice training centres, in order to test out an “experimental skills booklet” differing from its predecessors because it included skills acquired outside school.

In addition, a number of universities have instituted *portefeuilles de compétences* (skills portfolios: see [3.2](#)), which can also help young French citizens to complete the [Youthpass](#) certificate they may wish to obtain.

Educators support in entrepreneurship education

The [Agence France Entrepreneur](#) (AFE) has introduced a range of tools, including courses on raising awareness of entrepreneurship intended for teachers, in particular the OPPE – Observatory of pedagogical practices in entrepreneurship ([observatoire des pratiques pédagogiques en entrepreneuriat](#)). Set up by the public authorities in April 2001, the OPPE initially met a need for knowledge of entrepreneurial schemes incorporated into the secondary and higher education system. These days, it acts as a “tool for pooling, promotion and discussion of methods of teaching entrepreneurship, at the service of education institutions, teachers, students and networks accompanying business

creation". Agence France Entrepreneur also makes downloadable teaching aids available free of charge.

None of these courses on the entrepreneurial spirit or dedicated tools are compulsory components of training programmes for teachers and facilitators; they are all the result of spontaneous initiatives.

3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs

Access to information

There are currently over 10,000 startups in France. In the face of such entrepreneurial enthusiasm, which is especially evident among young people, the public authorities have also introduced measures to maintain it, by stimulating entrepreneurs' initiatives and facilitating access to information on this economic sector and investment funds.

French tech

In 2013, the Ministry in charge of the economy, launched an initiative seeking to promote development of startups: "[French tech](#)", whose aim is to improve "the clarity and coherence of public action in favour of startups" as well as to put "the front of the national and international scene the collective of French start-ups". It works in collaboration with the ministries of the Economy's and Finance's Directorates (General Directorate for Enterprises and General Directorate of the Treasury), the ministry responsible for foreign affairs, and the Commissariat-General for Investment, all of which support growth of startups. Its partners are mainly national operators, including the Caisse des Dépôts, BpiFrance and Business France. Its role is to bring together networks of startups, speed up their development and promote their reputations.

It has a range of schemes and programmes at its fingertips:

[The "accélérateur de start-up"](#) fund, which provides startups with services, bringing them "industrial" and sometimes financial resources enabling them to grow more rapidly and be competitive at international level. As regards available financial resources, the State may co-invest up to a total of 200 million euros in private initiatives' equity or quasi-equity

[The Bourse French Tech](#) (French Tech Grant) scheme, which enables young startups to cover their initial expenses. It totals between 10 and 30 thousand euros.

[The Pass French tech](#), which enables "hyper-growth" companies to benefit from public support for company development, accelerated evaluation of projects, and membership of a nationally and internationally recognised network.

Higher education

The Ministry of Higher Education is also responsible for promoting startups via the [I-LAB](#) scheme, which supports creation of innovative companies and is made up of two components: the *Concours national d'aide à la création d'entreprises de technologies innovantes* (national competition for assistance to creation of innovative technological companies) and the *Prix PEPITE, Tremplin l'Entrepreneuriat Etudiant* (Springboard for student entrepreneurship: see [3.8](#)).

In addition, several universities have created their own startup programmes and incubators, including the University of Saclay, which launched "[Startup Heroes](#)", a web series promoting student entrepreneurship, and the University of Orleans, which has its own incubator, the [Polytech Startup Lounge](#).

Local authorities

A number of regions and municipalities promote creation of startups on their territories by accompanying young entrepreneurs, providing them with financial support and informing them on existing networks. As an example, the Rhône-Alpes region and

DIRECCTE finance [Gate 1](#), a resource centre for innovative young companies and startups, providing them with assistance and advice.

Access to capital

The public authorities have introduced programmes and tools designed to facilitate the initial fundraising startups require; many of them are implemented via the Banque Publique d'Investissement (Bpifrance), which can both invest in and fund company projects.

Bpifrance

[Bpifrance](#) plays a key role in supporting startups by providing such funding solutions as:

- **The (startup loan (*Prêt d'amorçage*))**, applicable to small innovative companies (with fewer than 50 employees and balance sheet or turnover under 10 million euros) less than 5 years old, in startup phase and having benefited from public support for innovation. The loan is between 50,000 euros and 100,000 euros if it is made by Bpifrance alone, but can run as high as 300,000 euros in the event of a commitment from the Region.
- **The “innovation advance (*Avance innovation*)**, made to SMEs and companies with fewer than 2,000 employees and consisting of a participation in funding the project, in the form of a recoverable advance or a zero-interest loan.

Other schemes facilitating access to funds (non-exhaustive list)

The ministries responsible for the economy also act to promote startup creation, in particular through encouraging private individuals to invest in startups. Such initiatives include the [PEA – Share savings plan \(*plan d'épargne en actions*\)](#) enabling obtainment of a portfolio of shares in European companies while, under certain conditions, benefiting from tax exemption.

In addition, setup of business-angel groups and business-angel investment companies has been facilitated by relaxing the tax system applying to such bodies. In the same way, the legal framework governing [participative](#) funding has been relaxed so that startups can access it, all the more important as this type of funding is particularly well adapted to innovative companies.

Finally, innovative young companies carrying out research and development projects and enjoying “young innovative company” ([jeune entreprise innovante](#)) status can benefit from exemption from taxes on profits and social contributions.

3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture

Special events and activities

Various institutional bodies promote entrepreneurial culture, including the Ministry of National Education, the ministry in charge of Higher Education, the ministry responsible for the economy, the France Entrepreneur Agency, associations and local authorities, in particular the Regions and municipalities that carry out actions in favour of entrepreneurship and innovation.

A whole multitude of events and activities focusing on the “entrepreneurial spirit” have been organised by the main associations working in the field of youth entrepreneurship:

Competitions

They hold [competitions](#) to spread the word on young entrepreneurs, and help them get experience with presenting their projects and meet other entrepreneurs and potential financial and commercial partners. Competitions may be at national or regional level. A number of such initiatives are intended to promote entrepreneurship among women

([Créatrice d'avenir](#), etc.) and the disabled persons. They target specific sectors (environment, technological innovation, etc.) and are usually held annually. Prizes consist of financial endowments and assistance from experienced professionals.

Incubators

Other initiatives are designed to spread the word on entrepreneurship among the uninitiated; they include business incubator “open house” days for young people and students, women’s entrepreneurship weeks, startup weekends, the “*24h chrono pour entreprendre et innover*” for students and doctoral students, and BarCamps.

Call for proposals

Organisation of calls for proposals on development of entrepreneurship helps promote it.

Partnerships with the Social Economy Partner of the Republic Ngo

The public authorities pay special attention to the promotion of social entrepreneurship; they collaborate with the ESPER – Social Economy Partner of the Republic NGO ([Economie Sociale Partenaire de la République](#)), as well as with various representatives of the SSE (Social and Solidarity Economy), with a view to promoting the Social and Solidarity Economy’s values in the eyes of France’s young people. Their collaboration is expressed by initiatives at schools and universities throughout the Republic. The ESPER has created a free “Understanding the SSE” (*Comprendre l’ESS*) exhibition kit available to schools and Regions, as well as a complete kit for schools to use, enabling pupils to set up their social and solidarity enterprises in class. National and regional SSE fairs such as “SSE Month” (*Mois de l’ESS*), which takes place in November, are held every year. They usually include “jobs dating” and lectures along with a variety of other activities.

Websites

Promotion of the SSE is also carried out via social networks and specialised websites such as the [webzine Say YESS](#) run by the “[Jeun’ESS](#)” SSE promotion programme, which disseminates the latest news (initiatives, calls for proposals, etc.) on this flourishing economic sector.

Networks and partnerships

There are **numerous young entrepreneur networks seeking to promote youth entrepreneurship** developing at all territorial levels, national, regional and local alike, many of them instigated by the public authorities. Some of them specialise in specific economic sectors and are based on partnerships between public operators and private bodies (associations, companies, etc.):

The [Programme Jeun’ESS](#) was launched in June 2011 in the context of a Public/Private Partnership bringing together the State, the Caisse des Dépôts, and six Social and Solidarity Economy companies and foundations. It aims to promote youth entrepreneurship and the SSE and create a network of stakeholders.

The National Confederation of Junior-Enterprises ([Confédération Nationale des Junior-Entreprises](#)) aims to **develop the entrepreneurial spirit and**organise and disseminate young people’s knowledge and feedback. It acts as a facilitator, bringing together all active and associate members, in particular through organisation of regional and national events. The Confederation has numerous public partners, including the Ministry of Higher Education.

The AFE ([Agence France Entrepreneur](#)) seeks to **strengthen and better coordinate national and local policy-making in favour of entrepreneurship**, above all in such fragile areas as Urban Policy priority districts (See [Glossary](#)), rural revitalisation areas and Overseas France. Its founder members are the State, among the [ARF](#) National Regions Ngo (*Association des Régions de France*), the CSOEC – Higher Council of the Order of Qualified Accountants (*Conseil supérieur de l’Ordre des experts-comptables*), CCI (Chamber of Commerce and Industry) France and the [APCMA](#) – Permanent Assembly

of the Chambers of Trades and Crafts (*Assemblée permanente des Chambres des métiers et de l'artisanat*).

A number of regions are provided with regional *social solidarity economy* resource centres.

3.11 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

The [Law No. 2018-771 of September 5, 2018](#) for the Freedom to choose one's professional future reforms vocational training and apprenticeship

The parliament has adopted this law that includes measures on apprenticeship, vocational training, unemployment insurance, gender equality, employment of disabled persons and posted work. The measures of apprenticeship and vocational training are those which concern more specifically youth. The law introduces new arrangements and provisions that concern young people such as (incomplete list):

- The extension of the age of apprenticeship up to 30 years. "
- The creation of a third class "*prépa-métiers*" to prepare and to direct pupils and students towards the apprenticeship
- The implementation of financial assistance for companies with less than 250 employees who train young people in CAP or vocational Baccalaureate.
- The possibility of accessing to an apprenticeship program throughout the year.
- An increase of € 30 per month for apprentices under 20 years of age in CAP or professional Baccalaureate.
- The possibility of going to "Erasmus pro" for 15,000 young apprentices in Europe by the start of the school year 2022.

In addition, the *law for the freedom to choose one's professional future* creates the agency **France competences** that will be implanted at the end of 2018. This agency is made up of 3 colleges: State, trade union representative organizations of employees and employers representative organizations, Regions (local authorities) which will carry out the following missions:

- Equalization (*péréquation*) missions vis-à-vis the operators and the Regions (local authority). Equalization is a redistribution mechanism that aims to reduce the wealth gap, and hence the inequalities, between the different local and territorial authorities
- Mission of repartition and payment
- Organization and financing missions of the counselling in professional evolution (CEP);
- Missions related to the quality and regulation of support for vocational training;
- Professional certification missions; France Competences will establish the national directory of professional certifications;
- Missions for the formulation of recommendations, in particular on all questions relating to continuing vocational training and apprenticeship, in particular their access and financing methods;

Ongoing debates

Future retirement pension reform

A multilateral consultation on the future retirement pension reform is scheduled for October 2018.

The consultation brings together the social partners: ten employee organizations, business and agriculture unions who have to discuss the different provisions of this future reform which concern subjects such as the age of departure, the duration of contribution, the taking into account of long careers, etc.

For example, the pension reform project plans to maintain the age of retirement at 62 years. However, depending on the amount of their retirement pension, employees are encouraged to work longer.

This reform raises many questions from employees but also retirees.

4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

While the economic context is still relatively inefficient following the 2008 global financial crisis, French young people face many obstacles that make their journey towards **autonomy more difficult and longer** and reduce their ability to act in the society. The social inclusion is even more difficult for young people with less opportunity, from underprivileged backgrounds, or with few or no qualifications.

Social action policies dedicated to young people aim at facilitating **vocational integration, improving living conditions and reducing social disparities between young people**. They rely on **joint work** between public authorities (State and local authorities), which, among other things, elaborate and regulate policies and the association sector which both implements social policies but also performs mediation functions between the publics (young people), schemes and social action structures.

4.1 General context

Main challenges to social inclusion

Whereas the economic context remains lacking in dynamism following the world financial crisis of 2008, young French people are dealing with several obstacles that make theirs a long and difficult journey towards independence, and that affect their ability to take their place and to act in society. The main challenges facing them include their professional **insertion, improving their living conditions, and reducing (social) disparities between young people themselves**. The situation of young people varies according to their level of education, their social category, and their home environment.

Inequalities between young people and the gradual precarity of their living conditions are thus **crucial challenges** for public authorities, which must respond to social emergencies and act on several levers (health, housing, education, employment, etc.) to enable better social inclusion of all young people, especially the most vulnerable.

According to the [DJEPVA Barometer on youth published in 2017](#) and produced by the INJEP – National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire) and CRÉDOC – the Research Centre for the Study and Observation of Living Conditions (Centre de recherche pour l'étude et l'observation des conditions de vie), **“Young people currently occupy a position that sets them apart on the labour market, marked by greater instability and precarity than is the case for their elders: high unemployment rate, predominance of short-term jobs and back-and-forthing between employment and unemployment, lower levels of resources than the average for France’s population, and high poverty rate”**.

France’s young people are confronted with a **range of obstacles that make their road to autonomy longer and harder**, and impact their capacity to take their place in and become active members of society. Young people’s social inclusion is also very much conditioned by their and their families’ socioeconomic category, their educational level and where they live. The process of young people’s social inclusion is marked by major ongoing inequalities.

Data produced by various ministerial statistical departments enables characterisation of the poverty that above all affects the nation’s youth:

According to the 2017 edition 2017 of [INSEE’s Tableau de l’Économie Française](#), there are 8.8 million poor people in France* including 2.3 million people living in great poverty (serious material deprivation).

- Poverty first and foremost affects children under 10 y/o, teenagers and young adults (20-29 y/o), more than 10% of whom are poor.

- In 2014, 2.8 million children lived in households with incomes below 1,008 euros a month – a poverty rate of 19.8%. Disadvantaged children are most frequently to be found in single-parent families. Poverty rates also vary depending on the areas people live in and their origins. According to the [INSEE](#) (data for 2012, the most recent currently available), immigrants (and their children) account for a quarter of the total poor population.
- In addition, also according to the INSEE, the unemployment rate among young people stood at 20.6% of the working population in 2017. There are some 60,000 young people classified as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

Source: *Report on Inequalities in France*. 2017 edition. French Inequalities Observatory

*Data from 2014, the most recent available year. The poverty threshold is calculated in relation to the median of distribution of household income. In France and the European Union (EU), the official threshold corresponds to 60% of the median income, and stood at 1,008 euros a month per capita in 2014.

Main concepts

The concepts and principles that govern policies on social inclusion include two principles that enable a more specific characterisation and understanding of measures of social inclusion: support and the principle of common law.

Support ([cf. Chapter 3 Employment and partnership](#))

Support is also a matter that has been implemented as part of the professional insertion of young people, and it constitutes a principle that especially characterises the policies of social inclusion. Support is part of a process of social intervention with the objective of helping people in difficulty and establishing with them a relationship based on listening, advice, and mutual help, in a relationship based on reciprocity as well as involvement, but also making the person helped an actor who plays a part in putting together and implementing her/his own life plan. That notion is at the heart of social work, and it refers to professional practice and approach in which social workers (educators, social workers, and youth workers) must support young people in coming out of precarity and, more generally, in moving towards independence. That principle takes the form of a number of social-inclusion arrangements within which professionals support young people along their insertion pathway, along the lines of the [Youth Guarantee](#).

“Common law”

The notion of **“common laws”** describes the set of legal rules that apply to all situations that are not covered by special or particular rules. Common-law arrangements can then be used by all beneficiaries without distinction. Young French people benefit from several common-law arrangements that play a role in their social insertion (housing benefits, etc.), but it is most often the case that young people are unaware of those arrangements, which accounts for a significant proportion of **non-use of entitlements**. Encouraging young people’s access to common-law arrangements is a recurrent challenge in youth policies.

4.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Social-inclusion policies are aimed at the entire French population, not just at young people. Hence, their governance is based on intervention sectors that go beyond that of youth, as well as on a large number of actors, including local authorities as well as associations, which play a major role in implementing social-inclusion policies.

The State plays a number of **roles essential to social inclusion**, in partnership with local authorities, social security bodies and operators Its primary role is to **enact the**

fundamental legal standards for social action: individual rights, risks, protective systems, aid schemes, creation and abolition of services and institutions, levels of social benefits and **distribution of roles among the various stakeholders**, in particular between State and territorial authorities. The State also has a monitoring role **with regard to the legality of local authorities' accounts and decisions**, and conditions under which aid and social action policies are implemented. Monitoring is carried out by the IGAS - General Social Affairs Inspectorate (Inspection générale des affaires sociales).

Implementation of aid and social action is shared between the State, local authorities, public bodies, associations, and other private entities (foundations, etc.). The **State may intervene via its deconcentrated departments and specialised national agencies** ensuring coordination of actions between the various stakeholders (national agencies, territorial authorities, etc.).

The State also **provides expert assessment of action and social inclusion** through evaluation, analysis, observation and production of knowledge on social policies. Work carried out by the INJEP – National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire), the DREES – Directorate for Research, Studies, Assessment and Statistics (Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques), and the INSEE contributes significantly to knowledge on social inclusion policies.

To fight poverty and social exclusion, the Government can also revive the **CILE – Cross-Ministerial Committee on the Fight against Exclusion (Comité Interministériel de Lutte contre les Exclusions)**. Defined in the [Social Care Code \(Code de l'Action Sociale\)](#) by [article R115-2](#), the committee is tasked with drawing up, **co-ordinating**, and **monitoring the Government's policy on preventing social exclusion**. On request from the Prime Minister, it examines draft legislation and regulations on the fight against poverty. It rules on action programmes implemented by the various ministerial departments concerned.

Governmental actors

The Government, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, initiates policies aimed at fragile populations, especially the **multiyear plan against poverty and for social inclusion**. It monitors the impact of those policies, which are implemented by various actors, including **local authorities** ([regions, communes, and départements, cf. 1.4](#)) that hold competences in matters of social action, as well as **public operators and associations**. Amongst the ministries, the pre-eminent role of the **ministry in charge of social affairs and health** must be highlighted in drawing up and monitoring policies on social inclusion.

Ministry in charge of social affairs and health (Ministère des Affaires Sociales et de la Santé)

The ministry in charge of social affairs and health ([Ministère de la santé](#)) initiates and implements the government's policy in the areas of social affairs, solidarity, social cohesion, and health. It draws up and implements programmes to fight against poverty, and, in conjunction with other ministries, it takes part in public action in matters of social assistance, economic and social insertion, and social innovation. Jointly with other ministries, it has authority over several institutions that are themselves actors in social-inclusion policies.

These institutions are:

- **The DGS – Directorate General for Health** ([Direction Générale de la santé](#))

The DGS – Directorate General for Health (Direction Générale de la Santé) draws up the policy on public health and contributes to its implementation. Its action pursues 4 objectives: “reserve and maintain the state of health of members of the public, protect

the population from health threats, guarantee the quality, safety and equality of access to the health system, and mobilise and co-ordinate partners”.

- **The DGCS – Directorate General for Social Cohesion** ([Direction Générale de la Cohésion sociale](#))

The DGCS – Directorate General for Social Cohesion (Direction Générale de la Cohésion Sociale) is tasked with designing, proposing, and implementing policies to support vulnerable people. Hence, it intervenes in policies on solidarity, social development, and promoting equality (women’s rights).

- **The DREES – Directorate for Research, Studies, Assessment, and Statistics** ([Direction de la Recherche, des Études, de l’Évaluation, et des Statistiques](#))

The DREES – Directorate for Research, Studies, Assessment, and Statistics (Direction de la Recherche, des Études, de l’Évaluation, et des Statistiques) is part of the public statistics department. Its priority mission involves observation, drawing up expert reports, and assessment concerning policies on social inclusion.

- **The IGAS – Inspectorate General of Social Affairs** ([Inspection Générale des Affaires sociales](#))

The IGAS – Inspectorate General of Social Affairs (Inspection Générale des Affaires Sociales) is a inter-ministerial verification body that checks, audits, and assesses structures and policies relating to social inclusion. It also acts as an advisor to public authorities.

The decentralised departments of the ministry

The Ministry of Social Affairs (Ministère des Affaires Sociales) also relies on its decentralised departments to pass on its actions to territories (regions and *départements*), including:

- **DR-D-JSCS – Regional Directorates for Youth, Sport, and Social Cohesion** ([Directions Régionales de la Jeunesse, des Sports, et de la Cohésion Sociale](#)), which themselves co-ordinate the DDCSPP – *Département* Directorates for Social Cohesion and Population Protection (Directions Départementales de la Cohésion Sociale et de la Protection des Populations) depending on the size of the *départements* ([cf. 1.4](#)).
- **DDCSs – Départemental Directorates of Social Cohesion** (Directions départementales de la Cohésion sociale) are responsible for implementing the State’s policies on behalf of disadvantaged and vulnerable citizens, and young people in particular.
- **ARS – Regional Health Agencies** ([Agences Régionales de Santé](#)), State public structures in charge of health policy in the regions.

Local authorities ([cf. 1.4](#))

The département

Since 2004, the *département* has been the local-authority leader in the field of social and medico-social action. It is responsible for medico-social prevention work for children and families, the ASE – Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l’Enfance), and the FAJ – Youth Assistance Fund (Fonds d’Aide aux Jeunes), which gives financial help to young people dealing with one-off financial difficulties.

In the field of child protection, competences are shared between the *département* through the departments of the ASE and the legal authority of the State, which covers the departments of the PJJ – Legal Protection of Young People (Protection Judiciaire de la Jeunesse).

The ASE – Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l’Enfance) comes under the authority of the *Département* Council. Its missions are defined by the [Social Action and Family Code](#). One of those missions is to provide material, educational, and psychological support to

minors and their families, to emancipated minors, and to adults under the age of 21, who are dealing with social difficulties that are likely to seriously compromise their stability.

Public operators

National Family Allowances Fund (Caisse Nationale des Allocations Familiales)

The [CNAF – National Family Allowances Fund \(Caisse Nationale des Allocations Familiales\)](#) is a major actor in policies on national solidarity. Present in each *département* in the form of a CAF – Family Allowances Fund (Caisse d’Allocations Familiales), the structures work on behalf of the State and the *départements* to deal with making minimum social payments (housing benefits, benefits for disabled adults, and the minimum wage). That provides help for persons who are in precarity, who are isolated, or who are disabled, and makes their insertion easier. CAFs [support families](#) by paying them benefits to help them finance their children’s education and leisure. In addition, CAFs implement arrangements for social actions, such as facilitating access to social entitlements; they organise prevention, information, and education actions aimed at families, and they organise meetings with social workers. By helping families, the CAF helps young people and contributes to their independence through arrangements like the Working Tax Credit .

The CNOUS – National Centre for University and School Services (Centre National des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires) and its CROUSs – Regional Centres for University and School Services (Centres Régionaux des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires)

The [CNOUS – National Centre for University and School Services \(Centre National des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires\)](#) and its network of CROUS – Regional Centres for University and School Services were established by the law of 16 April 1955; there are 28 in existence. They are national public establishments that are overseen by the Ministry for Higher Education , and their mission is to improve living conditions for students by “giving all students the same opportunities for access and income in higher education”. The CROUSs support students in all aspects of their lives (housing, leisure, finance, health, etc.) through specific services and arrangements.

Local missions

Local missions are front-line public actors in implementing policies for inserting and supporting the most vulnerable young people. For further information on local missions, please [see 3.2 Main actors](#).

NGOs

There is a multitude of national and local associations that have social action as their objective. They may not specifically aim at young people, who may nonetheless be concerned by their actions. Those associations include historic national charitable associations that fight against poverty: [Secours Catholique](#), [Emmaüs](#), the [Petits Frères des Pauvres](#), [ATD Quart-monde](#), and [Secours Populaire](#).

Others are involved in child protection and in the social inclusion of young people, like the [Apprentis d’Auteuil](#), a foundation that has been recognised as being “of public utility” and of which the hostels accommodate minors placed there by the ASE – Child Welfare Service. It also does prevention work, and supports young people in their social and professional insertion. The association also accommodates unaccompanied minors, and supports them through the process of regularising their administrative situation.

Some thematic associations work more specifically with young people. That is the case with [Refuge](#), which supports young homosexuals and transsexuals who have experienced family breakdown (vagrancy or social isolation), or who are the victims of violence and discrimination, in order to prevent their social marginalisation.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Intersectoral cooperation, or more precisely “interterritoriality”* – i.e. coordination and cooperation between the various territorial levels (national and local) – is of major importance to implementation of social inclusion policies, above all those concerning youth.

A number of youth-related social policies and schemes (such as the Garantie Jeunes / Youth Guarantee – see [4.3 Strategy for social inclusion of young people](#)) are based on a multi-partner, intersectoral approach that mobilises local missions.

Social inclusion policies require coordinated responses between the State’s various departments, including ministries, deconcentrated departments and the public operators concerned. Such coordination is given concrete form by **the CILE – Interministerial Committee to Combat Social Exclusion (Comité interministériel de lutte contre les exclusions) created by the Law of 29 July 1998**. The CILE is responsible for defining and coordinating the Government’s policy on preventing and combating social exclusion.

- It ensures coherence of government action by fostering mobilisation of the various ministerial departments concerned and development of crosscutting actions.
- At the Prime Minister’s request, it may also be asked to draft government strategy for combating poverty, budgets required to combat exclusion and provisional legal and regulatory texts.

The CILE is a policy instrument for coordination, concertation and management of crosscutting actions. Such work should result in development of a comprehensive multi-year policy strategy.

However, the way a CILE is organised and run is not systematic, and is subject to the Government’s will. It last met on 21 January 2013, leading to the adoption of the Multi-year Plan against Poverty and for Social Inclusion (2013-2017).

The cross-sectorial approach in social inclusion policies can be also materialised in the creation of council:

CNLE – National Council on Policies for fighting Poverty and Social Exclusion (Conseil National des Politiques de Lutte contre la Pauvreté et l’Exclusion Sociale)

Established in 1988 by law no. 88-1088 of 1 December 1988 on the minimum wage, the [CNLE – National Council on Policies for fighting Poverty and Social Exclusion](#) (Conseil National des Politiques de Lutte contre la Pauvreté et l’Exclusion Sociale) is another actor in inclusion policies. The Council is a place for exchanges and consultations between public actors and actors involved in the fight against social exclusion. The CNLE takes part in the process of debates and in drawing up national action plans. The body comes under the responsibility of the Prime Minister, and its mission is to:

- give an opinion to the government on all matters relating to the fight against poverty and social exclusion
- ensure consultation between public authorities and associations that work in the field of fighting poverty and social exclusion
- on request from the Prime Minister, issue an opinion on draft legislation or regulations, and on action programmes relating to social insertion
- propose to public authorities measures that could improve the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

The members of the CNLE are appointed by the Prime Minister. It is made up of:

- Eight members of the Government
- Seven elected officials and representatives of social and territorial action
- Seven representatives of bodies involved in the fight against exclusion

- Twelve representatives of legal entities under public or private law, other than the State and territorial authorities, contribute to integration and the fight against exclusion;
- Eight representatives appointed by the Prime Minister upon the recommendation of national unions of employees
- Eight personalities appointed based on their competences in matters of the fight against poverty and social exclusion
- Directors of structures, including the Director General of the National Employees' Health Insurance Fund (Caisse Nationale d'Assurance Maladie des Travailleurs Salariés), the Director of the National Family Allowances Fund (Caisse Nationale des Allocations Familiales), and the Director General of the Employment Agency (Pôle Emploi)
- The President of the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council (Conseil Économique, Social, et Environnemental)
- Eight people experiencing poverty.

4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

On 13 September 2018, the President of the Republic presented [the national strategy for preventing and combating poverty](#), which is based on "[urgent findings](#)". The strategy is mainly coordinated by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health, by an interministerial delegate to preventing and combating poverty among children and young people. It targets families as well as young people but nonetheless has a major "youth" component. The strategy includes a number of measures designed to reduce and contain poverty among the youngest sectors of the population and provides a comprehensive preventive approach that does not only target people in the most precarious situations.

The strategy is partly the result of consultations held between January and March 2018, including several territorial meetings, [an online public consultation](#) and six workgroups.

Their results were presented in the presence of all interest parties: State departments, social bodies, community actors, qualified individuals and the people heard. The online public consultation attracted 7,200 respondents.

Strategy website: investirdanslessolidarites.gouv.fr

Scope and contents

The strategy is organised around 5 focuses, termed "Commitments"

- [Commitment no. 1](#): "Equal opportunities from the very start in order to break the cycle of poverty".
- [Commitment no. 2](#): "Guaranteeing children's fundamental rights on a daily basis".
- [Commitment no. 3](#): "Guaranteed training pathways for all young people".
- [Commitment no. 4](#): "Towards more accessible and equitable social rights providing greater incentives to activity".
- [Commitment no. 5](#): "Investing in order to ensure that everyone finds employment".

Each focus is based on observation of an existing inequality (statistical data) and comprises a series of measures. Focuses 1, 2 and 3 specifically concern children and young people. The measures presented will be implemented in the course of the coming year.

Focus 1: "Equal opportunities from the very start in order to break the cycle of poverty" takes account of the importance of education from early childhood onwards as a lever for reduction of inequalities connected with social origin. The Focus' measures seek to improve the way children are received, through:

- Drafting of a training plan and a new professional reference framework in order to foster children's development and learning of the language before they enter nursery school.
- Implementation of a "Social Mixity" financial "bonus" system for institutions taking in disadvantaged children.
- Development of modes of reception for very young children, in particular in territories with marked inequalities, with creation of a "territories bonus".
- Creation of 300 new social centres in priority territories.

Commitment no. 2: "Guaranteeing children's fundamental rights on a daily basis" This Focus aims to "halve the material deprivation rate among poor children by 2022", via the following measures:

- Institution of free breakfasts in territories with marked inequalities, implementation of more affordable school canteen prices and of child nutrition access programmes.
- Organisation of joint State/Child welfare outreach programmes focusing on child protection.
- Consolidation of healthcare access missions entrusted to PMIs – Mother and Child Protection Services (Protection maternelle et infantile), and support to community medicine in carrying out school health missions, in the context of 0-6 y/o children's health pathways.
- **Preventing and combating over-indebtedness** via deployment of 400 "Budget advice points" across the territory and introduction of a cap on bank charges.

Commitment no. 3: "Guaranteed training pathways for all young people"

Focus 3 measures are designed to combat school failure and foster young people's professional integration. They are also in line with the reforms of work, vocational training and apprenticeship undertaken by the Government, pursuant to [Law no.2018-771 of 5 September 2018 pour on the freedom to choose one's professional future I](#).

The national strategy for preventing and combating poverty introduces **an obligation to ensure training for all young people up to the age of 18**. The obligation will be incumbent upon the young people themselves and on the public authorities, which will be obliged to provide assistance to all minors who have dropped out of school.

In addition, special attention will be paid to the most vulnerable young people in the care of ASE – Child Welfare (Aide sociale à l'enfance) services. This will be given concrete expression by a contractual commitment between the State and *départements* (territorial authorities) for 18-21 y/o, **with a view to ensuring that no young person is left without assistance when he/she leaves the ASE**.

Focus 4 measures: "Towards more accessible and equitable social rights providing greater incentives to activity" aim to reform access to social rights through:

- Creation of a "universal activity income" based on a merger of several minimum social benefits.
- An increase in the prime d'activité (employment bonus).
- Reform of **access to complementary health insurance**: an aid to payment for complementary health insurance (ACS) will be integrated into complementary universal health cover (CMU-c) with financial participation of less than €1 a day.

"Commitment no. 5" measures: "Investing in order to ensure that everyone finds employment" consist of:

creation of an "Activity Guarantee" combining reinforced social accompaniment with integration into employment for 300,000 beneficiaries a year.

consolidation of the integration by economic activity sector in order to foster the most fragile individuals' return to employment.

- **dissemination of such** experiments as "Zero long-term unemployment territories". This experiment was launched in 2016. It aims to bring concrete responses to problems encountered by individuals who have been unemployed for over a year, in

particular by fostering **employment of the long-term unemployed under open-ended contracts (CDIs) in social and solidarity economy companies, funded by the State and local authorities.**

Responsible authority

The national strategy for preventing and combating poverty is based on multi-partner work overseen by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health. It mobilises various parties working in the field with the most vulnerable sectors of the population: people concerned, territorial authorities, associations, researchers and the public authorities. The strategy **is monitored on two levels:**

- National, via the CNLE – National Council on Policies for combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (Conseil national des politiques de lutte contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale), whose missions and composition will be revised in the coming months;
- Territorial, *via* governance at regional level mobilising the voluntary sector and representatives of territorial authorities.

The strategy is based on a contractual approach: its goals and modes of implementation, assessment of results achieved and financial resources must form the content of contracts between territorial authorities and the State.

Delegation for preventing and combating poverty among children and young people

In order to manage the strategy, a Delegation for preventing and combating poverty, in particular among children and young people, was created by Decree on 24 October 2018.

The Delegation has been entrusted with a threefold mission:

1. **organising** concertation between the main operators involved in preventing and combating poverty and all government departments and administrations concerned, territorial authorities, the voluntary sector and socially disadvantaged individuals themselves.
2. **coordinating** preparatory work on the strategy and drafting of the texts organising its implementation.
3. **over the years to come**, ensuring monitoring of the strategy's implementation and assessment of its effectiveness.

The Delegation **runs the Scientific Council and manages the Social Investment Fund**, which is intended to finance calls for projects on the following themes: development of young children, high-quality educational territories, integration of young people and combating non-take-up. The Delegation is headed by [an Interministerial Delegate to preventing and combating poverty among children and young people](#), appointed by the Council of Ministers upon recommendation by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health,

Revisions/Updates

Multi-year plan against poverty and for social inclusion

Between 2013 and 2017, a Multi-year plan against poverty and for social inclusion was implemented by the public authorities.

The Plan was jointly developed by the ministries concerned, territorial authorities, associations and public social security services, and in partnership with researchers, businesses, unions and individuals in situations of precarity. It mobilised over 20 ministries, each one designated and identified as leader of one of its measures. The plan was based on close coordination of the various parties involved, all the more so as it was organised territorially (local authorities). The strategy had to respond to immediate

urgent social issues as well as structure long-term social action policies. It comprised 54 measures organised into three key focuses:

- Reducing inequalities and preventing divides;
- Aiding and accompanying integration;
- Coordinating social action and making best use of parties involved.

An [initial assessment](#) of the multi-year plan was carried out in 2015. As regards access to rights, progress made succeeded in limiting “non-take-up” of rights: Introduction of the employment bonus in January 2016, development and testing of a “multiservice simulator” providing users with an overall estimation of the benefits they might lay claim to depending on their family situations and levels of resources. In addition, as provided for in the plan, “rendez-vous des droits” (rights rendezvous) were implemented across the territory. In all, 234,476 such “rendezvous” were conducted over the course of 2015.

4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people

Programmes for vulnerable young people

In the national Strategy for preventing and combatting poverty, the The Youth Guarantee and the programme for access to entitlements is one of the main social-inclusion programmes aimed at the most vulnerable young people.

The Youth Guarantee (Garantie Jeunes)

The [Youth Guarantee \(Garantie Jeunes\)](#) is the French response to the European recommendation of the EU [Youth Guarantee \(Garantie Jeunes\)](#). [Decree no. 2013-880 of 1 October 2013](#) on the experiment of the “youth guarantee (garantie jeunes)” sets the terms for implementing the programme.

It is aimed at young people aged from 18 to under 26, who are experiencing precarity and who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET), and who have very limited resources. In order to prevent social exclusion and to encourage their insertion into employment, they are offered intensive support and they benefit from being placed in professional situations, as well as receiving gradually-decreasing financial support (461.72 euros) to help them in their efforts to access employment. [Article 46 of law no. 2016-1088 of 8 August 2016](#), the so-called “Work Law (Loi Travail)”, provides for the Youth Guarantee (Garantie Jeunes) to be entered into the Labour Code (*cf.* [Chapter 3.1](#)) as part of a “conceptualised pathway of support towards employment and independence”. The Youth Guarantee was first launched in 10 *départements* and became **from 1 January 2017, an entitlement for young people aged 18 to 25**. The programme is steered by the [Ministry of Employment](#) via local missions.

The Youth Guarantee

The Garantie Jeunes (Youth Guarantee) is based on:

- Intensive collective accompaniment on the part of local missions;
- Repeated professional simulation exercises under several possible forms;
- Individual accompaniment throughout the year;

Monthly financial aid providing the young people concerned with increased autonomy. According to the [Results of statistical assessment of the impact of the Youth Guarantee reports](#), “between the start of the experiment and end 2017, some 178,000 young people were involved in the Youth Guarantee scheme”.

For 2018, the Government plans to fund [100,000 000 Youth](#) Guarantees.

In addition to the Youth Guarantee, the **National strategy for preventing and combating poverty** includes a number of measures specifically targeting young people in situations of extreme precarity:

A contractual commitment between the State and *départements* is set to be implemented to ensure that young people from 18-21 y/o in the care of ASE – Child Welfare (Aide sociale à l'enfance) services do not end up without any form of support when they leave the ASE

Other measures (a number of measures are covered by other policy strategies and do not only concern young people):

- improvement of access to rights and social services with universalisation of the “unconditional social reception” scheme; the “Zero non-take-up territories” experiment and introduction of a digital safe so that each and every citizen who so wishes has a secure storage space for their personal data;
- automatic renewal of complementary universal health coverage (CMU-C) for recipients of the RSA – Earned Income Supplement (Revenu de solidarité active);
- creation of 100 nursing homes and health centres in priority territories;
- implementation of a “100% Health” full reimbursement for spectacles, hearing aids and dental work;

Multiyear Plan against Poverty and for Social Inclusion 2015-2017 (Plan Pluriannuel contre la Pauvreté et pour l'Inclusion Sociale)

The former 2015-2017 Multiyear Plan against Poverty and for Social Inclusion (Plan Pluriannuel 2015-2017 contre la Pauvreté et pour l'Inclusion Sociale) included a wide-ranging programme of access to entitlements for young people, and took the form of several actions like (the following is a non-exhaustive list). **Some of these measures are still relevant:**

- “Entitlement Rendezvous (Rendez-vous des Droits)” organised by the CAFs – Family Allowances Funds (Caisses d'Allocations Familiales) in order to reduce **non-recourse to entitlements**. The objective of the arrangement is to inform potential beneficiaries of their entitlements and of help available. It enabled opening up to entitlements to be facilitated in 40% of cases. In 2014, 141,498 people benefited from the arrangement
- Implementing “Energy Cheques (Chèques Énergie)” aimed at modest households in order to improve recourse to access to energy.

The programme of access to entitlements also includes a digital aspect (e-inclusion), with measures such as:

- **putting entitlements on line** (mes-aides.gouv.fr) within the CAFs – Family Allowances Funds (Caisses d'Allocations Familiales) and for the general public, so that people can be informed of their entitlements
- providing “**Digits Safe (Coffres-Forts Numériques)**” for the frailest people, via a practical guide to be used by social workers
- **maintaining an internet connection** if the subscription is in arrears.
- Launching a wide-ranging programme of digital mediators to encourage **access to entitlements using digital technology** in some departments and social structures (CAF, etc.).

Funding

Youth Guarantee

Local missions receive financial support from the State enabling provision of assistance to young people. The unit cost is €1,600 per young person entering the scheme and 12 months' accompaniment.

The scheme is mostly funded by the State, with European cofinancing (YEI-ESF).

In 2018, mobilisation for deployment of the Youth Guarantee continued in the context of the PIC – Skills Investment Plan (Plan d'investissement dans les Compétences), with

State appropriations enabling 100,000 young people to exercise their right to the Youth Guarantee.

National strategy for preventing and combating poverty and for social inclusion

The total cost of the National strategy for preventing and combating poverty and for social inclusion (taking all measures together) comes to 8.5 billion euros:

- 2.1 billion euros devoted to social investment and prevention of poverty.
- 2.5 billion for assistance in finding employment.
- 3.9 billion for revision of the Employment Bonus.

Source: <https://www.gouvernement.fr/action/strategie-de-prevention-et-de-lutte-c...>

Quality assurance

The Youth Guarantee (Garantie Jeunes) programme was subjected to an evaluation that enabled, in particular, the conditions for its general application to be determined. That [evaluation](#) provided for by decree no. 2013-880 of 1 October 2013, and it is done under the ægis of a scientific committee chaired by a university professor. The quantitative evaluation is supplemented by qualitative field surveys with actors and young beneficiaries.

The various measures of the Multiyear Plan against Poverty and for Social Inclusion are evaluated by the Inspectorate General for Social Affairs, which draws up annual [progress reports](#).

Finally, with the support of [France Stratégie](#), a public body dedicated to studies and forward-planning, a **Poverty Strategy Assessment Committee** is tasked with analysing the impact of all measures on the living conditions of disadvantaged individuals.

It may be mobilised as an assessment body in the context of calls for projects, in particular those financed by social investment funds.

Calls for projects bear on **four themes**:

1. “full development of children from early childhood to 6 y/o”;
2. “reinforced educational support during compulsory schooling”;
3. “ensuring solvency of the integration pathways of young people 16-25 y/o”;
4. “access to rights and services, in particular for young people (“Zero non-take-up territory”)

4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

Intercultural awareness

Several actors such as ministries and organisations are involved in raising awareness of tolerance and of intercultural dialogue for young people but more generally for everybody.

Among these actors the DILCRA/[Cross-Ministerial Delegation on the Fight against Racism and Anti-Semitism](#) has an institutional role:

DILCRA – Cross-Ministerial Delegation on the Fight against Racism and Anti-Semitism (Délégation Interministérielle à la Lutte contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme) comes under the authority of the Prime Minister. Its mission is to set up regular actions to fight against racial discrimination and discrimination because of sexual orientation. Many of their actions are aimed at youth:

- work done in schools to make young people aware of the fight against hate and LGBT discrimination, in partnership with LGBT associations (SOS Homophobie, etc.)
- setting up an action plan against racism and anti-Semitism, which describes the orientations of the policy on fighting racism, anti-Semitism, and Holocaust denial
- setting up an “educational reference point” against racism, anti-Semitism, and discrimination, and aimed at educational staff as well as volunteers in associations, in partnership with institutions (universities, associations, etc.).

The DILCRA has drafted a 2018-2020 action plan against racism and anti-Semitism, which sets out the orientations of the policy for combating racism, anti-Semitism and denialism. The plan is organised around 4 action focuses:

Combating hate on the Internet

Educating against prejudices

Protecting citizens and assisting victims

Investing in new fields of mobilisation

Several of the action plan’s measures target youth (non-exhaustive list):

- Organisation of actions at schools to raise young people’s awareness on the fight against LGBT hate and discrimination, in partnership with LGBT associations (SOS Homophobie, etc.);
- Introduction of a “referent for education” against racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination, intended for teaching staff and association volunteers, in partnership with institutions (universities, associations, etc.)
- Creation of a national “Ilan Halami” Prize rewarding actions combating racism and anti-Semitism carried out on behalf of young people.
- Reinforcement of existing partnerships on the memory of the Shoah and places of remembrance and history, and with community actors in the fields of culture and collective memory with regard to slavery, colonisation, immigration and “forgotten” memories.
- Encouraging development of partnerships between schools and places of remembrance and history.

Young people's rights

Communication with young people concerning rights and responsibilities is a significant strand of public policies, in particular the ministry in charge of Youth (Ministry of National Education), as well as the Rights Defender (Défenseur des Droits).

The ministry in charge of youth has published the menu items “[Living Together \(Vivre-ensemble\)](#)” and “[Rights and Responsibilities \(Droits et Devoirs\)](#)” on its web site. Those items promote events and (public) campaigns organised to fight intolerance, and they restate the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Furthermore, several structures overseen by the ministry, as well as independent structures, have the role of promoting knowledge of rights to all young people. Such as **PAD Jeunes – Youth Access Points to the Law (Points d’accès au droit Jeunes)** and **IJ – Youth Information (Information Jeunesse) facilities**. Intended for young people under 30 y/o, PADs are reception, information and assistance facilities providing information and legal advice on asserting your rights: conflict with an employer, unpaid fines, difficulties obtaining a residence permit, family litigation, etc. Interviews are free of charge and confidential, and no appointment is needed. IJs are generalist amenities tasked with informing and assisting young people to encourage their take-up of rights.

