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Trampusch, Christine/Eichenberger, Pierre/de Roo, Micha/ Bartlett Rissi, Robin/Bieri, Isabelle/Schmid, Laura/Steinlin, Simon (eds.) (2010). *Continuing Vocational Training in France*. REBECA (Research on Social Benefits in Collective Agreements). Database, Part 2 'Social Benefits in Collective Agreements'. SNF-Project No. 100012-119898. Institute of Political Science, University of Berne.

Continuing Vocational Training in France

Preliminary Remark

In France, one can hardly distinguish between the public continuing vocation training (CVT) system and the CVT system regulated through collective labor agreements (CLAs). The state has co-opted the CVT scheme based on CLAs and transformed it into a territorial one. CLAs on CVT which are widespread are incorporated in legislation. For details, see below.

1. Introduction

Overview

The public system of continuing vocational training (CVT)

- Implementation and administration of CVT in France is done by many different actors: the state, local government, public bodies, public and private education establishments, trade unions, professional organizations and companies. Thus, CVT is a national task that is influenced not only by the state but by multiple actors, joint management, collective bargaining and the market (Vind et al. 2004: 20). Concerning the state, CVT is implemented by central and regional governments. At national level, CVT is subject of a distinct body of labor law (CEDEFOP 2008b: 22). At regional level, each region can implement its own CVT policies (CEDEFOP 2008b: 22).

- Typically, CVT provisions are first negotiated in national intersectoral agreements which should later always be integrated in national law. However, this process might be difficult because some rules in the agreements are difficult to realize (Lochard 28.05.2009, interview). Nevertheless, the fundamental law on CVT of 1971 law implemented the 1970 agreement (Bosch 2003: 2; Seillier 2007: 144). Furthermore, the 2004 law implemented the 2003 agreements (Giaccone 2009: 23), and the 2009 law implemented the 2009 agreement.
- The most important aspects of the CVT system are as follows: Time invested in CVT is considered as working time and companies are obliged to finance CVT (Drexel 2003: 14).
- The social partners fulfill different tasks in the French CVT system. Five points might be important to mention (details are explained below): First, they negotiate intersectoral and sectoral collective labor agreements (CLAs) (Lochard/Robin 2009). Second, they are involved in training policy for private sector workers. Third, they play an important role in the management of company provided CVT funding (Centre Inffo 2007: 3). Fourth, they set up and run the joint contribution collecting bodies. Fifth, they also manage some money of employment insurance funds that is earmarked for employment and training policies (CEDEFOP 2008a).
- The social partners have set up the Joint National Committee for Vocational Training (*Comité paritaire national pour la formation professionnelle*, CPNFP). This Committee is responsible for the general smooth running of the vocational training system and for ensuring adherence to the terms of the relevant agreements on CVT between the two sides of industry (CEDEFOP 2008b: 25).
- At national level they have set up the Bipartite Employment Commissions (*Commission paritaire nationale pour l'emploi*, CPNEs). Following the 2003 intersectoral CLA, the CPNEs have to put in place that each professional sector periodically examines the quantitative and qualitative development of jobs and qualifications in their field (ETUC et al. 2006: 48). At regional level, they have set up the Regional Joint Interprofessional Employment Committee (*Commission paritaire interprofessionnelle régionale de l'emploi*, COPIRE) that has similar tasks like the CPNEs (CEDEFOP 2008b: 25).
- The social partners have set up and run the joint contribution collecting bodies (sectoral and intersectoral training funds) which are called OPCAs (*Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés*). The purpose of these bodies is to collect, share and distribute the contribution made by companies in order to finance CVT.
- Furthermore, the social partners manage that portion of employment insurance funds which is earmarked for funding employment and training policies determined by the social partners. This money is managed jointly by employers' and workers' representatives: at national level by UNEDIC (*Union Nationale pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce*,

National Union for Employment in Industry and Commerce) and at local level by the ASSEDICs (*Association pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce*, Associations for Employment in the Industry and Trade). Both UNEDIC and ASSEDICs were set up in 1958 by the social partners and are managed by the social partners (CEDEFOP 2008b: 38; UNIJuridis 2008: 4). However, in 2009 UNEDIC and the ASSEDICs have been merged with ANPE (*Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi*, National Agency of Employment). Therefore, they are now managed together with the state (CEDEFOP 2008b: 21).

