

ApprEnt - National Report – France

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION AND INITIAL INFORMATION	p.2
National context	p.2
Apprenticeship schemes	p.2
1. Apprenticeship contract	p.2
2. Professionalisation contract	p.3
Apprenticeship development in higher education	p.4
French education system scheme	p.4
1. Apprenticeship schemes at UBO	p.5
STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE	p.6
1. Public bodies overseeing apprenticeship schemes	p.6
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT	p.9
1. Promotion of apprenticeship programmes in France	p.9
2. The standard design of apprenticeship programmes in France	p.9
3. Assessment and certification of apprenticeship programmes	p.10
4. Number of students in apprenticeship programmes	p.11
EDUCATION LEVELS	p.11
1. French legislations on apprenticeships	p.11
2. Funding of apprenticeship programmes	p.12
3. Levels of education of French apprenticeship schemes	p.12
4. Most common fields in apprenticeship programmes	p.13
REFERENCES	p.13

Introduction and Initial Information

National context

- 12 October 2017: talks get underway between the President of the Republic and the social partners.
- From 17 to 19 October 2017: the Prime Minister, Minister of Labour and Minister of National Education begin consultations with the social partners.
- 25 October 2017: presentation of the roadmap for reforming apprenticeship, vocational training and unemployment insurance.
- Working groups involving all of the stakeholders (including the social partners, chambers of commerce and industry and regions) will be set up by the Ministers of Labour and National Education from the beginning of November 2017. They will be expected to present their proposals by the end of January 2018.

Apprenticeship schemes are incentives from the regional and national authority:

- To match the needs of labour market;
- Just on time training and/or anticipate change.

The schemes highlight the need for innovation and pedagogical motivation:

- Necessity to reshape educational provisions and training system;
- Funding opportunities for the development of continuing education within University.

The apprenticeship schemes in France stands out for two forms of contracts:

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 between 16 and 25 years of age, 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. Depending on their age and seniority, they receive a minimum wage varying between 25% and 78% of a reference wage (the SMIC – salaire minimum de croissance/guaranteed minimum wage). 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.

Apprenticeship contract is in progress with reinforced competences of the Regional Authority (*Law 2014):

- Financial incentive from the Regional Council (higher than the compulsory rate established by Law);
- Specific experimentation in our region.

Regions, in fact, are “pivotal” actors in work/study programmes, especially as regards apprenticeship contracts:

They are responsible for regional maps of apprenticeship programmes, deciding on the opening and closing of courses (following consultation with stakeholders);

They organise the apprenticeship system across the regional territory (setup of educational structures via agreements with one or more partners);

They fund such structures;

They are responsible for administrative and financial control of regional CFAs.

2) *The professionalisation contract*

It is the result of National agreement within the trade organizations (joint collective bodies) and allows the achievement of a qualification linked to a professional sector. But the law contains no provisions that would lead to an in depth transformation of university diplomas. It only requires to alternate periods of learning with training providers (HE in our case) and period of work (related to the qualification)

The professionalisation contract is a pretext to reinvent curricula

- It is a legal framework and an employment contract:
 - But no scheme on the organization of diplomas;
 - Universities and schools are free to adapt their courses;
- It relies on a co-constructive approach with companies and professional sectors;
- Mixing public: initial education, continuing education, employee, job seekers, young students and adults.

Authorised joint collection bodies (OPCA - organismes collecteurs paritaires agréés) are responsible for collecting, pooling and redistributing the financial contributions due by companies for professional training. They are authorised and overseen by the State. They apply the priorities of the branches in professional training. On top of this primarily financial purpose, some of these bodies also provide support or consulting activities for companies and employees in their branch: assistance in determining skills requirements, putting together comprehensive employment and training solutions, implementation support and steering.