The mission of the [Rights Defender \(Défenseur des Droits\)](#) is to provide information about rights and to defend rights. That independent institution organises debates, especially work in schools, and “Film – Youth – Justice” (“Ciné – Jeune –

Justice”) meetings that aim at facilitating understanding of justice and democracy through film screenings and a debate ([for further information, please see 5.8](#)).

Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism

Public authorities are concerned by the rise in extremism and radicalisation. In the face of a growing phenomenon, several measures have been put in place:

- a facility to listen out for and to report radicalisation has been put in place with the setting up of a freephone number. The facility enables families to benefit from an answering service and from advice on the approach to take, as well as from psychological support;
- an on-line campaign and information site have been launched: stop-djihadisme.gouv.fr. The site is dedicated to prevention and to fighting against terrorism. It is aimed at the general public, at people who are close to young people undergoing radicalisation (e.g. teachers and associations), and at young people themselves. It is educational in character and provides practical tools (infographics, testimony videos, and placards) to better grasp and act against the phenomenon.

National plan for prevention of radicalisation, “Prévenir pour protéger” (Prevent to protect)

In April 2018, the Government adopted a [national plan for prevention](#) of radicalisation, “**Prévenir pour protéger**” (**Prevent to protect**), resulting from wide-ranging consultations carried out by the General Secretariat of the CIPDR – Interministerial Committee for the Prevention of Crime and Radicalisation (Comité interministériel de prévention de la délinquance et de la radicalisation), which mobilised 20 ministerial departments. It sets out 60 measures for reorientation of the prevention policy, organised into 5 focuses:

- 1) **Protecting minds against radicalisation**
- 2) **Adding to the detection / prevention network**
- 3) **Understanding and anticipating the evolution of radicalisation**
- 4) **Professionalising local operators and assessing practices**
- 5) **Adapting disengagement**

Socio-educational concepts have also been launched to fight against violent extremism, especially concepts that develop values of living together and of citizenship:

- a guide entitled “[Actors in sport and facilitation: better knowledge, better understanding, and better prevention of radicalisation phenomena \(Acteurs du sport et de l'animation: mieux connaître, mieux comprendre et mieux prévenir les phénomènes de radicalisation\)](#)” was drawn up by a working group steered by the ministry in charge of youth. The guide is intended for actors in the areas of sport and facilitation (youth and sports officers, sports educators, facilitators, sports leaders) in order to support them in grasping radicalisation phenomena and the means for effective prevention or reaction.

“Walker of the Net project”

In 2016, the **Family Allowances Fund**, the Agricultural Social Mutuality Fund, the Ministry of National Education and Youth, as well as the Ministry in charge of Family and Women's Rights, launched the project “Walker of the net” (“Promeneurs du Net”), an educational presence on the Internet. A Walker of the Net is a youth professional, educator or animator, who gets in touch with young people on the Internet and social networks in order to make them more accessible. listen to them, advise them and accompany them in carrying out their projects. The “Promeneurs du net” action, launched in a few departments in France, will be rolled out across the country. This new

mode of social intervention with young people can participate in the prevention of extremism, in particular by reducing the risks of social disruption through dialogue, exchange and accompaniment.

Website: <http://www.promeneursdunet.fr/>

4.6 Access to quality services

Several facilities that encourage social inclusion, especially through access to public services (health, housing, etc.), have been put in place or renewed by the political authorities such as the "Young people's Compass"

"Young people's Compass" (Boussole des Jeunes)

In 2017, in order to facilitate young people's access to their rights, the Ministry responsible for youth affairs, via the DJEPVA – Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations (Direction de la jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et de la vie associative) developed the "[la Boussole des jeunes](#)" (Young People's Compass), a digital platform providing young people with knowledge of the various rights and schemes that they might lay claim to depending on their situations and where they live. It facilitates access to the services available from public service professionals in the area they live in. The platform's service offers are organised by theme, provided by professional bodies and financed or cofinanced by the public authorities. The IJ network is closely involved in its running.

Housing

According to the INSEE – National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques), over the last twenty-five years, the proportion of young people in social housing stock and the percentage of young owners have fallen. On average, young people use 18.7% of their resources for housing, as opposed to 10% for the rest of the population. Given that finding, the objective of public authorities is to facilitate access to housing that is tailored to the needs of young people and to their resources. In response, the State, in partnership with institutional and voluntary actors, has put in place a "youth housing" strategy that has led to the implementation of several facilities aimed at:

1. Easing access to rental housing through:

The LOKAVIZ mark

The [LOKAVIZ](#) mark is awarded to (private) student housing by the CNOUS and CROUSs. It enables students to be guaranteed decent housing and it enables owners to find tenants easily, in particular through the dedicated [LOKAVIZ web site](#), which lists all charter-marked housing. The mark is awarded based on regulatory criteria for decent and for the energy performance of buildings, the amount of rent and charges, compliance with best practice between lessor and tenant, as well as location, taking account of the closeness of higher-education establishments, journey times by public transport or bicycle, as well as sports and cultural facilities.

The Visale facility

Young employees entering work can use the [Visale – Visa for Accommodation and Work \(Visa pour le Logement et l'Emploi\)](#) facility to guarantee payment of their rent arrears in the private housing sector. The facility covers all employees under the age of 30 whose employers are subject to "Employer participation in construction efforts" ("Participation des employeurs à l'effort de construction". (NB: "Employer participation in building efforts" ("Participation des employeurs à l'effort de construction") is also called the *1% housing facility (Dispositif du 1% logement)*. It is a tax paid by employers in the form of direct investments in employee housing.)

2. Facilitate access to ownership by:

Le [PTZ – Zero-Rate Loan \(Prêt à Taux Zéro\)](#) has been reformed for first-time buyers (the reform came into force on 1 January 2016). It enables them to finance up to 40% of their housing on an interest-free basis. The loan can be used anywhere in France for buying a new-build or older property, and it can run for 20 or 25 years. The PTZ consists of a deferred-payment of between 5 and 15 years, during which the young person makes no monthly payments towards her/his loan.

3. Encourage access to housing by young people who are disadvantaged or who are in dire poverty

Providing better support for young people, especially the most disadvantaged, is also an essential challenge. Hence, young people placed under legal control are given individual support by a single reference person, the [Insertion and Probation Adviser \(Conseiller d'Insertion et de Probation\)](#), who is tasked with monitoring the young person and with supporting her/him in access to housing.

To those recent initiatives must be added traditional social-action facilities such as [housing assistance](#).

Young people can also benefit from **ALS – Social-Housing Benefit (Allocation de Logement à Caractère Social)** as well as APL – Personalised Housing Assistance (Aide Personnalisée au Logement) granted to tenants in subsidised housing (housing that is the subject of an agreement between the State and the housing owner). Those benefits are paid and overseen by the [Family Allowances Fund \(Caisse d'Allocations Familiales\) on a means-tested basis. There is no minimum age requirement for applying for those benefits.](#)

These various social aid schemes (Social Housing Benefit / Personalised Housing Benefit) **are set to be reformed in spring 2019** ([see 4.8](#))

In addition, young people aged 16 to 30 who are in employment, on placement, in an apprenticeship, or looking for work can use [youth hostels](#), also called “young employees’ hostels or youth housing”, which provide them with temporary accommodation (for a maximum of two years).

Social services

When young people suffer financial difficulties, they can turn to a number of social services. Those social services include some that are dedicated specifically to young people, whilst others deal with the public as a whole.

Social services aimed at young people

University social services

Higher-education establishments have their own social services co-ordinated by the [CROUS – Regional Centres for University and School Services \(Centres Régionaux des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires\)](#). CROUSs have their own social-service offices.

Within those services, young people can request [specific help](#): either **one-off help** in the case of serious financial difficulties, or an **annual benefit** (over 10 months) when they experience long-term financial difficulties and they do not receive any grants based on social criteria. That help is aimed at students under the age of 35 who are in financial difficulty. There is no age limit for disable people.

Moreover, disabled people can benefit from [GIVEKA Foundation](#) grants that are overseen by the CROUSs. Those grants are aimed at students who, by reason of **accident or illness**, experience **financial difficulties in relation to starting or continuing their studies**.

All those requests for specific help are examined by a commission chaired by the CROUS Director.

Local missions

Local missions (*cf.* 4.2) can support young people when the latter are faced with serious difficulties, in particular by giving them access to the [FAJ – Youth Assistance Fund \(Fonds d'Aide aux Jeunes\)](#). The FAJ is a facility for providing temporary financial help that is managed and financed by the *départements*. It is aimed at young adults (aged 18 to 25) who are experiencing social difficulty, and it includes three types of assistance:

- **temporary help:** exceptional financial help to deal with an emergency (food purchases, transport costs, healthcare expenditure, etc.) or with emergency housing
- **financial help with an insertion project** (placements, etc.)
- **financial help lined to support action:** long-term support (health, etc.).

That help is given after a request is made to local missions, and it is means-tested as well as status-based. The amount given varies by *département*.

Social services for the general public

Young people can also use more general social services, such as the Family Allowances Fund and the social-action centres of their *communes*.

The CAF – Family Allowances Fund (See [Glossary](#))

Several [CAF](#) facilities and services are offered to people to ease their insertion into society and to bring them out of their financial and social difficulties:

- the [Earned Income Supplement \(Revenu de Solidarité Active\)](#), which supplements low earnings in order to provide a minimum income. The facility was established by [law no. 2008-1249 of 1 December 2008](#), and carries on from the RMI – Job-Seeker's Allowance (Revenu Minimum d'Insertion, set up in 1988), by providing a minimum income to the very poorest people. Entitlement to the RSA begins at age 25; however, since 1 September 2010, it has also been available to young working people aged under 25 ([decree no. 2010-961 of 25 August 2010 on extending the Earned Income Supplement \(Revenu de Solidarité Active\) to young people aged under twenty-five](#)) if they meet certain criteria. On 1 January 2016, the government established "[Work Credit \(Prime d'Activité\)](#)", which merges "work" RSA and "employment credit", which was an income supplement paid by the State to employees whose income did not exceed a certain amount.
- [Work Credit \(Prime d'Activité\)](#), partly aimed at young working people (from age 18 onwards). Its aim is to "encourage a return to professional work", in particular by supplementing the income of workers of modest means. Its amount is calculated on the basis of the composition and resources of the household, and on the basis of the beneficiaries' income level. **A reform of the "Work Credit" is currently underway.**
- [Family Support Allowance \(Allocation de Soutien Familial\)](#), which is paid to bring up a child who does not receive help from either or both of its parents, or to top up a low-amount maintenance allowance
- [AAH – Disabled Adults' Allowance \(Allocation aux Adultes Handicapés\)](#), to provide a minimum income for disabled people. The AAH is financed by the State and paid by the CAF – Family Allowances Funds (Caisses d'Allocations Familiales).

Social-action centres

Communes have a CCAS – Communal Social-Action Centre (Centre Communal d'Action Sociale). That administrative public establishment is tasked with putting in place the *commune's* social policy, and it is aimed particularly at young people in precarity. Its mission is to help poor people with administrative formalities and with completing applications to receive medical help, social housing, and financial help.

Health care

As part of the Priority Youth Policy (2013-2017), improving the health of young people and encourage access to prevention and care, took the form of various measures,

including the drafting of legislation on the health of young people. The first chapter of the [law on modernising the health system](#), which was promulgated on 26 January 2016, states that it provides “Support for young people in equality of health opportunities”. The law encourages, amongst other things, access to health entitlements and services through various initiatives that facilitate access to care and prevention:

Access to care

- Young people under the age of 16 can benefit from a medical reference person in the shape of the physician chosen by the family.
- The validity period of medical certificates has been reformed, making it easier for young people to obtain a medical certificate to practise a sport.
- Measures enabling young people to have better financial cover for their healthcare expenditure, such as the general application of the system of third-party payment and simplifying access to [ACS – Help with paying for additional Health Insurance \(Aide du paiement à une Complémentaire Santé\)](#).
- Students who have experienced family breakdown and who receive specific help can make an application for ACS – Help with paying for Additional Health Insurance (Aide du paiement à une Complémentaire Santé), and benefit from [CMU-C – Additional Universal Health Insurance \(Couverture Maladie Universelle Complémentaire\)](#). CMU-C is free additional health insurance aimed at facilitating access to care for people living in France on a stable basis and who are of modest means. **A reform of the CMU-C is underway for the 2019 year.**

Preventing risks

Initiatives on **sexual health** have also been implemented by school nurses providing **emergency contraception**, and by **free access** for minors aged at least 15 to reimbursable contraceptives as well as to medical consultations and examinations needed for those contraceptives to be prescribed.

Measures for preventing risky behaviour have been reinforced in partnership with school and higher-education establishments:

- (secondary-) school establishments can set up campaigns to prevent [addictive behaviour in a school setting](#): pupils are informed of the dangerous nature of products (tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs) and their effects, as well as of current legislation
- in order to provide training in the problems of addictive behaviour, school establishments, DGESCO – Directorate General of School Education and [MILDECA – Cross-Ministerial Mission on the Fight against Drugs and Addictive Behaviour \(Mission Interministérielle de Lutte contre les Drogues et les Conduites Addictives\)](#) have produced a [guide for people working in a school setting](#).
- Each higher-education establishment has an [inter-university department of preventive medicine and student health](#) with the role of advising and guiding young people, as well as carrying out actions on prevention and information for health. Several actions for preventing risky behaviour have also been set up within those structures, such as the appointment of “[health relay](#)” students. The role of those young people is to **inform and guide their colleagues** in relation to health problems. They are the interface between medical and social professionals, university institutions, and students.
- **Young adult detainees** also benefit from prevention programmes. They are individually monitored by a single reference person, the **CPIP – Prison Insertion and Probation Adviser (Conseiller Pénitentiaire d'Insertion et Probation)**, who supports them in formalities relating to health centres, the local mission, etc.

National Health Strategy 2018-2022

In addition, in December 2017, the Government adopted the 2018-2022 national health strategy, which contains a number of measures targeting children and young people.

- Introducing a health pathway for 0 - 6 y/o;
- Preventing child obesity;

- Stepping up promotion of health in schools;
- Improving healthcare provision in Overseas France by creating a hundred or so “overseas” specialist assistant positions and improving the job status’ attractiveness;
- Preventing hearing loss among young people;
- Testing out the “Pass préservatif” (Condom Pass) scheme for under 25 y/o: a sexual health information and awareness-raising programme targeting young people and including introduction of a card giving free access to condoms;
- Increasing interventions in the context of the “Consultations jeunes consommateurs de drogues” (Young drug-user consultations) scheme;
- Systematically providing specialised assistance to young people admitted to emergency departments or hospitalised following a bout of binge drinking;
- Training students taking first-aid courses in mental health.

Financial services

Young people faced with financial difficulties can have access to specific help by applying to social services, but they can also turn to arrangements and facilities for providing financial help, which help them with their insertion into society. Those facilities include:

Work Credit (Prime d’Activité)

Young job-seekers can also receive [Work Credit \(Prime d’Activité\)](#). Set up on 1 January 2016, the credit **enables support to be given to the activity and buying power of employees in precarity**; Students and apprentices can also be entitled to it if they show sufficient earned income. In **2019 the [Work Credit \(Prime d’Activité\)](#) scheme will be reformed.**

Help with looking for a first job

At the start of the 2016 academic year, the Government set up ARPE – Help with Looking for a First Job (Aide à la Recherche du Premier Emploi). ARPE is paid each month for 4 months to young graduates (from CAP – Certificate of Competence (Certificat d’Aptitude Professionnelle) to Master’s level), in order to provide financial support during the period of professional insertion that runs from the end of studies to starting one’s first job. ARPE is reserved for young people who received an educational grant during the final year of studies leading to a qualification via the school or university route.

Grants based on social criteria

Depending on their parents’ income, the number of children, and the distance from their place of study, students aged under 28 can be entitled to a [grant based on social criteria](#) that can enable them to meet their expenses and follow their academic curriculum. Grants are paid for 10 months. The amount paid varies according to the level of each student (the level is defined on the basis of social criteria), from 0, which grants exemption from [university registration fees](#) and from [payment of student social-security contributions](#), to 7.

Merit-Based Help (Aide au Mérite)

Student can obtain other types of help, such as [Merit-Based Help](#) (Aide au Mérite), an supplement to the grant based on social criteria for higher-education students who obtained a “Très Bien” (“Very Good”) grade in their *baccalauréat* (a national qualification issued at the end of secondary studies). In addition, students who prepare for one or more civil-service exams can, depending on the results obtained in their previous studies, receive the [Civil Service Diversity Allowance \(Allocation pour la Diversité dans la Fonction Publique\)](#), which stands at 2,000 euros.

Arrangements for banking inclusion

In order to reduce the risks of over-indebtedness, especially for disadvantaged people, the Multiyear Plan against Poverty and for Social Inclusion includes several measures relating to **banking inclusion and preventing over-indebtedness**, such as a ceiling

on commission and the legal obligation for credit establishments to put in place mechanisms for the early detection and processing of their clients' difficulties.

All those measures are part of the banking law of 26 July 2013, as well as the establishment of the Observatory on Banking Inclusion (Observatoire de l'Inclusion Bancaire) (decree no. 2014-737 of 30 June 2014 on the Observatory on Banking Inclusion (Observatoire de l'Inclusion Bancaire)), which has the task of monitoring the practices of credit establishments in matters of banking inclusion, in particular with regard to populations in financial fragility. The Observatory must provide public authorities as well as all actors involved (banks and credit companies) with objective data that allow practices and their developments to be evaluated, and ways of improvement to be put in place. It draws up an annual report that lists the actions taken in the fight against banking exclusion.

In addition, in September 2018, The Ministry of Economy and Finance reached an agreement with the banking sector **limiting bank charges for account holders with social problems** who have bounced cheques, largely due to such charges.

Help with driving licences

It has been made easier for unemployed young people aged 15 to 25 to undertake driver training, in particular by relaxing the terms and conditions for the [Driving Licence at One Euro per Day \(Permis à Un Euro par Jour\)](#). The maximum amount of the loan granted to young people to finance the driving licence is 1,200 euros.

Quality assurance

There is no standard approach for evaluating the quality of those various services. It is also important to distinguish between the evaluation of the impact of facilities on young people from checking the quality of services offered (reception arrangements, support, etc.). The former can be the subject of an internal evaluation (via ministerial statistics departments) and/or a qualitative evaluation by external actors (e.g. an academic laboratory or an evaluation agency); the latter can be the subject of a satisfaction survey, or of surveys put in place by the structure itself.

As an example, the Family Allowances Funds (Caisses d'Allocations Familiales) can carry out their own surveys. The CROUSs (See. [4.7](#)) also carry out annual surveys on the quality of their services, especially university catering.

Furthermore, the [Observatory of Student Life \(Observatoire de la Vie Étudiante\)](#) carries out surveys every three years on students' living conditions, in order to provide information to public authorities and improve students' living conditions.

4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion

Policy/legal framework

In France, **two types of youth work** have to be distinguished: the socio-educational youth work intended for all young people and the other aimed at **young people in difficulty and aiming to integrate them socially**. This form of youth work is associated to the protection of minors and young people.

Protecting young people in danger is a long-standing concern of French public authorities, which, through the [order of 2 February 1945 on juvenile delinquency](#), stated the need to set up a justice system specifically for children, based in particular on the **primacy of education over repression**. That legislation has undergone many changes since then. Nonetheless, it constituted the basis for the system of justice for minors, for policies on protecting the most vulnerable young people, and for preventing delinquency.

Young people are deemed **vulnerable** and in danger when they are mistreated or when their living conditions prevent their proper physical and psychological development. Young people in danger can benefit from:

- legal protection

PJJ – Legal Protection of Young People (Protection Judiciaire de la Jeunesse) has the task of protecting and educating minors in danger or under legal control. That protection must encourage their educational, social, and professional insertion through **educational actions** that take a variety of forms (support, etc.). In some cases, adults aged under 21 can also come under the competence of the Children's Judge.

- administrative protection

That is provided by the *département* Council and by the ASE – Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance), defined by [article L221-1 of the Social Action and Family Code \(Code de l'Action Sociale et des Familles\)](#). The service works to care for children (placements in with foster families or children's homes) and carries out "specialist" prevention work.

Specialist prevention is an educational action aimed at enabling young people undergoing marginalisation to **break away from isolation and to restore social links**. That approach is also used in preventing mistreatment, delinquency, and risky behaviour.

Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

The 2018 national strategy for preventing and combating poverty

The national strategy for preventing and combating poverty includes a range of measures targeting the most vulnerable young people ([See 4.4](#)), such as organisation of joint State/Child Welfare outreach programmes to prevent begging and helping families with children.

The "Action Programme for Young People exposed to Delinquency" ("Programme d'Actions à l'intention des Jeunes exposés à la Délinquance")

The Secretariat General of the Cross-Ministerial Committee on Preventing Delinquency (Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministériel de Prévention de la Délinquance) sets the guidelines of government policy in matters of preventing delinquency, and ensures that they are implemented. The committee is chaired by the Prime Minister (and, with delegated authority, by the Minister of the Interior (Ministre de l'Intérieur)), and it has drawn up a "2013-2017 National strategy for preventing delinquency (Stratégie nationale de prévention de la délinquance 2013-2017)" whose orientations have been kept up until now (2018).

One of the measures of that strategy is the implementation of a "**programme of actions aimed at young people exposed to delinquency**" (Priority 1). That programme must avoid having "young people (adolescents and young adults) tipping over into and becoming rooted in" delinquency by using specialist prevention, the fight against dropping out of school, educational action, etc. Its measures respond to two objectives: **preventing the initial move into delinquency, and avoiding recidivism**. [Practical sheets](#) specifying objectives and target groups are made available to youth professionals.

The programme is implemented in partnership with mayors, the Prefect, the State Prosecutor (*cf.* [Glossary](#)), and the departments of justice, national education, and the police.

The programme is financed through the FIPD – Cross-Ministerial Fund for Preventing Delinquency (Fonds Interministériel de Prévention de la Délinquance).

Examples of social-inclusion measures for vulnerable young people

Young people placed with the Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance)

Young people placed with the Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance) can benefit from the young-adult contract, which **extends the help** they received whilst minors. That help can take several forms, e.g. accommodation, psychological and educational support, a financial benefit, etc. The facility contributes to making **young adults** gradually independent. Young people must apply to the Council of the *département* where they have been placed. The *département* Council can refuse to extend that help.

One of the measures of the 2018 national strategy for preventing and combating poverty consists of conclusion of contracts between State services and *départements* with a view to ensuring that young people from 18-21 y/o in the care of ASE – Child Welfare (Aide sociale à l'enfance) services do not end up without any form of support when they leave the ASE.

Youth work providers in the field of social inclusion for young people

As part of social work with vulnerable young people, voluntary actors work in close partnership with public authorities, including the Ministry of Justice (Ministère de la Justice), the Ministry of National Education and Youth, and the Ministry of the Interior (Ministère de l'Intérieur), as well as local authorities, especially the *Département*, which plays a significant role in financing those social-inclusion structures.

The main structures for the social inclusion and the protection of young people are:

Children's homes

Département children's homes offer permanent reception facilities for minors who are in difficulty and who need emergency help. Within those homes, professionals have the task of observing and evaluating children during their stay, in order to start **educational work** with them. Children are placed there by the *département* Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance) or by the Children's Judge, as part of administrative protection or legal protection for childhood in danger ([article 375 of the Civil Code](#)) for juvenile delinquency (order of 2 February 1945). Children's homes are generally managed by the *département*, either directly or in the form of a public establishment.

MECS – Social Children's Homes (Maisons d'Enfants à Caractère Social)

MECS – Social Children's Homes (Maisons d'Enfants à Caractère Social) offer reception arrangements for stays of variable length to children and young adults whose families are experiencing temporary or long-term difficulties and can no longer take care of their children's education. Children are also placed there by the *département* Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance) or by the Children's Judge. MECSs are managed by associations or other private, non-profit bodies.

Prevention clubs

Prevention clubs and teams carry out educational action, termed specialist prevention, that aims at facilitating better social insertion and preventing young people from becoming marginalised. They seek out (in the street) young people who are alone or in groups, who are in difficulty or who have broken away from their environment. Their places of intervention are disadvantaged urban areas. Prevention clubs and teams are made up of educators, facilitators, mediators, and volunteers who are competent in prevention matters. The educational action of those bodies is carried out in collaboration with *département* social services (Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance)).

Reception Centres and Living Areas (Lieux de Vie et d'Accueil)

LVA – Reception Centres and Living Areas (Lieux de Vie et d'Accueil) are **non-traditional** reception structures that offer family-type care by taking in at least three and at most seven young people. Through ongoing, educational support, they aim at encouraging the social insertion of the young people accommodated there.

AEMO – Educational Action in an Open Setting (Action Éducative en Milieu Ouvert) and AED – Educational Action at Home (Action Éducative à Domicile) services

The aim of those services is to provide **home-based monitoring** of minors and their families and to provide them with educational and psychological support, in order to overcome the material or psychological difficulties that they encounter and to support the parents in developing their parenting skills. Monitoring measures are of two types:

- **AEMO – Educational Action in an Open Setting (Action Éducative en Milieu Ouvert)** is a restraint measure ordered by the Children's Judge if the health and safety of a minor are at risk
- **AED – Educational Action at Home (Action Éducative à Domicile)** takes place on request or agreement from one parent, when so required by the latter's health, safety, or education.

Adolescent Homes

The *département* public structures were set up in 1999. Their aim is to “receive, listen to, inform, and guide young people, taking account of the specificities of the special period that is adolescence; guide and support the individuals around those young people; and be a resource centre for professionals who work with young people”. There are adolescent homes in 65 *départements* (Mainland France / Overseas *Départements* and Territories). Adolescent homes are grouped into a federation, the [National Association of Adolescent Homes \(Association Nationale des Maisons des Adolescents\)](#). Some of those structures are also places for providing healthcare and consultations to adolescents; that is the case of the [Maison de Solenn](#) in Paris, which is part of a hospital complex and which has a medical research centre specialising in the problems of adolescence.

Source: DREES – Directorate for Research, Studies, Assessment, and Statistics (Direction de la Recherche, des Études, de l'Évaluation, et des Statistiques). Working document, statistics series. 2012. *Les établissements et services en faveur des enfants et adolescents en difficulté sociale (Establishments and services for children and adolescents in social difficulty)*, no. 173.

Training and support for youth workers engaged in social inclusion programmes

The role of “specialist educators” must be highlighted amongst social workers who support young along their pathway to independence and to social inclusion.

According to the ministry in charge of social affairs, specialist educators “contribute to educating children and adolescents, and to supporting adults with a disability or with behavioural disorders, or adults who are experiencing difficulties relating to insertion, by helping people in difficulty to maintain their independence and develop their socialisation skills [...]”.

Training

Specialist educators hold the State Diploma for Specialist Educators.

Fee-based training is done as a 3-year sandwich course in one of the 80 specialist schools that come under the [ministry in charge of labour](#). The qualification can also be obtained by following a 2-year university course at an IUT – University Institute of Technology (Institut Universitaire de Technologie).

Financing

In order to obtain help with paying for the training course, candidates can apply for financial help with training to:

- the *Département* Council or Regional Council
- the Local Mission for young people aged under 26.

For candidates whose parents' means do not exceed a certain threshold, it is also possible to obtain an education grant.

Professional development

Specialist educators can develop professionally; they can hold positions as heads of department or directors of establishments, and undergo higher training for:

- the Certificate of Competence for management functions and for heads of social-intervention units
- the State qualification in social engineering
- the Certificate of Competence for the functions of heads of establishments or of social-intervention department.

The qualification can also be obtained by validation of prior experience, enabling a certificate to be obtained based on professional experience.

Financial support

It is not easy to summarise and specify the amount and the modes of public financing of the various actors (structures, bodies, and associations) involved in social work with young people, especially because that financing varies with their legal status (association or public body), and because they mobilise several partners, such as ministries and local authorities, especially the *département*. The whole set of social-inclusion arrangements does not depend on the same budgets and financial programmes.

As an example, the National Strategies on Preventing Delinquency (Stratégie Nationale de Prévention de la Délinquance 2013-2017) (*cf.* 4.4 [Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes](#)) are financed by the FIPD – Cross-Ministerial Fund for Preventing Delinquency, whilst some measures for the legal protection of young people come under the Ministry of Justice (Ministère de la Justice). Similarly, the Child Welfare Service (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance) is financed by the *départements*.

Quality assurance

There are several mechanisms for evaluating structures and arrangements relating to inclusion and social work:

The [law of 2 January 2002 renewing social and medico-social action](#) requires structures covered by the 1945 order on juvenile delinquency (children's homes, etc.) to carry out an external evaluation every seven years and an internal evaluation every five years. The law requires the implementation of an internal and external evaluation of social and medico-social establishments and departments, covering the **activities and the quality of services provided** to beneficiaries.

In addition, the implementation of social-inclusion programmes can be evaluated by external service providers (evaluation firms and audit firms) as well as by public observation and evaluation services. The evaluations must **improve and reinforce** the programmes or structures.

For example, as part of preventing delinquency, the governance, actions, and impact of the National Strategies on Preventing Delinquency is to be evaluated by the Secretariat General of the Cross-Ministerial Committee on Preventing Delinquency and Radicalisation and by the various ministries concerned. Furthermore, policies on preventing delinquency

are also evaluated by the [Permanent Mission for Evaluating the Policy on Preventing Delinquency \(Mission Permanente d'Évaluation de la Politique de Prévention de la Délinquance\)](#).

4.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

Universal Activity Income

Among the measures of the 2018 nation strategy for preventing and combating poverty, reform of minimum social benefits is wide-ranging and set to bring about a far-reaching transformation of France's social aid system.

The Government plans to introduce a “**universal activity income**” merging and replacing existing social aids: the AAH – Disabled Adult Benefit (Allocation adulte handicapé), the RSA – Earned Income Supplement (Revenu de solidarité active), the [Employment Bonus](#) and the APL – Personalised Housing Benefit (aide personnalisée au logement) are among the systems concerned.

This single social payment is set to be introduced “in 2019 or 2020” according to the interministerial delegate responsible for combating poverty.

Ongoing debates

Reform of retirement pensions

The President of the Republic has announced his desire [to reform retirement pensions](#) and appointed a High Commissioner for Pension Reform under the aegis of the Minister for Solidarity and Health and responsible for carrying out consultations and proposing the substance of such reform. This large-scale reform, which is to be carried out in the context of employment and social action policies, also concerns young people, in particular because it will set the age and conditions for retirement. It is causing lively debate among politicians and citizens alike.

The reform consists of creating a single retirement system. It aims to switch from a system determined by professional status and made up of different regimes each governed by different rules to a single system whose provisions will be the same for all contributors.

To prepare it, an online consultation open to all comers is currently up and running, alongside ongoing dialogue with social partners. The **bill** on pension reform is set to be presented by the **Government** sometime during 2019.

5. PARTICIPATION

As an instrument of **citizenship and autonomy**, the participation of young people contributes to the consideration of their places and their roles in society. Encouraging the contribution of young people, in particular to the development of public policies, is an old concern of the French public authorities and a recurrent demand from the citizens' associations and movements of youth.

Through the support to the creation of **youth-led associations**, as well as the development of **participation mechanisms**, the public authorities intend to encourage the participation of young people in the "life of the city".

However, the participation of young people is more **effective and active at the local level** (municipalities) rather than at the national level where it is done in a more punctual and fragmented way. Moreover, political and associative participation more generally are marked by a strong social reproduction resulting in the accentuation of inequalities between young people.

Encouraging the **participation of all young people regardless of their social conditions and levels of training**, reducing barriers to participation and recognizing new forms of youth involvement appear to be some of the challenges of public action for participation of young people

5.1 General context

Main concepts

Several definitions and concepts enable the political participation of young French people to be understood and characterised. It is important, on the one hand, to speak of the notion of "commitment", and, on the other, of the notions of "intermittent participation" and "protest commitment".

Commitment

By definition, commitment is "the action of binding oneself through a promise or an agreement"; that implies not only a commitment to others, but also to oneself. The notion of commitment that lies at the heart of participation has a moral connotation that is still compelling today, including when we speak of political commitment. Commitment is seen as a civic duty, which partly explains the calls to commitment aimed at young people by public authorities.

According to a number of surveys ([France Bénévolat, 2010, 2012](#), and 2013, as well as *Baromètre DJEPVA / INJEP sur la jeunesse (DJEPVA /INJEP barometer on youth)*, published in 2016, the commitment of young French people is fostered by the desire to help others, to defend a cause, and to make oneself useful in society, as well as to educate oneself and assert oneself as an individual and a citizen.

Polls and surveys also highlight young people's disaffection towards traditional forms of commitment, i.e. belonging to a party, a trade union, or an association, and especially with regard to political commitment. However, that situation is not indicative of a lack of interest in politics, since young people's commitment takes new and varied forms. Contemporary modes of participation preferred by young people nowadays can be **more informal, one-off, and spontaneous**, something that is noted in the field of political commitment as well as at times of electoral participation.

Intermittent participation

Generally speaking, young people are more likely to abstain from voting than adults. However, young people's political (electoral) participation varies according to their age

range as well as the challenges and the intensity of campaigns; abstention is not a practice that is specific to young people. Young people's behaviour increasingly takes the form of "**intermittent participation**" characterised by a **selective approach** to voting. Some researchers even speak of a "[civic moratorium](#)" to describe the attitude of young French people to voting, an attitude that involves not wanting to take part in certain elections.

Protest commitment

This selective commitment on the part of young French people does not necessarily imply depoliticisation since, in spite of intermittent participation, young people feel more concerned by politics compared to preceding generations. Furthermore, the choice to abstain can appear as a political act in itself. A study carried out in 2010 by the [INJEP – National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education \(Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Populaire\)](#) highlights rising politicisation amongst young people, especially the development of "protest commitment" ([Roudet, B.: "Des jeunes davantage impliqués et plus protestataires", "Jeunesses études et synthèses, no. 2, November 2010\)](#)). That expression reflects the forms of action and of political participation that young people prefer nowadays. Petitions and demonstrations as well as modes of mobilisation via social networks and other digital tools make up some of those "protest" practices and arrangements that are renewed by young people and popular with them.

Institutions of representative democracy

Political regime

The political regime that is currently in force in the French State is the [Fifth Republic](#), of which the functioning is organised and defined by the [Constitution of 4 October 1958](#).

The Fifth Republic is a **semi-presidential** regime in which the President of the Republic is elected by direct universal suffrage for a five-year term. The regime is a hybrid one that combines features of the parliamentary regime and of the presidential regime. Executive power is dual in nature, and is personified by the President and the Prime Minister, who work in conjunction with the legislative power.

The Head of State appoints the Prime Minister, chairs the Council of Ministers, and promulgates laws; in addition, she / he can dissolve the National Assembly. In the event of a serious crisis, the Head of State can exercise exceptional powers (article 16 of the Constitution).

The Prime Minister is responsible to Parliament in accordance with [article 20 of the Constitution](#), which means that a Prime Minister who no longer enjoys the confidence of Parliament is required to resign. The Prime Minister's role is to direct government action and ensure that laws are properly applied (article 21 of the Constitution).

The political organisation of the French State is characterised by a certain amount of centralisation. However, over the last 30 years, it has undergone a process of decentralisation during which the State has gradually transferred its competences to [local authorities](#): *départements*, regions, municipalities, and EPCI – Public Establishments for Intermunicipal Co-operation (*Établissements Publics de Coopération Intercommunale*), which have their own decision-making bodies.

Representative bodies

Under the Fifth Republic, the principal democratic and, especially, legislative body is the (bicameral) Parliament, which is made up of the [National Assembly](#) and the [Senate](#). The two assemblies enjoy equal rights when it comes to legislative procedures. However, as a last resort, if there is a conflict with the Senate, the Prime Minister can ask the National Assembly to determine the matter.

- The [National Assembly](#) is made up of 577 members elected by **direct universal suffrage for a five-year term**.
- The [Senate](#) is made up of 348 senators **elected by direct universal suffrage for six-year terms** by a college of about 150 000 electors (of whom 95% are delegates from municipal councils). Half the Senate stands for election every three years, unlike the National Assembly, which is elected in full.

Other democratic (non-legislative) assemblies:

- The [Département Council](#) is the **deliberative assembly of the *département***. Each of the 101 *départements* of France has a *Département Council*, which deliberates to regulate the affairs of the *département* **in the areas of authority defined in law**.
- The [Regional Council](#) is the deliberative assembly of the region. Each of the 13 regions has a Regional Council, which deliberates to regulate the affairs of the region, of which the competences are defined in law.
- The [Economic, Social, and Environmental Council](#) (CESE – Conseil Économique, Social, et Environnemental) is a consultative assembly set up by the Constitution ([constitutional law of 23 July 2008](#)). Its main mission is to encourage civil society to take part in the government's economic, social, and environmental policy.

The CESE enables dialogue and **collaboration**. It can take referrals from the Prime Minister, the President of the National Assembly, and the President of the Senate, as well as via public petitions.

The CESE is made up of 233 members appointed for five years. The list of bodies that are entitled to appoint a councillor is established by decree ([decree no. 2010-886 of 29 July 2010 on the conditions for appointing members of the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council](#)). ESEC councillors can only serve two consecutive terms.

Forms of elections

Regardless of elections, electoral participation (voting) is non-compulsory, free, secret, strictly personal and by universal suffrage.

Presidential election

- Elections are held every five years by direct universal suffrage, using a single-member, majority-vote system over two rounds.

Legislative elections

- Elections are held every five years by direct universal suffrage, using a single-member, majority-vote system over two rounds.

Senatorial elections

- Elections are held every three years by direct universal suffrage, using a majority-vote system over two rounds or a list-vote system depending on the number of senators to be elected from each *département*. In each *département*, the electors are the members of the National Assembly, regional councillors, *département* councillors, and delegates from municipal councils.

Municipal elections

- Elections are held every six years by direct universal suffrage to appoint members of the municipal council, who will, in turn, elect the mayor (and her / his deputies).

Département elections

- Elections are held every six years to appoint members of the *département* council, who will, in turn, elect a president of the *département* council by a two-member majority-vote system over two rounds for a six-year term.

Regional elections

- Elections are held every six years for regional councillors, who, in turn, elect a president for a six-year term. Elections are on the basis of direct universal suffrage using a list-vote system over two rounds.

5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

Young people as voters

In France, the voting age (for all types of elections) is 18, i.e. the age of majority ([Law no. 74-631 of 5 July 1974 setting the age of majority at eighteen](#)).

Each young French person who has completed "[citizen census](#)" formalities at the age of 16 and who has reached the age of majority is automatically added to the electoral registers ([Law no. 2016-1048 of 1 August 2016 renewing the terms and conditions for entry in the electoral registers](#)).

The electoral participation rate of young French people varies according to elections: municipal, *département*, and European elections bring out fewer voters than the presidential election, which attracts out young voters in the greatest numbers, as it does for the rest of the population.

Presidential elections

During the 2017 presidential election, according to the Government, in the second round of the election of the turnout for metropolitan France is 65.30%.

According to [Ipsos /Sopra steria survey](#) nearly 30% of the under-35s (29% of those aged 18-24, 28% of the 25-34 year-olds) did not vote for the first round of the 2017 presidential election.

According to INSEE "**Voting during the two rounds of presidential elections and abstaining during legislative elections** is a choice made more frequently by young electors than by older electors [...] Between the ages of 18 and 34 , three registered voters in ten only vote during the two rounds of presidential elections. For these elections, the number of voters who only vote during one of the two rounds is also highest in younger voters: 8% of registered voters aged between 18 and 29 only voted during the first round and 5% only voted during the second, compared with 3% and 2% respectively for registered voters of 55 years old and over".

Legislative elections

74% of 18-24 year olds did not vote for the second round of the legislative elections on June 2017.

The abstention rate for the entire population is 56.6%, according to [the Ipsos / Sopra Steria survey](#). In the first round of the legislative elections, 63% of the 18-24- may abstain from voting (51.2% for the entire population).

European elections

In 2015, for the European elections, 26% of 18 to 24 years old took part in European elections.

Source: European elections, 2015, Ipsos/Sopra Steria survey, 2017

Young people as political representatives

There is no particular legislation covering the representation of young people in assemblies, or their place and role within political parties.

The minimum age for membership (of political parties) is set by the parties themselves. According to article LO.127 of the Electoral Code, “on the date of the first round of voting, any person who meets the conditions to be a voter [...] may be elected to the National Assembly”. The conditions for being a voter are set by article L.2 of the Electoral Code, which states that all French people who have reached the age of 18 and who enjoy civil and political rights can be voters.

5.3 Youth representation bodies

Youth parliament

There is no youth parliament in France.

Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

The main advisory boards on which young people sit are local councils, the student-organisation and youth-movement group of the CESE - Economic, Social, and Environmental Council ([See Glossary](#)), the student colleges of higher-education establishments, and *lycée* (senior secondary school) bodies.

- *Institutional instances*

Two councils were created respectively in 2015 and 2016 to contribute to the policies of childhood and youth:

- **Council for Children and Adolescents (*Conseil de l'enfant et de l'adolescence*) of the High Council for Family, Children and Age (*Haut Conseil de la famille et de l'enfance et de l'âge*).**

Article 69 of the Act of 28 December 2015 on adapting society to ageing introduced this High Council and placed it under the Prime Minister's authority, to promote the continuity and complementarity of policies in favour of families, children and adolescents, retirees and the elderly.

It is a reflection and guidance body that produces reports, issues opinions and makes recommendations. The High Council is comprised of a Council for children and adolescents, within which sits a college of children.

Twelve children and adolescents, with an equal number of boys and girls from different geographical areas and social demographics comprise the college of children. It is regularly involved in guiding national public policies. This body **provides its expertise on topics** under discussion within the Council.

The Order of 28 October 2016 sets out the conditions for the formation and organisation of the College of children and adolescents:

“The formation specialised in children and adolescents within the High Council of Family, Children and Age shall consult the associated college of children and adolescents at least three times per year. It shall inform it of any works it carries out and shall request its opinion on their progress.”

-Advisory Council on Youth Policies (*Conseil d'orientation des politiques de jeunesse, COJ*)

At national level, in 2016, the Advisory Council on Youth Policies (*Conseil d'orientation des politiques de jeunesse, COJ*) was created by Decree no. 2016-1377 of 12 October 2016. It is an administrative advisory body, placed under the authority of the Prime minister.

The COJ has three main missions:

- it can be consulted on legislative or regulatory drafts relating to youth and may examine any general interest matter relating to youth policy;
- it can send the Government proposals to improve the circumstances of young people;
- every year, it must send the Government an activity report. .

This Council is comprised of 79 members including youth representatives and youth organisations.

- *Local councils*

Since 1970, local authorities have been involved in young people's participation in local democracy. The authorities (regions, *départements*, and municipalities) have a certain amount of freedom in setting up youth-representation bodies, which leads to **diversity** in the design, frequency, and practice of setting up those councils. Local youth councils are gathered together in a network, the [ANACEJ - National Association of Children's and Youth Councils \(Association Nationale des Conseils d'Enfants et de Jeunes\)](#).

- *The student-organisation and youth-movement group of the CESE*

Structure: The CESE is made up of [eighteen representation groups](#) in which members are distributed according to their professional affiliations. The student-organisation and youth-movement group represents the interests of young people and students.

Composition: It is made up of members drawn from the voluntary sector and from the student-union sector:

- [UNEF – National Student Union of France \(Union Nationale des Étudiants de France\)](#)
- [FAGE – Federation of General Student Associations \(Fédération des Associations Générales Étudiantes\)](#)
- [JOC – Young Christian Workers \(Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne\)](#)
- [MRJC - Rural Christian Youth Movement \(Mouvement Rural de Jeunesse Chrétienne\)](#)
- [FFJ – French Youth Forum \(Forum Français de la Jeunesse\)](#)

Role and responsibility: The group expresses ideas on environmental, social, and economic matters. Some of its members belong to the **nine sections** of the ESEC, of which the role is to **carry out studies and draw up draft opinions**. In addition, group members also vote on opinions presented by the sections during plenary assemblies.

1. Sustainable Territorial Planning;
2. Economy and Finance; Education,
3. Culture, and Communication; Environment;
4. Agriculture,
5. Fishing, and Food;
6. Economic Activities;
7. European and International Affairs;
8. Social Affairs and Health;
9. Labour and Jobs.