The role of collective labor agreements (CLAs) in CVT:

- The law defines a framework of training themes that can be negotiated by the social partners: *code du travail, article L. 934-2* (Seillier 2007: 147).
- Collective labor agreements (CLAs) at intersectoral and sectoral level have played a very important role for CVT since the intersectoral CLA of 1970 (Lochard/Robin 2009). As an example: Since 1971, there is a statutory duty for enterprises to pay money for CVT (either in a fund or as internal firm investment) that evolved on the basis of 50 intersectoral as well as sectoral collective labor agreements (Barkholdt 2004: 57). Since the intersectoral CLA of September 2003, the social partners' role in CVT has even become more important (Lochard/Robin 2009).
- There are various sectoral or intersectoral CVT funds established by CLAs, the so-called OPCAs (*Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés*).

Levels of Bargaining

The social partners negotiate CLAs on CVT at the national level as well as at the sectoral level (Lochard/Robin 2009). Normally, CLAs at the national level are interpreted through detailed sectoral CLAs (Vind et al. 2004: 24).

Actors

- According to Lochard/Robin (2009), three employers' organizations are involved in collective bargaining on CVT: the General Confederation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (*Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises*, CGPME), the Movement of French Enterprises (*Mouvement des entreprises de France*, MEDEF), and the Craftwork Employers' Association (*Union professionnelle artisanale*, UPA).
- Five trade unions are involved in concluding CLAs on CVT (Lochard/Robin 2009): the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (*Confédération française démocratique du travail*, CFDT), the French Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff – General Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff (*Confédération française de l'encadrement – confédération générale des cadres*, CFE-CGC), the French Christian

Workers' Confederation (*Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens, CFTC*), the General Confederation of Labor (*Confédération générale du travail, CGT*), and the Workers' Force (*Confédération générale du travail – Force ouvrière, CGT-FO*).

Critical Junctures

Definition: Critical junctures are time periods or years when important decisions on the development of the collectively negotiated CVT scheme were made.

We have identified the following critical junctures:

- Until 1970 the CVT system was dominated by the state and the employers (Drexel 2003: 12-13). However, in 1968 the General Agreement invited the social partners to start national negotiation on CVT (Vind et al. 204: 20). In 1970, a national intersectoral agreement was concluded. An important provision of the CLA was to guarantee the right for training leave for employees. In 1971 (and also during the following years) the state further developed the CVT system in a new law (Drexel 2003: 12-13). The CLA of 1970 and the law of 1971 have been the starting point for the current CVT system that is characterized by multiple actors (Vind et al. 2004: 20).
- In the 1990s several CVT funds were criticized of not considering the employees' interests because they were managed by employers only. Therefore, the social partners and the state reformed the framework of the funds (Drexel 2003: 21).
- The national intersectoral agreements in 2003 and 2009 have also led to major public reforms of vocational training in France (Bosch 2003: 2; Lochard 28.05.2009, e-mail interview). Lochard/Robin (2009) state that since the 2003 national intersectoral agreement and the 2004 law the social partners have become very important actors in the field on CVT.

2. Important Collective Agreements (Examples)

- The 1970 national intersectoral agreement (implemented and expanded by the 1971 law), which regulates the following aspects:
 - the right of all employees to invest working time in CVT (Bosch 2003: 2),
 - the participation right of employees in enterprises (Bosch 2003: 2),
 - joint commissions for discussions about CVT (Bosch 2003: 2).
- The 1991 National Intersectoral Agreement (*accord national interprofessionnel du 3 juillet 1991 relatif à la formation et au perfectionnement professionnels*) (CPNFP 2009).

- The December 2003 National Intersectoral Agreement (*accord national interprofessionnel du 5 décembre 2003 relatif à l'accès des salariés à la formation tout au long de la vie professionnelle*) was implemented by the 2004 law (CPNFP 2009). It regulates the introduction of the individual right to training (*droit individuel à la formation, DIF*) (Giaccone 2009: 23) and the reinforcement of the role of OPCAs (CEDEFOP 2008a: 82). Furthermore, the social partners agree that they have the right to regulate further details on CVT in sectoral agreement (Bosch 2003: 8). At the end of June 2005, more than 250 sectoral agreements based on the agreement of 2003 were concluded; source: ETUC et al. 2006: 48):
- 2008 National Intersectoral Agreement (*accord du 11 janvier 2008 relatif à la modernisation du marché du travail*) (CPFNP 2009),
- 2009 National Intersectoral Agreement (*accord de janvier 2009 sur le développement de la Formation tout au long de la vie*), implemented by the 2009 law (Lochard 28.05.2009, e-mail interview).