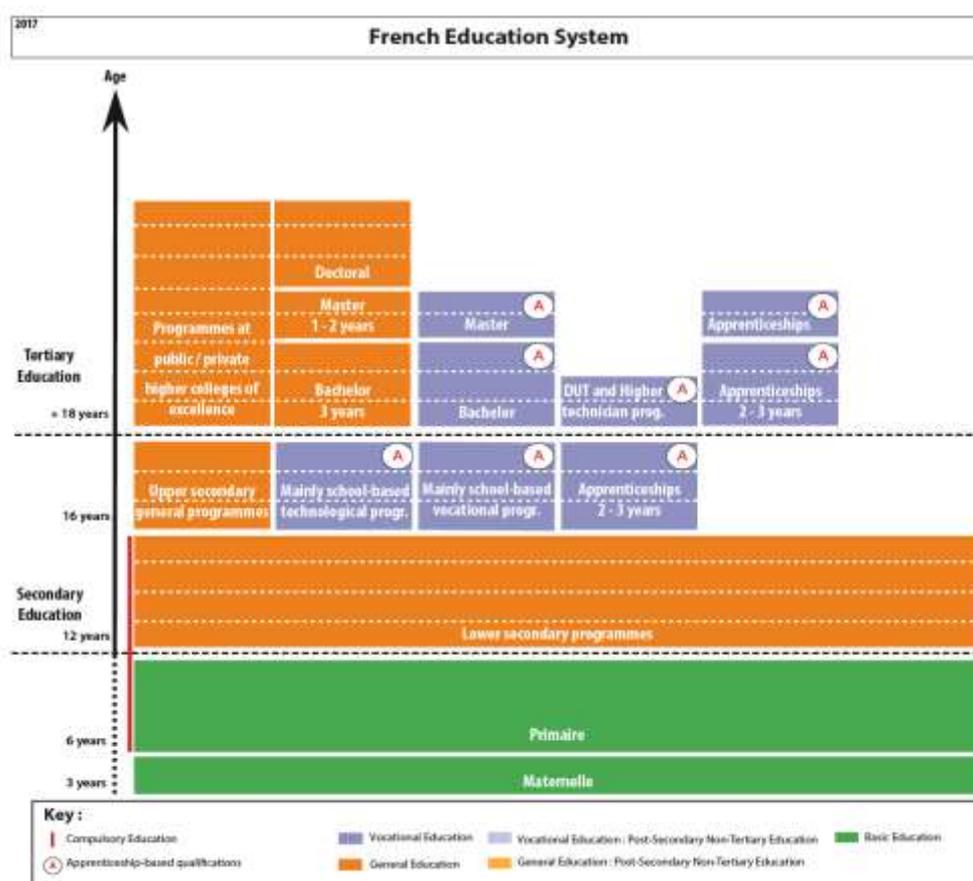
France young people can also be employed in the public sector through the apprenticeship contracts (which is not possible for the professionalisation contract). Nevertheless, most of the companies involved in the apprenticeship contract in France were small and medium size (SMEs).

Some of the major organisations (metal-mechanic industry, banking) are promoting apprenticeship in higher education, in partnership with public institutions (universities) or in their own (private) higher education schools. Apprenticeship is interesting for the employers for various reasons. On the one hand, it provides a cheaper labour force. On the other hand, it allows a better matching process. And it contributes to strengthen the links with higher education institutions.

Apprenticeship Development in Higher Education

24,9 % of apprentices in Brittany are following a curricula in higher education. That are not so high regarding the national figure, that is to say 35,6 %. Despite a rising number of students enrolled in apprenticeship programmes. Apprenticeship development in Higher education is relatively new and is not related with all professional branches. There are 6 fields offering training in Higher education:

Process industries; Management - Administration - Finance – ICT; Agrobusiness; Industrial maintenance- Mécanics – Automation; Logistics; Electricity – electronics.



DUT: Diplôme Universitaire Technologique – university technology diploma on completing 2 years of studies, applicants selected for admission after the baccalauréat. 24 specialised fields for a direct gateway to the working world or to continue studying.

Licence Professionnelle: vocational bachelor's degree obtained after 3 years of higher education. More than 1,620 specialised fields for professional integration in a wide range of sectors.

Master: professional-oriented master's degree in a specialised field. Admission is based on the student's record and an interview within the limit of the number of places available.

1. Is your university/organisation involved in apprenticeship schemes?

A public institution founded in 1971, UBO is a medium-sized university (around 20,000 students) offering a wide range of programmes in all fields. It is a multidisciplinary university, where 2242 staff members work.

Our University strategy:

- Enhance opening of University;
- Improve graduated professional integration rate;
- Curricula Professionalization.

The Apprenticeship Department was founded in 2008. Two people are working within this department, one responsible and her assistant. The University of western Brittany take into account a broad spectrum of learners (students coming from initial VET programmes, post-secondary students, professional who seek to upgrade their skills).

959 students are enrolled in training schemes - 406 in apprenticeship schemes, 533 in professionalization schemes - 55,6% in bachelor level (533 students), 31, 4% Master (301) 13% higher technician level (125).