Financing: The budget of the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council (Conseil Économique, Social, et Environnemental) is financed by the State. Parliament votes on it each year, as part of the law on finance, as required by the "State Control and Advice" mission. Each member of the ESEC receives an allowance.

Higher-education establishment bodies

Universities have several consultative and decision-making bodies within which students can have a presence, thus taking part in the management of their establishment. Those structures include:

- The boards of governors of the [CROUS - Regional Centres for University and School Services \(Centres Régionaux des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires\)](#)

Structure: The CROUS were set up by the [law of 16 April 1955](#). They are public establishments that come under the oversight of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education, and Research (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur, et de la Recherche). Their aim is to improve the conditions in which students live and study, in particular by providing services and benefits under ministerial guidelines. France has 28 CROUS centres forming a national network, the CNOUS - National Centre for University and School Services (Centre National des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires).

Each CROUS has a board of governors, which acts as a deliberative and decision-making body with young people amongst its members.

Composition: The Board of Governors is made up of 24 members, including 7 elected student representatives as well as a deputy chairperson elected by the board of governors. Elections for student representatives on the Board of Governors are held every two years. Those student representatives are often members of student unions or student movements.

Role and responsibility: The Board of Governors sets out general policy, and votes on the CROUS's budget. As with other members, student representatives play a part in drafting projects that relate to areas such as university life, [jobs, and cultural life](#). They take part in making decisions and they make proposals to implement students' requests.

Financing: CROUS centres are considered to be operators tasked with implementing policies defined by the Ministry of Higher Education. In that regard, they receive public grants (from the State and from local authorities). Their partnership with universities is based on performance agreements. Part of the CROUS's budget is allocated to boards of governors.

Students also have the chance to take part in university debates and in the life of their establishment by participating in elections and by sitting on the various councils of their establishment. Higher-education establishments are required to train student representatives. [Law no. 2013-660 of 22 July 2013 on higher education and research](#), more specifically [article 116](#), defines and sets the composition of those various central councils, which are:

The university's board of governors

The board of governors defines the university's policies.

Role and responsibility: It examines and approves the establishment contract, votes on its budget, and determines job allocation based on proposals from the vice-chancellor of the university.

Composition: five students sit on the board of governors (five postholders and five substitutes).

The academic council's CFVU – Commission on Training and University Life (Commission de la Formation et de la Vie Universitaire)

Role and responsibility: The CFVU – Commission on Training and University Life (Commission de la Formation et de la Vie Universitaire) is consulted on all matters relating to studies and university life (university programmes, teaching, testing arrangements, and creating qualifications). In particular, it adopts rules relating to exams, as well as measures on student guidance and on validation of knowledge acquired, as well as cultural, sports, social, and community activities, etc.

Composition: The CFVU has forty members, including student representatives (fourteen on average).

Lycée bodies

From the *lycée* stage onwards, young people can take part in the democratic life of their establishment by sitting on *lycée* bodies: class councils, CVL - Councils of delegates on

Lycée Life (Conseils des délégués pour la Vie Lycéenne), CAVL - Academic Councils on *Lycée* Life (Conseils Académiques de la Vie Lycéenne) and the CNVL - National Council on *Lycée* Life (Conseil National de la Vie Lycéenne).

- **Class councils are defined by article 33 of decree no. 85-924 of 30 August 1985 on local public education establishments.**

Role and responsibility: Class councils deal with educational matters relating to life in class and to organising the personal work of pupils; in addition, they draw up pupils' school reports. They also issue an opinion on wishes for guidance expressed by families and pupils.

Composition: Within establishments, each class must elect two titular delegates for the school year. Those delegates are pupils' spokespersons to educational teams, especially in [class councils](#). They can inform educational teams of all matters relating to class organisation as well as guidance. All pupils can vote and stand for election. Candidacies are individual. Pupils who have not submitted their candidacies can be elected if they receive enough votes. Elections are by secret ballot using a single-member vote over two rounds. Class delegates take part in the general assembly of delegates, which meets at least twice a year and is chaired by the head of the establishment.

The Higher Council for Education (Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation)

Set up pursuant to [law no. 89-486 of 10 July 1989 on guidance in education](#), the CSE - Higher Council for Education (Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation) is a consultative body chaired by the Minister of National Education, and has **97 members**.

Role and responsibility: The Council is a consultative body that is called upon to issue opinions on:

- the objectives and functioning of the public education department
- the regulation of syllabuses, exams, and the issuing of qualifications
- matters concerning private educational establishments and the staff of those establishments working under contract
- all matters of national interest concerning teaching and education.

Composition: It is made up of **97 titular members** and their substitutes, who represent:

- staff: teachers; guidance, educational, management, and inspection staff; administrative, technical, blue-collar, and service staff
- users: pupils' parents, students, and *lycée* students
- State partners in education: local authorities, extracurricular associations, and family associations.

The members hold office for a four-year term, except for representatives of users and *lycée* students, who hold office for two years.

- **The CVL - Council of delegates for *Lycée* Life (Conseil des délégués pour la Vie Lycéenne)**

Role and responsibility: The CVL is a body for dialogue and for exchanges between *lycée* students and adults. Half of its membership is made up of elected student representatives, and the other half is made up of adult members of the educational community. Elected *lycée*-student representatives can freely express their expectations and concerns, and give opinions. The CVL must be consulted on matters relating to:

- organising sports, cultural, and extracurricular activities
- health, hygiene, and safety, as well as laying out areas for the use of *lycée* students
- organising studies, school time, the school project, and the rules of procedure
- organising personal work, support and help for pupils, language and cultural exchanges in partnership with European and foreign educational establishments, etc.
- information on guidance as well as school and university studies.

Composition: The CVL is chaired by the head of the establishment. It is made up of 10 *lycée* students elected by direct universal suffrage for 2-year terms, with half the posts being open to election every year; 5 teachers; and 3 members of administrative staff. Adult members of the CVL have a consultative role, and cannot vote.

- The **CAVL - Academic Council on Lycée Life (Conseil Académique de la vie Lycéenne)**

Composition: The CAVL – Academic Council on *Lycée* Life (Conseil Académique de la Vie Lycéenne) is defined by [decree no. 91-916 of 16 September 1991, as amended, on the setting up of academic councils on *lycée* life](#), and [circular no. 2002-065 of 28 March 2002 on academic councils on *lycée* life](#). It is made up of a maximum of 40 members, half of whom are *lycée* students, holding two-year terms of office. It is chaired by the Chief Education Officer, whose role is to appoint the adult members of the council.

Role and responsibility: The CAVL drafts opinions on the school life and work of *lycée* students. It is the body for dialogue between *lycée*-student representatives and the Local Education Authority so called: *académies** In order to fulfil their mission, elected members must be in regular contact with the CVL's *lycée*-student representatives.

**Académie*: Administrative district of the Ministry of Education (Ministère de l'Éducation)

- The **CNVL - National Council on Lycée Life (Conseil National de la Vie Lycéenne)**

The role and functioning of the council is defined by [decree no. 95-1293 of 18 September 1995, as amended, on the setting up of the National Council on *Lycée* Life \(Conseil National de la Vie Lycéenne\)](#), [circular no. 2000-150 of 21 September 2000 on the composition and functioning of the National Council on *Lycée* Life \(Conseil National de la Vie Lycéenne\)](#), and [circular no. 2010-128 of 20 August 2010](#).

Role and responsibility: The Council meets twice a year, and gives its opinion on matters relating to school work and to social, sports, and cultural life in *lycées*.

Composition: The Council is chaired by the Minister of National Education (Ministre de l'Éducation Nationale) or her / his representative, appointed by ministerial ruling. It has 33 members elected for two-year terms. Each of the thirty *académies* has one representative on the CNVL, who is elected for a two-year term by *lycée*-student representatives of the CAVL. The three *lycée*-student representatives of the CSE – Higher Council for Education (Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation) are also members of the CNVL.

Financing: Those various *lycée* bodies are subsidised by the *Lycée* Life Fund (Fonds de la Vie Lycéenne), which was set up to support pupils' initiatives in "the life of their establishment" ([CIRCULAR No. 2001-184 OF 26-9-2001](#)). The fund is financed by the annual academic endowment for public secondary education, "Educational and Operating Grants".

Consultative bodies within ministries

With a view to renewing democratic life and to encouraging the participation of young people, various ministries have been able to put in place *ad hoc* or one-off arrangements aimed at encouraging young people to speak out and at gathering their proposals regarding specific policies and programmes. By way of example, the Ministry in charge of Labour, has set up a cross-ministerial working group called "Youth Guarantee" ("Garantie Jeunes") to set up the arrangement of the same name, which it has put together with fifty participants, including five young community representatives

Jean-Claude Richez, a researcher at the INJEP – National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (Institut National de la Jeunesse et de l'Éducation Populaire), wrote a report, published in 2014, on those various participation arrangements, [État des lieux des dispositifs de participation des jeunes dans les départements ministériels \[Situational analysis of arrangements for youth participation in ministerial departments\]](#). In that

report, he highlights the variety of those modes of participation, which contribute to better “making young people part of the public arena”.

Higher education student union(s)

From a strictly legal perspective, there are no student unions in France. The latter are in fact representative student associations or organisations that define themselves as unions. The description of “representative student organisation” was created by the Jospin Law ([framework law no. 89-486 of 10 July 1989 on education](#)).

In article 13, the law specifies: “Representative bodies are student associations that have the objective of defending the collective and individual material and moral rights and interests of students. In that regard, they sit on the National Council on Higher Education and Research (Conseil National de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche) and on the National Centre for University and School Services (Centre National des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires).” Those organisations receive help with training elected officials, and they receive, *pro rata* to their number of elected officials, a significant portion of their financing and grants made for the purpose of training elected officials.

Only 1% of French students are unionised, and less than 8% of students take part in union elections. Nonetheless, student unions have substantial influence over the life of their establishment and, more generally, over higher education. French students can choose between several unions and movements. Nonetheless, the UNEF - National Student Union of France (Union Nationale des Étudiants de France) and the FAGE – Federation of General Student Associations (Fédération des Associations Générales Étudiantes) are the main unions recognised by the public authorities.

- The **UNEF – National Student Union of France (Union Nationale des Étudiants de France)**

The UNEF was set up in the 19th century.

Composition: The UNEF claims to have 19 000 members, including elected student officials.

The UNEF is organised both nationally and locally; the union has local sections: *Associations Générales des Étudiants* (AGE – General Student Associations) that are present in each university town / city. Each AGE is run by a bureau made up of a chairperson, a general secretary, and a treasurer, who are elected every two years at a local congress during which AGE members also vote on the UNEF’s focus.

The UNEF’s main body is the National Congress, which meets every two years to elect the Administrative Commission, which is responsible for electing the National Bureau; the latter is the UNEF’s executive body, and it implements decisions taken by the National Congress. The National Bureau is made up of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, the General Secretary, and the National Treasurer.

Role and responsibility: The UNEF’s mission is to defend the rights and interests of students, as well as to express their wishes and opinions on all matters relating to student life: vocational and academic training, student accommodation, health, culture, etc.

Financing: Like all student organisations and student unions, the UNEF is an association. Its financing rules are the ones that apply to associations, and its resources can be drawn from public grants, membership fees, private donations, etc.

- The **FAGE – Federation of General Student Associations (Fédération des Associations Générales Étudiantes)**

The FAGE was founded in 1989, and brings together almost **2 000 associations and unions**. The FAGE has been recognised as a [representative student organisation](#) by the Ministry of Higher Education (Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur), and it is also

accredited by the Ministry of Youth. The FAGE is independent of parties and of employees' unions.

Composition: The FAGE functions as an association. It is made up of a Board of Governors which brings together [some fifty federations](#) (territorial and sectoral) and associated members. The role of the Board of Governors is to set define strategic guidelines and take decisions. It meets once every two months.

Role and responsibility: The FAGE's fields of action cover several subjects like independence, **academic success, improving living and studying conditions for young people**, as well as defending their rights and **their democratic representation**. It plays a role as student spokesperson, and it is an instrument of citizenship that enables young people to debate, to undertake projects, and to take on responsibilities in society.

Financing: *Lycée*-student and other student organisations that describe themselves as unions are constituted as associations; their financing rules are the same as those that apply to associations. Their budgets are drawn from their own resources (membership fees, private donations, etc.) and from public grants, such as credits from the FSDIE – Solidarity and Development Fund for Student Initiatives (Fonds de Solidarité et de Développement des Initiatives Étudiantes). The FSDIE is a fund that is mainly aimed at financing projects implemented by student associations.

School student union(s)

Structure: As with student unions, organisations that represent *lycée* students are governed by the law of 1 July 1901 (i.e. they are non-profit associations); they are not employees' unions. There are several "student unions", not a single organisation representing *lycée* students. Some of those unions are the *lycée* sections of student unions. They can be apolitical, independent, or affiliated to a political party. Those organisations include the [FIDL – Independent Democratic Federation of Lycée Students \(Fédération Indépendante Démocratique Lycéenne\)](#), the [SGL – General Union of Lycée Students \(Syndicat Général des Lycéens\)](#), and the [UNI National Inter-University Union \(Union Nationale Inter-Universitaire\)](#).

Composition and role: *Lycée*-student organisations are managed by *lycée* students themselves, with their elected officials representing all *lycée* students, especially during negotiations and discussions within National Education bodies (CVL, CAVL, CNVL). Their role is to organise themselves as well as to promote and defend the rights and demands of *lycée* students, and to enable them to exercise citizenship by allowing them to express themselves on education-related matters: academic pace, reforming educational syllabuses and the educational system, etc., as well as societal challenges (jobs, social inequalities, pension reform, refugees, etc.).

Each *lycée*-student organisation defines its mode of organisation and functioning: those organisations can bring together federations, act at several levels (local and national), and have committees. Like student unions, they have sympathisers who cannot vote, unlike members who can elect their representatives. *Lycée*-student unions follow a variety of modes of organisation. They can also play a role as information points for *lycée* students seeking answers regarding their education (the matter of exams, etc.).

Financing: Student unions are associations, so their rules of financing comply with [rules and laws that apply to the community sector](#). Their resources can be drawn from:

- subscriptions paid by members
- grants made by the State, regional councils, *département* councils, municipalities, public establishments for intermunicipal co-operation, and any other public structures
- donations and legacies
- various items of income from their activities, to the extent that they are not contrary to current laws and regulations.

Other bodies

France does not have a national youth assembly, but there are associations that have the aim of representing young people as well as defending their right and their place in society, especially in democratic bodies, such as the CNAJEP – Committee for National and International Relations between Youth and Non-Formal Education Associations (Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Éducation Populaire) and the FFJ – French Youth Forum (Forum Français de la Jeunesse).

- Committee for National and International Relations between Youth and Non-Formal Education Associations (Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Éducation Populaire)

The [CNAJEP](#) is a non-profit association set up in 1968 under [the law of 1 July 1901](#); it is a platform for youth and public-education associations. It is made up of 70 national movements that bring together 90 000 local associations and have 500 000 young people engaged in youth projects. It covers the whole of French territory, thanks in particular to a network of 23 regional committees (CRAJEP - Regional Committees of Youth and Non-Formal Education Associations (Comités Régionaux des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Éducation Populaire)) and at European level, through the European Youth Forum.

The CNAJEP's role is to represent members to public authorities and within community-sector bodies. It defines itself as a "force for advocacy", whence the stand it takes on "creating a right, from the age of 18, to lifelong education and training combined with resources", and on working with associations to draw up public policies. The CNAJEP is also tasked with co-ordinating the "Structured Dialogue" (initiated by the European Commission).

The FFJ – French Youth Forum (Forum Français de la Jeunesse)

The FFJ was set up in 2012. It is an independent assembly that has the aim of being a national forum for young people to be represented "by themselves", as well as for exchanges and work on various societal challenges (ecology, youth representation, employment, health, etc.).

The FFJ's instruments for action are issuing opinions, observations and proposals on societal debates and challenges, making referrals on those challenges to public authorities, action to recognise organisations managed by young people (with an average age of under 30), and monitoring youth matters. The [members](#) of the French Youth Forum (Forum Français de la Jeunesse) must meet certain criteria: the average age of the management of those associations must be less than 30, their functioning must be democratic, and they must be national in dimension.

The FFJ is made up of 16 associations gathered into 4 "colleges": student, *lycée* student, supporter, and community. It has a facilitation committee made up of 4 titular representatives (and 4 substitutes), as well as a team of paid workers who co-ordinate and support the FFJ's activities.

The FFJ actively supports the development of youth participation, which is the object of [opinion no. 4, "Le vote et la participation des jeunes en France"](#)[\["Youth voting and participation in France"\]](#), a report that sets out a number of proposals such as "developing training, information, and experimentation sites", "facilitating approaches to encourage young people to express themselves", and renewing democratic bodies.

Those two associations aim at representing young people in decision-making and consultative fora. Developing in parallel with them are more informal areas for mobilisation and participation put in place by young people themselves. The "Free Youth Parliaments" ("Parlements Libres des Jeunes") are examples of that.

“Free Youth Parliaments” (“Parlements Libres des Jeunes”)

Free Youth Parliaments (Parlements Libres de Jeunes) are the outcome of an experiment carried out in Rhône-Alpes region in 2013, on the initiative of a local association ([Aequitaz](#)), and which was subsequently spread across Ile-de-France region.

The parliaments **generally bring together young people aged 18 to 30 from a range of social backgrounds and from several territories**; they meet over two days to debate a variety of topics. Those deliberative fora are based on an elaborate procedure: young people issue opinions and action plans within thematic commissions that are then voted on by all the “parliamentarians” (young people) at a plenary session. The various young people are chosen by the network of organiser associations. **The parliaments are self-financing, and organisers work on a *pro bono* basis.**

The objective is to encourage the acquisition of civic skills, increase young people’s empowerment, and have them experience democracy. In his article entitled *Convergences et divergences des jeunesses dans une expérience délibérative. Le cas des “parlements libres des jeunes”* [Convergences and divergences amongst young people in a deliberative experiment: the case of “Free Youth Parliaments”], published in 2016, INJEP researcher Régis Cortesero described these parliaments as “a deliberative pathway that leads from expressing ‘the dreams and the anger’ of young people to co-constructing proposals [...]”.

Free parliaments are based on principles of organisation that are set out in a charter, including:

1. “A free parliament is a regional meeting between young adults aged 18 to 30, although a few older individuals may participate. Only youths under 30 years old can vote where decisions are to be made. Each youth participates as a citizen, is responsible for his/her opinions and actions and participates on an equal footing whatever his/her status (isolated youth, youth welcomed into an institution, youth workers, etc.) or social standing, origin, gender, etc. This diversity is an essential condition of the Free parliament”.
2. “Local youth meetings inspired by, or in preparation of, Free youth parliaments can be organised. These are called Free youth assemblies”
3. “A Free parliament is a place in which youths can start [discussions] by sharing their dreams and expressing their anger [...]”.
4. “A Free parliament is built in a free and creative (poetic) manner by allied people and organisations. A small group of 4 to 16 people from at least 3 different organisations including youths is one of the conditions for the success of a Free parliament”.
5. “A free parliament is not an institutional project: it is independent from public authorities (although a time for dialogue or for support from elected representatives or institutional decision-makers is possible and desirable)”

In 2018, the association spearheading these bodies is considering the creation of a National free parliament in the coming years.

5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

French public authorities have had a long-standing concern over young people’s participation in drawing up public policies. However, that approach is most often followed at local level within local councils: participation is more effective and active in local democratic bodies (municipalities) than in national bodies, where it occurs on a more one-off basis. Since the 1970s, local authorities have worked at promoting young people’s participation in local democracy.

Local authorities in particular are committed to youth participation in the local democracy. Local authorities have a measure of freedom in the setting up of youth

representative bodies, which has led to **considerable diversity** in such councils' design, frequency of meetings and implementation.

Young people are consulted on **a wide variety of themes**, not only those that concern them directly. In the case of local councils (regional and municipal alike), consultations may have bearing on local life, in such topics as participatory *lycée* budgeting, mobility, the environment and access to culture.

There are just as many questions raised at national level, where they are a matter for ministerial action. Themes tackled arise from ministries' areas of concern: healthcare, accommodation, professional integrations, political representation of young people, civic commitment, mobility, etc

There are no longer any specific texts that legally govern and define young people's participation in drawing up public policies. Young people's participation is based on general texts, such as the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the Council of Europe's [European Charter on the participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life](#).

Associations for promoting political participation by young people and local youth councils can draw up their own guides and charters. The ANACEJ - National Association of Children's and Youth Councils (Association Nationale des Conseils d'Enfants et de Jeunes) has drawn up reference guides and texts that set out the operating procedures of youth councils, such as [Our Agreement 2 \(Notre Accord 2\)](#). That text was adopted on 26 June 2013, and it reaffirms the value and significance of participation by children and young people, especially as a tool for "education in citizenship aimed at improving the local authority as a whole".

Levels of participation

At municipality and intermunicipality level, youth councils may give opinions and make suggestions either upon the Mayor's request or on their own initiative. Young people may therefore be involved in decision-making for certain municipal projects.

At regional level, a number of participation initiatives have been developed by Regional Councils, including:

- ad-hoc consultations giving the floor to young people's opinions; for example, the "États Généraux" (Hauts-de-France region), consultations with youth organisations during development of the Regional Plan (Bretagne and Île-de-France regions);
- event-type participation;
- consultative bodies (regional youth councils) serving as permanent youth representation;
- involvement in development of such policies as participatory *lycée* budgeting ([Bourgogne region](#), 2014).

At national level, the Cross-Ministerial Committee for Youth ([CIJ, see 1.3](#)) "encourages and supports dialogue with young people with a view to regarding them as stakeholders in and providers of solutions on matters that concern them". Ministries concerned may introduce various forms of youth participation in development of public policies. There exist, however, three main types of ministerial consultations:

- approaches encouraging young people's presence in the public areas of institutional policy debates. For example, in 2013 the Ministry of the Interior decided to increase youth representation in *Conseils Économiques, Sociaux et Environnementaux Régionaux* (CESERs – Regional Economic, Social and Environmental Councils). The measure was the subject of a [Memorandum on 27 June 2013](#);
- consultations based on dialogue with youth associations;
- schemes for the co-development of policies with young people. Such co-development is based on partnership work and horizontal dialogue between young people, associations and the public authorities.

It is important to specify that all those actions aimed at having young people take part in the development of their territory are not necessarily carried out on a regular basis; they can also be one-off actions.

Actors

There are many bodies involved in youth participation. Distinctions should be made between institutional stakeholders (ministries), youth association federations, youth representative bodies and associations.

Main stakeholders in youth affairs include:

Youth actors

- the ***Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Éducation Populaire*** ([CNAJEP](#) – Committee for National and International Relations between Youth and Non-Formal Education Associations). The CNAJEP contributes to co-construction of public policies, managing national implementation of the “structured dialogue” decided upon by the Council of European Ministers, which adopted a resolution on 23 November 2015 aiming to “improve youth political participation in democratic life in Europe”.
- [the Forum Français de la Jeunesse \(FFJ – French Youth Forum\)](#)
- The ***Association Nationale des Conseils d'Enfants et de Jeunes*** (ANACEJ – National Association of Children's and Youth Councils) has existed since 1991 and helps set up and develop local youth councils. It is a member of the CNAJEP.

Specific target groups

Although mainstreamed youth participation is promoted by public and community stakeholders, there are as yet no special practices or schemes designed to foster consultation of or participation by the most socially disadvantaged youth sectors.

Despite such advances in youth consultation, and NGOs' and the public authorities' determination to implement best practices, a number of obstacles to youth participation still remain. One of the major problems is the lack of “social diversity” due to under-representation of the more disadvantaged young people in youth representative bodies, and a contrasting over-representation of young graduates proficient in the codes of political participation. The lack of generational renewal of members of associations and institutional bodies may also have an influence on French youth representativeness.

Public authorities

- All ministries take part in developing youth participation. However, the leading authority in the organisation of consultation is the ministry in charge of youth, which works in partnership with the CNAJEP/ANACEJ and the FFJ.
- Since 2008, student organisations and youth movements have been represented as a group in the ***Conseil Économique, Social et Environnemental*** ([CESE](#) – Economic, Social and Environmental Council).
- Local authority officials responsible for youth affairs can also organise and administer local youth councils; usually local authority employees also manage municipal youth councils.

Additional stakeholders

In addition to the French public authorities, such international organisations as UNESCO also promote youth participation and consultation in France through the “[UNESCO Youth](#)” programme and UNESCO Youth Forum.

Information on the extent of youth participation

The National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (INJEP) has published numerous reports on youth consultation at local and national levels alike. They are based

on field work and (statistical) surveys that include information gathering via questionnaires. In *Les dispositifs de participation des jeunes au niveau des conseils régionaux* (Youth participation schemes at regional council level - 2015) by Laurent Lardeux and *L'État des lieux des dispositifs de participation des jeunes dans les départements ministériels* (Inventory of youth participation schemes in ministerial departments - 2014) by Jean-Claude Richez, the two INJEP researchers highlight the diversity and specificity of youth consultation schemes introduced by the public authorities.

INJEP had already carried out an exploratory survey in 2010, with a view to measuring "[the impact of youth councils on municipal policies](#)".

Outcomes

This approach based on co-construction with young people is most often placed in the public domain by ministries, which, where appropriate, provide the (youth) associations with which they have worked with information on changes to policies and projects.

As an example, the [ministry of youth \(Ministère de la Jeunesse\)](#) has provided public information on co-constructing public policies in conjunction with young people as part of the Priority Youth Policy (Plan).

The partnership and horizontal dialogue between the DJEPVA and youth associations, in particular in the context of work carried out under the Priority Youth Plan, shows how young people may be brought in to participate in development of certain policies. The study report "*État des lieux des dispositifs de participation des jeunes dans les départements ministériels*" (Inventory of youth participation schemes in ministerial departments), published by INJEP in 2014, highlights a number of "best practices" in youth consultation introduced by the authorities, including:

- "young people are involved in monitoring implementation of the policy decided upon";
- "young people are represented in sufficient number in workgroups";
- "young people are kept informed and receive work documents upstream";
- "young people's proposals are incorporated by the workgroup when they form the subject of an agreement, and are mentioned and indicated as coming from young people".

Young people's and youth organisations also play a part in drafting ministerial texts, by producing analyses and making proposals upstream in the form of contributions.

Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people

In spring 2015, the ministry in charge of youth organised five "[Rendez-vous de la jeunesse](#)" (Youth Rendezvous) during which various ministers (including the Prime Minister and the Minister responsible for youth affairs) went to meet with young people and their representative bodies to hear their proposals on developing their living conditions. The "rendez-vous", which were held in various French cities, brought together over 1,000 young people and led to the collection of over 100 proposals on improving youth policies. Young people had the opportunity to share their proposals, in video form in particular, via the Twitter and Facebook social networks.

5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation

Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation

Strictly speaking, there is no new strategy to develop youths' participation. However, the Government - and other public authorities – **implement and consolidate programmes and schemes the purpose of which is to increase the civic participation of young people**, by following the example of the strengthening of civic service and of the creation of the National universal service, which is one of the pivotal measures of the current Government's youth policies. More generally, these two commitment schemes are in keeping with the "Civic Path" (« Parcours citoyen ») programme which constitutes a policy for youth participation and commitment.

National universal service (Service national universel)

The [National universal service](#) scheme is an important governmental measure. It is a national commitment scheme, the purpose of which is to « promote the sentiment of national unity around common values». Currently under development, it **will be implemented in 2019**.

The Civic Path / Parcours citoyen (See 5.7, Formal learning)

The [Civic Path](#) is a cross-disciplinary educational and civic programme that starts from the beginning of secondary education. Its purpose is to inform and raise students' awareness of their rights and duties, but also to develop a culture of commitment in youths: of *bénévolat* and of volunteering. The National universal service scheme is a new stage in this "civic path".

Scope and contents

National universal service (Service national universel, SNU)

The SNU is a commitment scheme whose purpose, among others, is to:

- **"Further involve French youths in National life.** By promoting social and territorial intermingling, it enables the development of social and national cohesion".
- **"Raise awareness on the challenges of national defence and security.** It enables all youths to become fully-fledged players in the spirit of defence, for example by experiencing military life or domestic security jobs".
- **Develop the culture of commitment.** The SNU will allow youths to discover the different possible forms of commitment.

This provision targets all youths of around 16 years old, both boys and girls. It will consist of 2 stages:

1. **A compulsory part** of one month that will fall within the Civic Path - *Parcours citoyen* – (which starts in school, in particular with "moral and civic" classes), during which youths will live a collective experience
2. **An optional part** dedicated to commitment during which youths will be encouraged to voluntarily pursue a three-month period of civic or military commitment. Civic service will be one way of completing this second SNU phase.

Civic service

The Government also wishes to strengthen civic service, considered an instrument for commitment.

The civic service scheme (See Chapter 2 *Bénévolat and volunteering activities*) is a volunteering scheme, the founding principles of which are accessibility, social diversity and general interest. Its aim is to create a culture of commitment. In order to enable

every youth wishing to perform a civic service to do so, a target of 150,000 youths in civic service was set for 2018.

Young civic service volunteers can take part in the implementation of other existing public services, for example the “homework done” (“devoirs faits”) scheme which provides homework assistance offered by *bénévoles* to children.

Other schemes

In addition to the SNU and the strengthening of civic service, other measures encouraging youth participation and having been implemented under previous strategies (2013-2017) are still in force (See *Revisions and updates*). For example, Act “**no. 2017-86 of 27 January 2017 on equality and citizenship**” introduced several schemes encouraging youths’ commitment such as:

- The recognition of student commitment, through the validation of skills and knowledge acquired through *bénévole* activities in higher education curriculums;
- The generalisation of civic reserves throughout life. Civic reserves concern all adults or individuals above the age of 16 who wish to carry out general interest projects”;
- The right for underaged individuals to take part in the creation of an association and its administration, under certain conditions.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The various national schemes for youth participation or commitment are overseen by the **Minister of National Education and Youth and more precisely its Directorate for Youth, Non-formal education and NGOs**. However, the coordination and implementation of policies falls under the authority of relevant directorates and agencies such as the Service civic Agency.

Revisions/Updates

Youth participation has been the subject of two « works » of the Priority Youth Policy (Plan priorité jeunesse) implemented between 2013 and 2017 which focused on two aims: “promote and enhance youth commitment” and “strengthen youth representation in the public sphere” through several measures, described below, which are still in force:

- “inform and raise youths’ awareness of all types of commitment, during their entire school career and outside of formal education”;
- “promote youth commitment, a line of focus that is particularly promoted in 2017 the year of associative commitment”;
- “promote the recognition and value of association, union and political experiences by capitalising on acquired knowledge and taking them into account in school careers and professional integration”;
- “encourage youth participation in associative, political and union movements”;
- “encourage the development of youth organisations led by youths”;
- “perform a situational analysis of youth dialogue and participation in the public sphere”.

5.6 Supporting youth organisations

Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations

The Ministry in charge of youth actively supports the development of youth associations, which is one of the ministry’s areas of action and competence. Youth organisations are associations of which the functioning is governed by the law of [1 July 1901](#), which defines an association (*cf.* [2.1](#)).

One of the departments of the ministry in charge of youth, the DJEPVA - Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education, and Voluntary Organisation (Direction de la Jeunesse, de l'Éducation Populaire, et de la Vie Associative), is tasked with supporting associations through grants, as well as providing them with **“youth and non-formal education” accreditation, in accordance with [article 8 of the law of 17 July 2001](#) as well as [Decrees nos. 2002-570 and 2002-571 of 22 April 2002, as amended](#).**

Accreditation can be given to associations that have been duly registered for at least three years, that have an activity in the field of youth and non-formal education, and that “satisfy requirements relating to respect for freedom of conscience, the principle of non-discrimination, democratic functioning, transparency in their management, equality of access for men and women, and access for young people to their governing bodies.”

Public financial support

The financing arrangements for youth associations / movements and unions ([cf.5.3](#)) comply with the same principles and laws as govern the financing of all types of associations, including the law of [1 July 1901](#), which stipulates that “any duly registered association may, without any special authorisation, hold and administer [...] State grants.”

The ministry in favor of youth makes grants to accredited youth and public-education associations that carry out **actions accessible to all members of the public, contributing to the general interest and to strengthening social links**. Examples of projects supported are: access to artistic practices, holidays and leisure, education in independence and citizenship, youth mobility, etc.

Youth associations that make an application must meet the conditions for those grants to be made, i.e.:

- the association must be registered
- only the governing bodies of the association can request the grant
- the grant must be used to set up **a project of general or local interest** or a training programme for volunteers
- In the public authority must **“establish an interest”** in the project, which must come solely from the association.

In addition, the Government supports youth organisations and citizen commitment through several actions, including:

- the development of *bénévole* training via the **Fund for the development of associative sector** (Fonds de développement de la vie associative, FDVA), which contributes towards financing association training plans, which was allocated €8.2m in 2018;
- the implementation, in 2018, of the **citizen commitment fund** (Compte d'engagement citoyen, CEC). The CEC is a scheme developed in 2016 which lists individuals' bénévolat and volunteer activities and allows them to acquire training hours that are transferred to their personal training account (Compte personnel de formation, CPF).

Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants

Several studies have shown that political and community participation is closely linked to a high level of education. In order to fight against that fact and to encourage social mixing amongst young people who get involved, in March 2014, the FEJ – Youth Experimentation Fund (Fonds d'Expérimentation pour la Jeunesse) ([cf. 1.7](#)) launched a call for projects entitled *Développement d'organisation de jeunes dirigés par les jeunes* ([Development of youth organisations led by young people](#)), the objective of which was to enable young people (under the age of 30) to set up their own organisations, thus encouraging diversity amongst young people who take part in political and social life.

A total of 17 projects were selected that covered almost 43 000 beneficiaries spread across the whole territory. The projects implemented included an experiment that enabled lycée students themselves to put forward commitment projects using the “peer-to-peer” method, especially by developing actions to support young people’s projects aimed at and encouraging them to become independent and undergo social integration. The action carried out thus enabled “the effect of social reproduction to be attenuated”, and it showed the value of actions that encourage the setting up of youth organisations led by young people in urban and rural territories and aimed at members of the public who are distant from them.

One example of that is the ["In a rural setting, come up with a mobilising organisational model that is managed and facilitated by young people"](#) (*En milieu rural, penser un modèle d'organisation mobilisatrice, gérée et animée par des jeunes*) project, backed by the [MRJC – Rural Movement for Christian Youth \(Mouvement Rural pour une Jeunesse Chrétienne\)](#). The aim of the project was to support the setting up, development, and structuring of organisations managed and facilitated by young people in a rural setting. The project intended to “strengthen the capacity for young people in rural areas to act and to get involved in the public debate.”

5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning

Policy Framework

The desire to increase the significance of participation by young people, especially as regards their learning about citizenship, is also part of [the programming and framework law of 8 July 2013 on refounding the *École de la République*](#), of which the ambition is “to train all pupils so that they become enlightened, aware, educated, independent, and cultivated citizens who support the values of the Republic.”

Formal learning

Education in citizenship and acquiring civic skills constitute a long-standing challenge for formal education, which has always given importance to developing pupils’ knowledge of citizenship, as well as to going beyond the mere framework of citizenship, by developing actions in which pupils can experience citizenship.

Schools and educational institutions are effectively considered as places for “individual and collective learning about the democratic exercise of political citizenship.”

This learning is ensured through programmes such as the **Civic Path** (Parcours citoyen):

The Civic Path is a **multi-disciplinary educational and civic programme** mainly led throughout secondary school (collège to lycée). Its purpose is to teach and raise student’s awareness of their rights and duties.

Leaning on lessons, in particular Civic and moral education (*enseignement moral et civique*, EMC), and media and information education (*éducation aux médias et à l’information*, EMI), it contributes towards transmitting the values and principles of the Republic by broaching the main topics of civic education:

- secularism,
- equality between men and women and mutual respect,
- the fight against all types of discrimination,
- the prevention of and fight against racism and antisemitism, against LGBT discrimination
- education on the environment and sustainable development, the fight against harassment.

Circular no. 2016-092 of 20-6-2016 establishes the Civic Path (*Parcours citoyen*) during which “the student becomes a citizen who progressively gains awareness of his/her rights, duties and responsibilities [...], tests his/her ability to act and collaborate through contact with others, to exercise such rights, duties and responsibilities and improve them through different activities. The journey also allows the student to learn to accept the diversity of opinions and disagreements, by promoting listening and debates. It provides him/her with the means to behave thoughtfully and responsibly and to develop his/her critical thinking abilities.”

The civic path relies on the mobilisation of educational teams, associations and other stakeholders within the school's territory.

Learning to participate also takes shape through educational actions and teachings such as Moral and civic education (Enseignement moral et civique, EMC) or class councils:

Those programmes and actions include:

- EMC – Moral and Civic Teaching (Enseignement Moral et Civique), set up by the [programming and framework law of 8 July 2013 on refoundation the École de la République](#). EMC's aim is to bring together “the training of future citizens and the formation of their critical reasoning”, to have secondary-school students and *lycée* students acquire “**a moral conscience that enables them to understand, respect, and share humanist values of solidarity, respect, and responsibility.**” [Teaching EMC](#) must be cross-cutting and interdisciplinary. In practical terms, it must include **specific educational activities** (regulated debates, student councils, etc.) and **co-operative projects** (artistic, cultural, etc.) that question democracy. That teaching is part of the student's *citizen pathway (parcours citoyen)*, defined by [circular no. 2016-092 of 20-6-2016](#). In that *citizen pathway (parcours citoyen)*, students [take part in actions](#) that encourage the training of the future citizen (EMC, media-education courses, Defence and Citizenship Day, etc.).
- Class councils and the delegate elections ([cf. 5.2](#)) also take part in experiencing democracy, especially through voting, debating, exercising representation, and deliberating.

Non-formal and informal learning

Learning to participate, acquiring civic skills are aims that are shared by informal and formal education.

Developing links and exchanges between formal, informal, and non-formal education, based on young people learning about citizenship, mainly takes the form of a range of initiatives and programmes put in place by public institutions in partnership with associations. Those actions include some that aim at:

- Strengthening participatory bodies within school establishments ([cf. 5.3 councils and youth bodies](#))
- Encouraging young people's involvement in civil society by implementing the [Citizen Reserve \(Réserve Citoyenne\)](#), which aims at encouraging the driving forces of civil society to become involved beside educational teams, or putting a gap year into academic careers. The gap is defined by [circular no. 2015-122 of 22-07-2015](#); it involves students suspending their studies for a period of between 6 months and one year, in order to undergo a period of personal experience, professional experience, or commitment, either in France or abroad.
- The implementation of the Wednesday Plan (*Plan Mercredi*) enabling volunteer local and regional authorities to offer each child educational, artistic and also civic activities during extracurricular time.

Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

Associations that hold Youth and Non-Formal Education (Jeunesse et Éducation Populaire) accreditation (*cf.* [5.6](#)) and receiving grants by reasons of that special partnership enter into an agreement that set out the objective of actions and results indicators. That procedure enables a watch to be kept on the quality of projects undertaken by the associations.

Educators' support

Several initiatives have been put in place to support and strengthen training in the development of civic skills of staff working in the youth field (teachers, youth workers, educators, etc.).

The Ministry of National Education makes its own tools and educational supports relating to education in citizenship, such as the [CANOPE](#) network, which lists works published on the subject. In addition, educational documentary resource centres (at national, regional, and *département* level) offer documents in different forms that concern teaching staff and pupils. Each establishment has a documentation and information centre containing resources on the topic. The web site of the Ministry of National Education, <http://eduscol.education.fr>, “informs and supports” education professionals; it has a section on [education in citizenship](#), where teachers can find topic sheets.

As regards training for teaching staff, training arrangements exist at various levels: national, LEA-level, and *département*. The initial training of supervisory staff and teaching staff makes those members of staff increasingly aware of civic challenges. Education in citizenship is part of the list of requirements for training teachers at the University Teacher-Training Institute (Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres) ([Official National Education Bulletin, Bulletin Officiel de l'Éducation Nationale of 19 December 2006](#)). The promotion of civic values by stakeholders in education is done in partnership with an association network, including the [civic information centre](#) (CIDEM – Civics and Democracy) which has an educational-resource portal on citizenship.

In addition to teachers, facilitators and “youth workers” can receive training in citizenship. The various training bodies that offer access to professions and qualifications in the field of facilitation offer sessions on that topic. They are available for all qualifications in “voluntary” facilitation (Certificate of Competency to work as a facilitator in collective reception centres for minors, Brevet d'Aptitude aux fonctions d'animateur en accueils collectifs de mineurs) and “State qualifications” (**Professional Certificate in youth, non-formal education, and sport**). For example, the so-called “[CEMEA \(Centres for Training in Active Education Methods, Centres d'Entraînement aux Méthodes d'Éducation Active\)](#)” offers training in [Education in citizenship and Collective reception centres for minors \(Éducation à la citoyenneté et Accueils collectifs de mineurs\)](#) to facilitation professionals.

The Ministry of sports has also become involved in defending those values by drawing up, for the period from 2015 to 2017, a national “Citizens of Sport” plan, together with a [“Citizen of Sport” \(“Citoyen du Sport”\) support guide](#) aimed at sports federations. That guide should help sports stakeholders promote citizen values and react against all forms of violence, discourtesy, and discrimination in sport. In addition, in 2016, the Department of Sport (Direction des Sports) and the DJEPVA worked together to produce [Stakeholders in citizenship](#), a guide for trainers in sports and facilitation qualifications.

5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

Information providers / counselling structures

One of the main strands of public action aimed at young people is to inform them of their own rights as well as their capacity to act as citizens in society.

Information providers, counselling structures

Young French people can get information on their civic rights at a number of reception centres, or directly from institutions. Furthermore, the Ministry responsible for Youth plays an essential role in promoting young people's knowledge of their civic rights, and of democratic values more generally. Thus, young people can access information on their rights and defending those rights on the web site of the Ministry in charge of youth under the heading "Citizenship": <http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/>.

Information provided by structures aimed at youth

The Youth Information Network (Réseau Information Jeunesse)

The [Youth Information Network \(Réseau Information Jeunesse\)](#) is France's leading reception and information network for young people. The network is made up of over 1 500 structures across the whole of national territory, and receives over 5 million young people each year. Those structures are awarded certifications and grants by the ministry in favor of youth, the authority responsible for "youth information". The national Youth Information network is made up of:

- a national centre, the CIDJ - National Centre for Youth Information and Documentation (Centre National d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse)
- CRIJ – Regional Youth Information Centres (Centres Régionaux Information Jeunesse), which facilitate, in their respective regions, a network of BIJs and PIJs that receive, inform, and support users at local level
- BIJ – Youth Information Offices (Bureaux Information Jeunesse)
- 1 300 PIJ – Youth Information Points (Points Information Jeunesse)
- 25 Youth Info Buses (Bus Info Jeunes) in rural areas.

The CIDJ provides information via its [web site](#), by telephone, through the on-line forum at cidj.com, and via social networks. The web site also lists and locates all the network's local structures so that young people can reach them.

As an example, the [Youth Information Office \(Bureau Information Jeunesse\) in Perpignan](#) has a "Citizenship" department where young people can get information on the legal means available to fight against discrimination. On the web site, young people can access a sheet that defines discrimination, and a list of associations that work in the field of defending basic rights.

Youth and cultural Centres (Maisons de la Jeunesse et de la Culture)

MJC – Youth and Cultural Centres (Maisons de la Jeunesse et de la Culture) were set up in 1948 with a view to democratising culture and making citizens more independent; thus, they were part of the founding principles of non-formal education. Those structures offer young people activities, especially based on citizenship (debates, discussions, etc.). They come under the Ministry of Youth (Ministère de la Jeunesse), which awards them partial grants. According to the [Federation of Youth and Cultural Centres \(Fédération des MJC\)](#), the structures are "areas of liberty, debate, and democratic investment that offer their inhabitants the change to take part in the institutional life of the association, take part in decisions, and become fully-fledged stakeholders in the territory in which they live. That education [...] enables everyone, especially the youngest, to become active citizens."

The Rights Defender (Défenseur des Droits)

The Rights Defender (Défenseur des Droits) is an independent constitutional authority set up by Organic Law no. 2011-333 of 29 March 2011, and appointed for a 6-year term by the President of the Republic. The authority's task is to ensure that rights and freedoms are respected by State administrations, local authorities, public establishments, and any entity tasked with a public-service mission.

