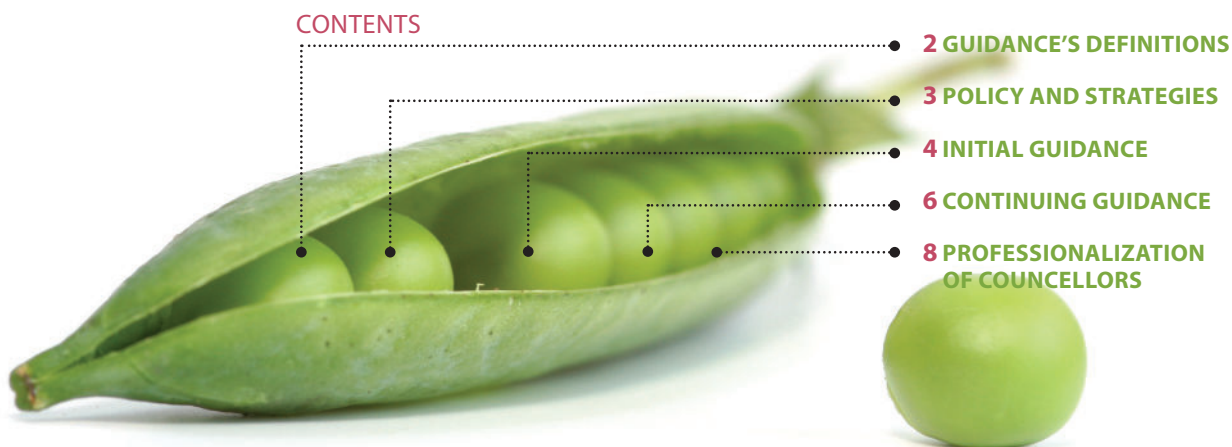




euro | guidance



# Lifelong guidance system in France



## Lifelong guidance in France

Euroguidance Network Publication

When France chose the theme of guidance as focus for the French presidency of the Council of the European Union, it was no doubt far from imagining that this work would lead to the development and adoption, on 21 November 2008, of a resolution aimed at «better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies».

However, in France, vocational training depends as much upon the initial curriculum as on a highly-developed continuous curriculum. This dichotomy has consequences for the guidance system which, even though it forms part of the European strategy for lifelong guidance, nevertheless continues to be impacted by an approach that is split between the conflicting ideas of initial guidance and continuous guidance.

This observation also applies to policies, and therefore strategies, in the area of guidance, with an additional tier - the territory, involving measures at the national and regional levels.

In addition, there is a wide range of organisations that provide information and guidance advice. This wide variety of information, guidance and advice structures differs depending on the target groups, the types of services offered, the status of the institutions or the origin of their funds.

The French system may therefore appear complex. The education and vocational training reforms introduced in 2013 and 2014 have partly modified the guidance system. Their aim is to increase the autonomy of individuals when making choices about their careers. National and regional operators work together to guarantee that all assets benefit from a consistent and uniform service over the whole of the country.

In this brochure, the Euroguidance-France network describes the main characteristics of the French lifelong guidance system - strategies, stakeholders and resources, with the emphasis placed on a range of current topics of concern.





## GUIDANCE'S DEFINITIONS

Guidance is the result of a continuous process aimed at developing and implementing a personal training and social insertion project that individuals carry out based on their aspirations and abilities.

Under the right to education each individual has the right to be informed, advised and supported in regard to career guidance, whether initial or continuous.

The public lifelong guidance service is thus designed to guarantee everybody access to free, full and objective information on careers, training, certification, opportunities and compensation levels, as well as access to networked services that offer quality guidance advice and support.

**Extracts from the Law of 24 November 2009 in respect of lifelong guidance and vocational training.**



2

*Guidance as a continuous process enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their life paths in learning, work and other settings where it is possible to acquire and use these*

*capacities and competences. Guidance covers a range of individual and collective activities relating to information giving, counselling, competence assessment, support, and the teaching of decision-making and career management skills.*

**Definition adopted by the resolution of the Council of the European Union of 21 November 2008**





## POLICY AND STRATEGIES - NATIONAL/REGIONAL SHARING

In the middle of the 2000s, a number of reports revealed the true complexity of the French system and its main consequence - the potential beneficiaries of guidance counselling were confused. One of the solutions was to create, in 2009(1), a (national) public guidance service.

However at the same time, the Regions and regional and local authorities, had gradually brought about the decentralisation of the «vocational training» competence to their advantage. As a result, basing themselves on the principle of a global approach to guidance-training-insertion for individuals, as early as 2004 the French Regions claimed control over «guidance».