Tasks of the Apprenticeship Department at Université de Bretagne occidentale

- Pedagogical engineering and innovation:
 - Meeting with pedagogical team, teachers;
 - Strengthen the partnership with authorised joint collection bodies and representatives of branch of industries;
- Financial and administrative management;
- Involvement in working group dealing with quality;
- Promotion, through various events;
- Guidance.

Most representative skills at UBO for apprenticeship:

- Retail and distribution;
- Insurance/banking finance;
- Marketing and sales techniques;
- Logistics;
- Agro-business industry.

Structure and Governance

Typology of stakeholders

Public authorities, entrepreneur associations, branch, associations, professional associations, enterprises and SMEs, research organisations, trade unions, universities, quality agents, etc.

1. Which public bodies have information and/or watches over ongoing apprenticeship schemes?

The French State serves as a regulator and watchdog. Rules governing the registration of contracts and defining eligibility criteria (for assistance, exoneration from charges, premiums), oversight of working conditions in companies and provision of assistance are under the responsibility of the Ministry for labour and employment.

Ministries involved in the governance Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Labour, and Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Ministry of National Education.

The French Ministry of Education plays a central role in shaping the apprenticeship system, a uniquely French characteristic that has been reinforced by the “Guichard law” of 1971.

The central government is responsible for:

- The overall legislation;
- Apprenticeships for French citizens living abroad;
- Where required, the adoption of objectives and means through contracts with the objective of developing apprenticeship, and
- The funding of vocational training programmes.

The state funds:

- Training possibilities for job seekers. The central government undertakes all or part of the training expenditures, as well as the remuneration of trainees;
- Training possibilities are offered for targeted groups: disables, immigrant workers, detained, illiterates, etc.;
- Training information and guidance;
- Grants to the regional authority.
- Support for designing and implementation of training plans within companies and within professional sectors.

Regions are responsible of the regional policy to develop access to apprenticeship and vocational training towards youngsters and adult jobseekers and needed to get new skills. Regional authorities are responsible for:

- The general planning of vocational training and apprenticeships;
- The definition of activities relating to vocational training;
- The definition of activities fostering consistent vocational programmes;
- Apprenticeship programmes;
- The implementation of vocational training programmes, and
- Where required, the adoption of objectives and means through contracts with the objective of developing apprenticeship.

In France, the 1983 law transferred the State prerogatives on apprenticeship training to the regions. The 1993 five-year law deepened the decentralization process. It transfers the whole jurisdiction on vocational training matters for the youth aged up to 26. The law also requires regions to decide of a regional plan on vocational training development for the youth. Alongside the transfer of prerogatives, State spending on the matter decreases. Regions are now responsible for about 23% of total spending on apprenticeship (two third of which are aimed at the 'Centre de Formation d'Apprentis')

Social partners who promote apprenticeship through employment and training management tools in professional sectors and companies, by setting priorities and funding for the professionalization contract.

The following actors should also be mentioned for their role in apprenticeship:

- the companies that recruit and train apprentices and fund their training via the apprenticeship tax (0.68% of the gross annual wage bill);
- the Consular Chambers, which notably contribute to placing young people in apprenticeships, for example by setting up alternance scholarships, preparing apprenticeship contracts, drawing up statistical documents on apprenticeship; they also run CFAs;
- Authorised joint collection bodies (OPCA - organismes collecteurs paritaires agréés) are responsible for collecting, pooling and redistributing the financial contributions due by companies for professional training. They are authorised and overseen by the State. They apply the priorities of the branches in professional training. On top of this primarily financial purpose, some of these bodies also provide support or consulting activities for companies and employees in their branch: assistance in determining skills requirements, putting together comprehensive employment and training solutions, implementation support and steering.

Apprenticeship Tools for SMEs

France has established a matching service to support the provision of apprenticeships in SMEs. CGPME, the Confederation of SMEs, has mandated its intermediary body AGEFA-PME to support the provision of apprenticeships in small enterprises. A web-service portal provides a broad range of services for small enterprises, including up-to-date information on apprenticeship tax credit and regional aids, a national database on potential apprentices to facilitate recruitment and a competence-based search engine on qualifications and training centres. A methodological toolbox for apprentices and tutors equips young people with strong basic skills to allow a successful integration into a small business. The tool advises on applying for apprenticeship positions, teaches interview training and soft skills to prepare young people for the business world, and facilitates the understanding of SME values, i.e. versatility, autonomy and creativity. As a result, young people are more motivated, more likely to complete an apprenticeship and more productive (<http://www.agefa.org/>).