She / he is also tasked with defending and promoting the higher interest and the rights of the child, as enshrined in law. In that context, the Rights Defender (Défenseur des Droits) is tasked with ensuring that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is properly applied. She / he offers educational tools aimed at staff working in education and with children: [the teaching kit that makes it easier for children to understand and appropriate their rights](#), **the educational poster that is aimed at children aged 9 to 14 and that sets out the 12 fundamental rights of the child** (to be displayed in establishments), and the card game [Happy Families \(Jeu des 7 Familles\)](#), **which aims at familiarising children with children's rights**. In addition, the Rights Defender also offers education stakeholders an on-line training module, ["Promoting equality in education" \("Promotion de l'égalité dans l'éducation"\)](#), which makes it easier to promote rights and equality and to prevent discrimination in the school context.

Information provided by the Ministry of National Education and youth

The Ministry of Education plays an important role in awakening an awareness of citizenship and human rights, as well as the democratic values of young people (*cf.* [5.7](#)), through national actions that touch all young French people, such as [commitment weeks \(semaines de l'engagement\)](#) organised in establishments.

Experimented in 2013, "commitment weeks" ("semaines de l'engagement") were trialled in establishments in order to train *lycée* students in the principles of democracy and encourage them to take part in the electoral process. These weeks are now organised annually. Over an awareness-raising period of at least one hour, **lycée students learn of their rights and duties**, as well as getting to know the functioning of *lycée* bodies and the life of the establishment. They meet and hold exchanges with their *lycée*-student representatives. That arrangement has been made long-standing.

Information provided by the ministry in charge of defence

The ministry responsible for defence is responsible for implementing the ["JDC - Defence and Citizenship Day" \("Journée Défense et Citoyenneté"\)](#), which is part of the **"citizenship pathway" ("parcours de citoyenneté") of young French people**. The JDC is compulsory, and it usually takes place **before the age of 18**. However, young people can take part in that day until the age of 25. It is the opportunity to inform young people of their rights and duties as citizens, and about institutions and their functioning. The programme for the day includes, amongst other things, training modules based on the rights and duties of citizens and on the challenges of defence (of national territory).

Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

Several information campaigns on civic rights and raising awareness of democratic values are organised annually within secondary schools and higher-education establishments, in partnership with associations that work to defend human rights.

Every 20 November, France commemorates the signing of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child by organising the [International Day of the Rights of the Child \(Journée Internationale des Droits de l'Enfant\)](#), which is the opportunity to make young people aware of the matter of respect of children's rights. On that day, educational teams are asked to carry out actions aimed at facilitating understanding of the bases and provisions of the Convention, and to develop a thought process on the subject. Particular emphasis is placed on protecting children and adolescents against all forms of violence. Article [L.](#)

[542-3 of the Education Code \(Code de l'Éducation\)](#) stipulates that at least one **annual session** to provide information on and to raise awareness of child abuse should be made part of the timetable of pupils in primary schools as well as students in secondary schools and students in secondary schools and *lycées*.

Young people (secondary and *lycée* students) are also made aware of international solidarity through [International Solidarity Week \(Semaine de la Solidarité Internationale\)](#), which is co-ordinated each year by the [CRID - Research and Information Centre for Development \(Centre de Recherche et d'Information pour le Développement\)](#) in partnership with volunteer establishments and teachers, who are invited to build and to implement projects on international solidarity.

To those events, one must add the many and regular competitions and prizes on the theme of citizenship and human rights organised in schools, e.g. the [Let's discover our institutions \(Découvrons nos institutions\)](#) competition (2016-2017), which promotes knowledge of the Republic's institutions, and the ["No to bullying" \("Non au harcèlement"\)](#) prize (2016-2017), which enables pupils and students aged 8 to 18 to express themselves collectively on bullying by creating a poster or a video that will act as a communication support for their establishment.

Several history competitions are also offered to establishments, with a view to contributing to building a collective memory based on shared values, like the [National Competition on the Resistance and on Deportation \(Concours National de la Résistance et de la Déportation\)](#), of which the organisation is determined by the [decree of 23 June 2016, published in the JORF – Official Journal of the French Republic of 28 June 2016](#), and the ["Flame of Equality" \("Flamme de l'Égalité"\)](#) competition, defined by [new academic year circular no. 2016-058 of 13 April 2016](#), for which students (at secondary school and in *lycées*) are asked to carry out a project on the history of the slave trade and on the fight to abolish slavery.

In addition, as part of her / his mission to defend the rights of the child, the [Rights Defender \(Défenseur des Droits\)](#) also develops actions to make children and young people in education aware of its annual [JADE – Young Rights Ambassadors to Children \(Jeunes Ambassadeurs des Droits auprès des Enfants\)](#) programme, which involves young people doing civic service who meet minors under the age of 18 in schools, leisure centres, social centres, and specialist establishments.

Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people

It is important to point out that the definition of the concept of "intercultural dialogue" differs according to the stakeholders who use it and implement it. In France, the notion of "intercultural dialogue" refers above all, in terms of public action, to actions aimed at encouraging tolerance between people, regardless of their origins (including social origins), religion, and convictions, as well as developing "living together" and affirming **respect for the equal dignity of human beings**.

[Anti-Racism and Anti-Semitism Education Week](#)

The Ministry of Education launches annually events based on the fight against racism and discrimination, especially the [Anti-Racism and Anti-Semitism Education Week \(Semaine de l'Éducation contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme\)](#). It brings together the entire educational community, including students' parents and student organisations, as well as education partner associations. That week is a "main federating event" of which the aim is to **make primary pupils as well as secondary and *lycée* students aware of preventing racism, anti-Semitism, and all forms of discrimination**.

[The "Ilan Halimi" award](#)

In October 2018, the Minister of Culture launched the Ilan HALIMI award dedicated to combating prejudice and falling within the 2018-2020 national plan against racism and antisemitism (*Plan national de lutte contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme 2018-2020*). This

award is supported by the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Education, the Minister of Culture, the Ministerial delegation against racism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBT hate (*Délégation interministérielle à la lutte contre le racisme, l'antisémitisme et la haute anti-LGBT*, DILCRAH) and a student mutual insurance body (the MGEN).

This national award recognises initiatives taken by groups of youths under the age of 25 that contribute towards combating racist and anti-Semitic prejudice and stereotypes. The projects selected can be carried out in school environments or non-school environments and can concern cultural, artistic, sports or digital fields.

Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication

The French public authorities have not drawn up a specific “transparent” communication plan tailored to dialogue with youth. In addition, there is no programme for training in “youth-tailored communication” aimed at political decision-makers.

5.9 E-participation

According to a survey by the CREDOC - Centre for Research and Documentation on Living Conditions (Centre de Recherche pour l'Étude et l'Observation des Conditions de Vie), 99% of 12- to 17-year-olds and 18- to 24-year-olds are web users across all types of connection. A survey steered by the INJEP / DJEPVA and carried out by the CREDOC, circulated in October 2016 and covering various aspects of the life of young people, gave rise to a publication, “L'engagement des jeunes: une majorité impliquée, une minorité en retrait” (“Commitment by young people: a majority involved, a minority drawing back”), which emphasises the high level of involvement of young people in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and in social networks, when it is a matter of getting involved. The rise in non-partisan forms of mobilisation, such as signing an on-line petition, is an indication of that interest in new technologies.

Given the **omnipresence of the internet in the daily lives of young people**, public authorities encourage the use of ICTs and education in those new means of communication, which play a part in developing participation by young people.

The Government and various ministries have launched digital consultations and put in place arrangements for e-participation, aimed at young people in particular. Ministries use an increasing number of *e-participation* tools, as part of the development of their public services and schemes including those targeting youth.;

Amongst those projects, it is important to highlight digital consultations as well as studies on the use of digital technology that aim at developing digital citizenship:

Digital consultations and participation

- In October 2018, the Government organised an online consultation on the « National universal service » (*Service national universel*) commitment scheme. This consultation targeted youths in particular to encourage their participation in the development of this scheme concerning them.
- In 2016, the Government has launched the bill on “[Equality and Citizenship](#)” (“[Égalité et Citoyenneté](#)”), which aimed at strengthening social and territorial cohesion and at fashioning a new citizenship culture, especially amongst youth. That bill was being discussed in the National Assembly and the Senate, and it was the subject of a specific approach: a digital consultation (in May 2016) enabled every citizen to make proposals and to give opinions on the topics covered by the bill. [The digital consultation](#) received 687 proposals and 10 248 votes. 30% of the participants, were aged between 18 and 24, and 26% were aged between 25 and 34.
- The Ministry of Education has put in place several e-participation projects, such as [national consultations](#) on primary- and secondary-school syllabuses, including Moral and Civic Teaching (Enseignement Moral et Civique), carried out in 2014-2015. In parallel with the consultation carried out in LEAs, the opportunity to make a collective

or individual contribution was given to national-education staff, school partners, members of professional associations, and civil society, who were able to give their opinions on the Ministry's plans via the [digital area](#) dedicated to national consultations on the *éduscol* web site. That consultation highlighted a significant level of adherence to the principles and objectives of the plan for Moral and Civic Teaching (Enseignement Moral et Civique).

- The Ministry of National Education also supported the launch of the [Isoloir.net](#) project in partnership with other stakeholders, including the European Commission, Île de France Region, and associations from the digital field. That **digital arrangement aims at encouraging awareness and citizen action among young people aged 14 to 18**, and placing in the public arena young people's opinions on the great debates of society. [Isoloir.net](#) is an active-education tool that is part of the trend of "Serious Games", applications developed from video-game technologies but that do not aim at providing only entertainment.

In parallel with digital participation, the public authorities, especially the Ministry of Education and the INJEP - National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education, have carried out several studies and a significant amount of research on the use of new technologies by young people, and on "digital citizenship":

- The magazine "[The Digital School](#)" ("[L'École Numérique](#)") is a reference magazine for appropriating Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) within the educational community. It makes teachers aware of the use of ICTs, and provides them with concrete resources to teach their classes. The magazine comes under the [Canopé](#) network, the publisher of multimedia educational resources, which comes under the oversight of the Ministry of National Education.
- The [digital challenge](#), especially as a tool for young people's commitment and participation, is one of the INJEP's topics. The Institute analyses and produces [knowledge](#) on new ICT practices, as well as keeping an information watch on those matters.

5.10 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

National universal service (Service national universel)

The President of the Republic announced his desire to create a « **national universal service** » (service national universel) centred, in particular, around two main topics: "**republican cohesion and the resilience of French society**".

In April 2018, the Government entrusted a working group with the task of forming proposals and providing its conclusions. The government validated the main principles of organisation proposed by the working group, and, in particular, its organisation according to two separate phases:

« The first phase of the SNU, in keeping with compulsory education, shall be the culmination of the civic path, having started in primary school and continued during secondary school. Carried out around the age of 16, it will last at least one month and will contain a period of collective accommodation". This period will include a collective life experience "enabling each youth to create new relationships, learn a new way of living together, and develop his/her culture of commitment to reinforce their position and their role in society".

In the second phase, youths will be invited to voluntarily complete a commitment period of at least three months, relating to general interest (social support, preservation of heritage, conservation of the environment, etc.) or to defence and security (voluntary enrolment in the army, the police, the gendarmerie, the fire brigade, civil security).

Ongoing debates

National universal service (service national universel)

The development of this new commitment scheme constituting a **thorough reform has raised many debates and discussions both in Parliament and in civil society (youth associations)**: the compulsory nature and the terms of its implementation, including its duration, the supervision of youths, and the content of teachings passed on, are some of the most debated aspects.

For example, the Advisory Council on youth policies (*Conseil d'orientation des politiques de jeunesse*, COJ), an expert body for the assessment of youth policies has decided to take up the matter at its own initiative and to produce an opinion, submitted to the Prime Minister in January 2018.

However, the main principles of this scheme were presented to the Council of Ministers (Conseil des ministres) of 27 June 2018, based on the report of the working group mandated by the executive. A final consultation phase, involving youths in particular, was initiated to fuel a final report expected by the end of 2018.

The scheme's development was based on the launch of a consultation with three lines of focus:

- Interviews with some of the project's stakeholders (associations, parents of pupils, unions, local and regional authorities, parliamentarians, companies, etc.);
- Regional meetings with youths in mainland France and in overseas territories;
- A qualitative study and an online public survey.

6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The education and training of young people are **major recurrent** concerns in the eyes of the public authorities and, more generally, French society as a whole, whose expectations in this regard are many and varied, and go beyond the simple issue of education itself.

The French educational model has undergone far-reaching changes enabling it to be characterised by **the ongoing spread of mass education** since the 1950s, accompanied by a lengthening of the duration of schooling and a form of “**democratisation**” expressed by access to high levels of qualification on the part of a significant percentage of the population, the less privileged social categories in particular.

However, as a number of reports issued by the Ministry of National Education (*Mass education in the Fifth Republic. An appraisal of national education statistics, 1958-2014, La massification scolaire sous la Vème République. Une mise en perspective des statistiques de l'éducation nationale (1958-2014)* –) as well as international assessments ([PISA 2015](#)) show, there are still **major inequalities in learning outcomes** and **social and academic trajectories** between schoolchildren and students, as academic success is very much conditioned by families' socioeconomic levels. According to the PISA 2015 study, although success rates among [French schoolchildren are within the average](#), France is one of the OECD countries where academic inequalities between schoolchildren are the most significant. Reduction of inequalities and success for all, schoolchildren and students alike, has become one of the most crucial challenges for the public authorities, which have been implementing school “refoundation” policies since 2012 .

In addition, although “Lifelong Learning” is included in the Labour Code ([Art.L.6111-1 of the Law of 24 November 2009 bearing on orientation and professional lifelong learning](#)), there are still major inequalities in access to training depending on age and activity sector. According to [INSEE's 2012 survey](#) on the training of adults, access to training decreases with age: six out of every ten individuals between 25 and 34 y/o have taken part in at least one training course, while between 55 and 64 y/o this is only the case with one in every three individuals. Development of **lifelong learning** and its **accessibility** are also challenges for the public authorities.

6.1 General context

Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

Recent developments and challenges

Combating **early school leaving and academic inequalities** is one of the public authorities' major challenges. In 2014, the Government launched a “everyone mobilised against school dropout” (“tous mobilisés contre le décrochage scolaire”) national strategy (See [6.3 “Preventing early leaving from education and training”](#)) with the aim of lowering numbers of **young NEETs to below 10%**. The strategy resulted in **an effective reduction** in young “dropouts”: at the start of the 2016/2017 school year, there were 110,000 such young people as against 136,000 five years ago. The drop continued in 2017, with numbers of early school-leavers down to fewer than 80,000. The present government is continuing with this [strategy](#)

However, there are still a good many challenges to be met in order to guarantee success for all pupils. The 2016 *State of Youth report (État de la Jeunesse)* (See [1.7](#)), which compiles annual statistical indicators on youth and on the basis of which public policies are drafted, summarises these challenges. According to the report, there are still a great many young people with reading difficulties: in 2015, 11.3% of boys and 8.4% of girls

experienced **reading difficulties**. Difficulty rates also vary depending on area. They are more pronounced in the north of France, the Île-de-France Region, and especially in Overseas territories, with results standing at around 75% in Mayotte, 30% in Guadeloupe, Martinique and Reunion Island, and 48% in French Guiana.

The annual report on Statistical markers and references on education, training and research (Repères et références statistiques sur les enseignements, la formation et la recherche) put out by the [Ministry of National Educations' Department for Evaluation, Forward-looking Analysis and Performance \(DEPP - Direction de l' Evaluation, de la Prospective et de la Performance\)](#), which compiles all available statistical data on the education system's operation and results in a single volume, also provides an overview of recent developments and trends in the education system.

The report reveals possible challenges in education, such as completion of a BA degree in three years (see Eurydice 2.3 Organisation of the Education System and of its Structure). According to the 2016 report, scarcely a quarter of undergraduates obtained their degree after three years of training: 28% of students were awarded a (general or professional) BA degree three years after their initial enrolment in the first year of a BA programme in 2010/2011. The rate is due in particular to the high number of students who give up their undergraduate studies after one or two years.

Key figures

- Numbers of students

According to the 2016 report on [Statistical markers and references on education, training and research](#), there were **15.5 million schoolchildren**, students and apprentices in Metropolitan and Overseas France at the start of the 2015/2016 academic year. **Numbers were up** by 140,000 compared with the start of the previous academic year, due in particular to the 3.2% increase in enrolments in higher education programmes. Secondary education also saw greater growth (+ 0.7%) than in the previous year. There was little change as regards primary education.

These numbers included some 350,300 disabled children/teenagers, making an increase of 6.1% in comparison with the previous year. Almost 80% of disabled pupils were enrolled in ordinary schools, with the remaining 20% educated in specialised hospital or medicosocial institutions.

- Results and qualifications

Lower and upper secondary education (*collège* and *lycée*) includes two annual examinations:

- the Diplôme National du Brevet (DNB – Lower Secondary Certificate)
- the Baccalaureate. (See [Eurydice 2.5 National qualification framework](#)).

During the 2018 session, the success rate for the DNB was 87,1%. The success rate for the [Baccalaureate 2018](#) stood at 83.3%, (June session).

- Early leaving from education and training

Among the academic inequalities that still exist, there was **a significant decrease in the school-dropout** phenomenon in 2016. In 2011, 140,000 young people left school with no qualifications; in 2017, the figure fell to 80,000, due to prevention policies designed to combat school dropout implemented by the Government.

According to the report [Statistical markers and references on education, training and research](#) 2018, in 2017, the rate of young people "leaving early" from the school system stood at 8.9%.

- Mobility of schoolchildren and students

According to the Ministry of Higher Education, France hosted 298,902 foreign students in 2014/2015. There is no consolidated data on outward mobility; figures provided by type of institution and mobility scheme are as follows:

- in 2012, 62,416 French students were enrolled abroad according to [UNESCO](#).
- in 2013-2014, there were 36,759 French students in the Erasmus mobility programme (Source: European Commission)
- According to the [Conférence des Grandes Ecoles](#) (CGE), 51,793 French *grandes écoles* students were in mobility programmes abroad for internships or study periods, whether as part of a qualifying training course or otherwise.

Organisation of the education and training system

In France, school education is compulsory and free of charge from the age of 6 to 16. The education system is organised into 3 periods (cycles or levels):

1. 1st level: five years of primary education at elementary school
2. 2nd level: four years at [lower secondary school \(*collège*\)](#) followed by 3 years at [upper secondary school \(*lycée*\)](#)
3. Higher education. Access to higher education is determined by success in the [Baccalauréat](#), a State examination providing a nationally recognised qualification

It is also worth mentioning pre-primary (nursery) education, which is particularly well organised and developed in France in comparison with other European countries. The nursery **school is a specific institution of the French education system**. It is an essential step in pupils' educational experience. **It is free and organised into three sections:** youngest, mid-range and older; children are taken in from the ages of three to the age of six, subject to the number of places available.

For further information, see Eurydice [2.3 Organisation of the Education System and of its Structure](#).

Reform of compulsory education.

In 2018, the President of the Republic announced his desire to **“lower the compulsory education age from 6 to 3 years old as from the start of the 2019/2020 school year”**. This measure, which will be the subject of legislative work over the next few months and recognises the fundamental role that nursery schools play in children's education (social education included), is set to make a practice compulsory that is already widely developed and approved of by parents in France: **97% of 3-year-olds already go to school**.

Main concepts

Among the concepts enabling at least partial understanding of the French education system are the notions of the **republican model** and **priority education**.

The republican school

The French education and teaching system is a **“republican” (in reference to the French political system) model** based on a number of founding principles:

- [Freedom of choice](#)
- [Free Provision](#)
- [Neutrality](#)
- [Secularism](#)
- [Compulsory schooling](#)

For further information, see Eurydice [2.1 Fundamental Principles and National Policies](#).

Priority education

Priority education is intended to respond to the crucial issue of educational inequalities, which are closely linked to territorial disparities. Many rural and urban areas are prey to economic difficulties and have few educational resources (sports and cultural facilities,

etc.) available for young people's use, a situation that has a negative impact on their academic success.

So-called priority education aims to **improve pedagogical** and educational action in schools and institutions located in areas that suffer the greatest social difficulties, with a view to reducing the impact of inequalities on pupils' success.

6.2 Administration and governance

Cross-sectorial cooperation

In order to implement the various strategies designed to ensure academic success and education policies and programmes, the Ministry of National Education cooperates with many different operators, including other ministries, public institutions, companies and associations. These partners intervene within their areas of action, some of which correspond to those of such scholastic programmes as sport, professional integration, memory and citizenship, and culture.

Schemes relating to extracurricular education and relying specifically on cross-sectorial cooperation have been introduced, including **Territorial Educational Projects (PEDTs - Projets éducatifs territoriaux)** and the **"Wednesday Plan"** (Plan Mercredi) launched at the start of the 2018/2019 school year.

- Territorial Educational Projects (PEDTs)

In 2013, in the context of changes in school time, the Territorial Educational Project (**PEDT**) **scheme** was introduced, designed as a **tool for local collaboration** bringing together all stakeholders in the realm of education: Ministries, including those responsible for education and youth affairs, Family Allowance Funds (CAFs – Caisses d'allocations familiales), associations, sports clubs, etc. The PEDTs mentioned in [Article D.521-12 of the Education Code](#) enable local authorities to expressly provide "every child with a high-quality coherent educational pathway before during and after school, organised [...]in complement to school hours". PEDTs aim to mobilise all a territory's resources, working in partnership to organise extracurricular activities. The creation of PEDTs is on a voluntary basis.

In 2018, the Ministry of National Education announced the inauguration of a "Wednesday Plan" (Plan Mercredi).

- The Wednesday Plan

Introduced at the start of the 2018/2019 school year, the [Wednesday Plan](#) **is a scheme by which local authorities organise extracurricular recreational activities on Wednesdays for children from nursery school up to the last year of primary school age**. Like the Territorial Educational Project (PEDT – Projet éducatif territorial) of which it is part both legally and administratively, the **Wednesday Plan is based on partnerial work between local authorities, State departments (the Ministry of National Education in particular), Family Allowance Funds (CAFs – Caisses d'allocations familiales), youth associations and the sports and cultural sectors**. The Wednesday Plan seeks to develop the quality of the extracurricular offer, consolidate the educational character of Wednesday activities, and reduce social and territorial divides.

A "Wednesday Plan Quality" (Qualité Plan Mercredi) Charter organises Wednesday activities around four principles:

1. "extracurricular activities should complement time with family and time at school"
2. "recreational activities should be accessible to all children wishing to participate, particularly children with disabilities";
3. "extracurricular activities should be coherent with the region and with its stakeholders";

4. “rich and varied cultural, sports and nature activities should have the aim of a final project (artwork, show, exhibition, tournament, etc.)”.

Outside the context of PEDTs and Wednesday Plan, the Ministry of National Education also forms partnerships with a variety of operators:

- Partners in the field of sport

In order to encourage physical and sporting activities among schoolchildren, the Ministry has developed [partnerships with various stakeholders in the world of sport](#), including school sports associations and federations and sports federations and clubs approved by the [Ministry responsible for sport](#). School sports federations are:

- [the Primary Education Sports Union \(USEP – Union sportive de l’enseignement du premier degré\)](#) for elementary schools
- [the National School Sports Union \(UNSS – Union nationale du sport scolaire\)](#) for lower and upper secondary schools
- [the General Sports Union of Private Schools \(UGSEL – Union générale sportive de l’enseignement libre\)](#), a sports federation for the private education sector.

In September 2013, the Ministry of National Education signed [a framework agreement](#) with the French National Olympics and Sports Committee (CNOSF - Comité national olympique et sportif français) and the Ministry responsible for sport. The signatories undertook to **promote the educational values of sport and Olympism** and collaborate to foster **access to community sports programmes**. [19 \(non-scholastic\) French sports federations also](#) signed a framework agreement with the Ministry. The agreements were co-signed by the two main school sports federations, USEP and UNSS.

- Partners in the professional world

The Ministry of National Education has formed ties with companies and [professional organisations](#) in all sectors. Such links are expressed by a wide range of actions **targeting pupils, families and the educational community alike**: talks to schools given by economic operators, entrepreneurs in particular, visits to companies, job shadowing, and organisation of fairs and events such as “Industry Week” and “Company Week”.

In the context of vocational education (see Eurydice [6 Secondary and Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education](#)), **representatives of vocational sectors** are participating in the creation and renewal of vocational qualifications (CAP, professional baccalaureate, BTS, etc.).

- Partners in the field of artistic and cultural education

The Ministry of Education has joined forces with the [Ministry of Culture and Communication](#) in order to develop artistic and cultural practice as well as access to cultural structures, facilitate encounters with artists and artworks, and improve teacher training. This leads them to lend support to **associations and bodies specialising** in culture and which develop **actions designed for schoolchildren**, such as the [“Springtime of Poets” \(Printemps des poètes\)](#), the [Avignon Festival](#) and the [Jeunesses musicales de France association](#), which promotes music among the young.

Such cooperation aims to develop activities complementing artistic and cultural education and takes a variety of forms: **classes involved in artistic and cultural projects (PACs - projets artistiques et culturels)**, film projects, **art workshops**, **artists’ residencies** and scientific and technical workshops.

- Partners in the field of scientific culture

As regards scientific culture, the Ministry works in close collaboration with such scientific culture institutions as the Académie des Sciences, the Académie des Technologies and the Cité des Sciences et de l’Industrie.

- Partners in the field of citizenship education

In the context of citizenship education, the Ministry of Education carries out a range of educational actions in collaboration with remembrance foundations and associations as well as other institutions and/or ministries, such as the **Committee for the Memory and History of Slavery (CPMHE - Comité pour la mémoire et l'histoire de l'esclavage)** and the Ministry of Defence, which implements **educational actions** focusing on the memory of contemporary wars and conflicts and funds educational projects on the memory of war (First World War).

- European partnerships

Besides such cross-sectoral cooperation, the Ministry of National Education has also developed international partnerships, above all with other European countries, as is shown by schools' participation in the Erasmus + "Education" and "Youth and Sport" programmes and by mobility among schoolchildren (school trips, etc.) (For further information, see *Eurydice* [13.5 Other Dimensions of Internationalisation in Higher Education](#)).

In addition, a number of "partner" European associations take an active part in raising pupils' and teachers' awareness of their European identity through a range of actions. They include

- [the European Association of Teachers \(AEDE – Association Association européenne des enseignants\)](#)
- [ESHA - European School Heads Association](#)
- [ÉVEIL \(association\)](#)
- [GE21 – Generation Europe 21](#)
- [Maisons de l'Europe](#)
- International partnerships

The Ministry of National Education has a longstanding partnership with UNESCO, expressed in concrete form by **the network of schools associated with UNESCO** and such schools' network of UNESCO Clubs

The network was set up in 1953 in order to promote UNESCO's ideals; it is present in **over 180 countries**, comprising **almost 11,000 schools** from nursery to post-baccalaureate level.

In 2018, the French network comprises **135 schools** across Metropolitan and Overseas France.

UNESCO-associated schools are institutions that have defined a **three-year** interdisciplinary educational project with wide international openness and focus on UNESCO's priorities (sustainable development; heritage advocacy; global citizenship; intercultural dialogue; promotion of peace and human rights; international solidarity, etc.).

Network of UNESCO Clubs funded by the Ministry responsible for youth

UNESCO Associations, Centres and Clubs are groups of volunteers of varied ages and socioprofessional status, voluntary activists at the service of UNESCO's ideals.

Established with the authorisation of [UNESCO National Commissions](#), Clubs are grouped into national and international networks, their goal being to engage in fieldwork in UNESCO's areas of competence. More than 65 years after the creation of the first UNESCO Association in Japan in 1947, the movement numbered some 4000 UNESCO Centres, Associations and Clubs in over 100 countries across the world.

In France, the Clubs have Law-of-1901 association status. They stand out due to the nature and purpose of their activities but are all in close contact with civil society in all its diversity. Clubs are able to carry out local and international projects thanks to partnerships in France and with Clubs in other countries, organise visits, excursions,

study trips and exchanges, hold conferences and debates, and take part in colloquia and UN and UNESCO International Days, Weeks, Years and Decades (Culture of Peace, Education for All, Safeguarding Heritage, Sustainable Development, etc.).

In 2018, the French network comprises **some hundred Clubs**

Governance

The Ministries responsible for National Education and Higher Education and Research draft, oversee and coordinate education policies resulting from work in partnership involving the ministries' various departments and directorates, along with general inspectorates and related and advisory bodies. The Ministry of Education also cooperates with other ministries, including the Ministries of Agriculture, the ministry of social affairs and health, and the ministry responsible for defence, all of which contribute to public education.

In addition, since the 1980s, the education system has been **partially decentralised**, with local authorities assuming responsibility for the operation of educational institutions: Municipalities are responsible for primary schools, *Départements* for *collèges* and Regions for *lycées* and specialised institutions (agricultural schools, etc.). However, the State (Ministry) continues to be responsible for pedagogy (i.e. teaching methodology) and for definition of national curricula and programmes, teaching organisation and content, and delivery of national qualifications. In the same way, assignment of university grades and titles and management of staff recruitment are the prerogatives of the Ministry of Higher Education and its departments.

For further information and details see Eurydice 2 Organisation and Governance, 2.6 Administration and Governance at Central and/or Regional Level .

6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

National strategy

Prevention and reduction of school dropout is **a major focus** of national and European educational policies alike. This being so, France has signed on to the European strategy combating early school leaving, with the aim of reducing numbers of young "dropouts" to below 10% by 2020 and halving the number of young people leaving the education system each year with no qualifications.

In order to achieve these aims, the [Minister of National Education](#) implemented an action plan countering school dropout, "Tous mobilisés pour vaincre le décrochage scolaire" (Everyone mobilised against the school dropout), in 2014. The plan is closely supervised and based on cross-ministerial work, with the Ministries of Labour, Agriculture, Health and Overseas France in particular, as well as cooperation with local authorities, associations working in the field of education, and families (of pupils) and representatives of the professional world. **The plan is continuing** .

Among other things, it draws on data produced by ministerial research departments: the [Centre for Studies and Research on Qualifications \(CEREO – Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications\)](#), under the co-supervision of the Ministries of Education and Labour, and the Ministry of National Education's Department of Evaluation, Forward-Looking Analysis and Performance (DEPP – Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance). The plan has 5 focus areas:

1. Mobilisation of teaching teams
2. Development of social ties
3. Partnership between stakeholders
4. Implementation of the right to return to training

5. Creation of new reception schemes

Territorial authorities, Regions most of all, play a key role in prevention of school failure, above all since regional competences in the areas of school dropout and vocational guidance were increased by the Law of 5 March 2014 bearing on training, employment and social democracy, and the “Professional Future” [law \(Avenir professionnel\) of 5 September 2018](#). (Regional Public Guidance Service (SPRO - Service public régional de l'orientation). See Chapter 3 “Employment and Entrepreneurship”)

Reference texts

- Circular no.2011-028 of 9 February 2011 on [combating school dropout](#)
- Decree no.2014-1454 of 5 December 2014 bearing on [vocational training of young people leaving the educational system with no professional qualification](#).
- [Law n° 2014-288 of 5 March 2014](#) bearing on training, employment and social democracy, and the “Professional Future”_
- Law [« Avenir professionnel » of 5 September 2018](#).

Formal education: main policy measures on ELET

Formal education plays a key role in the [“Everyone mobilised against school dropout” plan](#), in particular due to the fact that teachers are in a position to detect pupils experiencing difficulties.

A **training programme on prevention and detection** of early signs of dropout was organised for teaching staff, who had already been made aware of the importance of teamwork and working with parents. “School dropout advisors” acting under the aegis of school heads were added to school staff ([Circular no.2013-035 of 29 March 2013](#)).

Other measures contained in the plan were implemented by the Ministry of National Education for the school year 2016-2017, including:

- **Creation of a body** of National Education **psychologists**;
- **Organisation of “educational alliances”** bringing together a range of stakeholders, including parents, and coordinating interventions by various professionals in the field of education and external partners;
- Setup of **“parent spaces”**, consisting of regular meetings with parents, particularly those whose children are in danger of dropping out of school;
- Implementation of an **“Opening the school to parents** for successful integration” scheme, designed for allophone pupils and aiming to develop French-language acquisition;
- Annual organisation of **“Perseverance Week”** at all local education authorities*, providing an occasion to promote preventive actions and schemes implemented in schools (*the local education authority is the Ministry of National Education’s reference administrative district);
- Development of school/company actions;
- Creation of **information centres** for 16-25 y/o who have left the school system and wish to resume their education: website [reviensteformer.fr](#) and hotline.

Early school leavers

Lower and upper secondary school students who are in major difficulty and have turned their backs on their schooling or risk dropping out can be temporarily placed in the [remedial scheme](#), which provides **temporary reception adapted to their needs**. The scheme, which has existed since the 1990s, helps **counter school dropout**.

According to the annual report produced by the Department of Evaluation, Forward-Looking Analysis and Performance (DEPP – Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance) on [“Les pratiques d'enseignement et d'apprentissage en dispositif relais” \(Teaching and learning practices in remedial schemes\)](#) published in 2018, “in

2016-2017, there were 9,400 stays in all: 6,200 in remedial classes and 3,200 in remedial workshops.

Furthermore, **pupils placed in remedial systems evidence a wide range of problems**: 44% of them are at least one year behind in their schooling, and 40% only attend school intermittently or have been absent for over two months. The older such pupils are, the more likely they are to accumulate such difficulties, so increasing their risk of dropping out.

For further information on prevention of school dropout, see the 2017 Eurydice report "[Tackling early leaving from education and training in Europe](#)".

Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

The "Everyone mobilised against school dropout" plan also mobilises stakeholders in non-formal education, which combats school dropout **through pedagogical measures** and quality **youth work**. Such partnerships with stakeholders in non-formal education and their initiatives are not systematically listed by the public authorities.

These partner associations receive public subsidies from ministries and territorial authorities, Regions in particular, which participate in implementation of policies designed to reduce school dropout. As an example, the [Ile-de-France Region](#) subsidised the [ZEP \(Zone d'Expression Prioritaire\) association](#), an association of journalists that lends support to young people in the field of media literacy and helps school dropouts by running writing workshops to encourage young people to speak out about their personal, academic or material problems.

In addition, since 2010, the Ministry of National Education has also worked in partnership with the [Fondation de France](#), France's leading philanthropic network, to combat school dropout. The Foundation is an independent private institution receiving no public subsidies, which finances associations and services of general interest. In the context of its [partnership](#) with the Ministry of National Education, the Foundation has supported new pedagogical approaches based on 3 principles:

1. Adaptation of alternative teaching methods to develop a taste for and pleasure in learning;
2. Mobilisation of parents and families in the context of their children's education;
3. Implementation of methods of organisation and governance of collaborative institutions where decisions are taken in consultation with pupils.

Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions

The "Everyone mobilised to conquer school dropout" plan is a **multi-partner and cross-sectoral initiative**, promoted and coordinated by the Ministry of National Education and mobilising a variety stakeholders, including ministries, local authorities, institutions, public operators, associations and companies. Such mobilisation is given concrete expression by a range of initiatives and the creation of structures and tools including [platforms for monitoring and supporting "dropouts"](#). It is a tool for "coordinating all local actors involved in the phases of identification, accompaniment and monitoring of young peoples who have left the training system with no qualifications or skills."

"Dropout" monitoring and support platforms

Such platforms are a way of coordinating local stakeholders in the training, guidance and integration of young people. They aim to provide rapid personalised answers to any young person over 16 years old who has left the education system unqualified and with no professional certification. They are coordinated by regional authorities (Chief Education Officers, Regional Prefects and Presidents of Regional Councils). Such

platforms include Information and Guidance Centres (CIOs – Centres d’Information et d’Orientation) and local missions that receive and inform young people. (For information on CIOs and local missions, see [Youth Wiki 3.4 Career Guidance and Counselling](#)).

Platforms may bring in the following interest parties to assist their operation (non-exhaustive list):

- Actors in education: schools, school heads, etc.;
- Actors in employment: local missions, Pôle Emploi (Job Centres), training bodies, companies, employers organisations, etc.;
- Actors in healthcare: social workers, representatives of associations, child welfare services, etc.;
- Actors in youth volunteering schemes: Civic Service Agency ([see Youth Wiki 2.2 Administration and governance of Youth Volunteering: main actors](#)).

A guide on implementing platforms has been drawn up: Guide des Plates-formes de suivi et d'appui aux jeunes en situation de décrochage (Guide to platforms for monitoring and support of early school leavers).

The French Youth Guarantee

The **Youth Guarantee** (Garantie Jeunes) scheme, is intended for young people from under 16 to 25 y/o with few or no qualifications, who are not at school, undergoing a training course or employed – in other words, early school leavers; it operates **in complementarity** to all the other measures introduced to prevent school dropout. The Youth Guarantee **limits insecurity among young** “dropouts” and is designed to put young people in situations of major precarity on the road to **self-sufficiency**, providing them with support in their socio-professional integration. In addition, the Youth Guarantee, which is also a multi-partner cross-sectoral scheme (see Youth Wiki 3.6 *Integration of Young people in the labour market*) acts in complementarity, largely due to its target group (age bracket) of 16-25 y/o, while school dropout prevention schemes are mostly intended for younger people, primary and lower and upper secondary schoolchildren in particular.

For further information on prevention of school dropout, see the 2017 Eurydice report "[Tackling early leaving from education and training in Europe](#)".

6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

Several arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes have been introduced by the public authorities; some of them validate skills acquired during **volunteering experience**, such as “bénévole passports” and skills portfolios, which are intended in particular for the students described in the chapter on [2.8 “Skills recognition”](#) others **validate professional experience**, such as the “Accreditation of prior work experience” (VAE - Validation des acquis de l’expérience) scheme.

The VAE is defined by Article 133 of [Law no.2002-73 of 17 January 2002](#), which stipulates that “anyone in the labour market has the right to have their prior work experience accredited” in view of obtainment of a professional qualification listed in the National Directory of Professional Certification (See [RNCP glossary](#)).

The [VAE](#) is overseen by the Ministry of Labour, but its practical implementation depends on the institution responsible for delivering the qualification (Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood and Forests, Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs, Ministry of National Education, etc.). Anyone, whatever their age, nationality, status or educational level, who can show proof of at least one year’s experience directly connected with the qualification

sought after may apply for the VAE, as [Article L613-3](#) of the National Education Code confirms.

For further information, see Eurydice 8.5 Validation of non-formal and informal learning.

Information and guidance

VAE advice relay points (PRCs – points-relais conseil) have been set up at regional level at such public operators and associations as Pôle Emploi and local missions. Local VAE branches and offices have been set up in higher education and training institutions, providing information on qualifications accessible via the VAE.

[The National Committee for Professional Certification \(CNCP - Commission nationale des certifications professionnelles\)](#) keeps such information bodies' contact details updated and makes them available on its website.

Quality assurance

Since its creation in 2002, the VAE scheme has been the subject of [several reports](#), drawn up by such ministerial statistics and studies departments as the Centre for Studies and Research on Qualifications (CEREQ – Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications) and the [General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training \(DGEFP - Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle\)](#).

An assessment of the VAE scheme was launched in December 2015. It was entrusted to a mission made up of members of the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs (IGAS - Inspection générale des affaires sociales), the General Inspectorate of National Education (IGEN – Inspection générale de l'éducation nationale) and the General Inspectorate of the Administration of National Education and Research. The assessment enabled identification of 20 measures for transformation and improvement of the VAE scheme.

6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

Policy framework

In the context of the [Bologna Process](#), France took part in the drafting of reference criteria for learning mobility. Regarded as a vector of academic success, mobility is promoted by France's public authorities through programmes and schemes with a wide range of aims, including **the shaping of world citizens, facilitating continuation of studies** in another country, and giving pupils and students **access to a wider (international) labour market**.

The various mobility schemes in Europe and across the world provide concrete experience in linguistic and cultural learning. They are intended for a wide public (schoolchildren, apprentices, and stakeholders in the education system), are essentially carried out for the purpose of learning, and are components of educational projects.

Learning mobility policies are based **on partnerships between public authorities and community operators** and are given concrete expression by **bilateral cooperation** between States via organisation of a system of teaching French abroad and implementation of European and international educational content.

New regulations and legislation governing higher education came into force in 2018:

- Decree 2018-372 of 18 May 2018, **bearing on temporary suspension of studies in public institutions delivering initial higher education training courses**, enables any students who so wish to suspend their studies once during their undergraduate or graduate courses, for a period of between six months to a year, in order to acquire personal or professional experience either on their own or under the supervision of a

host body in France or abroad. Such time off is at the student's own initiative and may not be made compulsory in the course the student is taking.

For further information, see Eurydice, Chapter [13, "Mobility and Internationalisation"](#), which is devoted to international learning mobility programmes at all educational levels.

Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education

A distinction must be made between mobility programmes intended for schoolchildren and students and those designed for teachers. The largest is the European Erasmus + programme for education, training, youth and sport adopted for 2014-2020 period. It contributes to the strategic objectives set out in the European plan regarding education, training and higher education by 2020, in particular as concerns:

- Fostering student mobility so that 20% of higher education graduates will have carried out a mobility during the course of their studies;
- Ensuring that at least 6% of 18-34 y/o vocational education and training graduates have carried out a period of study or training abroad;

Erasmus + also provides mobility actions for:

- nursery, primary and secondary school teaching staff,
- Learners and teaching staff in vocational education and training,
- Students, teachers and staff in higher education,
- Staff in adult education.

Each school level has its own mobility programmes. For further information on their specificities and the operators promoting them, see Eurydice:

- [13.1 Mobility in Early Childhood and School Education;](#)
- [13.2 Mobility in Higher Education;](#)
- [13.3 Mobility in Adult Education and Training.](#)

Foreign students

Lastly, the Ministries of the Interior and Higher Education, Research and Innovation have set up **single windows for foreign students at universities**. In 2017, there were 26 single windows for reception of foreign students, in liaison with Regional Centres for Student Services (CROUSs – Centres Régionaux des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires) and local authorities, 24 incorporating prefectural services and 7 with representation of CAF services, in order to improve reception of foreign students on campuses and facilitate administrative procedures.

Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work

Stakeholders in the fields of youth work and non-formal education, in partnership with the ministries responsible for youth policies (National Education), offer a **range of non-formal mobility schemes designed for young people**. Fostering access to such schemes for young people from **disadvantaged backgrounds** is one of the challenges taken up by the public authorities and youth mobility operators.

The main non-formal mobility schemes are:

- The programmes organised by [the Franco-German Youth Office \(OFAJ - Office Franco-allemand\)](#) and the Franco-Quebecois Youth Office (OFQJ – Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse)
- International civic service set up by [the Civic Service Agency](#)
- Mobility actions (European voluntary service, youth exchanges, etc.) included in the Erasmus + programme

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' "Youth Solidarity- City Life Holiday" (JSI-VVSI – Jeunesse Solidarité-Ville Vie Vacances) programmes
- International Solidarity Volunteering (VSI – Volontariat de solidarité internationale)

The Youth Wiki chapter "2.6 Cross-border mobility programmes" describes these various schemes.

Moreover, the **Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) has launched three calls for "youth" projects in all**, "[Jeunesse II 2016-2017](#)", "[Jeunesse III 2017-2018](#)" and "Jeunesse IV 2018-2019", designed to support decentralised cooperation projects involving French and foreign young people mobilised in the context of volunteering schemes or vocational training courses.

Since 2016, the three calls for projects have led to assistance with the mobility of 1,304 young people, for a total of 60 winning projects.

The calls have enjoyed technical support from the Ministry of National Education (Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and NGOs (DJEPVA – Direction de la jeunesse, de la vie associative et de l'éducation populaire)), the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (Department for Culture, Education, Research and Networking (DCERR – Direction de la culture, de l'enseignement, de la recherche et du réseau)), France Volontaires, the Civic Service Agency (ASC – Agence du Service Civique) and the two Erasmus+ Agencies, and the support of the Schneider Electric Foundation.

A "Jeunesse V" call for projects incorporating a component relating to the education sector is planned for late 2018.

Fostering mobility for socially disadvantaged young people

Apart from these schemes, there are the non-compulsory actions implemented by local authorities (Regional Councils and municipalities) to foster non-formal mobility, in particular on the part of young people experiencing economic difficulties or with fewer opportunities:

Young people from disadvantaged urban territories

A partnership exists between the General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET – Commissariat général à l'égalité des territoires) and the National Holiday Voucher Agency (ANCV – Agence Nationale pour les Chèques-Vacances) with the priority aim of supporting holiday stays in Europe with a view to fostering young people's access to European and international mobility. In 2017, it enabled support of 109 projects to the benefit of 1,090 young people from disadvantaged urban territories.

