

## On-the-job training: France stands out from its European neighbours



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According to the latest available statistics, in 2020 France, like all other European countries, maintained its training effort despite the health crisis. Training practices and training methods have nevertheless changed, and French companies have shown themselves to be particularly capable of adapting to changing circumstances and taking advantage of government schemes. The results of the CTVS survey also point out specific French features in terms of the way companies have integrated training into their HR and development strategies.



EMPLOYMENT  
 SUPPORT  
 SOCIAL EXPERIMENT  
 EMPLOYMENT  
 MEASURE  
 EVALUATION  
 LOCAL APPROACH  
 LOW LEVEL OF  
 QUALIFICATION  
 YOUNG PERSON  
 IN DIFFICULTY

After the European Year of Youth, the European Union devoted the 2023-2024 period to skills, in order to “give a fresh impetus to lifelong learning”. Among the objectives of this European Year of Skills, particular attention was paid to employers’ needs, notably in order to support innovation and competitiveness by giving them the means to contribute to the environmental and digital transitions\*. But how do European firms normally respond to their skill requirements? Why do they train their employees? In a competitive environment, what position does training occupy in their strategies for development or securing their employees’ career trajectories? The 2020 round of the European Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) provides some of the answers to these questions.

The data not only describe European companies’ continuing training practices and policies and the changes they have undergone over time but also shine a light on specific national features, notably those of France, shortly after the 2018 reform came into force.

At the time of the last round of the survey in 2015, the analyses showed that, whereas companies in Eastern European countries still needed to strengthen their training effort, their counterparts in Western Europe were able to demonstrate a high level of involvement in this area. In 2015, French companies stood out by virtue of their sustained investment in training, mainly in the form of internal and external courses, but were lagging

behind when it came to on-the-job training which, moreover, was developing rapidly in Europe. This called into question French companies’ ability to innovate by making greater efforts to combine work and training in order to develop their employees’ skills, particularly in a period of crisis. Has the 2018 act, which prepared the ground for the promotion of on-the-job training measures, led them to seize this opportunity?

The most recent available data from the CVTS 6 and EFE-a surveys testify to French companies’ ability to adapt in the face of the Covid-19 crisis. Regardless of size, those companies that provide training seem to have strengthened their commitment, giving training a strategic dimension.

Whereas the aim of the 2018 act was to move from an obligation to fund training to an encouragement to provide training, particularly for those companies that were not in the habit of doing so, the changes observed mainly occurred within those already committed in this area. Many of these latter now regard training as a tool to be used to further their economic development.

The aim here is not to analyse companies’ training effort by dwelling on the levels achieved in terms of the share of companies that provide training for their employees or the share of employees who receive training. These indicators have changed little in the past ten years or so. Small firms still lag behind larger ones, so it is their practices that are mainly responsible for the disparities between countries. These small companies are also more



\*[www.european-year-of-skills-2023.fr](http://www.european-year-of-skills-2023.fr)