In 2014 (2) a single law instituted the final stage of the decentralisation of «vocational training» and the (first?) stage of decentralisation of «guidance».

Thus, since 1 January 2015, a regional public guidance service (SPRO - service public régional de l'orientation) was created in response to user expectations, whilst at the same time taking into account the economic development of the territories. The regional territory has become the level at which the actions of the guidance structures are coordinated.

The law of 2014 states that «The State defines, at national level, the guidance policy for pupils and students in schools and higher educational institutions» and «the Region coordinates the actions of the other organisations involved in the regional public guidance service».

The Region is also responsible for «the creation of the professional development council» and providing «an information role, in particular in respect of training and the validation of prior experience».

The initial guidance services are administered by the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research although other Ministries may be involved in providing information, such as the Minister for Urban Affairs, Youth and Sports and the Minister of Agriculture. The guidance services of the Ministry of National Education target general and professional secondary education establishments along with higher education establishments.

The continuous guidance services are very often co-administered by the Ministry in charge of Employment and Work, and by the Regions. They are responsible for informing and guiding assets, adults seeking jobs, who wish to change career path, who choose or are required to be professionally mobile, or who desire to acquire additional competences. Organisations involved in reception, guidance, information, support (AOIA - accueil, orientation, information, accompagnement) are structured in networks at the national level, with territorial locations extending sometimes as far as the living area or labour pool. There are almost 9,000 such structures in France.

To respond to the rules underlying any public service (access to free, full and objective information), information on careers, training, certification, opportunities and levels of compensation is made available based on two major systems. At the national level, there are skills and capabilities observatories managed by social partners, and at the regional level, the resource and information centres de (Centres for training co-ordination, resources and information known as 'CARIF').

Finally, apart from the policies and strategies introduced by public decision-making bodies, private guidance centres and private press agencies such as L'Étudiant and Studyrama, offer information and guidance services to secondary school pupils and students. In competition with public service structures, and unlike them, these organisations offer paying services.

(1) Law n° 2009-1437 of 24 November 2009 related to lifelong guidance and professional training

(2) Law n° 2014-288 of 5 March 2014 related to professional training, employment and social democracy

**further information :** [www.cnefop.gouv.fr](http://www.cnefop.gouv.fr) portal of the National Employment, Professional Training and Guidance Council, responsible in particular for promoting dialogue between the various stakeholders (decision-making bodies, financiers, service providers) and for assessing the policies and strategies in its areas of competence including guidance.





## INITIAL GUIDANCE

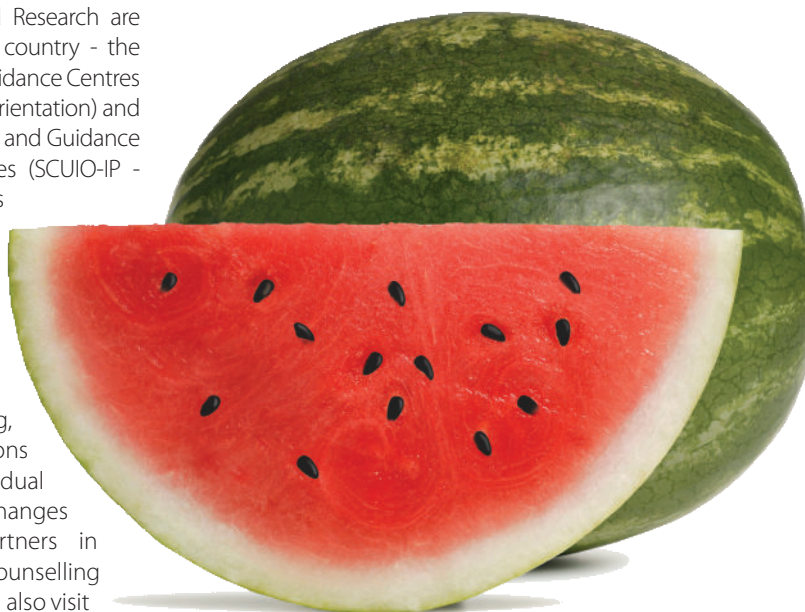
### Principal structures, some tools

For reasons of simplicity only the main guidance networks are presented here. For the initial training of young people and students, two main networks that depend on the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research are located across the whole of the country - the network of the Information and Guidance Centres (CIO - Centres d'Information et d'Orientation) and the network of the Joint University and Guidance and Professional Insertion Services (SCUIO-IP - Services Communs Universitaires d'Information et d'Orientation et de l'Insertion Professionnelle).