Since 2008, young people involved in such schemes and living in urban areas marked by inequalities have been invited to fortnight-long stays at the United States Embassy. This is the "Young Ambassadors of Volunteering" ("[Jeunes ambassadeurs de l'engagement associatif](#)") programme based on a partnership between the General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET – Commissariat Général à l'égalité des territoires), the United States Embassy in Paris and [the Association for the Development of Citizen and European Initiatives \(ADICE – Association pour le Développement des Initiatives Citoyennes et Européennes\)](#)

During their stay, young ambassadors and ambassadors are invited to represent France in the United States and exchange views on the themes of cultural diversity, equal opportunities and volunteering. The initiative seeks to encourage young people's participation in the life of their communities, reinforce civic commitment and develop intercultural dialogue.

Young people from Overseas France

For young people from Overseas France, the Exchange Fund for Educational, Cultural and Sports Purposes (FEBECS – Fond d'échanges à but éducatif, culturel ou sportif), set up in the context of the Framework Law for Overseas France of 13 December 2000, helps cover transport costs for young people under 30 years of age in the context of

educational, cultural and sports exchanges (to "Metropolitan" France or the regional environment (neighbouring territories)).

It supports mobility on the part of young people from the Antilles-Guyana area, Reunion Island, Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, Wallis-et-Futuna, and Mayotte to Metropolitan France or neighbouring territories.

Quality assurance

Some assessments are both **qualitative and quantitative** and aim to characterise and improve such schemes. These are carried out by such ministerial statistics and studies departments as the [Centre for Studies and Research on Qualifications](#) (CEREQ – Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications) under the co-supervision of the Ministries of Labour and National Education, the **Department of Evaluation, Forward-Looking Analysis and Performance** (DEPP – Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance) and the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (INJEP – Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire), which regularly carry out [studies](#) on formal and non-formal mobility schemes.

Other **monitoring procedures** aiming to ensure that mobilities are properly implemented and run have also been set up by the Ministry of National Education and its partners. Such actions come under **the European Quality Charter** for Mobility. School mobility schemes for French children are carefully **supervised and secured**. Among other things, this is expressed by the need (for schools) to anticipate all practical and administrative steps required, such as implementation of assessment procedures and designation of advisors, accompanying adults and tutors.

Schools must also list all trips abroad made by pupils and accompanying staff on the ["Ariane"](#) website set up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The website enables school heads and accompanying adults to benefit in real time from safety recommendations on the situations in destination countries.

Finally, so as not to penalise pupils carrying out mobilities in the context of partnerships between their schools and foreign schools, schoolchildren and apprentices can obtain [certificates of European or international experience](#).

Such monitoring procedures are defined in reference texts designed to regulate, accompany, validate and secure mobility:

- [Circular no.2016- 091 of 15 June 2016 bearing on mobility of lower and upper secondary students in Europe and across the world.](#)
- [Circular no.2011-117 bearing on outings and trips organised by lower and upper secondary schools.](#)

6.6 Social inclusion through education and training

Educational support

The ministries of national and higher education education have introduced various **social inclusion schemes** aiming to guarantee academic success for all pupils. Such initiatives and schemes aim **to reduce economic and social inequalities**, and facilitate the schooling of disabled children or those newly arrived in France.

Chapter 12 of *Eurydice, Educational Support and Guidance*, describes the various measures for social inclusion implemented by stakeholders in education.

Providing financial aid

Depending on what resources they have available, schoolchildren and students can benefit from financial aid, **school and university grants** in particular. Grants are awarded for an academic year. There are three levels, depending on the resources of the

person or people taking responsibility for pupils in question, and the number of children involved.

In addition, municipalities, *départements* and regions may also award grants to schoolchildren and students on their territory. Such financial assistance depends on the policies implemented by local authorities: they therefore vary from one municipality to the next and from one region to another.

In the event of financial problems, schoolchildren and students can benefit from exceptional financial aid financed by **their institution's social fund** (lower secondary, upper secondary or student social funds)

For further information see Youth Wiki [4.6 Access to quality services](#)

Facilitating the schooling of disabled children

Schooling for disabled children has been a legal principle since the Law of 11 February 2005. A range of measures facilitate their inclusive education, financial aids among them: **the Disabled Child Education Allowance (AAEH – Allocation d'éducation de l'enfant handicapé)**, the **Disability Compensation Benefit** (PCH – Prestation de compensation du handicap), the **Disability Card** (Carte d'invalidité) and provision of specialised transport. In addition to such assistance, pupils can stay fulltime or part-time in a medicosocial institution or be schooled at **Local Units for Educational Inclusion (ULISs - Unités localisées pour l'inclusion scolaire)**, which provide primary and secondary education for groups of children with cognitive or mental disorders (specific language and learning disorders, motor function, auditory or visual disorders, multiple disabilities or disabling illnesses).

For further information, see Eurydice [12 Educational Support and Guidance](#)

Schooling allophone children

Schools' intake obligations apply as much to allophone [children newly arrived in France](#) as they do to other pupils. Special resources such as bilingual welcome booklets are provided and educational inclusion projects created to help cope with allophone pupils.

For further information refer to Eurydice [12 Educational Support and Guidance](#).

Social cohesion and equal opportunities

Several information campaigns on civic rights and raising awareness of democratic values are organised at secondary schools and higher education institutions on a yearly basis, in partnership with human rights defence associations. They aim to foster and reinforce tolerance and successful coexistence. For further information [see 5.9 Raising awareness among young people](#).

See also:

- Eurydice report, [Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education](#).
- Eurydice chapter [Promoting Equity, Social Cohesion and Active Citizenship](#).
- Eurydice report [Citizenship Education in Europe](#).

6.7 Skills for innovation

Innovation in formal education

The [“Common Core of Knowledge and Skills” \(Socle commun de connaissances et de compétences\) \(Decree no.2015-372 of 31 March 2015\)](#) represents everything that children between 6 and 16 y/o must know and have mastered by the end of compulsory schooling. It includes all knowledge, skills and values required for a pupil's success at

school, in their personal lives and as citizens. At primary and lower secondary school, all subjects taught have a role to play in acquisition of the common core, including artistic, cultural and sports activities.

A new common core of knowledge, skills and culture was introduced at the start of the 2016/2017 school year. It is organised around [5 domains](#):

languages for thinking and communicating;
 methods and ways of learning;
 forming the person and the citizen;
 natural systems and technical systems;
 representations of the world and human activity.

The new common core reinforces and reasserts the need to master certain “basic” areas of knowledge (languages, mathematics, etc.) and also strengthens various skills connected with innovation, such as use of digital technology in Domain 2 “Methods and ways of learning”. Apart from the programmes themselves, innovation also concerns teaching practices and methods. **The right to try out new teaching methods** was instigated by the Ministry of National Education in 2005. Within schools, teachers may draw support from the “Research, Development, Innovation and Experimentation Department” (DRDIE – Département recherche-développement innovation et expérimentation). The department’s role is to foster innovation and carry out research in the field of education.

Resources and tools are made available to teachers so that they can try out innovative approaches, such as [the “experiment library” \(“expérithèque”\)](#), which lists all innovative and experimental projects implemented in schools. 5000 projects are listed in it. Some of them may be rewarded during [Innovation Days](#) in which innovative educational actions implemented in the context of calls for projects are rewarded and receive “Innovation Prizes”. Teachers can also receive further training during “Innovation Days”, which organise professional training modules for participants as well as conferences bringing together researchers, education professionals and school partners.

Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work

The Ministry of National Education has set up a programme of “educational actions” ([actions éducatives](#)), defined as actions “in **continuity of and complementary to educational action in the classroom, [promoting] collective and individual initiatives, [encouraging] crosscutting approaches and [contributing] to the development of partnerships**”. Educational actions under [the Circular bearing on the 2016/2017 Programme of Educational Actions in the Bulletin Officiel of 22 September 2016](#) are very much at the crossroads of formal, informal and non-formal education.

The educational action offer is organised into nine themes:

- Scientific, technical, industrial and entrepreneurial culture;
- Education in citizenship;
- Artistic and cultural education;
- Education in the environment and sustainable development;
- Media and information literacy;
- Language, literature and philosophy;
- History and memory;
- Sport, healthcare, safety and responsibility ;
- Research, innovation, experimentation, use of digital technology.

Implementation of such actions may rely on members of the [Ministry of National Education’s “Citizen Reserve” \(Réserve citoyenne\)](#), which is made up of bénévoles. They are carried out through organisation of competitions, multi-partner events such as the [“French young mathematicians tournament \(TFJM², Tournoi français des jeunes](#)

[mathématiciennes et mathématiciens](#)). the “Fête de la Science” (Science Festival) or the **“Cosmos à l'École” (Cosmos at School) project,** the result of a partnership between the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS – Centre national de recherche scientifique), the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (EONR) and French teachers.

6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media

National strategy

Enabling pupils to exercise their citizenship in a society of information, forming enlightened citizens capable of analysing and criticising the media and its content is one of the aims of the **Ministry of Education**, which has introduced “Media and information literacy” (EMI – Education aux médias et à l’information). The subject is incorporated into compulsory schooling programmes at primary and lower secondary schools – i.e. at cycles two, three and four ([Special Bulletin Officiel of 26 November 2015](#)). In its 1st section, the **Framework Law on the Future of Schools (loi d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'école de la République)** of 8 July 2013 (see *Eurydice Overall national education strategy and key objectives*) defines media literacy as scholastic training that “develops the knowledge, skills and culture required for the exercise of citizenship in the contemporary society of information and communication [...]”. This crosscutting subject was introduced at the start of the 2015/2016 school year and was incorporated into the common core of knowledge, skills and cultures in 2016.

Media literacy is based on training in the use of digital tools and resources and raising awareness of rights and duties connected with use of the internet and social networks. Skills acquired in the context of such education should be assessed progressively.

Among those involved in media literacy, the [Centre for Media and Information Literacy](#) (CLEMI - Centre pour l'éducation aux médias et à l'information), an operator under the Ministry of National Education, is tasked with implementing training actions promoting the use of information resources in education with a view to fostering pupils' better understanding of the world around them.

Young people's use of social networks has also been studied by the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (INJEP – Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire), which has published a variety of articles, including *Twitter, un outil de transformation dans le champ éducatif (Twitter, a tool for transformation in the field of education)* in February 2014. The [Canopé Network](#), a Ministry of National Education operator, provides teachers with a range of training courses and teaching resources in the fields of education in the media and digital education.

Media literacy and online safety through formal education

The main instrument made use of by the Minister of National Education, which aims to teach children how to decode information and show proof of vigilance with regard to media and the internet, is the **Media and information literacy (EMI – Education aux médias et à l'information) programme**, which aims to create “cybercitizens”. Its objectives are to:

- Develop pupils' **critical spirit and judgement**,
- Familiarise pupils with the world of media,
- Open pupils up to current affairs and the world,
- Have them discover **media diversity and plurality**,
- Teach them to process and **“decode” information**,
- Introduce them to **creating their own media**.

The themes tackled by media and information literacy are many and varied, as can be seen in the best practices listed by [institutional educational networks](#). For example:

History/geography classes in schools under the Dijon Education Authority studied:

- [“History as told by the press: Berlin and the Cold War” \(Histoire racontée par la presse: Berlin et la guerre froide\)](#)
- [“Does the web participate in democracy?” \(Le web participe-t-il à la démocratie?\)](#)

In language classes, themes dealt with include the “dangers” of the internet:

- [“Harassment over the internet” \(le harcèlement par internet\)](#)
- [“Media addiction” \(l’addiction aux media\)](#)
- [“Internet safety, social networks and harassment” \(Sécurité sur internet, media sociaux, harcèlement\)](#)

Teachers can obtain **training in media literacy**, which is now incorporated in disciplinary programmes. Various online schemes and resource centres have been set up, such as the [Parcours M@gistère](#), a tutored interactive ongoing training scheme intended for secondary school teachers and [MOOCs](#) (Massive Open Online Courses) on media literacy. In addition, the Centre for Media and Information Literacy (CLEMI - Centre pour l'éducation aux médias et à l'information) provides several types of educational interventions and accompaniments: teacher training, 5-day courses on media and information literacy, talks, activities and advice, roundtables devoted to media and information literacy, etc. As regards the dangers connected with internet use, teachers have an information and resource portal devoted to the subject available to them: [“Responsible Internet” \(Internet responsable\)](#), which, among other things, lists the regulatory texts on data protection, internet law, cyber-harassment, etc.

Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning

As Ministry of National Education partners, operators in non-formal education also foster media and information literacy via various initiatives. Associations have set up digital education projects in the context of Territorial Educational Projects (PEDTs – see 6.2 Cross-sectoral cooperation). Not all such initiatives have been inventoried but, as an example, [the Ligue de l'Enseignement \(Education League\) association](#) (in Loire-Atlantique) organises workshops on the internet and coding and has mounted an exhibition on the subject of image manipulation, *Images lie to us? Manipulating images or manipulating the public (“Les images nous mentent? Manipuler les images ou manipuler le public”)*. The State-approved association of [CÉMEAs \(Training Centres for Active Education Methods\)](#), which is recognised as being of public interest and which trains youth work professionals, also organises training and talks on media literacy.

Apart from this initiative and via the Youth Experimentation Fund (FEJ - Fond d'expérimentation pour la jeunesse, see 1.7 Evidence-based youth policies), the Ministry of Youth Affairs launched a call for projects in 2014 on **“Non-Formal Education for and by young people: Digital practices, innovative places and youth media”** with a view to fostering “cyber-citizenship” and creation of innovative places and youth media. 334 projects were presented by associations, local authorities and public institutions. [52 projects](#) were selected.

Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media

Preventing risks posed by new media is one of media and information literacy’s key focus areas.

Campaigns **combating cyber-harassment** have been implemented by the Ministry of National Education in partnership with the [e-Enfance \(e-Childhood\) association](#), which is of recognised public interest and approved by the Ministry of National Education. The

association raises young people's awareness on **best practices in digital technology** and **advises** parents and educational professionals on the uses of digital technology. It operates a free helpline, organises talks to secondary school pupils, and has launched a 2017/2018 "[Non au harcèlement](#)" ([No to Harassment](#)) awareness-raising campaign. In order to reach a wide audience, the campaign has been disseminated on [Facebook](#) and the Ministry of National Education's [website](#). Awareness-raising tools have also been created by pupils themselves, in competition for "[No to Harassment](#)" prizes rewarding the best posters and videos made by pupils.

In addition, in 2016, Family Allowance Funds and their partners, the Agricultural Mutual Assistance Association (MSA - Mutualité sociale agricole), the Ministry in charge Youth and the Ministry in charge of Families, Childhood and Women's Rights, launched a scheme across the country entitled "Promeneurs du Net, une présence éducative sur Internet" (Web Walkers, an educational presence on Internet). **A Web Walker is a youth professional, educator or youth worker** who, in addition to his/her salaried work, enters into contact with young people via the internet and social networks. He/she **listens to them and advises and supports them** in achieving their aims.

6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

Information providers / counselling structures

In France, the term "youth work" does not have a single definition and refers to a variety of actions and administrative contexts. According to the **National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE - Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques)**, youth work "*aims to bring about the social integration of certain categories of the population [including young people] and improve social relations between their members, and, more generally, promote cultural life in a community*".

The **youth work sector has seen many changes over the years**, in particular as regards the **training and qualification** of youth workers, accompanied by greater visibility of the youth work sector. Specialised websites and youth-worker fora, as well as public websites such as those run by local authorities, which provide youth activities and youth-worker training, participate in the dissemination of information on careers in youth work. Information, counselling and guidance bodies (See [3.4 Career Guidance and counselling](#)) such as [the National Office for Information on Education and the Professions](#) (ONISEP – Office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions) provide information on careers in youth work.

Among institutional websites, the [jeunes.gouv.fr](#) site promotes the Brevet d'Aptitude aux Fonctions d'Animateur (BAFA –Certificate of competency for youth workers), which enables its holders to supervise children and teenagers during their holidays and recreational activities, and such vocational certificates in youth work as the [Vocational Certificate in Youth, Non-Formal Education and Sport \(BPJEPS-Brevet Professionnel de la Jeunesse, de l'Éducation Populaire et du Sport\)](#).

Awareness raising initiatives

In order to promote public awareness on youth work and formal and non-formal education, the Ministry responsible for youth affairs has set up a [BAFA - BAFD \(Brevet d'aptitude aux fonctions de directeur / Certificate of competency in directorial functions\)](#) **mobile site** for tablets and smartphones, on which some 800,000 applicants are listed and 13 million registered. The site is intended for all young people likely to be interested in occasional supervision of holiday and leisure centres during school holidays and out-of-school periods, as well as in a career as a youth worker.

6.10 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

The education system is currently undergoing major reform instigated by the Government, which is determined to “build the school of trust”. Young people’s education and training is central to youth policies. A number of measures have been introduced modifying the secondary and higher education systems since the start of the 2017/2018 school year:

For primary and secondary education (incomplete list)

- Lowering the starting age for compulsory education age to 3 y/o
- Splitting CP and CE1 classes (first two years of primary education) in two in priority education networks:
- Organisation of national assessments at CP and CE1 levels and 1st^{year} of low secondary education (6ème) in order to identify pupils’ difficulties at the start of the year,
- Introduction of the “Devoirs faits” (Homework done) scheme, consisting of study time during which pupils who so wish can do their homework in the company of adults who can help them
- A new optional 2-hour course in choral singing, counting towards the France’s national certificate of secondary education (DNB – Diplôme national du brevet) as do all optional courses, was introduced at the start of the 2018/2019 school year.
- Reinforcing the practice of reading and the role of book in schools

Higher education

- Reform of the Baccalaureate and creation of “Parcoursup”, a new platform for access to higher education <http://www.parcoursup.fr/index.php?desc=quoi> replacing the “Admission Post Bac(APB)” platform created in 2009
- Reform of higher education **via the Plan Etudiants (Students Plan) launched in 2017, which aims to “transform undergraduate courses, foster students’ success” and consolidate complementarity between lycées and higher education institutions.**

For further information, see 1.3 **National Youth Strategy, goals and content**, and [Eurydice: 14 Ongoing Reforms and Policy Developments](#).

Ongoing debates

Academic assessments

For the 2018/2019 school year, the Ministry of National Education decided to organise standardised assessments of pupils at various levels of their schooling: CP, CE1, 6ème and 2nde (1st year of upper secondary education), in order in particular to “[have indicators available enabling measurement, at national level, of the education system’s performances \(évolutions \(temporal evolutions and international comparisons\)\)](#)”.

The assessments are currently causing a good deal of debate and reflection, in particular among the education community, pupils’ parents and parliamentarians. A Parliamentary Report entitled “*Evaluer l’école pour la réussite de tous*” (*Assessing schooling to ensure everyone succeeds*), which proposes reform of the assessment system, was published in September 2018.

7. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

11-30 year olds in France are in **good health overall**. This is what the young people themselves claim, according to the public survey on youth health, *Les comportements de santé des jeunes. Analyses du Baromètre santé 2010 [Health behaviour of young people. Analyses of the 2010 Health Survey]*. But although this population considers itself to be in good physical and mental health, young people's health is still a **concern** for the public authorities, not least because adolescence and young adulthood are a pivotal time when physiological and mental changes are taking place and **new behaviours and practices** are taking hold – including at-risk ones that are likely to become difficult to shake off.

A range of stakeholders are involved in public youth health policies in France (such as national and local public authorities, professionals in the health, education and social action spheres, associations aimed at combating social exclusion and youth-oriented centres), which usually form part of **comprehensive public health policies** but address issues that are specific to young people.

Mental health, preventing addictive behaviours, sexual health and accessing rights to health are the public authorities' main fields of action in terms of youth health.

Increasing the well-being of all young people and reducing health inequalities between them, **fostering access to rights** to health and improving **prevention policies**, when French public health policies have tended until now to give precedence to the **curative approach**, are all examples of challenges to which the national authorities and other youth advocates need to find answers.

7.1 General context

Main trends in the health conditions of young people

For more than twenty years, the aim of the French "Baromètre" surveys has been to monitor the main behaviours, attitudes and perceptions associated with risk-taking and the health of the French population: smoking, alcoholism, illegal drug use, nutrition, quality of life, etc. A specific version of this **extensive scientific survey**, conducted through interviews, has been produced on the subject of young people's health.

The study entitled "Youth health survey 2010" (Baromètre santé Jeunes 2010) by the agency Santé publique France is the largest ever study to have been carried out to date in terms of data on young people's health. It is based on a sample of 6,000 young people and gives an idea of the behaviours evident among 15 to 30 year olds – in all their diversity.

The survey shows that young people's health **differs depending on their social background, gender and age group** – but that 96% of 15-30 year olds claim to be in good health. Among other things, the survey describes health behaviour trends as regards diet, mental health, alcohol, smoking and drugs.

A new *health behavior survey (Health Barometer 2017)* was conducted by the Ipsos survey institute from January to July 2017 with a representative sample of 25,000 people aged 15 to 75 years. The first results are not yet public.

Dietary habits

Data from the study of the last "Nutrition survey 2008" (Baromètre nutrition 2008) shows that, when compared with adults, young French people **eat more or less healthily**; that said, distinct characteristics can be observed in terms of their dietary habits, which differ depending on their social background and gender. Young people consume a lot more drinks that are high in sugar – one of the factors associated with obesity – than adults do. What is more, obesity and overweight rates are still high

despite having levelled out. According to the *Bulletin épidémiologique hebdomadaire [Weekly Epidemiological Bulletin/BEH]* published in June 2017, the prevalence of obesity was 16% among boys and 18% among girls in 2015.

On a final note, obesity is higher among low-income families. What is clear from the data is that social inequalities have consequences on dietary practices: the children of blue-collar workers and employees do not eat fruit and vegetables as often as those born into higher socio-economic categories.

Mental health

Regarding mental health, according to the [Health Survey 2010](#) (Baromètre Santé 2010), almost one young person in ten (9%) admits to have suffered about of depression.

3.4% of 15-30 year olds claim to have considered suicide over the past twelve months.

0.9% of 15-30 year olds (0.5% of men and 1.3% of women) have attempted to commit suicide over the past twelve months. This makes **this age group the most concerned** by suicide – for women in particular. These figures have remained stable since 2000, however.

Alcohol

Alcohol consumption studies show that **consumption goes up with age**, and becomes more of a regular occurrence. Only 2.5% of 15-30 year olds drink alcohol on a daily basis. That said, between 15 and 30 years of age, monthly, one-off consumption rates and episodes of drunkenness during the year are very high – 25.5% and 38.6% respectively. Alcohol consumption appears to be **most common among males**. But the trends concerning all of the indicators are pointing to increasingly similar consumption between men and women. Similar levels are now particularly evident among the 20-25 year-old age group.

Smoking

According to the [European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs – ESPAD 2015](#), France ranks alongside those European countries with the highest smoking rates.

According to the [Health Survey 2016](#) (Baromètre Santé 2016), 15-30 year olds smoke the most. Note, however, that, between 2010 and 2016, daily smoking fell among 25-34 year-old males (from 47.9% to 41.4%) and 15-24 year-old females (from 30.0% to 25.2%). Smoking is also increasingly coming across as a **social marker**. In 2016, the prevalence of daily smoking rose among the lowest earners, whereas it fell among the highest earners. Disparities depending on qualifications are following the same trend, thus highlighting the widening social inequalities where smoking is concerned.

Drugs

According to the report *"Jeunes et Jeunes addiction"* [Young people and addiction] by [the OFDT - French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction \(Observatoire Français des Drogues et des Toxicomanies\)](#), published in December 2016, cannabis is far and away the most commonly tried and consumed illicit substance among the French population – young people in particular. It is widely available to adolescents, since 28% of 15 year olds and half of 17 year olds (47.8%) claim to have already smoked it. Cannabis use is higher among boys than girls. Other illicit psychotropic substances (such as amphetamines, cocaine or ecstasy for example) tend to be used in the latter years of adolescence and among young adults. The data shows that, among 18-25 year olds, ecstasy is the second most commonly consumed illicit substance (3.8%), after cannabis and ahead of cocaine (3.1%). More generally, as we get older such **drugs are used more seldom and for only limited periods of time**.

Sources:

- [Health Survey 2016 \(Baromètre Santé 2016\)](#)

- ["La santé des 15-30 ans. Une lecture du baromètre santé"](#) [*The health of 15-30 year olds. An analysis of the health survey*] *Agora débats/jeunesses* [*debates/youth forum*] 2013/1 (No. 63) INJEP, SciencePo Jeunesse.
- [European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs – ESPAD 2015.](#)

Physical exercise

Young people are the age group who do the most exercise, with 15-29 year olds exercising more than their elders: 46% of them play sport more than once a week, compared with 39% among 30-49 year olds. The most popular sports among young people are: swimming, football, cycling and jogging.

Main concepts

Several concepts and notions help to gain a clear idea of public health policies, particularly those focusing on young people. The notions of "Public Health", "general law" and "access to healthcare" define and characterise the French public health system.

Public Health

Youth health policies normally fall within the **Public Health** sphere – which goes beyond the scope of curative medicine and encompasses all the factors which contribute to the development and determination of individuals' health: including the social environment and living conditions (housing, employment, recreation, etc.). Part of the objectives of Public Health is **to limit health risks**, guarantee the very best quality of care and ensure the **greatest possible equality** among the population in terms of health. Public Health forms part of a general law health service.

General law health service

The French health service is governed by **general law**, which designates all of the health service to which any resident must have access, pursuant to the "right to health protection" as recognised by the [Preamble of the 1946 French Constitution](#). Since health comes under the general law system, it is therefore accessible to all; but the population is first required to become a member of a Compulsory Health Insurance Scheme: in this way they benefit from basic social cover. The range of available general law medical care is provided by both public facilities (hospitals, health centres, mother and child protection centres, etc.) and liberal medical practice (private clinics, physicians, etc.). In the general law health service, everyone is free to choose where they want to be treated.

"Access to health care"

Although health education and prevention do feature in the policies that the public authorities put into practice, the French health service is primarily based on a **curative approach** and access to health care. **Access to health care** means an individual's ability to access health resources and services.

It is influenced by social, economic (level of education, etc.), geographic, cultural and organisational factors which can either help or hinder a person in accessing such services. It is closely tied in with the notion of accessibility, which refers more **to the reimbursement of services**, but also the proximity or distance of healthcare services (medical cover, insurance, doctor's surgery, health centre, etc.). **Unequal access and accessibility** in terms of health care are issues that the public authorities need to address.

7.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Various stakeholders at various levels are involved in the governance of health policies.

1. At national level

The State is responsible for improving the population's health, particularly among its youngest citizens. It must do its utmost to ensure equality of people when it comes to health, to improve the quality of care and to promote public health. Several government departments play a part in drawing up and rolling out health policies: those responsible for health as well as labour, the economy and the budget.

Ministry for Solidarity and Health

At national level, it is [the Ministry for Solidarity and Health](#) which “drafts and implements Government policy in terms of solidarity, social cohesion, public health and organisation of the health service”. This Ministry is responsible for organising prevention and medical care. In liaison with the other competent departments, it writes and applies the rules governing the health protection policy.

Directorates of the Ministry for Solidarity and Health

This ministry is composed of several directorates/bodies whose remits may have to do with young people's health (list not exhaustive):

- The [DGS - General Directorate for Health \(Direction générale de la santé\)](#):

The DGS draws up, assesses and helps to deliver public health policy. With a sub-directorate for population health and chronic disease prevention, the DGS is particularly instrumental in designing youth health policy.

It has four main missions:

1. Preserving and improving the health of the population.
2. Protecting the population from national or international health threats.
3. Guaranteeing quality, safety and equality when accessing the health service.
4. Coordinating, overseeing and initiating networks of partners of the Ministry for Solidarity and Health.

- [DGOS - General Directorate for Healthcare Services \(Direction générale de l'offre de soins\)](#):

The DGOS organises the range of available medical care based on health policy objectives and priorities.

- [DGCS - General Directorate for Social Cohesion \(Direction générale de la cohésion sociale\)](#):

The DGCS is tasked with designing, managing and assessing public policy bearing on solidarity, social development and promoting equality. It coordinates **7 thematic public policies**:

1. Preventing and combating exclusion and poverty, developing social inclusion and the integration of people in vulnerable circumstances.
 2. Housing and access to housing for homeless or inadequately housed people.
 3. Independent living for disabled people.
 4. Independent living for elderly people.
 5. Family policy and protection of children and vulnerable persons.
 6. Women's rights and gender equality.
 7. Promoting innovation and social experimentation, particularly as part of the social and solidarity economy.
- [DREES - Department for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics \(Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques\)](#)

The DREES is part of the public statistics service. It is tasked with producing and disseminating knowledge about health policy and with guiding research policy. The DREES conducts surveys at regular intervals on young people's health and social conditions.

- [IGAS - General Social Affairs Inspectorate \(Inspection générale des affaires sociales\)](#);

The IGAS inspects, audits and assesses structures and policies.

- SGMAS (General Secretariat of Ministries of Social Affairs)

The General Secretariat of the Ministries of Social Affairs is responsible for the coordination of services and social public policies. It coordinates the joint work between the ministries and the territorial administrative services: (Regional Health Agency (ARS), Regional Directorate of Youth, Sports and Social Cohesion (DRJSCS) and Regional Directorates businesses, competition, consumption, labor and employment (DIRECCTE).

The General Secretariat is organized into four directorates, three delegations and an office. It has authority over the cross-cutting functions:

- The Finance, Purchasing and Services Department (DFAS),
- the Human Resources Department (HRD),
- the information systems department (DSI),
- the Directorate of Legal Affairs (DAJ),
- the Delegation for European and International Affairs (DAEI), for the fields solidarity - health and work
- the Delegation to information and communication (DICOM) for the solidarity - health and work fields
- the Office of Communication of Youth and Sports (BCOMJS) for the sports field
- the Delegation to the health information systems strategy (DSSIS) for the solidarity - health field.

The Ministry for Solidarity and Health undertakes partnerships with different operators and structures dedicated to health which play a part in crafting and delivering youth health policies. These operators take diverse legal forms (Agencies, associations, etc.).

Operators of the Ministry for Solidarity and Health contributing more specifically to the drafting and implementation of youth-oriented policies (non-exhaustive lists).

- The agency Santé publique France

[Santé publique France](#) is France's national public health agency, whose supervising Minister is the Minister for Solidarity and Health. The Agency was set up on 27 April 2016 by the [Law for modernising the health service](#). Its purpose is to protect the health of French citizens through epidemiological surveillance, general surveillance and prevention. It seeks to "know, explain, safeguard, protect and promote the population's health better" and has the status of being a centre of expertise in public health.

The Santé publique France agency came about through the merging of 3 public institutions: [InVS - the French Institute for Public Health Surveillance \(Institut de veille sanitaire\)](#), [EPRUS - the French Establishment for Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response \(Établissement de préparation et de réponse aux urgences sanitaires\)](#) and [INPES - the French Institute for Health Education and Prevention \(Institut national de prévention et d'éducation pour la santé\)](#).

It plays a key role in the planning stages of youth health policy by conducting studies and statistical qualitative surveys on youth health, among them ["the youth health survey" \(baromètre santé jeunes\)](#) which sheds light on the health of young French citizens (See [7.1 General context](#)).

- HCSP - French High Council for Public Health (Haut Conseil de la santé publique)

The HCSP was founded by the Law of 9 August 2004 on public health policy, set up in 2007. It is able to issue opinions and recommendations on young people's health and

well-being. It may be consulted by ministers and the chairpeople of Parliament's competent commissions.

The HCSP is tasked with:

1. "contributing to the drafting, annual monitoring and multiannual assessment of the National Health Strategy;
 2. providing the public authorities, in liaison with the health agencies, with the necessary expertise for managing health risks and designing and assessing health security and prevention strategies and policies;
 3. providing the public authorities with foresight and advice on public health issues;
 4. helping to craft a comprehensive and concerted children's health policy".
- MILDECA - Cross-government mission for combating drugs and addictive behaviours (Mission interministérielle de lutte contre les drogues et les conduites addictives)

Reporting to the Prime Minister, the [MILDECA](#) oversees and coordinates the **Government's action on combating drugs and addictive behaviours**. In this regard it shapes the Government's action plan against drugs and drug addiction and keeps an eye on its implementation. The MILDECA also devises schemes and policies for preventing and screening for [addictive behaviours in young people](#).

- PAEJ - Drop-in advice centres for young people (Points d'accueil et d'écoute Jeunes)

[PAEJs](#) are centres **for adolescents** and young adults (10-25 year olds) who are struggling socially and mentally vulnerable. They have a **preventive role** to play by welcoming, listening to, supporting, guiding and carrying out mediation with young people in at-risk situations. These centres must give young people the chance to talk about their problems and concerns and to gain the capacity for personal initiative and action again. They are merely **an intermediary** between the young person and the **general law** facilities of the health service (hospitals, child psychiatry, etc.). There are three types of drop-in centres:

1. Reception facilities for young people;
 2. Reception facilities for runaways and housing for minors;
 3. Reception facilities for vulnerable youths.
- SUMPPS - University Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Service (Service Universitaires de Médecine Préventive et de Promotion de la Santé)

The SUMPPS is a free university medical service available across all higher education institutions and open to all students.

Its purpose is **to ensure the physical well-being** of students throughout their studies. In addition to the medical check-up stipulated in the [Decree of 7 October 2008](#), its remit covers the whole of the prevention spectrum. In this respect, the SUMPPS conducts and organises health promotion, prevention and information campaigns with the focus on developing them jointly with students.

Students can come in on a one-to-one basis for **advice and information**, to check they are up-to-date with their jobs or to get a medical certificate. The service can also arrange **specialist (smoking, diet) and psychologist appointments**.

It is placed under the **authority of university bodies** (Boards of Trustees, Vice-Chancellor of universities). The SUMPPS mainly gets its funding from the State (Minister for Higher Education) and through the fees paid by students enrolled at the university, included in their tuition fees.

2. At regional level

Health policies are also governed at regional level. Over the past thirty years, several regional bodies have joined the healthcare system. This regionalisation process has been shored up by the [Law on reforming hospitals and on patients, health and local areas of 21 July 2009, known as the "HPST" Law](#).

- ARS - Regional health agencies (Agences régionales de santé)

The HPST Law of 21 July 2009 created [ARS - Regional Health Agencies](#), which are the authorities with overall responsibility for the health service at regional level. They are also tasked with: organising the range of available medical care in line with the population's needs, improving the coordination of care and setting up public health policies at regional level – particularly those aimed at young people. There are three activity strands involved in managing public health policy at regional level:

1. **"Health security and surveillance**, as well as health observation;
2. **Defining, financing and assessing** health promotion and prevention initiatives;
3. Anticipating and managing health emergencies.

Although they are required to implement national policy, ARSs can also, depending on the needs of their local populations, carry out regional projects and action plans for the benefit of young people.

Associations specialising in young people's health and well-being

Associations working to prevent risk behaviours and educate in health as well as medical-social facilities for young people play an instrumental role in governing youth health policy. Among these stakeholders, Centres for adolescents (Maisons des adolescents) and Family Planning (Planning familial) help to welcome and support the most vulnerable youths. (Non-exhaustive list)

- Centres for adolescents

Some medical-social facilities have been set up specifically to address youth well-being, one example being Centres for adolescents (See [4.7 Social Inclusion: Youth work providers in the field of social inclusion for young people](#)). These public facilities belong to the [National Association of Centres for Adolescents](#) (Association nationale des maisons des adolescents) and are committed to: "welcoming, listening to, informing and guiding socially struggling and mentally vulnerable youths". Some of them also provide medical care and appointments for adolescents, such as the [Maison de Solenn](#) in Paris, which is part of a hospital group and has a medical research centre specialising in common adolescent problems. Centres for adolescents are on the frontline when it comes to applying youth mental health policies.

- Family planning

Founded in 1956 initially as "La maternité heureuse", the association, which in 1960 became the "Mouvement Français pour Le Planning Familial" (MFPF), more commonly known as "[Le Planning Familial](#)", is a longstanding advocacy movement which "takes on board all sexual orientations and champions the right to contraception, abortion and sexuality education". **Accredited by the Ministry of National Education**, the association is a highly reputed partner that campaigns in secondary schools and sixth-form colleges (lycées). Pursuant to its [framework agreement](#) signed with the aforementioned Ministry, the association is tasked, among other things, with:

- "Delivering, in partnership with National Education staff, sexuality education and information sessions in schools;
- Developing programmes aimed at preventing sexist and sexual violence in schools by delving into the theme of relationships between girls and boys;
- Offering gynaecological appointments, contraception prescriptions, guidance, one-to-one sessions and monitoring on abortions and preventing STIs;
- Putting on training programmes on sexuality and gender-related issues for professionals in the health, social and educational sectors. This association is a member of the [International Planned Parenthood Federation \(IPPF\)](#).

Cross-sectorial cooperation

A range of different stakeholders are involved in the public health sphere: agencies, health insurance, health watchdog and private-practising professionals.

Implementation of youth health policy is therefore reliant on **intersectorial and interministerial cooperation** between the Ministry for Solidarity and Health and the other sectorial ministries, such public operators as Santé publique France, devolved ministerial departments, local authorities, associations and health facilities, as well as other partners. This cooperation can take official form by way of signed agreements between stakeholders (State and associations) for example and/or participation in workgroups.

The key role played by the [Ministry of Sport](#) in crafting policy aimed at promoting physical well-being must be highlighted, but the **Ministry of National Education** is also instrumental in this interministerial partnership and the roll-out of youth health policy. [Law No. 2016-41 of 26 January 2016 on modernising the French health service](#) underscores the role that schools and higher education institutions play in youth health policy by maintaining that: "[The mission of promoting health in schools] is carried out, across all educational institutions, ... by the local education authorities in liaison with the regional health agencies..." (Article 3)".

The DJEPVA - Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations (Direction de la jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et de la vie associative) (See 1.3 National Youth Strategy), currently under the Ministry of National Education's authority helps to develop information for young people on health matters via its Youth Information (Information Jeunesse) network.

Other institutions, like **the Regional health agencies** (see above [7.2 Governance](#)) can also put specific health policies into practice which call on the various stakeholders operating in their local area.

Moreover, territorial authorities (Regions, *Départements* and municipalities) also take action as regards public health through projects as well as medical-social facilities, **health centres and community clinics** or **partnership-based platforms**, one example being the [City-Health Workshops \(Ateliers santé ville\)](#), which bring together diverse health operators. These Workshops are local public initiatives seeking **to reduce social and territorial health inequalities** and to improve the health of **residents living in deprived urban neighbourhoods**, by facilitating the involvement and coordination of different stakeholders (associations, etc.) through the setup of medical social networks. Underpinning them is a partnership between the State, local authorities and Regional Health Agencies.

7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

National strategy(ies)

The drafting and implementation of health and well-being policies usually lead to **national plans being drawn up** that set out the **Government's priorities** in terms of health.

The draft National Health Sport Plan is most often part of the overall orientations of the National Health Strategy. Its goal is to promote physical activity and sport as "a determinant, in its own right, of health and well-being for all, all throughout life".

This strategy is articulated with other plans. The aim is to promote sport to all audiences, with a special focus on reducing social inequalities in access to physical activity and sport and the development of physical activity.

The National Sport-Health Strategy is more generally articulated around different axes:

- Promoting health and well-being through physical activity and sports
- The development and use of physical activity adapted to therapeutic aims
- Protecting the health of athletes and strengthening the safety of practices and practitioner

These multi-year strategies are then implemented at the regional level in partnership with the Regional Health Agencies.

Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

No programme has been set up to date that specifically encourages physical activity among young people. That said, there are schemes for developing sports practice among women and residents living in deprived urban neighbourhoods, set up by the Ministry of Sport in 2012.

Encouraging women to take up sport

In France, men have twice as much access to a sports pastime as women in some local areas. According to [the 2015 report](#) of the National Observatory for Urban Policy (Observatoire national de la politique de la ville), in deprived urban neighbourhoods where there are urban policy (politique de la ville) measures in place, the proportion of members of sports clubs is lower than in other urban neighbourhoods – especially where women are concerned: this proportion **exceeds 4%** for male members, **but is less than 3%** for female members.

To address this situation, in 2012 the Ministry of Sport organised a policy to develop sports practice among women – especially in deprived areas. This policy has resulted in **support being lent to associations** that promote sport and in the development of **community facilities**.

Encouraging sport practice in deprived urban neighbourhoods

In 2015, the Ministry of Sport launched the ["Citizen of sport" \(Citoyen du sport\)](#) scheme geared towards promoting **the benefits of sport in terms of citizenship**, preventing all forms of violence, antisocial behaviour and discrimination in sport and increasing access to regular sports practice, not least among young people who are the furthest removed from any access to sport as well as those living in deprived urban neighbourhoods. The scheme is being carried out through several initiatives including the programme ["I'm learning to Swim" \(J'apprends à nager\)](#), which provides free swimming lessons in deprived urban neighbourhoods and rural areas for children before they join secondary school. 70,000 children have been able to benefit so far.

Physical education in schools

Considered to be a factor that contributes to both social inclusion and to better health, sport is a **compulsory subject in school**, where it is known as EPS - physical education (éducation physique et sportive) in France. It is tailored to the different levels of schooling. Physical education is specified and defined in the official education programme of the consolidation cycle (last two years of primary school and first year of secondary school, programme officiel d'enseignement du cycle de consolidation) set out in [the Ruling of 9-11-2015 – French Official Journal \(Journal Officiel\) dated 24-11-2015](#), as well as the [Guidance and Planning Law no. 2013-595 of 8 July 2013 for restructuring French schools](#).

Teachers have a wide range of digital teaching aids for drawing up their lesson plans, including [the Ministry of National Education's Eduscol website](#) dedicated to EPS, which compiles information about competitions, programmes and news concerning physical education.

Primary education

In infant and primary schools, 108 hours a year are devoted to physical education, which equates to an average of three hours a week. EPS is intended to meet five learning outcomes (champs d'apprentissage):

1. Developing motor skills and learning to express yourself using your body;
2. Learning how to use methods and tools via exercise and sport;
3. Sharing rules and taking on roles and responsibilities;
4. Learning to keep fit through regular exercise;
5. Adopting an artistic and sporting physical culture.

Over and above developing motor skills and improving health, EPS must also play a part in ensuring the social inclusion of children by:

- Contributing to health education and enabling pupils to become more familiar with their own bodies;
- Contributing to "safety education" through controlled risk-taking;
- Teaching accountability and independence and passing on such ethical and social values as respecting rules, yourself and others.

Secondary schools

All secondary school pupils attend **compulsory weekly physical education classes** for four hours in total in Year 7 (first year) and three hours in all the other years. These classes are **assessed as part of the DNB - national general certificate of secondary education (Diplôme national du brevet)** via coursework.

Pupils can practise a range of activities out of a choice of 26 physical, sporting and artistic activities defined at national level. Under the Common Base of Knowledge and Skills (see [Eurydice: Introduction](#)) for example, all pupils must take swimming, or more specifically "learn how to swim".

At secondary-school level, physical education also serves a number of educational purposes:

- Following rules;
- Embarking on a project-based approach;
- Taking on responsibilities;
- Knowing and looking after yourself.

Sixth-form colleges (lycées)

All sixth-formers follow 2 hours of compulsory physical education (EPS) lessons a week. The EPS syllabus for general and technological lycées includes aspects relating to [the Guidance and Planning Law for the Future of Schools no. 2005-380 of 23 April 2005](#). It is intended to follow on from the syllabus taught at secondary school. EPS is assessed as part of A Levels (the Baccalauréat) via CCF – coursework (contrôle en cours de formation) during the final year. In addition, if students would like to devote more time to sports training, they have the possibility of choosing:

- Optional EPS lessons for 3 hours a week during all three years spent at lycée in France (equivalent to the last year of secondary school/Year 11 and the two years of sixth-form college), focusing on two activities;
- Exploratory lessons for 5 hours a week in Year 11, possibly then followed by additional teaching for 4 hours a week during the final cycle.

Collaboration and partnerships

Physical education (EPS) is underpinned by a partnership between the Ministry of National Education, various sports associations and the local authorities who lend their support in a variety of ways, such as through grants for school associations and

assistance with the running of sports facilities. This intersectorial collaboration takes shape particularly through "extracurricular sport" (sport scolaire).