Governance of apprenticeship schemes

Development of work/study programmes is based on partnerships between State departments, including the ministries in charge of agriculture, social affairs and employment, and the Ministry of National Education, consular chambers, professional sectors contracting companies and Regions. Regions, in fact, are “pivotal” actors in work/study programmes, especially as regards apprenticeship contracts.

Apprenticeship Programme Development and Stakeholder Involvement

Promoters, Design, Implementation, Examination, Certification, Programme Evaluation

1. Has your country/region a programme to promote apprenticeships? Who does it? How it works?

To improve the status of apprentices, the law of 5 March 2014 reinforced the activities of CFAs (training centres), notably with the addition of an apprentice support role.

Its aim is, on the one hand, to help apprentices bring their plans to fruition, and on the other hand, to reduce the number of contract failures. There are also plans for the CFAs to become involved in helping apprenticeship applicants to find an employer or to find a new employer in the case of a contract failure, in concert with the public employment agency. Finally, the CFAs are involved in giving apprentices social support and professional backup. The aim is to prevent or resolve social and material difficulties that might threaten the smooth progress of the apprenticeship contract. Similarly, CFAs promote diversity within their structures by raising instructor awareness and encouraging international mobility for apprentices, in particular by drawing on European Union programmes. Brittany region is particularly involved in promoting apprenticeship.

2. Which is the standard design of these programmes in your country? Do they need approval from central offices before they can be implemented? Is there any quality control to ensure the quality of these programmes?

The regional councils, which are now in charge of apprenticeships and vocational training for young people and adults, have adopted 'quality charters'. These documents are co-signed by vocational bodies representing particular sectors, or by training organisations that enter into contractual agreements with the region.

BRETAGNE QUALITY for apprenticeship requirements

1st step: Convince potential young apprentice and companies

2nd step: define the training path, from the very beginning to the signature of the contract

3rd step: assistance during notice period

4th step: assistance and support throughout the contract and training

5th step: provide support to continue and to enter labour market at the end of the contract

6th step: Measure companies and apprentice satisfaction

Apprenticeship	Professionalization contract
Young 15 –25 (prior learning)	Young from 16 up to 25 (continuing education) Wo resume their studies
At 15 : with a specific scholarship status	Unemployed people from 26
Up to 30 years old in some specific cases Experimentation in some regions (such as Brittany)	Employees or workers with inappropriate qualifications
No limit for disables and entrepreneurship	Young students in HE to graduate
Specific employment contract	Main objective : employment
Fixed term contract or permanent contract	Fixed term contract or permanent contract
Covered/borne by regional authority	Decided and negotiate with professional branches
Development in progress, also for HE	
Salary depends on the age/diploma	

3. How are the students assessed? Which type of certification do they receive, if successfully completed?

For classic curricula and for curricula in apprenticeship: methods of certification are defined during the registration at national committee for professional certification, which is placed under the authority of the French minister in charge of vocational training. The committee is made up of 43 members: representatives of ministers, representatives of the regions, social partners, representatives of the consular chambers, and qualified persons.

Title of the degree, learning outcomes, assessment, or number of credits (ECTS) are the same.

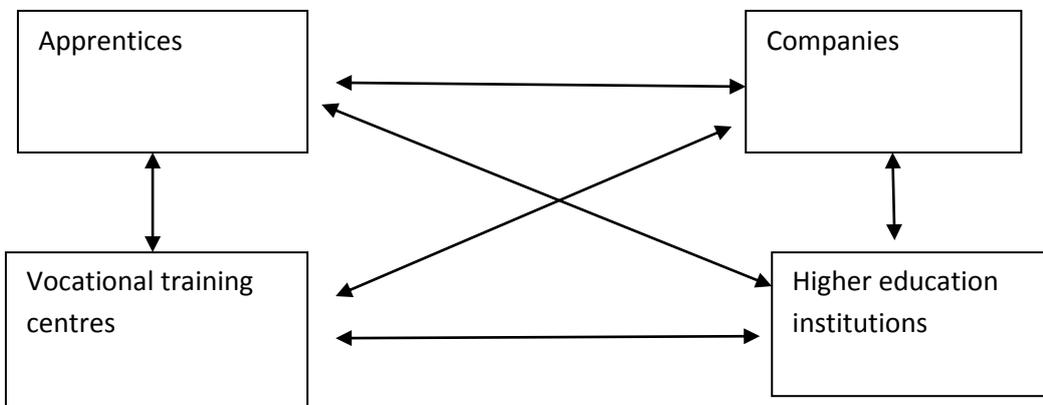
Training programmes and time allocation between training and time spending in companies are tailored made with training, nothing is compelled. The most important thing is learning outcomes and skills. Students and apprentices will get the same degree.

