

Developments: France launched a Skills Investment Plan

The situation of adult education in France has significantly improved in 2019-2020 and the funding situation has stayed the same. The Skills Investment Plan, piloted by the Ministry of Labor was adopted, promoting upskilling, the ecological and digital transition and funding for low- skilled people. It sets the following ambitions:

- Train 1 million unskilled or unskilled job seekers and 1 million young people who are distanced from the labor market
- Meet the needs of new professions in a growing economy
- Contribute to the transformation of skills, particularly linked to the ecological and digital transition
- Build a skills society with a skill-tool-based approach
- Promote the regional pact to finance and support low-skilled people.

The European Pillar of Social Rights has been implemented visibly, but La Ligue is not aware of a consultation process. France believes in the European solution and often implements recommendations presented by the EU. There are clear policies for the implementation of Upskilling Pathways and many new initiatives for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals came into effect during the last year. The Skill investment plan does not only invest in training but also seeks to contribute to the transformation of skill provision, especially linked to the ecological transition.

Challenges: More attention to digital divide

The adult education sector in France was significantly affected by the COVID-19 crisis. The health crisis accentuated the disparities in terms of access to training for the most disadvantaged and the least qualified, in particular those who cannot use digital distance learning.

The government issued new training projects to push for digital training and encourage trainers to become more competent in e-learning. As a response to the crisis, the state will support organisations whose trainers were unemployed during the confinement. Although civil society welcomes this initiative, they are also aware that it does not account for rent, insurance costs and other costs. Hence, many adult education providers are still facing the threat of closures and learners are left behind, not being able to return to their training centres.

The focus for the next year will be specific target groups, such as migrants and young people living in the countryside. Speaking out a recommendation to the French government, La Ligue believes that large companies should not provide education because instead of focusing on local realities, they have market driven objectives. Hence, it is important to subsidise and rely on local associations for adult education who know their territory and the people who live there.