Extracurricular sport

Over and above physical education, which is taught during national school hours and lessons, pupils are able to take **additional sports activities** on an "**extracurricular sports**" basis. This is organised by school-based sports associations that have been given a public service mission **for educational and social purposes**. Their role is clarified in the agreements they sign with the Ministry of National Education. These school partner associations are as follows:

- At primary level, the USEP – Sports Education Union for Primary Education (Union sportive de l'enseignement du premier degré);
- At secondary level, the [UNSS - National Union for Extracurricular Sport \(Union nationale du sport scolaire\)](#).

An extracurricular sports association must be set up in each secondary school and lycée. An integral component of the institution's strategic plan, it must contribute towards a thriving academic scene within the school.

It gives pupils the chance **to play one or more sports**, for 3 hours **each week**, all year round. This is in addition to physical education lessons. What is more, pupils are encouraged to get involved in the life of the sports association and in organising events and competitions. **School-based sports associations are federated within the UNSS**. In 2011, this Union had over a million members and 9,561 associations on its books. More than 33,000 physical education teachers are involved in running it.

Extracurricular sport at school level also provides opportunity to forge international partnerships and organise myriad cultural exchanges, particularly through exchanges with sports teams from institutions in other countries.

Sports academy (section sportive scolaire)

Sixth-formers attending lycée who are keen on taking their sports practice to another level, all the while following a regular academic curriculum, can choose to enrol in a sports academy. Students are selected on the basis of a sporting and academic application.

7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

National strategy(ies)

The national strategies drawn up by the Government and, more specifically, the health authorities, address health issues or problems that concern all French citizens: **sexual health, smoking, nutrition and chronic illnesses**. Whilst they are not specifically aimed at young people, more often than not they comprise measures or actions in favour of youth health. Several multiannual strategies or programmes seeking to improve the health of the general population, young people in particular, are under way. These deal with tobacco control, sexual health and cancer.

National programme for reducing smoking 2014-2019

Coordinated by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health, this programme is primarily aimed at: reducing daily smoking rates and **creating a smoke-free generation**.

The programme is rolled out by the ARS - regional health agencies on the basis of scientific studies and datasets provided by the [MILDECA - Cross-government mission for combating drugs and addictive behaviours \(mission interministérielle de lutte contre les drogues et les conduites addictives\)](#), Santé publique France agency and [OFDT - French Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction \(Observatoire Français des Drogues et des Toxicomanies\)](#).

The programme's actions are organised around three key priorities:

1. "Protecting young people";
2. "Helping smokers to stop";
3. "Acting on the tobacco economy".

[The national programme for reducing smoking](#) sets out a number of measures aimed at protecting young people, including:

- Creation of a plain pack with larger health warnings. Since 1 January 2017, sales of cigarettes and roll-your-own tobacco have only been authorised in plain packaging;
- Certain additives and flavours are banned;
- Tobacco product advertising at sales outlets is now prohibited;
- All customers must now be asked to show a form of ID that proves their age before buying tobacco;
- Prohibition on establishing new tobacconists around public and private schools alike, training centres and leisure centres for young people;
- Increase in the price of tobacco.

National sexual health strategy 2017-2030

The Ministry for Solidarity and Health has launched a comprehensive strategy to improve and promote the sexual health of French citizens, young people among them.

Between now and 2030, the measures outlined in the National sexual health strategy ([Stratégie nationale de santé sexuelle](#)) are aimed at:

- **"Making sexual health and sexuality education of the youngest generations a central feature of their health education pathways"**. Knowledge about biology as well as psychosocial skills (giving thought to mutual respect, gender equality between girls and boys, reciprocity and consent in relations with others) must be passed on to young people. Particular attention should be paid to under 15 year olds, 20% of whom are already sexually active;
- **"Strengthening the provision of prevention, screening and treatment services regarding sexual health around primary care professionals"**. This especially entails promoting the consultation on contraception and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for underage girls and boys;
- **"Keeping** a particularly close eye on vulnerable groups of people or those more exposed to HIV"
- **"Improving and diversifying** the prevention of STIs and HIV";
- **"Promoting research** in sexual health".

Cancer plan 2014-2019

[The Cancer plan 2014-2019](#) is the third plan to be devoted to this disease which affects some 355,000 people every year. The plan focuses on the importance of screening and prevention as well as the fight against inequalities in terms of treatment. The Cancer plan is a governmental initiative, coordinated by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health in partnership with a number of other health institutions including the National Cancer Institute (Institut national du cancer).

The plan sets out objectives bearing on young people:

- Adapt treatments for children, adolescents and young adults;
- Allow sufferers to continue their schooling and education;
- Meet the needs of children, adolescents and young adults suffering from cancer.

Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people

Young consumer consultations

Since 2005, a network of [consultations](#) has been set up across all French *départements* on the initiative of the Ministry for Solidarity and Health as part of the fight against drug addiction. These **consultations are free and anonymous**. They are intended for young consumers of psychoactive substances (such as cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, synthetic drugs and cocaine) as well as those showing signs of substance-free addictive behaviour (video games for example).

Some 30,000 people a year attend these consultations, three quarters (23,000) of whom are substance consumers and a quarter are family members or friends of consumers.

ARS – Regional Health Agency programmes

Apart from the initiatives making up national and comprehensive health strategies (nutrition, healthy lifestyles, etc.), health programmes specifically geared towards young people are set up at regional level by Regional Health Agencies, which can take action on a multiannual basis.

In 2016, in partnership with the Regional Health Agency, the [Alsace Champagne-Ardenne Lorraine Region](#) supported health prevention and education schemes for young people by launching a call for proposals called "Work on your health" (Travaille ta santé). The purpose of this was to improve quality of life for under 25s – not least their knowledge of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and diseases.

Funding

The Ministry for Solidarity and Health grants appropriations to the FIR – Regional Intervention Fund (Fonds d'Intervention Régional) for financing measures and trials that have been approved by the Regional Health Agencies. The FIRs are the latter's financial management instruments. Their resources come from an endowment provided by:

- the State;
- Basic compulsory health insurance schemes;
- the CNSA – National Solidarity Fund for Independent Living (Caisse Nationale de Solidarité pour l'Autonomie).

Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools

Schools have a **twofold mission: surveillance, monitoring** of pupils' health as well as providing them with **health education** and teaching them to take responsibility in light of the risks.

Citizenship and health education committee

In secondary schools, the [CESC - citizenship and health education committee](#) (comité d'éducation à la santé et à la citoyenneté) implements health education and measures on preventing violence in schools. This committee form part of the overall governance of each secondary school institution pursuant to the provisions of [Articles R 421-46](#) and [421-47](#) of the Education Code (Code de l'éducation). It is chaired by the school head or principal and can be made up of a number of different members: representatives of teaching staff, parents and pupils, representatives of the municipality and local authority, institutional partners (police or gendarmerie for example) and partner associations.

Health education at school is also achieved through the health education pathway.

The PES - health education pathway (parcours éducatif de santé)

This initiative is part of the legislation for restructuring French schools and has been reaffirmed by the legislation for modernising the French health service. It has been

implemented since the beginning of the 2016/2017 academic year and is explained in a "brief document that can be understood by all stakeholders" indicating what steps are being taken as regards pupils' health from primary school right through to sixth-form college (lycée). This document is also shared with families.

The [PES](#) is a three-pronged approach:

1. Health education;
2. Prevention, which bears on the risks and situations which children and adolescents might encounter depending on their age (addictive behaviours, diet, exercise, sexuality education, sexist and sexual violence, etc.);
3. Protection, in order to create an environment that is conducive to well-being.

A [Support Guide for the Health Education Pathway](#) has been drawn up by the Ministry of National Education for schools.

Health education

Health education is organised around priority themes:

- A healthy lifestyle, education in healthy eating and sport;
- Sexuality education, access to contraception and prevention of STIs and AIDS.
- Prevention of addictive behaviours;
- Prevention of "dangerous games" and contribution to the prevention and tackling of bullying at school;
- Prevention of mental health problems;
- Sexuality education in light of the risks.

Health education forms part of the Common Base of Knowledge and Skills and must be officially documented in the school's strategic plan. National health education guidelines are defined by [Circular no. 2011-216 of 2 December 2011, published in the BOEN - National Education Official Bulletin \(Bulletin officiel de l'éducation nationale\) no.46 of 15 December 2011.](#)

Sex and relationship education

Sexuality education in secondary schools and sixth-form colleges (*lycées*) is defined by Circular no. 2003-027 of 17 February 2003 entitled "[Éducation à la sexualité dans les écoles, les collèges et les lycées](#)" [education in primary schools, secondary schools and sixth-form colleges]

At lower and upper secondary level

At least **three annual sexuality education sessions are organised** in secondary schools and sixth-form colleges (*lycées*). These tie in with and round off the various subjects taught in lessons, **biology in particular**.

Their learning outcomes are as follows:

- "Provide pupils with objective information and scientific knowledge;
- Identify the different dimensions of sexuality: biological, emotional, cultural, ethical, social and legal;
- Develop critical thinking skills;
- Encourage responsible individual and collective behaviour (prevention, protection of yourself and others, the right to privacy and private life);
- Raise awareness of the specific information, aids and guidance available in and outside the school".

This education forms part of a **public health approach**:

- To prevent and reduce risks: unwanted early pregnancies, forced marriages, sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS;
- To crack down on homophobic and sexist behaviour as well as sexual violence;
- To promote gender equality.

Preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is a key priority of sexuality education.

Prevention of STIs, HIV/AIDS in particular, involves informing adolescents about the risks they run and what they can do to protect themselves.

It can be addressed during:

- Earth and Life Science lessons;
- the annual sexuality education sessions;
- educational actions enabling a cross-cutting approach to be taken to AIDS prevention.

Partnerships with associations are set up with a view to running information campaigns, for example with the association [Sidaction](#). [1 December, World AIDS Day](#) is another opportunity for staging prevention initiatives. What is more, there is at least one **condom vending machine** in every sixth-form college (lycée).

Initiatives to protect young people against sexual violence may also be organised in the context of this sexuality education, through awareness-raising actions.

Teaching aids

There is a range of resources to help teachers plan their sexuality education lessons: [the Sexuality Education portal on Éduscol](#).

Peer-to-peer education approaches

The peer-to-peer approach to health prevention **is gradually gaining ground** in France. It not only concerns young people but also the elderly and disadvantaged groups of people. It is an approach favoured by the voluntary organisation sector, but public actions aimed at promoting it have been carried out.

The "student-Health relay" (étudiant-relais Santé) scheme

This peer-to-peer approach has been materialised through the "student-Health relay" scheme introduced by the SUMPPS - University Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Services (Services Universitaires de Médecine Préventive et de Promotion de la Santé) in higher education institutions. The "**student-health relay**" is involved in prevention measures at university level. It provides information about health issues and refers its peers to the relevant points of contact. It represents the interface between the health and social workers, university institutions and students.

The "Onsexprime" website

In addition to the "student-Health relay" scheme, the website "[Onsexprime](#)", run by the agency Santé publique France (a public institution supervised by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health), has been designed on the basis of this peer-to-peer prevention approach. Onsexprime.fr seeks to paint a **reassuring picture of sexuality for adolescents and enable them to grasp the importance of prevention**.

The website publishes testimonies and retranscriptions of other adolescents' experiences. This content is supervised and approved by the website administrators, and some content is fictional. The website also has a forum where young people can chat and post comments on the subject of sexuality (these discussions are also moderated by the hosting website).

Assessing the peer-to-peer health education approach

The peer-to-peer education approach and initiatives using this practice **are not systematic**. But its impact and merits have been analysed by scientific research for all that. The INJEP - National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education (Institut national de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire) has written up studies and reports on the subject: "[L'éducation pour la santé par les pairs: une autre façon de prendre sa place dans la société](#)" [Peer-to-peer health education: another way of finding one's place in society], supervised by Yaëlle Amsellem-Mainguy and Éric Le Grand. These studies show

that the key to successful peer-to-peer health education is the "complementary" combination of peer education (between young people) and more "traditional" education involving health professionals (adults). Other studies look into the role and importance of the Internet in peer-to-peer education.

Collaboration and partnerships

Health policies within schools rely on collaboration between multiple partners: teaching staff, institutions and associations as well as pupils' parents. Health and social workers (school doctors or nurses for example) are also called on to help deliver these projects. The citizenship and health education committee is tasked with organising these partnerships.

External professionals can also share their expertise by developing initiatives in schools and producing educational resources: the Agency Santé publique France, MGEN - General Mutual Health Insurance Fund for National Education (Mutuelle générale de l'éducation nationale), the Red Cross, Planning familial, National Anti-Smoking Committee (Comité national contre le tabagisme), Crips - Regional AIDS prevention and information centres (Centres régionaux d'information et de prévention du sida), CPAM - Primary Health Insurance Fund (Caisse primaire d'assurance maladie), Anpa - National Association for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Addictions (Association nationale de prévention en alcoologie et addictologie), Sidaction (HIV prevention, etc).

When such experts are to hold regular [sessions](#) in school settings, an agreement must be signed. These partnerships are formally established, perhaps through a framework agreement. To give an example, in 2010 the agency Santé publique France signed a five-year framework agreement with the Ministry of National Education.

Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people

With a view to raising young people's awareness of risk factors and behaviours for health, the public authorities use a variety of tools to promote physical and mental well-being. This advocacy work can be carried out via structures dedicated to informing young people and national or local campaigns.

Information providers/counselling structures

Information providers and counselling structures belonging to the [Youth Information Network](#) (Réseau Information Jeunesse) (See 5.8 Information providers/counselling structures) help to raise young people's awareness of addictive and risk behaviour. These community structures are located in municipalities where youngsters can go directly without needing an appointment. They are coordinated at regional level by the CRIJ - regional youth information centres (centres régionaux de l'Information Jeunesse), which are subsidised by the devolved departments of the ministry in charge of youth and by the Regional Councils.

Some of the network's resources can be accessed on the website of the [Youth Documentation and Information Centre \(Centre d'information et de documentation Jeunesse\)](#), the central resource centre for the whole of the Youth Information network as well as the CRIJ for the Ile-de-France (Parisian) region.

All of the organisations working in favour of youth health (See 7.2 Governance), such as the associations partnered up with public authorities (**maisons des adolescents, missions locales**) as well as **SUMPPS**, placed under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education, play a part in raising young people's awareness.

These structures pass on and disseminate information about the health schemes available to young people and promote access to rights to health.

In some municipalities there is a **Youth health centre (Espace santé Jeunes)**. This is somewhere 11 to 25 year olds can come for advice and guidance on health and well-being issues. It is **free of charge, freely accessible** and guarantees **confidentiality** and **anonymity for the young people who come**. It is also a resource centre where young people can get information **about nutrition, contraception methods, infectious diseases (STIs), addictive substance consumption and suicide prevention**. Youth health centres can be set up by local authorities (Municipalities, *Département*) in partnership with associations.

Campaigns geared towards young people

Santé publique France is tasked with launching national risk behaviour prevention campaigns and screening campaigns. In 2015, the Agency and the Ministry for Solidarity and Health decided to launch [their HIV and STI screening campaign](#) "Screening is a way of taking care of your future" (Se faire dépister, c'est prendre soin de son avenir) on World AIDS Day. This message, which was as much for the wider community as it was for young people, was broadcast across several types of media: television, posters (seven visuals) and web banner ads. Events were also organised in connection with the campaign at eight busy train stations.

The Ministry of the Interior put together a **road safety campaign** to tackle **drink driving**: [Sam, "whoever's driving doesn't drink"](#) (Sam, celui qui conduit c'est celui qui ne boit pas). Launched in 2016 for the attention of young people, this campaign involved **the production and broadcasting of the short film "Samvenger"** about Sam (which stands for No Fatal Accidents/Sans Accident Mortel), a recurring character created in 2006 symbolising the young driver who decides not to drink on a night out and commits to driving his or her friends back home. This film was released on 3 August 2016 and shown at more than 2,600 cinemas as well as on the YouTube channel "[Sam, the designated driver](#)" (Sam, le conducteur désigné).

In 2018, this campaign was renewed.

Social network: <https://www.facebook.com/samleconducteurdesigne/>



CELUI QUI CONDUIT, C'EST CELUI QUI NE BOIT PAS.

7.5 Mental health

National strategy(ies)

The action plan "in favour of youth health and well-being"

The most recent governmental plan aimed at fostering **good health and well-being among all 11-21 year olds** was launched in **2016**. It sought to prevent mental health problems and suicides during teenage, a common period for depression and suicidal thoughts. Some of the **plan's measures** are still in progress.

The [action plan "in favour of youth health and well-being"](#) (en faveur du bien-être et de la santé des jeunes) was **drawn up jointly by the different government departments concerned**, including the [Ministry for Solidarity and Health](#), Ministry of National Education and Ministry of Sport,

It pursued four main thrusts:

1. "Enable professionals to better identify the signs of mental health problems or suffering in adolescents or young adults, and help these professionals to address such situations;

2. Find ways to ensure young people feel more supported and heard;
3. Guide young people more effectively towards the competent professionals, facilitate early advice and action and diversify and improve available treatments whilst reducing the inequalities in this area;
4. Develop shared monitoring of these problems and the emerging symptoms of contemporary adolescence."

Several key principles formed the cornerstone of this action plan:

- "multiple perspectives", in other words multidisciplinary collective efforts;
- "consideration of the potential of young people (the pupil) and their family";
- "early advice and action";
- "adaptation to different local areas".

Institutional framework

Several government departments as well as a range of institutional stakeholders and associations working in the health sphere rallied to the cause of this plan, which was coordinated by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health overall. This **interministerial and intersectorial cooperation** particularly took shape in the signature of framework partnership agreements between centres for adolescents (See [7.2 Administration and governance](#)) and the Ministry of National Education, which also signed an agreement with the Ministry for Solidarity and Health. The point of these agreements was to define the principles underpinning the cooperation developed as well as the plan's implementation in the local areas between the regional health agencies (ARS) and administrative national education bodies (local education authorities).

Assessment

As part of the drafting process for the "Youth health and well-being" plan, [a report](#) entitled "Mission Bien-être et santé des jeunes" [Youth health and well-being mission], presenting health policy analyses and outlining **recommendations** for developing youth well-being and management of the plan in favour of health and well-being, was also written up. Some of the initiatives arising out of the trials of the "health & well-being" plan have been assessed, pursuant to the [social security financing legislation for 2017](#).

Improving the mental health of young people

The plan in favour of youth health and well-being set up the following initiatives:

- trial [of reimbursement for psychologists for 16-21 year olds](#).

This concerns a free series of appointments with psychologists, which is being trialled for a three-year period. A doctor can decide to suggest the series to young people, up to a limit of ten sessions including two assessment sessions. It is reimbursed on behalf of the young person. The purpose of this initiative is **to bring mental health therapy within reach of the wider community**. The trial is defined in Article 68 of the [social security financing legislation for 2017](#).

- geo-localised information portal

A "thematic section" for young people is set to be added to the [Santé.fr portal](#), the public health information service currently being developed. This will be an online portal where young people can access reliable, geo-localised health information.

Not only that, but a number of trials aimed at fostering and nurturing well-being at school have been rolled out in secondary schools and sixth-form colleges (lycées) by teaching staff in liaison with their local education authority and regional health agencies in particular. These trials are listed in the **Directory of educational trials (Bibliothèque des expérimentations pédagogiques)**, "[l'expérithèque](#)".

Several guides have also been produced by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health and Ministry of National Education: "[Une école bienveillante face aux situations de mal-être](#)"

des élèves - Guide à l'attention des équipes éducatives des collèges et des lycées" [[A caring school environment to address pupils' mental health problems - Guide for the attention of lower and upper secondary teaching staff](#)]; "*Souffrances psychiques et troubles du développement chez l'enfant et l'adolescent - Guide de repérage à l'usage des infirmiers et assistants de service social de l'Éducation nationale*" [Mental suffering and developmental disorders in children and adolescents - Guide to detection for use by National Education social service assistants and nurses]; as well as the guide "*Agir sur le climat scolaire au collège et au lycée*" [Acting on the school climate at secondary school and sixth-form college].

7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

Policy framework

Youth health policies harnessing **mechanisms of early detection and signposting of mental problems or illness** primarily concern **children** which, over the **first six years of their life**, benefit [from compulsory prevention examinations](#) that are paid for by the French health insurance system (Assurance Maladie). The results of these examinations are recorded in the **personal health record** (carnet de santé) which is issued free of charge to all children when their birth is registered so as to keep track of their medical follow-up. Some of these compulsory examinations are organised at school (infant, primary or secondary school) with nurses, doctors, teachers and school counsellors **working together**.

The compulsory screenings and medical reviews stipulated in [Article L. 541-1 of the Education Code \(Code de l'éducation\)](#) take place during the child's **sixth and twelfth year**.

Health review: at age 6

When pupils turn 6, they must attend a medical check-up that tests for and diagnoses anything which might impact their learning capacity (cognitive, physical, linguistic or mental problems). This compulsory examination is stipulated in the [Public Health Code](#) (Code de la santé publique) and in [the Law of 5 March 2007 on child protection](#).

Health review: at age 12

The screening appointment in the child's twelfth year (by the nurse) includes:

- An interview with the adolescent particularly about his or her living conditions, perceived health, any difficulties, mental suffering and his or her pubertal development;
- Consideration of any comments gathered from parents and teachers;
- Verification that the child is up-to-date with his or her jabs;
- A growth & development examination;
- Screening of any sight problems;
- Screening of any hearing problems;
- Oral & dental health check;
- Recommendations and advice for the child, tailored depending on his or her questions and the examination's data.

Health review: for students

During their studies at a higher education institution, students may be asked to attend a compulsory prevention appointment organised by the SUMPPS - University Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine Service (Service Universitaires de Médecine Préventive et de Promotion de la Santé) at their institution, [in accordance with the law](#). Organisation of this check-up, which covers medical, psychological and social aspects, **is not systematic** but depends on higher education institutions.

Stakeholders

A great many stakeholders are involved in youth screening and appointment programmes and they usually work together through partnerships. Among the institutions and organisations, it would be worth highlighting the role played by the PMI - Mother & Child Protection (Protection maternelle et infantile) services, by school medical teams and preventive medical teams in higher education institutions (governed by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Higher Education) and by the prevention associations with support from the regional health agencies, which set up measures for screening and signposting mental problems and illness.

The PMI - Mother & Child Protection services

The PMI was created by [the Order of 2 November 1945](#) to combat maternal and infant mortality. Its services can be found in each *département*, managed by the local authority, the General Council (Conseil général). They deliver health protection for mothers and infants up to 6 years of age and can provide advice to future parents.

Medical care at school

The remit of National Education doctors is defined in [Circular no. 2001-013 of 12-01-2001](#). They organise individual prevention through health reviews as well as monitoring of school children with special needs. They provide advice about the schooling of disabled children.

Preventive medicine in higher education establishments

Health protection, screening and appointments for students are all carried out by the SUMPPS (see 7.2 [Cross-sectorial cooperation](#)) and help in particular to identify students with disabilities, enabling them to be offered assistance where necessary.

Regional health agencies and associations

Regional health agencies play a role in screening and signposting illness by rolling out national health plans across the regions as well as by supporting and financing prevention associations which promote and organise screenings. One such association in France is [Sida info service](#), which provides advice and information about sexual health, the risks and protection methods.

Local missions (missions locales)

Local missions are community-based public service centres. They are committed to helping 16 to 25 year olds integrate professionally and socially. These structures are recognised by the Law of 26 January 2016 on modernising the French health service as playing a role in identifying young people in particular need of support. Local missions must advance access to social rights, prevention and health care.

These structures are gathered within the National Union of Local Missions (UNML) whose mission is to represent the national network and to form the union of employers of the branch of Local Missions, reception centers, Information and Guidance (PAIO) and other social inclusion organizations.

Guidance to stakeholders

The public authorities carrying out youth advocacy missions produce an array of tools and guides for youth public health stakeholders, similar to the tools of the agency Santé publique France, such as the website [Fil santé jeunes](#) and its [Youth health portal](#) which provide answers to any health questions young people might ask. The portal brings together practical advice, useful addresses and telephone numbers enabling young people to talk anonymously with professionals, some examples being "Ecoute Cannabis", "Ecoute Alcool" and "Suicide écoute" – hotlines to discuss cannabis, alcohol or suicide concerns respectively.

The Youth health portal also refers to all of the institutional health and well-being promotion and education websites designed particularly for young people, including "[Drogue info Service](#)" (drugs) or "[Onsexprime](#)" (sexuality).

What is more, the agency Santé publique France also helps to develop associations' communication and promotion tools by subsidising some of their websites - "[Sida info service](#)" for example.

The Youth Compass

In order to facilitate young people's access to their rights and public services, the Government has formally launched in 2018 to develop the "[The Youth Compass](#)", a digital platform that will eventually enable young people to know the different rights and services available to them, social devices they can claim in their (geographical) environment.

The purpose of this tool is to inform and encourage young people to use their rights and the services, including health services intended for them.

Target groups

The compulsory health reviews and screenings delivered by the public authorities are **for all children and young people** attending school, even if more regular attention and monitoring are ensured for children suffering from chronic diseases and young people with disabilities. Screening for sexually transmitted infections is offered **to young prisoners** because of their increased vulnerability, especially since several Santé publique France [epidemiological reports](#) show that the prevalence of such infections seems to be higher among young prisoners than in the general population.

Funding

State-run public health policies are financed by a ministerial budget that has to **pass through Parliament**. This is the "health safety and prevention" programme overseen by the General Directorate of Health. Health policy funding is mainly provided by **health insurance, the State and local authorities** including the *Département* (county-level), which is instrumental in financing screening and consultation actions for children.

The three areas of the "health security and prevention" programme to which funding is allocated are:

1. Population health: reimbursement of contraception, support for national associations working to improve the health of the most vulnerable groups of people, etc.;
2. Prevention of chronic diseases and quality of life of patients: tackling addictive practices, youth mental health policies, support for sick children, etc.;
3. Prevention of environmental risks: nutrition, preventing hearing loss or lead poisoning for example.

Every year the regional health agencies (ARSs) launch **a campaign for drawing up contracts** and funding prevention action plans fronted by a variety of operators (associations, public institutions, local authorities, etc.). The ARSs allocate their resources chiefly to action plans that are geared towards **priority target groups** on the wrong side of the inequalities regarding access to medical care and health.

*Source: [Document de politique transversal. Projet de loi de finance pour 2017. Politique en faveur de la jeunesse](#) [Cross-cutting policy document. Draft finance law for 2017. Youth policy].

7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

Apart from **structures** that are specifically dedicated to **welcoming young people**, along the lines of the Local missions, SUMPPS (See [7.2 Cross-sectorial cooperation](#)) or centres for adolescents, there are no policies or programmes with the specific aim of making health facilities more youth friendly.

7.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

National Health Strategy 2018-2022 In 2018, the Government has developed a new National Health Strategy to be implemented until 2022. The measures in this plan are being implemented.

This strategy responds to the different mutations and "risks" (health) facing French society. It also takes into account the **persistence and importance of social and territorial inequalities in health**. The National Health Strategy 2018-2022 (SNS) has been the subject of consultation with health stakeholders and other relevant ministries (Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Overseas ...) and an online consultation with the public in November 2017 which has attracted 5,000 contributions from, among others, health professionals.

The national health strategy is based on several principles of action:

- "Developing an interdepartmental approach to health"
- "Setting up individual health courses"
- "Adapting actions to territories";
- "Simplifying the regulatory framework and give more flexibility to the actors on the ground";
- "Associating health democracy bodies upstream of decisions";
- "Respecting the principles of ethics, solidarity, transparency and independence";
- "Basing decisions on proven knowledge, independent assessments and expertise, health impact studies and research".

In addition, the strategy has a specific component to the health of "children, adolescents and young people".

Protecting the health of the "youngest" is indeed an important axis of public health policies, in particular because of the long-term positive effects on the child's development but also on its educational success.

The purpose of this specific component is to promote early and appropriate care, as well as to develop health education and risk prevention from an early age. It is composed of seven priority objectives:

1. "Accompanying parents from the prenatal period in learning the health issues of childhood and adolescence
2. Improving the early identification and management of childhood disorders and illnesses
3. Developing early childhood education for health and psychosocial skills
4. Preventing violence and abuse on children
5. Continue adapting the offer of care to the specificities of children and adolescents
6. Improving support and social integration of children with disabilities
7. Improving student health »

In addition, the national plan includes specific provisions for **overseas territories where social inequalities are significant**, with negative consequences for health. For example, the higher prevalence of chronic diseases (high blood pressure, diabetes) contributes to excess maternal perinatal and infant mortality: between 6 and 8 deaths per 1000 births in 2015 against 3 in the rest of *France hexagonale*. According to the

national survey on maternal deaths, 2010-2012 of Inserm and Agence France Public Health, the maternal mortality ratio in the overseas departments (DOM) is 4 times higher than in the Hexagon (See [glossary](#)).

Ongoing debates

Social Security Funding Bill 2019

Presented to the Cabinet of Ministers on October 10, 2018 by the Minister of Public Accounts and the Minister of Solidarity and Health, the bill was adopted in final reading by the National Assembly on December 3, 2018.

This draft text includes many measures such as the progressive implementation of the reimbursement of certain expenses (glasses, dentures and hearing aids) or the merger of complementary universal health cover (CMU-C) and the payment of complementary health (ACS) assistance.

This bill, which induces structural reforms of the health and care system in France, has given rise to numerous debates, particularly in parliament and trade unions.

8. CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

Democratising access to culture and artistic practices is the **major thrust underpinning** cultural youth policies aimed at **encouraging cultural participation on the part of young people**, which might be defined as the possibility of accessing culture, practising arts and expressing one's creativity; in other words, of being a cultural spectator, beneficiary and stakeholder all at once. These policies also set out to **familiarise** them with national heritage as well as to recognise and adapt **to new uses** and **cultural practices** among youngsters, particularly in the wake of the technological revolution.

These objectives are not just being pursued by the government departments concerned, particularly the **Ministry of Culture** which is instrumental in developing cultural initiatives for young people, but also by **local authorities, associations and cultural institutions** (such as museums, libraries and theatres) which play no small part in the cultural participation of youth through the development of initiatives and projects, financial assistance and building of cultural facilities. Policies bearing on creativity and culture involve **all sorts of stakeholders** with differing areas of expertise who usually work together, in a complementary fashion.

8.1 General context

Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

The most recent major surveys on the cultural participation of young people reveal certain cultural behavioural trends among French youngsters:

The [CNL – National Book Centre \(Centre national du livre\)](#), a public institution of the Ministry of Culture, conducted a national survey in 2016 on young people and how they relate to books and reading. The main findings of this [study](#) carried out among 7-19 year olds show that reading is **appealing and a regular activity**: 77% claim to enjoy reading, 78% read because they want to and devote around 3 hours a week to it for recreation. The study demonstrates **the impact of the family environment** on reading practices: the children who read the most have parents who are regular readers themselves and have a high level of education.

In 2018, the Centre conducted a national survey among young adults aged 15-25. The datasets show that:

- Most young people read, particularly because they want to, even though the majority of them read in the context of school, university or work.
- Wide disparities exist between young adult women and men: women read more readily because they want to compared with men, reading for an additional 1 hour 40 min a week and 3 more books a year.
- The family context influences how young people relate to reading: 15-25 year olds whose parents read regularly for themselves or for their children clearly read more than others.
- Digital activities leave a small amount of room in the day for reading*.
- Reading in "paper" format is favoured, even though other ways of reading are also popular among 15-25 year olds.
- 15-25 year olds mainly read novels. Fantasy, crime and science-fiction are primarily the most popular genres. Many young people also read graphic novels, comics and manga.

Source: **Study carried out on behalf of the CNL by Ipsos**: A. Vincent-Gérard and B. Vaysettes, [Les jeunes adultes et la lecture \[Young adults and reading\]](#).

On the other hand, 18-25 year-old visitors of national museums tend to come from a more working-class social background. This comes to light in the report *État de la jeunesse* [the State of youth], 2014, which points out the sociology of this group of visitors who benefit from museums' free admission policies.

18-25 year-old visitors to national museums are:

- mostly female (62%).
- 67% are still studying.
- 21% are already working.
- 8% are apprentices.
- 6% are jobseekers.

With respect to the social class they grew up in, young people **from the middle and "working" classes** (23% and 27% respectively) feature **just as strongly** as those from the middle-upper and upper classes (31% and 19% respectively). What becomes apparent is that young people harking from the working classes use museums' free admission schemes more than other youngsters.

The **Eurobarometers** make it possible to compare the uses and participation of young French people with other Europeans. According to the [Special Eurobarometer 399, "Cultural Access and Participation"](#), which the European Commission conducted in 2013, the cultural practice index score for young French people lies at a **medium level**. It is 17% for 15-24 year olds, compared with 26% for Europeans of the same age. Under 15s have the highest cultural practice index score (38%). The survey also identifies barriers to cultural access and participation: **lack of interest, too expensive, limited choice, lack of information**.

The datasets from these surveys yield an insight into the challenges to be addressed by cultural public youth policies: **removing these barriers** by sparking interest, making cultural facilities and practices more accessible and developing and promoting cultural opportunities.

Main concepts

Of the concepts most strongly characterising cultural public policy, it would be worth mentioning: "cultural democratisation", the notion of "heritage" and the concept "of cultural exception".

Cultural democratisation

"Cultural democratisation" defines the fact of making culture accessible to as many people as possible. This ambitious idea forms one of the cornerstones of cultural public policies – those of the Ministry of Culture more specifically. Ever since it was first created back in 1959, the latter has been "tasked with making the key works of humanity, and of France first and foremost, accessible to as many French citizens as possible [...]" in the words of the writer André Malraux, *ministre d'État*, who was entrusted with founding the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

For fifty years, this principle has long been the subject of debate: two approaches to democratisation have thus been pitted against each other, one so-called **"elitist"** approach which involves fostering access for all to "classical" or "erudite" culture, and the other involving **broadening the notion of culture** and **recognising cultural plurality** and equality (rural or urban culture for example). These debates have shaped and organised the crafting and implementation of cultural policy. Against this backdrop, some have preferred to talk of the concept of **"cultural democracy"** rather than of cultural democratisation. By cultural democracy, we mean the recognition ["of the diversity of aesthetic experiences"](#), cultures and the lack of any hierarchy between the latter.

These days, the various cultural stakeholders, the Ministry of Culture included, are seeking a **balance between these approaches**, especially when it comes to developing

cultural youth policies. Cultural democratisation and the recognition of new cultures (such as digital for example) remain at the heart of cultural youth initiatives.

Heritage

In a similar way to cultural democratisation, the notion of "**heritage**" is one of the **linchpins** of French cultural public policy. Heritage defines "the common legacy" of a society. For a long time confined to monuments and museums, the notion of heritage has since broadened to encompass intangible cultures. According to the [Ministry of Culture](#), these concern, for example "oral, musical or choreographic traditions, languages as vehicles of these traditions, traditional sports and games, festive events, local craft know-how and knowledge linked to what we know about nature or the universe". Heritage forms a distinct sector in its own right of cultural initiatives and policies, particularly those aimed at young people. Such initiatives set out to help young people to get personally to grips with heritage themselves.

Cultural exception

The notion of **cultural exception**, promoted by France since the 1980s, is based on the idea that culture is not [a commercial product like any other](#). Although its economic dimension does need to be taken into account, the role that culture plays in the personal development of each citizen as well as that of society means that this economic sector is a common good; this then requires the public authority's involvement to ensure there is an ongoing cultural offering that is of high-quality, varied and accessible to as many people as possible.

8.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Cultural policy, particularly when geared towards young people, calls on a number of different stakeholders who may either work separately or, on the other hand, closely together. The main bodies involved in advocating culture are the **government departments and their devolved departments, public cultural institutions, local authorities and associations**.

Stakeholder

Government departments

Two government departments are particularly active in drawing up and delivering cultural policy for **all** young people: the [Ministry of Culture](#) and the Ministry of National Education and Youth through **the DJEPVA - Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations** (Direction de jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et de la vie associative) in particular (which is placed under the authority of the Ministry of Education). Although they may participate in different ways through different activities, a good number of these activities rely on a cross-government, complementary partnership.

Other government departments also get involved alongside the Ministry of Culture in crafting policies or specific initiatives aimed at certain groups of youths: the **Ministry of Agriculture**, which sets up schemes for students at rural agricultural schools, and the **Ministry of Justice**, which comes up with programmes for young prisoners.

Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture's overarching mission is **to foster access to culture, the development and dissemination of cultural creation and to showcase French artistic creations**. That said, the Ministry is not the only key stakeholder in youth policies – it contributes jointly to them with the other government departments concerned with developing creativity and cultural participation among children and young adults.

The Ministry has a SCPCI - Service for the Coordination of Cultural Policies and Innovation (Service de la coordination des politiques culturelles et de l'innovation) attached to the General Secretariat (Secrétariat général), which is in charge of **cultural democratisation and artistic and cultural education, as well as of developing cultural practices for different population groups including young people**. The projects and policies initiated by the SCPCI are rolled out across the regions by the devolved departments: the DRACs - Regional Departments of Cultural Affairs (Directions régionales des affaires culturelles)

Under the authority of the Regional Prefect and *Département*-level Prefects, the latter departments have responsibility over the cultural policy defined by the Government within the Regions (local authority).

Ministry of National Education and Youth

Together with the Ministry of Culture, the [Ministry of National Education](#) contributes to schoolchildren's **artistic and cultural education** particularly through artistic teaching content as well as the promoting of art and culture to school groups.

DJEPVA - Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations (Direction de jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et de la vie associative)

The DJEPVA, which reports to the Ministry of National Education, plays a key role in promoting the associative initiative, especially in terms of non-formal education, by financially supporting associations and facilities that carry out cultural projects for young people. As such, the DJEPVA reaches out to a wide section of the public, beyond pupils and students alone, and (indirectly) supports a range of cultural youth projects.

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

The Ministry of Agriculture is something of a forerunner in terms of cultural youth policy, if you consider that, since the 1960s, agricultural learning paths taught "sociocultural education" (ESC), a multidisciplinary approach stemming from Non-Formal Education whose learning outcomes are open-mindedness, developing an inquisitive mind and independent thinking in young people.

Associations (NGOs)

Associations form **the cornerstones** of cultural youth policy. They put the democratisation of culture into practice, by organising cultural activities and familiarising youngsters in cultural and artistic practices. There are 267,000 associations with a cultural purpose (for all audiences) in France. They also provide employment: according [to the 2017 edition of Chiffres clés, statistiques de la culture et de la communication \[Key Figures at a Glance, Culture & Communications Statistics\]](#), 13% of these associations employ at least one employee, with other workers helping on a volunteer basis (*bénévolat*).

Cultural associations play an active part in rolling out youth policies under partnership agreements and contracts with the State (government and devolved departments) and local authorities. They also develop their own cultural and artistic projects.

Local authorities

In France, local authorities (Municipalities, Regions and *Départements*) are instrumental in cultural initiatives, for they consider such initiatives to form **a crucial part** of local development while also contributing to **social cohesion and territorial appeal**. What is more, they can make choices at their respective levels, on the basis of their remit in terms of cultural policy:

- Managing and financing libraries,
- Managing museums and giving grants to cinemas,
- Developing artistic education,
- Watching over and preserving movable cultural objects which are listed as historical monuments,

- Preserving and showcasing archives and organising archaeological departments.

With regard to cultural youth policies, the local authorities carry out and can bolster activities developed by the State (government and devolved departments), but they can also develop cultural strategies specifically tailored to the reality of their local areas.

Organisation of responsibilities

The Ministry of Culture may well be the **key impetus and decision-maker** behind national cultural initiatives, but it does not have the monopoly over cultural policy for all that: local authorities and associations alike play an equally important role in putting together and carrying out cultural youth projects and can also develop their own strategies for action. Cultural policy is also based on a number of partnerships between these different operators, however, who work together in setting up and regulating cultural youth initiatives.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Cross-sectorial cooperation is put into practice through the joint implementation of cultural youth projects between different ministerial departments. This may entail partnership agreements or agreement protocols:

The agreement between the DRACs - Regional Departments of Cultural Affairs (Directions régionales des affaires culturelles) and DRAAFs - Regional Departments of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (Directions Régionale de l'Agriculture, l'Alimentation et la Forêt).

These culture/agriculture agreements have a long history, since the first agreement was signed on 17 July 1990. It had two key objectives: "facilitate creation, dissemination and cultural and artistic practice in rural areas" and "enable rural populations to personally get to grips with the benefits of showcasing their heritage...".

The DRAC and DRAAF have run a joint artistic and cultural education policy at regional level through the "culture-agriculture" agreement. Signed for a three-year period, the "culture-agriculture" agreement sets out to develop cultural action and artistic education in rural and peri-urban areas. It encourages cultural facilities and local authorities to get involved in artistic and cultural projects conducted with the **public agricultural schools**. Such projects are primarily organised in connection with sociocultural education.

The strategic objectives of the agreements include:

- Fostering cultural and artistic education,
- Promoting new forms of cultural mediation,
- Supporting cultural and artistic creation.

One such example is the 2015-2017 "culture and agriculture" agreement signed by the [DRAAF and DRAC of the Pays-de-la-Loire Region](#) on the theme of [of professional gestures](#). In the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region meanwhile, a three-year partnership agreement between the DRAC, Local Education Authority and Festival d'Avignon was also signed in 2016.

8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

Existence of a national strategy

The role of the Ministry of Culture is to initiate, regulate and support cultural programmes, initiatives and policies aimed at young people, such as the Artistic and Cultural Education policy which is one of the Ministry's priorities, at the centre of cultural policies in favor of youth. The Artistic Cultural Education is covered by a [Charter for Artistic and Cultural Education \(charte pour l'Education artistique et culturelle\)](#). This

policy is based on an approach involving multiple partners, calling on the **Ministry of National Education**, local authorities and associations. It is aimed at fostering equal access for all schoolchildren to art through creative practice and the acquisition of an artistic culture.

Artistic and cultural education is now compulsory since the Guidance and Planning Law of 8 July 2013 for restructuring French schools. It is also enshrined as one of the fundamental missions of certified facilities under agreement with the Ministry of Culture (Law No. 2016-925 of 7 July 2016 on the freedom of creation, on architecture and on heritage).

In 2018, the Government has continued to strengthen artistic and cultural education by implementing a joint action plan between the Ministry of National Education and Youth and the Ministry of Culture. **The plan for "Arts and Culture in Schools" (plan À l'école des arts et de la culture) aims to provide children and young people between the ages of 3 and 18 with an artistic learning path.**

The plan should make arts and culture a key focus in schools as "this enables pupils to develop each of their five senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste) as well as their practical understanding of reality". The intention, therefore, is to provide an artistic, cultural and sensory education - EACS (éducation artistique, culturelle et sensorielle) at the different times in a child's day: at school, at after-school and during extracurricular activities. The measures contained in the plan are to be implemented from 2019 onwards.

Scope and contents

More broadly speaking, cultural youth policies are aimed at democratising culture and cultural practices, and at helping young people to get personally to grips with their cultural heritage.

The purpose of the Artistic and Cultural Education policy is "to foster, for each child, access to the arts and culture in all their forms, to help to build personal judgement and awareness with a view to developing critical thinking, and to endeavour to pass on the basics of a genuine humanist culture likely to open minds up to the diversity of arts and thought".

[Plan for "Arts and Culture in Schools" \(Plan "À l'école des arts et de la culture"\)](#)

The plan sets out to expand:

- children's artistic knowledge,
- artistic practice,
- encounters with artists and artworks.

It also sets out to reduce inequality of access to artistic practices for children. Access to cultural activities is highly unequal and is partly conditioned by the social environment and places where children and young people live. According to the Government, "developing the arts in schools and during after-school time falls under the requirement for Republican equality".

To achieve these objectives, the Ministries of Culture, and National Education and Youth, have identified three practices to be developed as a priority in primary and secondary schools from 2019 onwards:

1. musical practice,
2. reading (books),
3. the theatre.

Primary school

Each year, in primary schools, schoolchildren will have:

- devoted 10% of their school time to artistic learning and practices,

- experienced at least two cultural highlights:
 - a visit to a cultural establishment (museum, cinema, etc.),
 - a show (theatre, dance, concert, opera, circus arts),
 - a visit to a heritage monument (castle, church, washhouse, statue of Jesus on the cross, industrial heritage, etc.)
 - an encounter with a designer or performer,
- borrowed books from a school or community library each week,
- sung in their school choir.