The CIOs accept applicants from all walks of life and prioritise young people at school and their families. Main activities - information on studying, professional training, qualifications and professions, individual counselling, organisation of exchanges and discussions between partners in the education system. Counselling psychologists who work there will also visit secondary schools (collèges and lycées), they are responsible for the school adjustment of pupils and are involved in preventing and reducing the dropout rate. They support pupils in obtaining lifelong career decision-making skills. At the same time, they are responsible for and co-ordinate the organisation of information provided to pupils on self-awareness, activities to promote discovery of the world of business and work, in partnership with the educational teams. Finally, they act as technical advisers to headteachers to put in place a customised guidance programme, in accordance with national policies.

The SCUIO-IP are present for students in all universities, and are often associated with professional integration help desks. Main activities - providing information on university curricula, monitoring and providing help to students in the form of tutoring and support, support for their training project and for creating their career plan in the form of one-on-one meetings and counselling, information on career changes from the first year onwards, advice on finding training programmes, information and workshops on professional integration.

As the Youth Information network depends on the Ministry for Youth it has reception areas located throughout the territory that enable it to respond to the demands and requirements of young people in matters of information on day-to-day living and vocational or educational guidance.



4

[www.education.gouv.fr](http://www.education.gouv.fr)

[www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/pid24842/orientation.html](http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/pid24842/orientation.html)

<http://eduscol.education.fr/cid48057/orientation-priorites.html>

[www.onisep.fr](http://www.onisep.fr)

[www.cidj.com](http://www.cidj.com)

v  
ă

ö

# S Portfolio of Competences

A portfolio of competences is an individual file created slowly over time using a range of documents, which allows individuals to certify the competences they have obtained as a result of training and experience. The term «portfolio of skills» is also used. For a number of years, as a result of the rapid spread of digital technology, there has been an increase in the number of e-portfolios. Portfolios of competences are increasingly used in higher education establishments, in particular in universities.

Among the numerous portfolios developed, the Portfolio of Experience and Competences (PEC - Portefeuille d'Expériences et de Compétences)

has grown steadily and today is used in 35 of the country's 75 universities. Since its experimental creation in 2007 by 4 founding universities, 700 teachers have been trained to help students throughout their course create their professional integration project by the means of an e-portfolio. This tool is aimed at empowering students and giving them control over their career path by teaching them how to describe and promote their experiences and their skills. Since 2012, the convergence of the PEC with Europass has led to a greater co-ordination and complementarity of the two portfolios.

**further information :** [www.pec-univ.fr](http://www.pec-univ.fr)

# ä Parcours Avenir - a guidance tool to help acquire new skills by becoming familiar with the socio-economic world and by taking initiatives



**PARCOURS AVENIR**  
a guidance tool to help acquire new skills by becoming familiar with the socio-economic world and by taking initiatives

PUPILS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS ) PARTNERS ) ACTIONS ) AIMS )



BETTER PROFESSIONAL INCLUSION

In collège, and in the lycée, the Parcours Avenir «must allow each pupil to understand the world of work and business, to experience the diversity of jobs and training programmes, to develop their sense of commitment and initiative and to draw up their academic and vocational guidance programme», (Cf. decree of 1st July published in the Official Journal of 7 July 2015). It consists of a range of activities that are carried out during courses within a discipline

and extracurricular skills and to promote them when designing their individual guidance pathway.

**further information :** to support its implementation, the ONISEP has produced a brochure that can be found in the teaching section of the site : [www.onisep.fr](http://www.onisep.fr)

ä

â  
ç  
e  
t

euro | guidance



## CONTINUING GUIDANCE

Principal structures offering guidance services for people entering the labour market