4. How many students undertake this type of scheme every year in your country/region?
 Which is the level of success?

31st December 2016, 412 400 young peoples enrolled in apprenticeship training, among them 37% enrolled in higher education degree (from technical diploma to Master). 152588 at national level.

17 000 apprentices in Brittany in total, 25% in higher education, 4520 students enrolled in apprenticeship training in universities at regional level.

Pedagogical collaboration



Education Level

Legislation, funding, Bologna (pre-bachelor, bachelor, master, doctorate) EQF and NQF

1. Which legislation do you have in place in your country/region/institution about apprenticeships?

The 1987 Seguin law, which raised the upper limit of the age eligibility criteria to 25, and expanded the scope of qualifications that could be studied through the apprenticeship route to include higher education level qualifications.

The next step will be in 1993, when a decree authorizes apprenticeship (and so WBL) for HE, opening the doors for narrower relations with companies. This event have had a small effect on universities at the beginning but the increasing number of students in apprenticeship and thenumber of programs opened in WBL is now very important and that shows that it's a real opportunity for students but also for companies

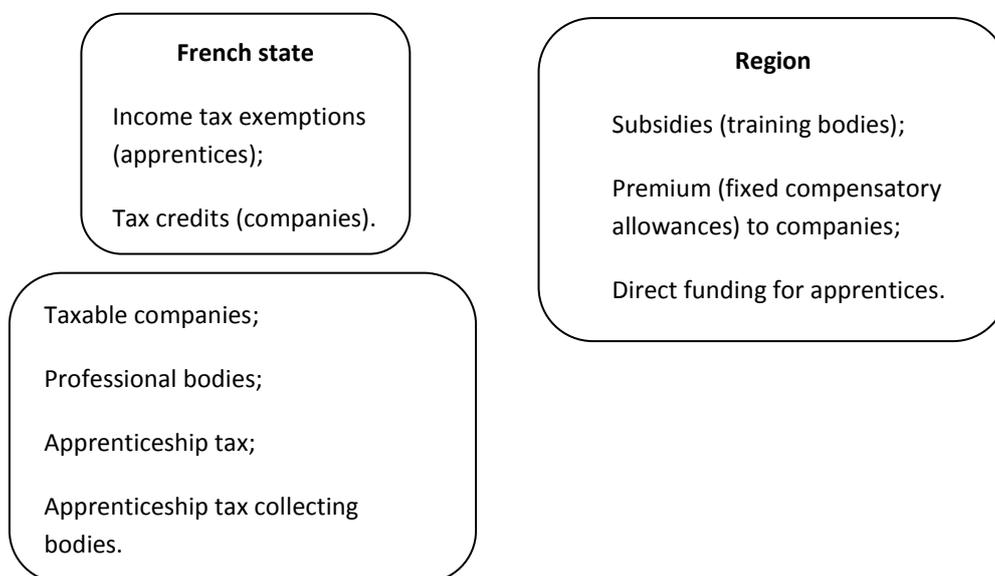
Law no.2011-893 of 28 July 2011, known as the "Cherpion" law, on development of work/study programmes and the securing of vocational paths, which reinforces trainees' rights and protection by stating that "traineeships are only legal if they are the subject of a

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.

Labor code organizes the training in apprenticeship.

2. How are the apprenticeship programmes funded? Is there any national regulation about it?



3. Which level of education is linked to apprenticeship schemes in your country? Is the award received equivalent (in credits and/or recognition) to similar awards that are not linked to apprenticeships?

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4. Which subjects/professional areas/economic fields are more popular in this type of programmes?

Strengths UBO:

One department for all the University (one common department, so one inclusive approach. Some University have several department responsible for apprenticeship for each fields.

Weaknesses:

- Foreign students;
- Funding of apprenticeship too complex;
- Complex governance the complexity of the system, characterised by a large number of stake holding agents and intermediaries, resulting in high management costs and an inefficient allocation of resources;
- Not enough human resources.

Threats:

- Apprenticeship strongly linked with low level qualification;
- Not same level than a classical training schemes

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