Secondary schools

Each year, in lower secondary school, students will have:

- followed lessons in artistic education,
- taken a weekly oral skills class, which will help kick-start new momentum for drama groups to become widespread,
- experienced at least two cultural highlights: a visit to a cultural establishment (museum, cinema, etc.), a show (theatre, dance, concert, opera, circus arts), a visit to a heritage monument (castle, church, washhouse, statue of Jesus on the cross, industrial heritage, etc.), an encounter with a designer or performer,
- benefited from a workshop on media and information literacy,
- if they wish, sung in a choir and attended a weekly screening of a heritage film.

Each year, in upper secondary schools (*lycées*), students will be able to:

- take part in a research and creativity workshop (music, dance, theatre, etc.) in partnership with cultural networks,
- attend a weekly film showing.

In addition, as part of the [Wednesday Plan \(plan Mercredi\)](#), primary schoolchildren can benefit from cultural activities. The Wednesday Plan aims to provide children and families with a wide range of extracurricular activities and to **support the development of high-quality after-school clubs run by willing local authorities**.

Willing local authorities can organise "Wednesday Plans based 100% on Artistic and Cultural Education". In such cases, local authorities must ensure, for example, that all students receive the equivalent of 2 hours' artistic practice by developing an artistic learning path during after-school and extracurricular time that is in line with the school schedule.

Overview of the "Arts and Culture in Schools" plan of activities for the start of the 2019 school year: <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid134086/a-l-ecole-des-arts-et-de-la-culture.html>

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The responsible authorities depend on the initiatives or projects being rolled out for young people: they may be the Ministry of Culture, local authorities or may involve shared responsibility between the stakeholders concerned (See 8.2 [Cross-sectorial cooperation](#))

The Artistic and Cultural Education policy comes under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of National Education. The HCEAC - High Council for Artistic and Cultural Education (Haut Conseil de l'Éducation Artistique et Culturelle) also has a role to play.

Set up in November 2005 with a view to **promoting the arts** in schools, the HCEAC's missions encompass advice, discussions and foresight. Its role and members are defined by the [Decree of 28 August 2013](#). It now has 24 members appointed by ruling for a three-year term: representatives of government departments, local authorities (associations of elected representatives) and specialists appointed on account of their expertise (from the education or culture spheres for example).

The Council is chaired by the Minister of National Education and the Minister of Culture.

One of the Council's missions is to monitor the development and roll-out of artistic and cultural education policies in their various dimensions (educational, budgetary and partnership aspects).

Revisions/updates

In July 2017, the Government (formed on 21 June 2017) confirmed its commitment to giving 100% of children access to the artistic and cultural learning path. The Ministries of Culture, Education and Higher Education have underscored [the importance of artistic and cultural education](#) at all levels of education – from infant school right up to doctoral level – and above all their intention to draw particular attention to music, to promote the importance of books and reading in learning matters and to better factor in art and culture in teacher training courses.

In September 2018, the Government underscored the importance of artistic and cultural education by developing the plan for "**Arts and Culture in Schools**" (plan À l'école des arts et de la culture).

The President of the Republic has committed to ensuring that all children benefit from a "coherent and challenging cultural learning path", and to fulfilling the target of 100% that he would like to achieve through the a gradual implementation of the plan over the five-year term.

8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

Democratising the cultural participation of young people is a key priority of the State-led policies and policies run by local authorities and private not-for-profit structures alike (associations, foundations, etc.).

With a view to reducing obstacles to cultural access and participation, the Ministry of Culture has drawn up a **pricing policy and schemes for freely accessing the permanent collections of 50 national museums and national monuments**. Applicable since 4 April 2009, this measure applies to young EU residents under 26 years of age, as well as the whole of the educational community.

Cultural democratisation forms the backbone of what the Ministry of Culture does in a bid to reduce barriers to cultural access through "[cultural development](#)", a policy which results both in support for the cultural offering in its diversity and in actions that make culture more accessible to youngsters. Cultural development also extends to people who, because of their social situation, find themselves the most removed from culture: prisoners or socially or geographically excluded people for example. Disabled people and hospital patients also form target groups for cultural development policies.

Cultural development relies on **the partnership between** the Ministry of Culture, other government departments concerned, the artistic public institutions, cultural facilities, associations and non-formal education networks. It is materialised through an array of measures:

- Support for trials aimed at diversifying the ways in which culture can be accessed (*creative digital practices, amateur practices*);
- **Plan for Artistic and Cultural Education (plan pour l'éducation artistique et culturelle)** launched in 2008;
- **Setup of the endowment fund InPACT** (*Initiative for sharing culture [Initiative pour le partage culturel]*) in March 2012, bringing together a dozen businesses and sponsors, involving private and public funding alike. InPact supports innovative cultural initiatives aimed at people who are the furthest removed from culture.

These various initiatives are **financed by public funds** through the "Transmission of knowledge and democratisation of culture" (Transmission des savoirs et démocratisation de la culture) programme – more specifically the work package entitled: **support for democratisation and artistic and cultural education**, which had a budget of more than €54m in 2016. (Source: *2017 finance bill, Youth policy [Projet de loi de finances 2017, Politique en faveur de la jeunesse]*)

Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

The various stakeholders advocating cultural participation among young people promote cultural opportunities through a range of actions: events, national campaigns and use of information dissemination tools.

Internet users can find out what's on culture-wise on the institutional websites:

- The website <http://www.culture.fr/> of the Ministry of Culture gives the lowdown on cultural events in France and is also a resource base on art.
- The website <http://www.culture.fr/Juniors> shows what cultural events are happening for young people: family outings, exhibitions, performances for children, workshops in museums, releases of new cultural digital apps and so on.
- The DJEPVA website, <http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/interministeriel/loisirs/culture/>, also provides information on schemes for accessing culture that are particularly geared towards youngsters.

In addition to websites, so-called "general public" events are also put on to promote existing cultural opportunities.

Since 2015, the nationwide book festival for youngsters, "Partir en livre", has been organised by the CNL - National Book Centre (Centre national du livre) with input from the Youth Press and Book Salon (Salon du Livre et de la presse jeunesse). This free festival sets out to pass on enjoyment for reading as well as familiarise young people with the people and places involved in the book industry as a whole. Over 3,000 free events are held throughout mainland France and overseas territories as part of this festival.

Moreover, **youth information facilities**, forming as they do a France-wide Youth information network (See [2.7 Information providers](#) in [Raising awareness about Youth Volunteering Opportunities](#)) and under agreement with the Ministry of Youth, also play a part in promoting the national and local provision of cultural activities. These facilities (offices, youth information points) may sell tickets, give out **invitations and offer discounts for cultural events**.

Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

Raising young people's awareness of cultural heritage is one of the objectives of cultural associations and institutions, not least the Ministry of Culture which, through various initiatives, educates youngsters in history and history of art or in vocational training in the heritage occupations.

Such actions are run all year round. They aim at raising young people's awareness of the history of their society and of their living environment (heritage, architecture, landscape, etc.) through diverse approaches: **tours, workshops, encounters and personal accounts, local arts and craft practices, etc.** These projects may be embarked on during school time, initiated by teachers, or during children's free time, with their family or while attending holiday clubs and other "youth" facilities (Youth and cultural centres [Maison des jeunes et de la culture], etc.).

A whole host of stakeholders are involved in this education and promotion of heritage for young people: heritage sites, heritage advocacy associations, volunteering programmes (chantiers de bénévoles, see below) or [the network of Towns/Cities and Regions of Art](#)

[and Culture \(Villes et pays d'art et d'histoire\)](#), etc. All of these stakeholders are busy rolling out initiatives for accessing cultural heritage. Some examples include:

"That's my heritage!" (C'est mon patrimoine !)

"That's my heritage!" ([C'est mon patrimoine](#) !) is an initiative that has been organised by the Ministry of Culture for 6 to 18 year olds from deprived backgrounds since 2005.

It seeks to open children's and adolescents' eyes up to the sheer range of heritage out there through multidisciplinary extra-curricular activity programmes: workshops, dramatised tours, treasure hunts, readings, dance, performances or digital art practice. The activities put on are the result of a [call for proposals](#) for the attention of cultural stakeholders. Their project proposals can be legally overseen by a heritage institution or association. They must rely on several funding sources (local authorities, sponsors, etc.), with public subsidies only able to cover up to 80% of the provisional budget.

This scheme is overseen by the Ministry of Culture and [CGET - General Commission for Territorial Equality \(Commissariat Général à l'égalité des territoires\)](#), in partnership with social centres, youth and culture centres, holiday clubs and rural development associations (foyers ruraux). It is also rolled out via national or local partnerships with the [CMN - Centre for National Monuments \(Centre des monuments nationaux\)](#) and diverse institutions across the heritage spectrum. Local authorities can also get involved in this project, either by stumping up funding or by fronting projects. In 2015, more than 30,000 young people took part in this initiative.

Heritage volunteering programmes (chantiers patrimoniaux de bénévoles)

Several associations that protect and promote heritage, including [Rempart](#) and the CHAM - [Chantier Histoire Architecture Médiévale](#)), subsidised by the Ministries of Culture and Youth, organise international heritage restoration programmes on a volunteering basis (*bénévolat*).

Family visits

With a view to helping the most deprived families to enjoy heritage visits, the Ministry of Culture has published, with input from its General Directorate for Heritage (Direction générale des patrimoines), a guide on cultural family sightseeing: *Visiter en famille, socialisation et médiation des patrimoines [Family sightseeing, socialisation and mediation of heritage]* for the attention of cultural mediation professionals.

Europe-wide events

Over and above these national initiatives, some heritage promotion events have a European dimension, such as the [European Heritage Days](#), launched by the Council of Europe and organised jointly with the European Union. The theme of the 34th edition, taking place in September 2017, is youth.

In France, the European Heritage Days are organised by the Ministry of Culture. They call on the CMN, the network of Towns/Cities and Regions of Art and History, the Heritage Foundation (Fondation du Patrimoine) and heritage preservation associations present.

All of these initiatives are financed by public funding through the Heritage 175 (Patrimoine 175) programme, whose total budget in 2016 topped €73m.

(Source: *2017 finance law, Youth policy [Projet de loi de finances 2017, Politique en faveur de la jeunesse]*)

8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

Formal education

Formal education plays a prominent role in the acquisition of artistic and creative competences as well as cultural knowledge (history of art), particularly through artistic teaching content on the core curriculum up to lower secondary school level, which forms part of the broader programme of **artistic and cultural education**, implemented by National Education together with the Ministry of Culture.

This policy is enshrined in the Guidance and Planning Law of 8 July 2013 for restructuring French schools, which provides that artistic and cultural education in schools comprise "a learning path for all schoolchildren throughout their schooling", which is "implemented at local level" and in which "cultural and artistic stakeholders along with associations can [...] be involved". The importance of artistic and cultural education has been firmly established with the plan for "Arts and Culture in Schools (plan À l'école des arts et de la culture)". See 8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

The learning outcomes of artistic and cultural education are to:

Enable all schoolchildren to forge a rich and coherent personal culture throughout their schooling;

- Develop and increase their artistic practice;
- Enable encounters with artists and artworks and attendance of cultural venues.

This programme entails creating a **PEAC - artistic and cultural learning path** (parcours d'éducation artistique et culturelle) for primary and secondary schoolchildren. The point is to create complementary links between their different **educational moments: while at school, at after-school or holiday club and during extracurricular activities**. Three pillars underpin the learning path:

1. Artistic learning (part of the core curriculum up to lower secondary school level); musical education, visual and plastic arts (primary).
2. Encounters with artists and artworks through partnerships.
3. Artistic practices which may be hosted in establishments and be built on outside the establishment.
4. Monitoring of the child's artistic and cultural learning path *via* a digital platform: [FOLIOS](#) which enables formal documentation of learning paths, from primary school through to upper secondary schools (*lycées*). Schoolchildren have a [personal online section](#) on this platform, which teachers can access to update throughout their learning paths.

Other **actions** forming part of artistic and cultural education also foster the acquisition of creative and cultural competences. These include:

The culture correspondent (réfèrent culture)

In each upper secondary school (*lycée*), a teacher can put him- or herself forward for the position of school **culture correspondent (réfèrent culture)**. In this capacity, s/he is responsible for the school's cultural life and for coordinating partnerships. These correspondents keep an eye on and implement the cultural aspects of the school's strategic plan.

Partnership between the CNC - National Cinema Centre (centre national du cinéma) and National Education

The partnership between the CNC, Ministry of National Education and local authorities has been running for some twenty years now. It takes concrete form through the

projects "Primary school and the movies" (Ecole et cinéma), "Lower secondary school at the movies" (Collège au cinéma) and "Upper secondary school students at the movies" (Lycéens au cinéma) which, for the past twenty years or so, have given pupils and students the chance to watch high-quality heritage and contemporary films chosen with the CNC at partner cinemas. (This partnership is not systematic across all schools).

History of art lessons

History of art lessons are taught to all schoolchildren from primary school right through to upper secondary school level. They give the children insight into artworks from different artistic movements, periods and civilisations and, through a multidisciplinary approach, can be **taught by all willing teachers in the form of shared projects**. At lower secondary school, these lessons are delivered by history-geography, plastic arts and music teachers. Pupils also have digital resources to hand for rounding off or advancing their knowledge of history of art. Examples of such websites are:

- <http://histoiredesarts.culture.fr/>
- <https://www.monuments-nationaux.fr/>
- <http://www.expositions.education.fr/index.php> (Interactive filmed tours of major exhibitions)

Sociocultural education in agricultural schools

Students attending agricultural schools attached to the Ministry of Agriculture are able to attend "sociocultural education" (ESC) classes bearing on several spheres including the "cultural and artistic sphere".

The learning outcomes of classes in the "cultural and artistic sphere" are to nurture creativity and judgement and to educate in the different forms of expression and communication. The ESC teacher must give students the opportunity of studying works and of trying their hand at artistic techniques.

Cultural and artistic education can, in practice, involve:

- Implementing a range of individual and collective practices, giving precedence to the sensitive approach and work using the imagination;
- Developing projects incorporating the work of artists;
- Devising a cultural programme for the association of students or the school which fosters artistic mediation.

Non-formal education

Non-formal cultural education and action associations develop their own artistic and creative training programmes and projects. There is no system-wide programme or framework bearing on the development of cultural and creative skills.

Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields

Teachers

Training for "plastic arts and choir singing and music education" teachers is regulated by National Education. During their vocational training and study for the CAPES - postgraduate certificate in secondary teaching (certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second degré), "Plastic Arts" or "choir singing and music education" specialism, candidates must acquire both practical and theoretical knowledge. The training and certificate arrangements are defined by legislation:

- [Ruling of 19 April 2013, amended](#)
- [Ruling amendment of 30 March 2017](#)

Plastic arts

The learning outcomes of the plastic arts teacher training certificate (occupation) are to:

- Become well-versed in the history of artistic movements and techniques;
- Harness artistic culture and knowledge of plastic art;
- Situate and compare works of different kinds, from diverse periods, cultural and geographic areas;
- Analyse and explain changing practices in the plastic art sphere.

In addition, the examination for the certificate includes an artistic test aimed at "testing the candidate's artistic commitment, [...] inventiveness and creativeness [...] and know-how in terms of expression with plastic means".

Choir singing and music education

The CAPES - postgraduate certificate in secondary teaching, "Choir singing and music education" specialism has similar learning outcomes to the plastic arts specialism. The candidate must become well-versed in musical culture and technique and be able to pass musical knowledge on to students as well as develop a musical project.

Digital resources

Plastic arts, history of art and music teachers have all kinds of teaching aids to hand for drawing up their art lesson plans and learning how to teach their subjects. These resources can be found on the National Education website, [EDUSCOL](#), which, for each subject, outlines the learning outcomes and suggests teaching content.

What is more, when the teacher is also his or her school's **culture correspondent (référént culture)**, s/he receives specific training in **three main areas**: knowledge of the artistic and cultural education environment, proficiency in the partner-based project methodology and making optimum use of shared resources.

Cultural facilitators and educators

Training in the cultural facilitation occupations is overseen, for the administrative aspects, by the Ministries of Sport and Youth, which award the facilitation diplomas.

"Cultural facilitation" is defined by [the framework \(référentiel\)](#) of the BPJEPS - Vocational Certificate for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Sport (brevet professionnel de la jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et du sport), "cultural facilitation" specialism, which clarifies the role of the cultural facilitator.

This role must come within a non-formal education approach and foster "development of community ties", particularly for the people furthest removed from culture because of their social situation. In this regard, the facilitator designs and leads, completely independently, cultural events and projects with four key activities in mind:

1. Cultural guidance;
2. Organising group activities, developing expression and creativity;
3. Participation in implementing local partnerships in the realm of cultural facilitation;
4. Supporting amateur cultural practices and projects.

On the subject of **developing creativity**, the facilitator must carry out appropriate educational initiatives using technical tools and media that s/he is familiar with (in terms of their characteristics) thanks to the training modules.

The involvement of facilitators does not replace the need for artistic initiatives – rather, this should be complementary and serve as an invitation to take part in artistic and cultural practices.

Cultural sector professionals

The cultural sector spans several different occupations which can come under the private or public sector. Regarding cultural occupations coming under the administrative remit of the Ministry of Culture, these are listed in a [directory \(répertoire\)](#) of occupations of the

Ministry of Culture, which describes all of the occupations practised by ministerial staff according to activity and competence.

In the same way as central government across France does, the Ministry of Culture primarily recruits civil servants through **competitive examinations**. Fixed-term contracts are also available.

The **competitive exams are annual** and prepare candidates for occupations in different **sectors** (administrative, documentation, education, research, technical aspects and surveillance, art occupations). Examples of the types of occupation accessible *via* the competitive exams of the Ministry of Culture are:

- [State architect and urban planner](#)
- [Chief Architects of historic monuments](#)
- [Librarian](#)
- [Heritage curator](#)
- [Library stack staff](#)
- [Heritage and cultural services engineer](#)
- [Professor of national graduate schools of art](#)

The courses giving candidates access to these occupations can be taken in universities and public or private higher education institutions.

Providing quality access to creative environments

Municipalities are able to set about opening up creative spaces and venues within local areas.

[The 104](#)

For example, the Paris City Council has founded the artistic public institution [104](#), which is a centre for residencies, production and dissemination for the general public and artists from all over the world. As somewhere to come and give free rein to artistic practices, the 104 also hosts exhibitions, concerts and performing arts shows (dance, theatre, circus, etc.). This unregulated [open venue](#) can be accessed freely with no booking required by young people keen on practising their art with no restrictions. The 104 is financed by public funding, which includes grants allocated by the City of Paris, the institution's own income and an endowment fund relying on contributions from the institution's partner sponsors.

[MJC - Youth and culture centres \(Maisons de jeunes et de la culture\)](#)

MJCs are [symbolic venues](#) in terms of the cultural participation of young people. Set up in the postwar era, they really came into their own in the 1960s-'70s with the development of the non-formal education movement to which they still belong to this day.

Youth and culture centres are facilities open to all youths for practising cultural, artistic and recreational activities, developing their own artistic sensitivity and expression and forge their own identity as citizens. According to the confederation principles of MJCs, their role is "to help each [young person] to develop their sensitivity and intelligence and provide them with the cultural means necessary for them to thrive."

Indeed, **MJC - Youth and culture centres (Maisons de jeunes et de la culture)** are actually **Non-formal education** associations gathered within a [confederation](#). They can be found all over France, across more than 700 branches. They rely on contributions from their members as well as public subsidies (municipal and ministerial). They have been [accredited](#) by the Ministry of Youth as their work is recognised to be in the public interest. These centres also receive funding from **local authorities** *via* Multiannual objectives and resources agreements.

8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

In the context of some courses for cultural occupations, students are able to hone their business skills through cultural and creative activities. This is particularly the case for courses which prepare for the commercial cultural sectors (book, press, audiovisual and multimedia).

For example, Paris Fashion School, a co-creation of the ENSAD - National Graduate School for the Decorative Arts (Ecole nationale supérieure des Arts Décoratifs), which is a public higher education institution coming under the Ministry of Culture, the Ecole des MINES ParisTech and Paris-Dauphine University, offers courses combining "creativity, strategy and innovation". The Master's programmes include modules on production of materials and textiles, artistic and creative skills, marketing, strategy and start-ups as well as production, law and new materials. During their training, students take part in workshops with guest designers and also learn during placements.

It is worth mentioning that there are a large number of courses blending cultural practices with the development of business skills, but it is not possible to go into them all here, given their sheer number and diversity. Moreover, such courses are not all taught by the same establishments (private or public for example) and do not all have the same learning outcomes.

Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors

The Ministry of Culture and its DGMIC - General Directorate for Media and the Cultural Industries (Direction Générale des Médias et des Industries Culturelles) have helped to finance the setup of a collaborative platform "www.entreprendre-culture.fr", developed by the cultural entrepreneurship association MERCI - Undertaking in the Culture and Innovation Networks Mission (Collectif Mission Entreprendre dans les Réseaux de la Culture et de l'Innovation), founded in 2014. The members making up its network include structures which offer guidance to project leaders and entrepreneurs in the cultural sector.

The website www.entreprendre-culture.fr is a collaborative tool providing cultural entrepreneurs with a discussion forum and resource base on cultural entrepreneurship.

This tool offers a database which lists the cultural entrepreneurship guidance structures funded by the public authorities.

Through this database, it is possible to:

- Raise the profile [of project leaders](#) and cultural entrepreneurs in existing guidance structures in France,
- Promote the guidance schemes provided by the [guidance structures \(incubators\)](#).

The website also has an information section on cultural entrepreneurship, an events calendar, a newsletter for project leaders and cultural entrepreneurs and a professional area for the guidance structures.

In addition to the website, the Ministry of Culture has also set up an "[Undertake in Culture in 2018](#)" Forum ([Forum Entreprendre dans la Culture en 2018](#)), hosting conferences, workshops and an incubator for students, entrepreneurs and professionals in the Culture sector.

8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies

New technologies in support of creativity and innovation

All of the stakeholders working for the cultural benefit of young people, whether public (cultural institutions, local authorities, schools, etc.) or private (associations, businesses, etc.), bear in mind the central, regular role played by technology in the cultural practices of youngsters, who are now digital natives. Young people's use of technology is bringing with it far-reaching cultural change: different relationships with space and time and the transformation of cultural venues and devices, which are becoming ever more hybrid. Cultural stakeholders must therefore adapt to these upheavals, all the while encouraging wider use of these new technologies.

There is currently no single political strategy aimed at developing the practice and use of new technology in young people, or financial programme specific to the development of cultural practices with regard to technological innovation. The initiatives are led by a range of operators.

Ministry of Culture

The recognition and development of new technologies for disseminating cultural creation is one of the missions of the Ministry of Culture, which has a [Digital Innovation Department \(Département de l'innovation numérique\)](#) tasked with supporting trials bearing on digital technology, culture and heritage. These trials are rolled out through calls for innovative digital service proposals ([Appels à projets services numériques innovants](#)) not specifically intended for young people. One of the flagship projects seeking to develop the creative, enjoyable use of new technologies is the deployment of "Micro-folies" – cultural venues which combine social settings with places for disseminating cultural content and hosting creation workshops.

Micro-folies are original, **hybrids**, "**adaptable and hyperconnected**" cultural venues that can be laid out around modules (spaces): **a digital museum** displaying 250 works from national collections, in digital format, **a stage** where artists, associations and amateurs can come and rehearse and perform, **an eatery**, organised in liaison with local associations and **a workshop area**, equipped with 3D printers, computerised sewing machines and computers. Such spaces have been designed for children, as well as designers, artists, students and all local residents.

Led by the Ministry of Culture and coordinated by La [Villette](#), a cultural public institution supervised by the latter Ministry as well as the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Micro-folies can be rolled out across all territories by adapting to local contexts and relying in particular on local intermediaries in the territories (local authorities, associations, schools). Project leaders looking to set up Micro-folies are supported by La Villette.

In 2017, Micro-folies were deployed across 10 towns after the signature of a deployment agreement between the Public Institution of La Grande Halle de la Villette (Etablissement public de la Grande Halle de la Villette) and the Ministry of Culture. These alternative cultural venues have been set up in deprived urban areas or areas requiring regeneration (deprived neighbourhoods or former mining towns). The point of Micro-folies is to democratise digital and technological culture by bringing it right to the doorstep of local populations and young people, as well as encourage their participation and awaken and acknowledge their creativity.

Ministry of National Education

Since the 1990s, National Education has been developing programmes on information and communication technology (ICT) in education for teachers and students alike. The latter take media and information lessons in this respect (see 6.8 Media literacy and online safety through formal education). Furthermore, digital skill acquisition schemes have also been set up:

- The B2I - IT and Internet Certificate in upper secondary schools (Brevet informatique et Internet au lycée), which is aimed at certifying students' Internet and multimedia literacy;
- **PIX**, a public service for testing and certifying digital skills, which has been freely accessible since 2017 to Year 9 and 10 (third and fourth year of secondary school) students, upper secondary school students and higher education students, as well as any other person who might be interested.

Initiatives for delving deeper into the creative practice of new technologies in particular have also been rolled out:

- organisation of the "coding week" (semaine de la code) for promoting computer programming learning and discovery actions.
- the launch by some local education authorities of competitive examinations for schools on the creative and enjoyable use of digital technology: **Didactica digital competitive examination**, the 2016/2017 theme for which was "Work together in the digital age: collaborate, cooperate, create" (Faire ensemble à l'heure du numérique: collaborer, coopérer, créer).
- Beginner's classes in computer programming, such as the "[Scratch Aveyron](#)" project, which guides teachers and their students in programming techniques and teaches them how to create and disseminate their digital creations.

Participation in these initiatives is neither systematic nor compulsory, but depends on the school and their strategic plan.

Community and associative initiatives.

Local authorities have the possibility of shaping their own programmes and facilities bearing on developing the creative use of new technologies for young people. It would also be worth highlighting the role that associations play in developing cultural projects spanning new technologies, innovation and design, much like some *Fab labs* (shared workshops dedicated to digital fabrication). Moreover, these projects are usually **carried out jointly between local authorities, associations and institutional partners.**

Facilitating access to culture through new technologies

The use of technologies, particularly IT, as cultural participation tools, is promoted by the Ministry of Culture, which has put together a cultural mediation offering making use of new communication technologies:

- Such websites as [l'Histoire par l'image](#), [EduThèque](#) run by the Ministry of National Education,
- The portal www.histoiredesarts.culture.fr,
- Apps enabling [virtual tours](#),
- Digitisation of collections and their availability online via "[Joconde](#)"
- Visitors' aids that can be downloaded from computers or on smartphones, or the use of social media websites as mediation channels.
- The history of arts tool for organising and sharing research, [Renkan](#), which can be used to view, on knowledge maps, historical chronologies across some twenty artistic fields as well as thematic pathways with regard to an artist, an artwork, an art movement, a technique and so on.
- The [Culture Pass](#) (Pass culture)

The culture pass

The Culture Pass (Pass Culture) seeks to help young people to visit artistic venues and buy cultural objects. It consists of a location-based mobile app which a young person can use to see all the cultural events available in their area: a dance or drama class, an exhibition, a guided tour, a film showing, a concert, a book, or an archaeological excavation.

This is an innovation in the cultural sphere, developed according to the State Start-up (Start-up d'Etat) method in conjunction with young people, cultural stakeholders and local authorities.

A trial has been underway since the beginning of 2018 in 5 territories (Bas-Rhin, Seine-Saint-Denis, Hérault, Guyana, Finistère) involving around 500 young people and some one hundred structures offering activities. A trial phase began at the start of the 2018 school year, encompassing 10,000 recipients selected according to criteria for representativeness.

The final version will aim to reach the 800,000 young people or so who turn 18 each year.

8.8 Synergies and partnerships

Synergies between public policies and programmes

The Charter for artistic and cultural education (Charte pour l'éducation artistique et culturelle)

The production of the **Charter for artistic and cultural education (Charte pour l'éducation artistique et culturelle)** by the HCEAC - High Council for Artistic and Cultural Education (Haut Conseil de l'Éducation Artistique et Culturelle) presented in July 2016 is a clear sign of the intention to foster a **synergy, a complementary approach** between youth policies, particularly educational ones, and cultural policies in particular.

This [charter](#) brings together the stakeholders and institutions involved in artistic and cultural education around ten guiding principles for artistic and cultural education. It thus specifies that artistic education is not limited solely to the cultural sphere, but must also contribute to the "shaping and empowerment of the person and the citizen" and "factor in all of the stages in a young person's life" through an overall approach involving [joint responsibility](#) between the stakeholders delivering this education (local authorities, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Culture, etc.).

Culture and Health

For more than two decades now, the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Culture have been running a joint policy bearing on access to culture for the whole hospital community: patients, elderly people, families, health workers and social workers. This is called the **"Culture and health" (Culture et santé)** programme.

In the regions, the interministerial partnership is materialised through agreements signed between the DRACs - Regional Departments of Cultural Affairs (Directions régionales des affaires culturelles) and the [ARS - Regional Health Agencies](#) (Agences régionales de la santé). What is more, several hospitals have inserted cultural policies into their objectives and resource contracts.

For example, a new 2016-2019 agreement has been signed between the Parisian Region (Ile de France) DRAC and ARS. The partnership between the two devolved departments is particularly aimed at:

- "Fostering and supporting cultural and artistic activities in medical environments, through partnership with professional cultural structures – especially those in the local community."
- "Encouraging health facilities to define a long-term cultural policy shared by the whole of the local community that forms an integral part of its strategic plan."

Partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers

Cultural youth action is usually reliant on teamwork between various stakeholders: artists, cultural institutions, local and national authorities as well as associations. These partnerships are formally documented in contracts or agreements. It exists several types of contracts.

The CLEA - Local Artistic and Cultural Education Contract (Contrat local d'éducation artistique et culturelle) also referred to as the Territorial Artistic and Cultural Education Contract (CTEAC - Contrat territorial d'éducation artistique et culturelle)

CLEA/CTEA - Local or Territorial Artistic and Cultural Education Contracts (Contrats locaux ou territoriaux d'éducation artistique et culturelle) are contractual arrangements drawn up by the Ministry of Culture for three years, renewable, aimed at setting up and strengthening local artistic and cultural education policies. They are signed between local government (whether the Region, Département or municipality), the DRAC and the Ministry of National Education; other stakeholders can also climb aboard (foundation, association, holiday club, sociocultural centre, etc.).

CLEAs are tasked with helping children and young people in the local areas concerned to benefit from an artistic and cultural learning path.

They must enable children and young people (as well as the rest of the population) to:

1. Encounter artworks, artists and cultural venues
2. Try their hand at an artistic practice
3. Get personally to grips with artworks, resources and cultural venues in their community

Through CLEAs, **all of the partners** are invited to bring their **skills, remit** and resources to bear on organising a shared project with the aim of making artistic and cultural education **widely available**.

Artist-in-residence programmes

A school (whether at primary, lower secondary or upper secondary level) may host artists as part of residence programmes with a view to facilitating encounters with artwork and an artist. The **residence in schools** (circular no. 2010-032 of 5 March 2010) must also enable students to develop their own artistic practice and **shape their aesthetic judgement**. Further, it must also encourage them to find out about and visit places of creation.

These artist-in-residence programmes are grounded in partnerships, signed agreements (at the very least) between the school head or chief education officer, director of the national education *département*-level services, artist or head of an artistic team, and the head of the cultural structure where applicable.

8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

Democratising participation in culture is a key principle of the Ministry of Culture's policies which, through partnerships and funding for associations, helps to reduce the cultural access inequalities facing young people in difficult social circumstances.

Cultural participation of young prisoners

Since 2009, together with the Ministry of Culture, the Minister of Justice has undertaken cultural and artistic initiatives in PJJ - Judicial Youth Protection (Protection judiciaire de la jeunesse) institutions, on the basis of an agreement protocol (30 March 2009) bolstering

the partnership between the two institutions. This was updated with the "[circular of 3 May 2012 on the implementation of cultural projects](#) for prisoners and minors under protection". The young prisoners are 16-25 year olds subject to a restriction or deprivation of freedom measure in a penal institution.

The measures carried out in this context also set out to promote **citizenship and respect for oneself and others**. A great many projects all over France, including in its overseas territories, on a variety of themes (such as films, the plastic arts or theatre for example) have been rolled out.

Some examples include:

Des Cinés, la vie !

Since 2006, from October to February, young people living in the Parisian area or overseas, in the company of PJJ - Judicial Youth Protection (Protection judiciaire de la jeunesse) and film professionals get to attend workshops and watch a selection of short films on a given theme, talk about them and vote for the film of their choice. A ceremony is then organised at the Cinémathèque française so as to reward the director of the youngsters' favourite short film. The trophy award is designed by the young people themselves.

Alongside other stakeholders, the CGET - General Commission for Territorial Equality (Commissariat Général à l'égalité des territoires), [CNC - National Cinema Centre \(centre national de la cinématographie\)](#) and Ministry of Culture are involved in this project, which encourages the young participants to debate the societal issues and themes touched on in the films (relationships within the family, at work, with others, with one's own body, adolescence, or violence for example).

Bulles en fureur

Since 1992, the operation "Bulles en fureur" has got youngsters and professionals alike thinking about comics, writing and imagery. The brainchild of a PJJ educator, this is a literary prize awarded by adolescents during the Angoulême international comic festival. At the same time, if they like, adolescents have the chance to compete for the "young designers" (jeunes créateurs) prize by coming up with an artistic creation inspired by the selected comics.

The purpose of this project is to:

- "(Re)acquaint youngsters with the enjoyment of reading;
- Develop reading and proficiency in the written and spoken language;
- Spark discussion around questions to do with health, citizenship and otherness;
- Encourage youngsters to share their opinion on a work, compare it with others, hone their critical thinking and make choices;
- Combat illiteracy."

The awards ceremony of the 26th edition of the national operation "Bulles en fureur" was held in October 2017. More than 120 young people from all over France attended.

Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

A whole host of initiatives aimed at combating inequalities are conducted by stakeholders actively involved in promoting cultural youth policies, the ministries, their departments and cultural institutions (private or public), jointly with the associations and social structures.

Public initiatives (non-exhaustive list)

"A day off at Versailles" (Une journée de vacances à Versailles)

Public heritage institutions put on their own cultural access schemes for people from all walks of life, in keeping with the recommendations of the Ministry of Culture and its cultural development policy.

For instance, in 2016 the institution of [Château de Versailles](#) and Emerige Group (Sponsor) devised "A day off at Versailles" ([Une journée de vacances à Versailles](#)), an initiative giving Parisian children who don't get to go on holiday the opportunity to visit Château de Versailles in a special and altogether unprecedented way: actors in period dress, storytellers and mediators facilitate their visit. The children come face to face with heritage but also the contemporary showpieces in the Château. Based on a partnership with the holiday clubs across the Parisian municipalities, this initiative welcomed 2,500 children between the ages of 6 and 13 on 24 July 2017.

"Concerts de poche"

Travelling concerts with awareness-raising workshops to begin with are organised for pupils from deprived school neighbourhoods or from rural areas. This initiative is run by the association "[Les Concerts de Poche](#)" together with the Ministry of National Education, with support from the DRACs - Regional Departments of Cultural Affairs (Directions régionales des affaires culturelles).

The mission "Community living" (Vivre ensemble)

Since 2003 the Ministry of Culture has had a "**Community living**" (**Vivre ensemble**) **mission** for which 32 cultural institutions have clubbed together to reach out to groups of people who have little experience of cultural institutions. The aim is to turn culture into a tool for tackling exclusion, thereby playing a role in cultural democratisation.

To benefit the most vulnerable people (in social terms), the mission's institutions have chosen to work with intermediaries, who may be volunteers (*bénévoles*), social workers, educators or facilitators.

This mission achieves its aims by:

- Appointing a correspondent in each institution who forges personalised ties with these intermediaries,
- Hosting free discovery, awareness and training sessions,
- Carrying out appropriate mediation,
- Distributing visit preparatory and help guides,
- Adjusting rates.

The institutions and intermediaries meet at regular intervals to work on common subjects. They have particularly drawn up a joint charter for improving access to cultural institutions. Every year, they get together at a forum where they can chat and define new project priorities.

Associative initiative

Financed by the Ministry of Culture, [Culture du Cœur](#) works in favour of the cultural social and professional inclusion of people who are in socially vulnerable situations or excluded from society, by advocating the sharing of "common goods": culture, sport and recreation.

What Culture du cœur aims to do is: enhance access for vulnerable people to cultural, sporting and recreational amenities; with culture seen as a means for thriving on a personal level and becoming better integrated socially and professionally.

The association has a foothold all over France and relies on more than 5,000 cultural and sporting partners who cater for people on the sidelines by extending them invitations and/or offering awareness-raising and training actions: tours, encounters, debates and specific workshops for example. According to the association, some 600,000 invitations are up for grabs nationwide.

8.10 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

Oral skills programmes

With spoken proficiency being regarded as a skill that is essential for students' academic success, and, beyond that, for their professional and personal success, from the **beginning of the 2019 school year, all Year 10 (fourth year of secondary school) students will study an extra half hour of French a week (i.e. 4.5 hours) to work on oral expression, in particular to prepare for the oral test of the DNB – national general certificate of secondary education (Diplôme national du brevet).**

Devoting such time to oral skills opens up new impetus for creating a drama group in each lower secondary school.

The Culture Pass (Pass Culture)

The Government has launched an app dedicated to culture, which is currently being tested. See Culture Pass 8.7 Renforcer l'usage creative des nouvelles technologies / Fostering the creative use of new technologies

Ongoing debates

There are no current debates concerning cultural youth policies.

9. YOUTH AND THE WORLD

International cooperation through voluntary commitment and participation in the political process on the part of French youth has a long history, beginning after the Second World War and still very much alive today in a context of globalisation and far-reaching economic, social and environmental change where there are no few challenges to be met at world level, including climate change, inequalities in development between States and respect for international humanitarian rights.

Young people's interest in such global challenges is most often expressed by **international mobility** and their **participation in transnational citizenship and solidarity movements**, two forms of action encouraged by the public authorities, which intervene by developing international volunteering schemes and educational programmes in international solidarity, lending financial support to youth movements and, in certain contexts, fostering youth participation and involvement in the drafting of international policies.

Because it develops a sense of belonging to a global community, the public authorities also see international engagement as an instrument for social cohesion with ramifications at local and global levels alike.

However, there are still inequalities among France's youth as regards international engagement, which mostly concerns young people from more affluent backgrounds or who have received higher education. This being so, facilitating access to international engagement and volunteering for young people with fewer opportunities is an important issue in the eyes of public authorities (Ministries, local authorities, etc.) and associations (non-governmental organisations, youth movements, etc.) active in fostering international youth engagement.

9.1 General context

Main concepts

Young people's international engagement and cooperation policies are not based on any specific national concepts.

Youth interest in global issues

Recent surveys have enabled us to identify and describe French youth's levels of knowledge of and interest in global issues.

["The French and development aid policy" data.](#)

The AFD – French Agency for Development (*Agence Française de Développement*), which implements the government's development aid policy, conducts an annual survey on "[les Français et la politique d'aide au développement](#)" (The French and development aid policy).

The study carried out in 2018 by the opinion poll institute, Ipsos, on behalf of the AFD, assesses to what extent French people, and young people in particular, support public aid to development, as well as their knowledge and perception of such global issues as inequalities between States and the question of global warming.

The survey **reveals that 70% of French people are in favour of public aid to developing countries**. However, while French people support policies of solidarity towards countries in transition, there is scope for improvement in their knowledge of how development policy works and the challenges involved: **26% of them state they are well informed about French development policy**.

For 70% of French people, what will happen in developing countries over the next few years with regard to the economy, the climate and demography, for example, could have an impact on their lives in France.

Furthermore, French people question the effectiveness of development aid: **40% consider it to be effective, while 60% think the opposite is true.**

The study shows that there is engagement from young French people: 66% of French 15-25 year olds are involved or would like to get involved in a cause or project to help others. Their preferred choice of cause are those concerning the environment and sustainable development. **59% of young people also believe that citizens have a role to play in changing the world for the better.**

Data on youth engagement

More generally, other surveys have demonstrated French youth's interest in volunteering and *bénévolat*, including the [Baromètre de la Direction de la jeunesse, de la vie associative et de l'éducation populaire pour la jeunesse 2017](#).

Carried out by the French Research Centre for Studying and Observing Living Conditions CREDOC (Centre de recherches pour l'étude et l'observation des conditions de vie) in collaboration with the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal Education INJEP at the request of the DJEPVA – Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations, the survey shows that youth volunteering has been increasing since 2016.

In 2017, 32% of 18-30 year olds were willing to give their time to support volunteering activities. This proportion is slightly higher compared with 2016. The study also indicates that the potential for youth engagement is stable.

Data on international youth volunteering

In 2017, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which funds several international volunteering schemes, published a briefing note on statistics relating to the various forms of volunteering schemes supported by the Ministry in charge of foreign affairs:

- "At 31 December 2016, 1,908 volunteers were recorded".
- "The distribution between men and women was 40/60%".
- "While 39% of volunteers were over 30 years old, most of them were young people, young women in particular. This distribution has not significantly changed compared with previous years".
- "90% of volunteers were French nationals, with the rest coming from around 50 different countries".
- "Volunteer host countries were mainly located in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 45% of volunteers, while 30% were hosted in Asia and the rest in America and North Africa".
- "Where the academic profile of international solidarity volunteers is concerned, 66% were educated to Master's level or above, which is a high level of education".

For further information on youth engagement, see [Chapter 2 Voluntary activities](#).

Data on French students' international mobility

The success of the European ERASMUS+ education programme bears witness to French students' interest in learner mobility on the international scene. Since its creation in 1987 up to 2017, over a million people (students, teachers...) have benefited from such programmes (Education and Training components). France is the second country for Erasmus+ student mobility in Europe (2014 data) and outside Europe (2016 data).

Source: Press release, [Erasmus fête ses 30 ans \(Erasmus celebrates its 30th anniversary\)](#)

Data on youth expatriation

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs', at 31 December 2017, the number of people listed in the Register of French Citizens maintained by the consulates was 1,821,519, which is an increase of 2.2% compared with 2016. The overall number of French people living abroad is estimated to be between 2 and 2.5 million, including those not listed in

the Register. The breakdown of French people registered by gender, geographical area and age group is as follows:

- 50.1% listed on the Register in 2017 were women.

Women were less present in Asia/Oceania (42.2%) and more present in the Member States of the European Union (53.4%).

- 34% of those listed were under 25 years old, while 51% were between 25 and 60 years old.

9.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Projects and policies promoting young people's interest in the global issues and challenges of tomorrow's world mobilise a great many stakeholders, including ministries, public operators and local authorities, along with associations, non-governmental organisations and movements involved in international development or solidarity education. Such interest groups usually work collaboratively, especially when it is a case of implementing volunteering schemes. However, according to the 2015 *Rapport d'évaluation des politiques publiques portant sur l'engagement citoyen international des jeunes* (Report on [assessment of public policies bearing on young people's international civic engagement](#)) drafted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' and Ministry of Youth Affairs' General Inspectorates, governance of such policies is **"fragmented" but in the process of being structured.**

Public stakeholders

Various government authorities are active in the field of youth engagement in international solidarity, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, all of which play a particularly active role as they are responsible for developing, promoting, implementing and supervising international solidarity schemes and, more specifically, international youth volunteering schemes.

Ministries

Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs

The Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs is active in promoting international youth engagement through a range of international volunteering schemes and organisation of events bearing on global issues, in particular through its DGM – Directorate General for Globalisation, Culture, Education and International Development (*Direction générale de la mondialisation, de la culture, de l'enseignement et du développement international*) and more specifically the DAECT – **Delegation for External Action by Local Authorities (Délégation pour l'action extérieure des collectivités territoriales)**, one of the DGM's departments. The DAECT fosters collaboration between French and foreign local authorities in carrying out collaborative projects in the fields of culture, sustainable development, education, youth and economic development. It enlists the help of a National Council for Decentralised Cooperation which aims to share a common vision of internationalisation of local authorities between these latter and the ministries concerned.

The National Council for Development and International Solidarity

The CNDSI – National Council for Development and International Solidarity (*Conseil national pour le développement et la solidarité internationale*) – provides a framework for dialogue and regular concertation between all development and international solidarity stakeholders on guidelines for development policy.