6

NETWORK	MISSIONS
<b>National employment agency Pôle Emploi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for and placement of job seekers</li> <li>• Support for companies in the area of recruitment</li> <li>• Career Guidance Counselling (CEP)</li> </ul>
<b>Agency for the employment of Managers - APEC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and advice for executives throughout their careers</li> <li>• Help to companies to optimise their recruitment and the management of their internal skills</li> <li>• Career Guidance Counselling (CEP)</li> </ul>
<b>Local Mission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social and professional integration of young people aged between 16 and 25 in all areas - guidance, training, employment, accommodation, health, mobility, citizenship, sport, leisure, culture</li> <li>• Career Guidance Counselling (CEP)</li> </ul>
<b>Cité des métiers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cité des Métiers brings together, in the same location, professionals in the areas of guidance, training, employment, competence assessment and business creation, who pool their resources in order to offer better guidance, better integration and a better career path for individuals .</li> </ul>
<b>Employment office/ Training office</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customised Support and Counselling</li> <li>• Promotion of training and employment measures</li> <li>• Actions in favour of employment and companies</li> </ul>
<b>MIFE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance professionnelle personnalisée</li> <li>• Promotion de la formation et des dispositifs d'emploi</li> <li>• Actions en faveur de l'emploi et des entreprises</li> </ul>
<b>Cap Emploi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and counselling for disabled people</li> <li>• Help with placing disabled people in private or public companies</li> <li>• Career Guidance Counselling (CEP)</li> </ul>
<b>Fund for the Integration of Handicapped People into the Civil Service FIPHFP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and counselling for disabled people so that they may be recruited or maintained in employment, in the three public functions</li> </ul>
<b>Network of information on women's rights CIDFF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception, Information on women's rights including employment, professional training and company creation</li> </ul>
<b>VAE Counselling Relay Points</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and Guidance of the public on Validation of Prior Experience procedures de (VAE)</li> <li>• Support during the different steps of the approach and administrative formalities, via one-on-one meetings and counselling</li> </ul>
<b>Skills audit service provider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of skills audit</li> </ul>
<b>Approved joint body in respect of individual training leave (CIF) OPACIF</b>	<p>Main mission - support employees in drawing up their training project in respect of Individual Training Leave (analysis of requests and funding)</p> <p>But also :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for employees in drawing up their training project in respect of the CIF, a competence assessment or a VAE</li> <li>• Information provided to these individuals</li> <li>• Career Guidance Counselling (CEP)</li> </ul>
<b>CONSULAR CHAMBER Chamber of trade and crafts Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chamber of Agriculture</b>	<p>Main mission: Representing the interests of companies to public authorities.</p> <p>Including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of general interest events (fairs, shows, conferences, ...) in the service of companies, their territory and the attractiveness of their geographic territory.</li> <li>• Management of Decision Support Centres to help young people take decisions about their future and provide information on contracts, jobs, diplomas</li> </ul>

## y The Validation of Prior Experience – VAE

Originating from the law for Social Modernisation of 2002, the Validation of Prior Experience is recognised by the Education Code as the 4th method of access to professional certification in France\*. By combining the knowledge and competences acquired in a professional situation or during unpaid activities, with a

certification referential, the training nature of work is acknowledged by the VAE. The creation of a dossier of evidence before a sovereign jury confers upon it a social and legal recognition in the same way as certification acquired in initial or continuous training.

**further information :** [www.vae.gouv.fr](http://www.vae.gouv.fr)

\* 4th method of access to professional certification such as initial or continuous training and apprenticeship.

AUDIENCES	FURTHER INFORMATION
• Job seeker (paid or not)	<a href="http://www.pole-emploi.fr">www.pole-emploi.fr</a>
• Private sector executive employee • Executive job seeker (paid or not) • Students who have finished their higher education	<a href="http://www.apec.fr">www.apec.fr</a>
• Young people aged between 16 and 25	<a href="http://www.unml.info">www.unml.info</a>
• All audiences	<a href="http://reseau.citesdesmetiers.com">http://reseau.citesdesmetiers.com</a>
• All audiences	<a href="http://www.ville-emploi.asso.fr">www.ville-emploi.asso.fr</a>
• All audiences	<a href="http://www.intermife.fr">www.intermife.fr</a>
• Job seeker (paid or not), in particular • with a «disabled» issue	<a href="http://www.capemploi.com">www.capemploi.com</a>
• Job seeker (paid or not), public sector employee, in particular with a «disabled» issue	<a href="http://www.fiphfp.fr">www.fiphfp.fr</a>
• All audiences, in particular women	<a href="http://www.infofemmes.com">www.infofemmes.com</a>
• Any person having at least 3 years' professional experience	<a href="http://www.intercariforef.org/reseau/reseau-carif-oref">www.intercariforef.org/reseau/reseau-carif-oref</a>
• Private sector employee • Public sector employee	
• Private sector employee • Job seeker (paid or not)	<a href="http://www.fongecif.com/contact.html">www.fongecif.com/contact.html</a> <a href="http://www.afdas.com">www.afdas.com</a> <a href="http://www.faftt.fr">www.faftt.fr</a> <a href="http://www.fafsea.com">www.fafsea.com</a> <a href="http://www.unagecif.com">www.unagecif.com</a> <a href="http://www.unifaf.fr">www.unifaf.fr</a> <a href="http://www.uniformation.fr">www.uniformation.fr</a>
• Company bosses • Entrepreneur (employee or job seeker) • Young person in search of companies in the context of sandwich courses (apprenticeship, professionalisation contract)	<a href="http://www.cci.fr">www.cci.fr</a> <a href="http://www.artisanat.fr">www.artisanat.fr</a> <a href="http://www.chambres-agriculture.fr">www.chambres-agriculture.fr</a>

## ü Career Guidance Counselling – CEP (Conseil en Evolution Professionnelle)

Originating from the law of 2013 relating to job security, Career Guidance Counselling is a **new** right that is available to any individual (employee, self-employed, job seeker...) throughout their working life.

It allows them notably to obtain information on their professional environment and the way jobs are developing in the region, to better understand their competences so as to be able to promote them, to identify jobs that correspond to their competences and to know the measures available to complete a career development project.

The free and confidential CEP, comprises three levels, a one-on-one meeting, customised counselling and support for implementation of the project\*. It is provided by five networks of national operators (see table opposite), and possibly by other stakeholders designated by the Regions.

\*Career engineering and financial engineering





## PROFESSIONALIZATION OF COUNCELLORS

### Training guidance counsellors for pupils and students

The profession of guidance counsellor is not a regulated profession in France. Only public service counselling psychologists who work in Information and Guidance Centres and in schools have a degree in psychology and a specific diploma known as the Diplôme d'Etat de Conseiller d'Orientation Psychologue. To be qualified, students must have a degree in psychology and sit an exam designed to recruit officers from the Ministry of Education.

From 2016 onwards, the creation of a single body of psychologists from the national education system will amend the frame of reference of competences and how they are recruited. They must hold a Master's degree in Psychology and shall benefit from an additional year of training, on a sandwich course, leading to a specialised certificate. Teachers are also involved in offering guidance to pupils and in structures designed to prevent and combat school dropout rates.

Joint university information and guidance services include teams consisting of guidance counselling psychologists, design engineers, documentalists, psychologists, teachers with university qualifications.

#### further information :

- counselling psychologists association of France : <http://acop-asso.org>
- University Conference Network of Counsellors in the Guidance and Professional Integration of students [www.lacourroie.fr](http://www.lacourroie.fr)
- Institut de recherche en orientation professionnelle : <http://inetop.cnam.fr/>

### Training adult guidance professionals

Within the multiple structures of continuous guidance (see the main networks p 6 & 7), the practitioners of continuous guidance may be, integration counsellors, employment counsellors, researchers, training counsellors... There is no single professional reference framework. There is therefore no single training to prepare practitioners for carrying out these activities.

For their initial training, these practitioners were able to follow a wide variety of training courses but often in human sciences (educational sciences or occupational psychology).

Once guidance professionals have been recruited, it is the network to which they belong that is responsible for their professionalisation, and their access to continuous training. There is a large number of service providers that offer professional development paths. We should note that the Ministry of Employment, entrusted to the Carif-Orefs the task of making such an offer.

#### further information :

- The Carif-Orefs [www.intercariforef.org/reseau/page/professionnalisation-des-acteurs](http://www.intercariforef.org/reseau/page/professionnalisation-des-acteurs)
- Inffo Centre charged with developing information in the field of professional guidance and training at the national level [www.centre-inffo.fr](http://www.centre-inffo.fr)

### Webography



[www.orientation-pour-tous.fr](http://www.orientation-pour-tous.fr) the national lifelong guidance portal (information on initial and continuous training programmes, jobs, guidance structures, etc).

[www.monorientationenligne.fr](http://www.monorientationenligne.fr) an online youth guidance service.

[www.onisep.fr](http://www.onisep.fr) a national publisher of information on jobs and teaching.

[www.euroguidance-France.org](http://www.euroguidance-France.org) the site of the French Euroguidance network, for the European dimension of guidance and to promote mobility.

[www.cidj.com](http://www.cidj.com) the network of youth information centres.

[www.pole-emploi.fr](http://www.pole-emploi.fr) site of the Agence nationale pour l'emploi - see in particular the «Je m'oriente» section.

[www.apec.fr](http://www.apec.fr) site dedicated to executive employment - job offers, guidance tools.

[www.unml.info](http://www.unml.info) portal of the Union Nationale des Missions Locales (UNML) - representative and federative union of the network of Local Missions and other integration organisations.

[www.capemploi.com](http://www.capemploi.com) portal of the national Specialised Placement Organisations network in the service of disabled persons.

[www.intercariforef.org](http://www.intercariforef.org) portal of the network of the Carif-Orefs in charge in particular of the information and professionalisation of stakeholders involved in adult guidance.



Editing  
Euroguidance-France

Authors :  
Graziana Boscato, Isabelle Dekeister,  
Régis Guillemette, Elisabeth Kunze,  
Laurent Lascrou, Régis Roussel,  
Alice Vielajus  
Layout : Claudie Carpentier