The 53 prominent figures that make up the CNDSI are divided into groups representing the various components of civil society: NGOs, unions, employers, businesses, members

of parliament, local authorities, universities and research centres. An eighth group composed of prominent foreign figures rounds out the Council, which is chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Ministry of National Education and the Ministry in charge of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

The Ministry of National Education and the Ministry responsible for Higher Education help arouse young people's interest in global issues through school programmes and materials as well as by enabling young people to experience international mobility via the [European Erasmus +](#) programme in which they participate.

For the 2014-2020 period, the Erasmus+ programme for education and training is focusing on the following objectives:

- Developing student mobility with a view to ensuring that 20% of all higher education graduates carry out a mobility during the course of their studies;
- Ensuring that at least 6% of 18-34 y/o vocational education and training graduates carry out a study or training period abroad;
- Bringing the school dropout rate down to below 10%

Moreover, facilitating the mobility of the most underprivileged young people is one of the strategic objectives of the Erasmus+ programme, in particular that of the Erasmus+ France/Education & Training and Youth & Sport (Erasmus+ France/Education Formation et Jeunesse & Sport) agencies. For example, 4 out of 10 Erasmus+ students receive a scholarship.

This agency has also been given responsibility for implementing the new European Solidarity Corps programme.

The Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs' DJEPVA – Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisations (*Direction de la jeunesse, de l'éducation populaire et de la vie associative*)

The **DJEPVA**, which is attached to the Ministry of National Education (see Chapter 1.4 Youth policy decision-making), fosters the development of bilateral exchanges and multilateral cooperation programmes in favour of youth, in particular through provision of funding and development of mobility projects. It also oversees the activities of bilateral youth offices (the Franco-German Youth Office and the Franco-Quebecois Youth Office) and participates in the drafting and implementation of cooperation policies in the field of youth.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition

Agricultural education, which comes under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, encourages international youth engagement and cooperation through international student exchange policies, drawing in particular on the world's geographical networks: 12 networks in all facilitate cooperation with the countries of the Maghreb, America, Africa and Asia.

Depending on the global issues involved, other ministries may participate in the drafting of international youth engagement policies, including the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition, which implements government policy on sustainable development, the environment (protection and promotion of nature and biodiversity in particular) and countering global warming.

Public operators

Either on its own or in collaboration with other government agencies, the Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs oversees the various operators working to promote international engagement, in particular on the part of young people, including:

The French Agency for Development

The AFD – French Agency for Development (*Agence française de développement*), is a public institution that plays a key role in France's cooperation policy. It is under the joint supervision of the Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, and the Ministry for Overseas France. The AFD is tasked with promoting economic and social development in the so-called Southern countries and French Overseas territories. It funds projects, programmes and studies and lends its support to partner countries in the implementation of projects combating poverty and promoting economic development, education, etc.

France Volontaires

Set up in 2009, [France Volontaires](#) is a platform for international solidarity volunteering schemes, which promotes, develops and implements the various forms of engagement involved in VIESs – international exchange and solidarity volunteering schemes (*volontariats internationaux d'échange et de solidarité*). The platform also acts as an international volunteering observatory and is tasked with finding opportunities for and providing information and guidance to those wishing to volunteer. In addition, it is a member of the Civic Service Agency Public Interest Grouping (*Groupement d'Intérêt Public de l'Agence du Service Civique*) and contributes to the development of Civic Service as part of its international commitments.

The French Institute

The French Institute (*Institut Français*) comes under the aegis of the [Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs](#) and the [Ministry of Culture](#). It is responsible for developing French cultural action on the international scene via a range of actions including:

- Promoting international artistic exchanges;
- Supporting cultural development in Southern countries;
- Encouraging dissemination and learning of the French language;
- Developing dialogue between cultures via organisation of “seasons”, “years” and “festivals” in France and abroad;
- Fostering international mobility on the part of creators;
- Coordinating and encouraging international action with French local authorities;
- Acting on behalf of cultural diversity at European level through European and multilateral partnerships.

The Civic Service Agency

[The Civic Service Agency](#) (*Agence du Service Civique*) is a public operator under the aegis of the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs; it provides all young people between 16 and 25 y/o, and up to 30 y/o for the disabled, with the opportunity to commit themselves, if they so wish, to a general interest mission in France or elsewhere. Civic service may be carried out in France or abroad. Since 2010, over 2000 volunteers have worked in over 90 countries across the world, with a total of 1,101 missions undertaken in 94 countries in 2015 (For further information, see *Chapter 2 Voluntary Activities*)

The Erasmus+ France / Education and Training Agency

The Erasmus+ France / Education and Training Agency is responsible for promotion and management of a number of European programmes and schemes, including Erasmus+ education and training components. The agency comes under the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and the Ministry of Labour.

The main aims of such European programmes are to enable young people to contribute to multilingualism and European citizenship. By 2020, over 500,000 French citizens and four million Europeans should have benefited from individual mobilities or strategic partnerships in the context of Erasmus+.

The Agency is the national representative for the [Europass](#), [AEFA – European Agenda for Adult Education and Training \(Agenda Européen pour l'Education et la Formation des Adultes\)](#), [Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe \(EPALE\)](#), and [ECVET](#) (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training) schemes. It is also acts to provide information within the [Euroguidance](#) network.

Erasmus+ Youth and Sports Agency

Just like its counterpart devoted to education, the Erasmus+ Youth Agency participates in creation of European citizenship and links between the youth of member States contributing to non-formal education, and also intended for vulnerable sectors of the public.

The programme is designed for young people between 13 and 30 y/o as well as associations, local authorities and any entity working in the field of youth. The agency's main activity focuses are:

- [Youth exchanges](#): to foster encounters between European youth groups around a range of topics
- [European voluntary service \(EVS\)](#): to foster the sending and hosting of young volunteers on projects useful to the Community
- [Mobility among youth operators](#): to develop cooperation between youth professionals
- [Strategic partnerships](#): to share experiences and innovative practices between bodies in different countries active in the fields of education, training and youth
- [Participation and structured dialogue](#): to lend support to debate between youth and decision-makers on the major themes that concern them.

Bilateral offices

Since the 1960s, France has hosted two international youth offices that organise international mobility programmes, mostly in the fields of solidarity and environmental protection: the [OFAJ – Franco-German Youth Office \(Office franco-allemand de la jeunesse\)](#) develops a Franco-German volunteering programme, while the [OFQJ – Franco-Quebecois Youth Office \(Office franco-québécois de la jeunesse\)](#) seeks to contribute to bringing French and Quebecois youth together. Although OFQJ schemes essentially focus on vocational training, some of its projects bear on such global issues as [climate change](#) and water.

For further information on these offices and their programmes, see *Chapter 2 2.6 Cross-Border Mobility Programmes*.

Local authorities

Local authorities (Regions, *départements*, municipalities and intermunicipalities) play a leading role in implementation of international civic engagement projects for young people, in particular because international engagement helps foster civic awareness and self-sufficiency among the nation's youth while contributing to local authorities' international influence.

Such authorities intervene via financial support for mobility programmes, as well as through organisation of local events related to international solidarity or sustainable development (forums, encounters, etc.). They may also lend direct or indirect support to international youth engagement, in particular through grants aiding mobility or creation of solidarity and citizenship projects. They may also develop their own projects or invest in partnerships with associations.

In addition, they may implement projects related to policy on local authorities' decentralised cooperation – i.e. external action based on agreements with local authorities in other countries. The **Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs** lends its support to implementation of [AECT – external action of local and regional authorities \(action extérieure des collectivités territoriales\)](#), with combating climate change and environmental questions among its priorities. Decentralised cooperation projects

involving young people are given concrete expression by the hosting of young people from other States and sending young French citizens to partner local authorities.

Non-public stakeholders

Associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in the field of international solidarity

Associations play a major role in youth engagement, enabling young people to experience international solidarity for themselves through international volunteering or community service. It would be impossible to mention all the associations and movements active in the field of international youth engagement as they are simply too numerous and too varied. Such associations and NGOs usually act in partnership with public operators, in particular ministries and local authorities, which may also lend them financial support.

In addition, a number of such associations may be accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, enabling them to receive financial support and send out volunteers on missions in the field of humanitarian action and cooperation.

In 2015, there were 28 accredited associations, including: (non-exhaustive list)

- [ACF – Action against Hunger \(*Action contre la faim*\)](#)
- [Agronomists and Veterinarians without Borders \(*Agronomes et Vétérinaires sans frontières*\)](#)
- [ASMAE – Sister Emmanuelle Association \(*Association Sœur Emmanuelle*\)](#)
- [ATD Fourth World – Land and People for Tomorrow \(*ATD Quart-Monde – Terre et Homme de demain*\)](#)
- [CRF – French Red Cross \(*Croix-Rouge française*\)](#)
- [EDM – Children of the Mekong \(*Enfants du Mékong*\)](#)
- [EED - Children and Development \(*Enfants et développement*\)](#)
- [EMI – International Medical Assistance \(*Entraide médicale internationale*\)](#)
- [GER – European Guild \(*Guilde européenne du raid*\)](#)
- [HI - Handicap International](#)
- [MDM – Doctors of the World \(*Médecins du monde*\)](#)
- [Samusocial International](#)
- [SIF – Islamic Relief France \(*Secours islamique France*\)](#)
- [GRET – Research and Technological Exchange Group \(*Groupe de recherche et d'échanges technologiques*\)](#)

None of the above associations have volunteering as their primary focus, unlike other associations specialising in sending young people abroad such as France Volontaires. Set up in 2009, France Volontaires is the leading operator active in sending out volunteers in the field of development. Its role is to promote and develop various forms of voluntary and solidarity engagement abroad.

Youth associations and movements

A number of youth associations and movements set up and run by young people themselves take part in the public debate, promoting democracy and citizenship at European level: (incomplete list)

- The [European Youth Parliament](#) is an association funded by the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs. It promotes European citizenship through participative events, such as simulations of European Parliamentary debates, open to young people (upper secondary students).
- [The European Youth Association](#) brings together young people between 18 and 35 y/o with a view to promoting a democratic Europe.

International organisations.

French youth can also participate in schemes set up by international organisations of which France is a member, such as the UN, UNESCO and La Francophonie

The United Nations (UN)

France is one of the founder members of the United Nations (UN), whose mission it is to respond to such international issues as peace and security, climate change, sustainable development, human rights, terrorism, and humanitarian and health crises. It is also represented in the other main and subsidiary bodies of the UN (it is an elected member of the Human Rights Council, for example). The UN has developed programmes in which young French citizens can participate, including the [United Nations Volunteers \(UNV\)](#), [UNV Youth](#) and [UNV Specialists](#) programmes, and the [Young Experts](#) programme.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

France is one of the founder members of UNESCO, which enables young people to participate in international solidarity projects, in particular by acting as ambassadors for education in sustainable development.

International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF)

[The OIF](#) is an institution that fosters cooperation between French-speaking countries. A number of its missions concern global issues such as promotion of peace, democracy and human rights, and development of international cooperation at the service of sustainable development. The OIF intervenes via aid to financing and support for implementation of solidarity projects. It launches public calls for projects every year, funded by the Organisation's budget as well as by voluntary contributions from member States and governments.

The OIF has also developed a [VIF – Francophonie International Volunteering programme \(*Volontariat international de la francophonie*\)](#). Based on the values of solidarity, sharing and commitment, the programme provides young French-speakers aged between 21 and 34 y/o with the opportunity to make their knowledge, knowhow and soft skills available to a development project for a 12-month period and experience international mobility in a French-speaking area. Such volunteering missions are carried out at French-speaking institutions wishing to benefit from the help of volunteers in implementing their projects.

Companies

Company foundations may also participate in development of international solidarity projects focusing on young people. In particular, they are regular partners in calls for proposals for young people, implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as the Schneider Electric Foundation.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Policies encouraging youth engagement in international solidarity are essentially based on a multisectoral partnership involving a range of interest groups including associations, public institutions, ministries, young people participating in such projects, local authorities and companies. Cross-sectorial work is above all carried out in the context of **implementation of international mobility projects**. In order to facilitate cooperation between these various partners, international mobility committees have been set up at national and regional level on the initiative of the Ministries responsible for Youth Affairs, National Education, Labour, and Agriculture. Such committees are tasked with improving the governance of policies encouraging international youth engagement by facilitating cooperation between stakeholders.

Formed in 2013, the CPMEI – Standing Committee on European and International Mobility for Young People (*Comité Permanent de la Mobilité Européenne et Internationale de la Jeunesse*) – is a national body bringing together all stakeholders concerned: ministries, associations representing local authority officials, mobility operators and youth

representatives. It is chaired by the Minister responsible for Youth Affairs and seeks to set guidelines in the field of international mobility following work meetings in which various recommendations are made to the Minister.

Set up in 2015, COREMOBs – Regional Committees on European and International Mobility (*Comités régionaux de la mobilité européenne et internationale*) – are regional versions of the CPMEI. They bring together all stakeholders in youth mobility along with beneficiaries' representatives and seek to facilitate coordination and networking of partners. Each regional committee must also carry out diagnoses and draft (triennial) mobility plans.

Cross-ministerial circular no.djepva/mcejva/dreic/dgefep/dger/2015/54 of 23 February 2015 bearing on setup of regional committees on European and international mobility for young people defines the role played by such committees.

Regional Multi-Actor Networks

In addition to the COREMOBs, cross-sectoral cooperation between parties involved in promoting solidarity and international cooperation may take the form of an RRMA – a [Regional Multi-Actor Network](#) (*Réseau régional multi-acteurs*). In the 1990s, on the initiative of the State, local authorities and associations, a number of French regions set up such regional multi-actor schemes for exchange, support and concertation in the field of international cooperation.

Such networks have **3 specificities**:

1. "Their action is rooted in the regional territory";
2. "Their aims are to improve international cooperation and solidarity actions and contribute to inhabitants' international openness";
3. "They facilitate a multi-actor network (associations, local authorities, educational institutions, non-formal education bodies, public institutions, economic actors, etc.) in a dynamic of exchanges, collaborative work, concertation and subsidiarity".

Their main activities are:

1. Identification of actors;
2. Information (monitoring, production and dissemination of information);
3. Support to project promoters (training and methodological support);
4. Facilitation of exchanges between actors (capitalisation of experience, pooling, organisation of meetings and creation of partnerships).

Such networks are funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

Exchanges between young people and professionals in the field of international relations **are not systematic** nor are they the subject of any national strategy; nonetheless, through **ad hoc or annual events**, young people have the opportunity to find out about global issues as well as receive training from professionals in their own countries.

The Ministry in charge of Foreign Affairs' "Ambassadors' Week"

[Ambassadors' Week](#) (*Semaine des ambassadeurs*) is an annual event which, among other things, helps the public discover what ambassadors do and better understand major diplomatic issues and topics.

It provides an occasion for French ambassadors to debate with elected representatives, experts and representatives of civil society and the private sector. The general public is also given the opportunity to meet diplomatic staff and attend roundtables.

Voluntary initiatives

Associations may also instigate meetings between young people and operators active in resolving global issues and promoting international solidarity. It would be impossible to list all such initiatives given their number and diversity (a wide range of fields of action, including world peace, climate issues and humanitarian development).

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

Meetings between young people and policymakers are not the subject of any specific policies or schemes; nevertheless, international conferences on global issues bringing together public decision-makers, associations, non-governmental organisations and civil society, including young people, may be organised, such as the annual international “Convergence Forum” and the Conference of Youth (COY), on the occasion of conferences on climate (as was the case with COY 11 during the 2015 COP 21 in Paris).

The Convergence Forum

The [Convergence Form](#) is an annual multi-partner event promoting the aims of sustainable development and the fight against poverty and climate change in Northern and Southern countries alike. Over 200 partners from civil society and public and private voluntary sectors take part. The French Agency for Development (AFD) is one of the Forum’s main partners, and the event is also supported by the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry responsible for the Environment. The Forum brings together international speakers including policymakers and students, who work together to develop solutions to social and environmental issues and strengthen international partnerships around a forceful idea: “zero exclusion, zero carbon, zero poverty”.

The COP 21 Climate Change Conference and COY 11

The 24th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), commonly referred to as COP 24, took place in Katowice, in Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018. The aim of these annual conferences is to achieve clear rules of application for the Paris Agreement, negotiated in 2015 at the COP 21 on climate change. Before the COP, the COY (Conference of Youth) is held, where thousands of young people from around the world come together to debate, exchange views and find ways of tackling global warming. Each year, young French people take part in the COY, in particular under the impetus of their local authorities (municipalities) and associations involved in the field of sustainable development.

The Conference of Youth held in November 2015 (COY 11) on the occasion of COP 21 (the Paris Climate Change Conference) saw meetings between international policymakers and young people. COY 11 was funded by such public institutions as the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs and the Ministries responsible for Foreign Affairs, the Environment, National Education and Higher Education. This 11th edition of COY brought together some 4000 young people in Paris to debate, exchange viewpoints and find concrete solutions to environmental protection, as well as to meet international policymakers such as the UN’s Secretaries-Generals.

Youth Ambassadors for Community Service

Since 2008, committed young people living in urban areas with marked inequalities may be invited to the United States for a fortnight by the US Embassy in the context of the “[Youth Ambassadors for Community Service \(*Jeunes ambassadeurs de l’engagement associatif*\)](#)” programme. The scheme is based on a partnership between the General Commission for Territorial Equality (*Commissariat Général à l’égalité des territoires*), a French governmental institution, the United States Embassy in Paris and the [ADICE – Association for the Development of Citizen and European Initiatives \(*Association pour le Développement des Initiatives Citoyennes et Européennes*\)](#).

During their stay, the youth ambassadors are invited to represent France in the United States and exchange viewpoints on such subjects as cultural diversity, equal opportunities and community service. The initiative aims to encourage youth participation in the political process, strengthen civic engagement and develop intercultural dialogue.

9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Formal learning

Formal education plays an important role raising in awareness and understanding of global issues such as **global warming, inequalities in development between States, and international cooperation**.

Since the publication of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including "Quality education for all", by the United Nations in 2015, these goals have been adopted nationally in the form of the **"2030 Agendas"** by local authorities, associations and also by the Ministry of National Education.

Education on sustainable development

From primary school onwards, pupils' attention is drawn to the question of sustainable development through a range of projects and concrete actions. Such cross-disciplinary education continues over the four years of lower secondary school through the study of scientific notions (such as globalisation) and social phenomena (such as demographic growth and inequalities in development) at a variety of levels: local, regional, European and international alike.

Education on sustainable development was introduced into primary and secondary curricula by two successive circulars:

- [The Circular of 8 July 2004: Universalisation of EEDD – Educating for the Environment and Sustainable Development \(*Education à l'environnement pour un développement durable*\)](#)
- [Circular no.2007-077 of 29 March 2007: EDD – Educating for Sustainable Development \(*Education au Développement Durable*\)](#)
- In 2013, [the law to reform schools brought such cross-cutting education within the Education Code](#). In the same year, a labelling scheme, "E3D", for schools and educational establishments taking a global approach to sustainable development was introduced.
- In 2015, during the hosting of COP 21, the Ministry of National Education reinforced the widespread implementation of education on sustainable development.

In primary and secondary education, sustainable development is a major theme which is tackled in an interdisciplinary and cross-cutting way, involving learning such as: development and international solidarity education, health education and artistic and cultural learning.

In lower secondary schools, Interdisciplinary Practical Lessons (Enseignements Pratiques Interdisciplinaires) including "Ecological transition and sustainable development" allow for sustainable development issues to be considered.

Furthermore, local education authorities (decentralised departments of the Ministry of National Education) are encouraged to organise, among other things, debates on the relationship between sustainable development issues and climate change, educational projects, scientific workshops on these topics, in particular in cooperation with local stakeholders involved in sustainable development and environmental education.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' volunteering schemes

In addition, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs funds "Youth programmes" designed to train international cooperation professionals. Such programmes are intended for students in their second year of study for a Master's degree who are interested in international relations and global issues (inequalities in development, global warming, etc.) and would like to work in an international organisation.

Programmes and positions associated with them are as follows:

- [The United Nations Volunteers \(UNV\) programme: Youth Volunteers and Volunteer Specialists](#)
- [Jeune Expert Associé \(JEA\)](#) or Junior Professional Officer (JPO), at the United Nations.
- [Jeune Expert Associé](#) at the [World Bank](#) or Junior Professional Officer at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe ([OSCE](#)).
- [Junior Professionals in Delegations \(JPD\)](#).

Non-formal and informal learning

Volunteering and international mobility schemes

International volunteering plays a key role in raising young people's awareness of global issues and international solidarity. It is very much encouraged by the public authorities, which develop and oversee international volunteering schemes. Through missions in developing countries and youth projects, volunteering makes young people aware of global issues so enabling them to take part in the public debate.

VSI – International Solidarity Volunteering (*Volontariat de solidarité internationale*)

VSI is [governed by Law no.2005-159 of 23 February 2005 bearing on the VSI contract](#). It enables any association accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send volunteers on missions in the field of humanitarian cooperation and action.

VIA – International Volunteering in Administration (*Volontariat International en Administration*)

Intended for young people between 18 and 28 y/o, [VIA](#) gives young people the opportunity to work in consulates, embassies or French cooperation and cultural action services. VIA postings last for an average of 18 months. There are over a thousand volunteers in VIA posts every year.

VIE – International Volunteering in Business (*Volontariat International en Entreprise*)

Introduced by the [Law of 14 March 2000](#), [this scheme](#) gives young people between 18 and 28 y/o the opportunity to carry out a professional mission abroad for a period of 6 to 24 months. Although this kind of volunteering has no direct bearing on international solidarity or global issues, there is a wide range of missions, which may be commercial, technical or scientific.

The "Working Holiday" Visa

The "Working Holiday" Visa (WHV) is intended for young people between the ages of 18 and 20 who wish to spend a maximum of one year in a partner country for tourism or cultural purposes, and also have the opportunity to work in the country they go to.

The programme is based on bilateral agreements concluded between France and the scheme's partner countries: Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, South Korea, Russia, Argentina, Hong Kong, Chili, Colombia, Taiwan, Uruguay and Mexico (entry in force on 1 September 2016).

For further information on volunteering schemes, see Chapter 2 Voluntary activities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' calls for projects

Every year, the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs launches calls for projects aimed at local authorities. Some of these calls for projects contribute, in particular, to the decentralised cooperation strategy (for local authorities) and focus on international youth mobility, such as the calls for "Youth" projects, which since 2015 have provided financial support for international mobility projects in the context of training and international solidarity.

For further information on these schemes, see 9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation.

Festivals and participative events

Public and community operators active in promoting international solidarity also raise young people's awareness of global issues via the organisation of participative events and festivals, such as the Festival of Solidarity (*Festival des Solidarités*) and forums and encounters organised by local authorities.

The Festival of Solidarity

For the last 20 years, the [Festival of Solidarity](#) has been organised by a range of stakeholders engaged in solidarity action on a daily basis: associations, schools, local authorities, sociocultural bodies and citizens. The event brings citizens together and provides them with an opportunity to give collective thought to a fairer, more united and more sustainable world. Themes tackled correspond to global issues defined by the United Nations. The festival is supported by a variety of institutional partners including the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs, and the Ile-de-France Region.

Science Festival (Fête de la science)

Established in 1991, the [Science Festival \(Fête de la Science\)](#) is organised each year by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation to give people the opportunity to discover the world of science and meet scientists. This event features thousands of free events open to everyone, including students (primary school children and lower and upper secondary school students). All fields of science are represented, including "sustainable development". During this festival, events (such as exhibitions, conferences and debates) are held to raise awareness of sustainable development issues and to highlight the role of research in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

For instance, at the 2018 edition of the Science Festival, [the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon \(ENS\) higher education institution](#) held a stand dedicated to the discovery of the 17 SDGs. The stand organised 6 workshops, in particular working together with student associations including, for example:

- the PollENS association, which has addressed the issue of biodiversity through its work on bees and pollinators,
- the OcéaSciences association, which has raised awareness among school groups about the issue of plastic pollution in the oceans.

International solidarity forums organised by local authorities

Local authorities (municipalities) may also organise their own international solidarity and cooperation forums, during which associations present their activities and get the opportunity to meet with volunteers.

Educators' support

Young people and professionals in education or youth work who want to train or deepen their knowledge of global issues and international solidarity have the opportunity to follow, according to their statutes, training offered by international solidarity associations or training offered by the National Education

Training courses provided by the National Education service

The [EDUSCOL](#) website, which brings together a number of sites and services providing information and support to professionals working in education, provides teachers with educational resources relating to education on sustainable development.

The open access website compiles information on the themes, issues, tools and partnerships, as well as the teaching methodologies and techniques that teachers can use within the context of education on sustainable development. What is more, educators have the opportunity to receive training on sustainable development through their institution, at the request of the teaching team.

Additionally, National Education service staff also have access to a national resource and skills hub (online) dedicated to development education which differs from EDUSCOL: the website: <https://crdp.ac-amiens.fr/edd/index.php/accueil/pole-national-competence-edd>

Through this online portal, they can find "information necessary for integrating Sustainable Development into their lessons and school projects". A news section is regularly updated with information on the constant developments in research, teaching practices and events related to this theme.

Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

Campaigns on global issues for youth are mainly about the environment and global warming. For example, the Ministry of National Education organizes "Climate Week" which is part of the desire to mainstream education for sustainable development. Launched in 2015 as part of the COP21, [Climate Week](#) mobilises subject-based disciplines, especially the sciences, as well as cross-curricular disciplines, in particular **education on sustainable development, scientific and technical culture, moral and civic education, development and international solidarity education and health education.**

It seeks to address the issue of climate change through the scientific and civic issues involved and is a response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, including goal 13 which is to "combat climate change". It takes the form of debates, activities, as well as simulations of international negotiations on climate change. These debates are organised with local partners and associations involved in education on the environment and sustainable development.

Moreover, young people seeking to be educated in or improve their knowledge of global issues and international solidarity can enrol in training courses organised by international solidarity associations. There is a fee for such courses which are designed to inform participants on development aid policy, participation in solidarity action and the issues involved in cooperation with Southern countries. There are a great many associations organising short courses on global issues, and more specifically on inequalities in development, non-violence and peace.

List of associations organising courses (incomplete list)

- [Coordination SUD](#)
- [Bioforce](#)
- [Humacoop](#)
- CEFODE – Cooperation and Training in Development – North-South Area (*Coopération et Formation au Développement, Espace Nord-Sud*)
- [URD – Relief, Rehabilitation and Development \(Urgence réhabilitation développement\)](#)
- ICP – French Committee for Civil Peace Interventions (*Comité français pour l'intervention civile de paix*)
- MAN – Movement for a Nonviolent Alternative (*Mouvement pour une alternative non violente*)

Information providers

Youth-targeted campaigns on global issues essentially concern questions of the environment and climate change. The Ministry of National Education, for example, organises “Climate Week”, an expression of the wish to universalise education on sustainable development. Launched in 2015 in the context of COP21, [Climate Week](#) gives free rein to various educational disciplines, the sciences in particular. It takes the form of debates, activities and simulations of international negotiations on climate change. Debates are organised with local partners, associations involved in education on the environment and sustainable development.

Associations

Associations play a key role in raising awareness of international solidarity and global issues. Some are partners of public institutions, including the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs and the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, one such being EDUCASOL, the French platform for education in citizenship and international solidarity. [Educasol](#) provides an open space for promotion of the activities of educators in development and international solidarity. The association also promotes education in development and international solidarity in institutions.

The national association [Erasmus Student Network](#), IXESN France, fosters civic engagement and cooperation between international students via two **theme-based** actions:

- **Hosting of international students**, making use of a sponsorship system between international and French students;
- **Promoting international youth mobility.**

Biodiversity Centres (*Maisons de la Biodiversité*)

In addition to formal education, public events and campaigns launched by the ministries concerned and bodies devoted to the protection of nature may also play a role in awareness-raising on global issues. A number of local authorities possess resource centres devoted to nature, such as [Maison Paris nature](#), which holds discovery workshops on the French capital’s flora and fauna with a view to involving its inhabitants in their preservation. Such centres can also take the form of “*Maisons de la biodiversité*”. Located in public gardens or regional nature parks, these bodies organise educational activities (walks, exhibitions, etc.) connected with nature and designed to raise awareness on its protection.

Key initiatives

The public authorities, including ministries concerned and local authorities, also make use of digital and other resources on major global issues to raise the general public’s and young people’s awareness of global issues, in particular as regards protection of the environment.

Digital resources

In September 2017, the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition published a leaflet on biodiversity and its protection entitled *La biodiversité s’explique* (Biodiversity Explained), which followed on from other leaflets designed to raise the general public’s and young people’s awareness on environmental protection and ecological challenges. Such informatory resources are also compiled in the Ministry’s webzine “[Changeons de regard sur la biodiversité](#)” (Let’s change our views on biodiversity), which reports on the wealth of biodiversity in France, in particular in its Overseas territories.

Furthermore, the website and social networks of the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition present the various government strategies to tackle global warming,

in particular through animated films, such as its [strategy to combat deforestation](#) included in the Climate Plan (Plan Climat).

Ministry of National Education websites

The Ministry of National Education has several websites with resources for education on sustainable development: such as the “Discover the World” portal

Dedicated to international youth mobility, in particular for solidary purposes, [Découvrir le monde](#) (Discover the World) is a platform created and run by the Ministry responsible for Youth Affairs; it provides young people with information on the possibilities and various aspects of international mobility in general (Erasmus+, the Franco-German and Franco-Quebecois Offices, etc.) and international volunteering in particular.

9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

Green volunteering

Volunteering and eco-volunteering are promoted and implemented by a great many associations, which may receive financial support from the public authorities or such bilateral offices as the [Franco-German Office](#) (OFAJ) which organises VEFAs – Franco-German ecological volunteering schemes (*volontariats écologiques franco-allemand*).

VEFAs provide young people between 18 and 25 y/o with the opportunity to carry out a year’s volunteering in Germany, with a view to acquiring skills connected with environmental protection while learning or improving their German. The scheme is funded by the Ministries responsible for Youth Affairs in the two countries involved.

The Civic Service Agency, which oversees youth volunteering missions, also organises [eco-volunteering missions](#) in partnership with environmental protection agencies ([see Chapter 2 Voluntary activities. Stand-alone law](#)). A number of such projects focus on raising inhabitants’ awareness of and lending support to their eco-responsible initiatives, as well as raising awareness on water-related environmental actions.

Green production and consumption

The Ministry responsible for Agriculture oversees a range of actions (campaigns, schemes, etc.) designed to encourage sustainable farming and consumption of local and organic products. A number of such actions are carried out by or specifically intended for young people.

Sustainable food campaigns

Campaigns are regularly organised to promote local and sustainable farming in the eyes of young audiences. In 2016, **agricultural lycée students presented a variety of citizens’ initiatives** focusing on farming and food at the annual Agricultural Fair. Students presented [3 exemplary projects](#) with a view to raising the general public’s awareness on sustainable local high-quality food. In addition, [anti-food waste campaigns](#), many of them [visual](#), are also carried out in volunteer lower secondary schools.

The “Canteen Pleasure” Charter

The Ministry of Agriculture’s [“Pleasure in the Canteen” \(Plaisir à la cantine\)](#) programme has existed since 2010. It is intended for all lower and upper secondary schools and is based on a Charter co-signed by the school principal, representatives of the local authority (region or municipality) and the DRAAF – Regional Directorate for Food, Agriculture and Forestry (*Direction régionale de l’alimentation, de l’agriculture et de la forêt*) – a deconcentrated directorate under the Ministry of Agriculture. The “Pleasure in the Canteen” Charter’s objectives include:

- “Breathing new life into canteens by acting on their food offer in order to make it more attractive while guaranteeing compliance with regulations on meal quality”;
- “Giving new meaning to the act of eating by combining its nutritional aspect with the aspects of taste, sociability and mealtime rituality”.

Students at schools that have signed the Charter also take part in cookery workshops run by their institution’s school catering professionals.

Teaching aids and resources

The Ministry of Agriculture has developed a range of teaching aids to help teachers create their own activities: getting nursery and primary school pupils acquainted with local and seasonal products and getting them to understand what eating is all about. Such tools are particularly useful in [“taste classes” \(classes des goûts\)](#), a sensory awakening programme. “Taste classes”, which were reintroduced in 2015, are dispensed to primary school pupils by teachers or facilitators who have received special training. Resources employed in their training include a booklet entitled [“Programme de formation des enseignants sur les classes du goût”](#) (Training programme for taste class teachers).

9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

Intercontinental youth work cooperation

The international Solidarity scheme

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been running the [VVV/SI – City-Life-Holiday/International Solidarity \(Ville, Vie, Vacances/Solidarité Internationale\)](#) scheme since 1991, and the [JSI – Youth, International solidarity \(Jeunesse, Solidarité Internationale\)](#) scheme since 1997. The two sponsorship schemes are based on partnerships between the public authorities and associations that develop solidarity projects.

The projects put forward under these schemes must be led by young people and must help young people from Northern and Southern countries to come together to work on international solidarity projects, both abroad and in France.

Young French people who apply for these call for projects must be supported by a sponsor, an association governed by the French law of 1901 belonging to one of the seven groups of international solidarity associations recognised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: [Crid](#), [Clong-Volontariat](#), [Solidarité Laïque](#), [CNAJEP](#), [CHD](#), [Groupe Initiatives](#) and [Forim](#).

Since their creation, the schemes have enabled the cofinancing and completion of over 600 international solidarity projects involving more than 11,000 young French citizens in over 35 different countries and in France. Subsidies granted to projects generally range from €2000 to €7,500.

The VVV/SI programme is also intended for young people with fewer opportunities living in disadvantaged urban areas targeted Youth groups taking part in VVV/SI projects must be between 15 and 25 y/o and preferably of mixed gender.

For further information on such schemes, see Chapter 2 Voluntary activities. Stand-alone law.

Development cooperation activities

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' calls for Youth projects

Fostering greater cooperation between States is achieved through various schemes, including the calls for projects which give young French people the chance to experience professional mobility or international solidarity.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' calls for "Youth" projects comprise a programme fostering intercontinental cooperation involving young people. It is intended for local authorities and results from a determination to encourage youth internationalisation and support local authorities' commitment to international youth mobility in the context of their external action. In 2015, the Ministry launched an initial call for projects in support of decentralised cooperation, "International Youth Mobility 2015-2016" (Mobilité internationale des jeunes 2015-2016). The programme is now in its fifth year.

The Call for Projects programme seeks to develop decentralised cooperation partnerships. Project themes are selected by local authorities (environment, culture, heritage, tourism, etc.) but must also concern ESCI - education in citizenship and international solidarity (*Education à la citoyenneté et à la solidarité internationale*), with a view to raising local inhabitants' awareness of global issues, and sustainable development goals (SDGs). They must also have a professionalising aspect and comply with the principles of reciprocity of exchanges.

Projects are intended for all young people between 16 and 30 y/o, including those with fewer opportunities. The programme has enabled over 320 young people to experience European and international mobility since it was launched in 2015.

Bilateral cooperation

Youth offices

In addition to the programmes and schemes organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bilateral offices such as [the Franco-German Youth Office \(Office franco-allemand de la jeunesse\)](#) and the Franco-Quebecois Youth Office (Office franco-québécois de la jeunesse) are part of a policy of cooperation between States.

OFAJ

In 2017, OFAJ – Franco-German Youth Office (Office franco-allemand de la jeunesse) supported 8,417 exchange programmes, involving 188,083 participants in total through:

- 4,807 group exchanges
- 3,610 individual exchanges and programmes

OFQJ

2,385 young French people took part in a mobility programme organised by the OFQJ – Franco-Quebecois Youth Office (Office franco-québécois de la jeunesse) in 2017 compared with 2,693 in 2016. 251 young people benefited from mobility in the service of citizen cooperation.

(For further information see [9.2 Administration and governance](#))

Franco-Tunisian cooperation

The AFD – French Development Agency (Agence française de développement) has entrusted the online associative platform, Solidarité Laïque, with managing a Concerted Multi-stakeholder Programme (Programme concerté pluri-acteurs) for Tunisia. This programme, called "Let's get active" (Soyons Actifs/Actives), aims to strengthen Tunisian civil society's ability to reduce inequalities in access to rights in particular. This three-year programme (2016-2018) has a number of different strands, including:

- support for social innovation projects run by civil society in the areas of education, socio-professional integration and the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE),

- strengthening the capacity of civil society
- developing civil society's influence on public policy.

Around 50 pilot projects have been put in place under this programme involving the participation of the Tunisian and French Ministries responsible for youth affairs as members of the steering committee.

9.7 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

European Solidarity corps

France was involved in the negotiation of the draft European regulation [of the European Solidarity Corps \(ESC\)](#) for which the European regulation was adopted in October 2018. The ESC, which concerns 18-30 year olds, aims to strengthen cohesion and foster solidarity in European society by offering young people opportunities to volunteer or work on projects being run in their country or internationally.

Framework agreement with Russia on youth exchanges

At the initiative of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, on 20 September 2018 an agreement was signed between France and Russia on youth exchanges. A monitoring committee is soon to be set up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which seeks to promote existing volunteering schemes in France to the Russian authorities and Franco-Russian stakeholders engaged in cooperation activities.

The "An ambition for the French language and multilingualism (Une ambition pour la langue française et le plurilinguisme) strategy

In 2018, France adopted an international strategy for the French language and multilingualism based on 33 measures to promote learning, communication and creation in French. The development of the strategy was based on the launch of a consultation, which resulted in more than 5000 "ideas" being gathered and the organisation of an international conference.

The planned measures that relate more specifically to global issues include:

- The creation of the first incubator dedicated to language learning, "The Digital Factory for Multilingualism" (La fabrique numérique du plurilinguisme) which will be created in conjunction with the French Institute (Institut français), the Cité de la Francophonie – a centre dedicated to Francophone cultures located in Villers-Cotterêts, the CIEP – International Centre for Educational Studies (Centre international d'études pédagogiques), INALCO – National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations (Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales) and the French stakeholders EdTech, FrenchTech and those involved in innovation.

This project will seek to create new tools, content and services for language learning through new digital uses and technologies (including artificial intelligence, chatbots, bots and immersive reality technologies).

Ongoing debates

Citizen consultations

The French State has contributed to Citizen Consultations which give the citizens of the 27 European Union countries an opportunity to debate and present their vision of Europe.

These consultations took place between April and the end of October 2018. Debates and exercises in participatory democracy, as well as an online consultation, were organised. Several events were run by young people and youth associations.

Glossary

Draft public finance law (Projet de loi de finances)

The draft public finance laws are a category of financial norms introduced in the Constitution, article 34 in the constitutional revision of 23 July, 2008. They are part of an approach to public finance management spanning several years, aimed at balancing the budget.

Excerpt from <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/finances-publiques/ressources-dependances-etat/budget/0405-qu-est-ce-qu-loi-programmation-finances-publiques.html>

Economic, Social, and Environmental Council (Conseil Économique, Social, et Environnemental CESE)

The Economic, Social and Environmental Council was established in 1958. Its primary mission is to advise the public authorities on economic, social and environmental matters. It is mandatory to consider economic, social and environmental programming plans or bills. It may be seized by the Government of any bill or decree falling within its jurisdiction. The Council has no decision-making power. It is composed of representatives of the various professional categories

Excerpt from <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/fonctionnement/autres-institutions/ces/quelles-sont-fonctions-du-conseil-economique-social-environnemental.html>

Family Allowances Fund (Caisse d'allocations familiales)

Established in 1945, the Family branch is one of the four components of the general social security system, with Sickness, Old Age and Recovery. The Family branch is organized in a network of 103 family allowance fund (Caf) covering the entire French territory, with a National Fund for Family Allowances (CNAF). Its objective is to propose a global offer of social services as close as possible to the inhabitants, by fighting territorial and social inequalities.

The Family branch of the social security has two primary missions:

- Helping families in their daily life, facilitating particularly the conciliation between family and professional lives;
- Developing solidarity with the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities.

In order to fulfill these missions, it relies on two levers

- Payment of financial benefits to families (family and social benefits, housing subsidies and social minimums such as assistance for adults with disabilities and income from active solidarity);
- Support for families and the setting up or co-financing of various services and public facilities for them (such as the crèches).

Excerpt from *La branche famille de la sécurité sociale*

General Commission for Territorial Equality (CGET – Commissariat Général à l'égalité des territoires)

The General Commission for Territorial Equality advises and supports the Government in the elaboration and the implementation of development policies reducing spatial inequalities. Attached to the Prime Minister, he ensures the follow-up and cross ministerial coordination of these policies. The CGET implements the Urban policies defined by the programming law of 21 February 2014: it mobilizes common law policies, continues the adoption of new city contracts at the inter municipalities level, launches the new National Urban Renewal Program and establishes "citizen councils" in each disadvantaged neighborhood.

Excerpt from <http://cget.gouv.fr/le-cget/missions>

IGAS - General Social Affairs Inspectorate (Inspection générale des affaires sociales)

The general social affairs inspectorate is a cross ministerial body of control. IGAS audits, monitors or evaluates policies and structures. It intervenes on the request of ministers or on the basis of its programme. It deals with issues concerning the life of every citizen: employment, work and training, health, social and family policy, public or private social insurance schemes;

Excerpt from <http://www.igas.gouv.fr/>

Local authorities (Collectivités territoriales)

Local authorities are legal entities separate from the State and for this reason they enjoy legal and patrimonial autonomy. Municipalities, *départements* and regions have the status of local authorities (Constitution, art.72).

According to paragraph 3 of the Constitution, article 72, local authorities freely administer themselves in the conditions provided by the law. They only hold administrative powers which prevent them from exercising state powers such as enacting autonomous laws or regulations, benefiting from powers of jurisdiction or acting independently in the conduct of international relations.

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

Local mission (Mission locales)

The 445 local missions are present throughout the national territory and carry out a public service mission in order to enable all young people aged 16 to 25 to overcome the difficulties that impede their professional and social integration. For more than thirty years, the local missions have developed a global accompaniment towards the young people. They deal with all the difficulties of social inclusion: employment, training, guidance, mobility, housing, health, access to culture and leisure. This comprehensive approach is the most effective way to remove barriers to integration into employment and working life.

Excerpt from <http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/ministere/acteurs/service-public-de-l-emploi/article/missions-locales>

Metropolitan France / Hexagonal

"Metropolitan" France or "Hexagonal France", or French France refers to the territory located in Europe. It includes its continental territory and the islands near the Atlantic Ocean, the Channel and the Mediterranean Sea, like Corsica. Metropolitan France thus differs from **France overseas**, ie the French Republic territories that are precisely outside the European continent.

Prefect (préfet)

The prefect is the "depository of the authority of the State in the department". He remains responsible for public order: he has police powers which make him an "administrative police authority". He is the direct representative of the Prime Minister and of each minister in the department. It implements governmental development and spatial planning policies at the departmental level.

Excerpt from <http://www.vie-publique.fr/decouverte-institutions/institutions/collectivites-territoriales/principes-collectivites-territoriales/quelle-est-fonction-prefet.html>

RNCP National Directory of Professional (Certification Répertoire national des certifications professionnelles)

The National Directory of Professional Certification is aimed at informing constantly people about professional and vocational diplomas and qualifications certificates. It

contributes to facilitate the labour market access, the management of human resources and professional mobility.

Excerpt from <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/repertoire>

State prosecutor (Procureur de la République)

Magistrate, member of the state Prosecutor's Office, the state prosecutor represents the public ministry before all the courts of justice. The public ministry is all the magistrates responsible for representing the interests of society and ensuring the observance of public order and the application of the law. It is placed under the authority of the Attorney General (Head of the Public Prosecutor's Office at the Court of Appeal) and the Minister of Justice. He is appointed by decree of the President of the Republic on simple advice from the Superior Council of Magistracy. The public prosecutor intervenes on the information of the police, but also the State services or following a complaint by an individual, when an offense is committed within the jurisdiction of the court of in which it performs its functions.

Excerpt from

http://www.justice.gouv.fr/telechargement/doc/Presentation_du_metier_de_procureur_de_la_Republique.pdf

Urban Policy (Politique de la Ville)

The Urban policy aims to reduce urban development gaps in disadvantaged urban areas and to improve the living conditions of their inhabitants. In order to respond to the combination of difficulties affecting these territories, the Urban policy mobilizes all common law policies and public services and has specific means of intervention. The **CGET General Commission for Territorial Equality** is responsible for the design and the implementation of this public policy at the cross-ministerial level, as well as the management of the corresponding resources.

Excerpt from <http://www.ville.gouv.fr/?l-essentiel-de-la-politique-de-la>

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