3. Important Sectors

- Important branches (amongst others), concerning CVT, are the agriculture, trade, craft, social economy, temporary employment and hospital sectors (Seillier 2007: 146).
- OPCAs (*Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés*) are sectoral and intersectoral training funds and most important in sectors dominated by SMEs or in sectors in difficulties (due to restructuring processes).
- In sectors with large enterprises, OPCAs only play a marginal role because enterprises keep most of their financial resources for their own training plans (CEDEFOP 2008a: 92).
- Two examples of OPCAs with good practice (CEDEFOP 2008a: 89-92) are the temporary workers sector (*Fonds d'assurance formation du travail temporaire, FAF.TT*) and the textile and clothing industry sector (*forthac*).
- Every sector needs its own specific workers' qualifications, therefore, the agreements vary quite a lot along the sectors. Some sectors formulate their *validation des acquis de l'expérience* (see section 7), others do not (Lochard 28.05.2009, interview).

4. Structure, Organization, and Mode of Administration

- In France, there exist several sectoral CVT funds: the OPCAs.
 - The main task of OCPAs is collecting CVT contributions made by companies. OPCAs are established through collective bargaining, but the state gives authorization to

operate (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81). The OPCAs are regulated by Law No 2004-391, 4th of May 2004. This law is based on the national agreement signed by all trade unions in September 2003 (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81). However, the state has a mandatory control mandate executed by the ministry in charge of vocational training (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83).

- In 2008, there were 97 OPCAs: 40 national professional organizations, two national inter-trade and intersectoral organizations (OPCALIA and AGEFOS-PME), 24 regional inter-trade organizations (OPCALIA) and 31 other organizations (Lochard/Robin 2009).
 - OPCAs belong to the Single Equalisation Fund (*fonds unique de péréquation, FUP*). This fund's main function is reallocating overages of the OPCAs and distributing the money to those bodies that have generated a deficit (CEDEFOP 2008b: 25).
 - OPCAs are managed by a board composed of an equal number of representatives of employers and trade unions (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81). The president of an OPCA is usually an employers' representative and the vice president an employee representative (CEDEFOP 2008a: 82).
 - There is a strict separation between fund raising and training delivery (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81). All financial resources are pooled, which means that small enterprises may receive more financial resources from an OPCA than its initial contribution (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81).
 - OPCAs are free to establish their own internal organization, but they have to respect certain rules as far as fund collection and allocation are concerned (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83).
 - The final decisions on concrete trainings which are done with the money of funds dedicated to training plans are made by the employer (Barkholdt 2004: 58).
- Furthermore, in the framework of the interprofessional agreement of 2009 and the 2009 law the Joint Fund for Rendering Career Paths Secure (*Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels, FPSPPF*), a funding of (re-)qualification activities for unemployed and employees that are in 'vulnerable situations' is intended. The fund was planned by the social partners in the 2009 agreement but is not yet ready to be active (Alleki 2009).

5. Role of the State: Financial Support, Legislation, and Extension Procedures

- Despite the important role of the social partners in CVT, the state still has regulatory supervisory power and is responsible for the legislative and regulatory framework (Lochard/Robin 2009). As mentioned above, the state actually co-opts the collectively negotiated CVT scheme at national level and transforms it into a territorial one.
- Furthermore, the state also initiates and pays for initiatives that target special groups like young people, unemployed, people with disabilities, people with literacy problems and prisoners (Lochard/Robin 2009).
- The role of the regions is also very important: the regions define and implement the vocational training policy for young people and adults who are seeking employment or a career change. Thus, they have their own regional vocational training policies (Lochard/Robin 2009). Regional councils that are concerned with training have their own rules and budgets, but they work together with the social partners (Lochard 28.05.2009, interview).
- Concerning UNEDIC and ASSEDIC, the provisions in agreements concluded by the social partners on the unemployment system are subject to central government approval. The idea of this is to make this provision compulsory to all private sectors (Unijuridis 2008: 4). Furthermore, since 2009 both institutions have been merged with ANPE and are therefore under control of the state (CEDEFOP 2008b: 21).
- There is a training-tax credit that allows that under certain conditions a part of the in-company training expenses are deducted from the taxable profit or from the taxable income (Gasskov 2001: 45). This rule was introduced in 1988 and extended until 2001 (Gasskov 2001: 45). Unfortunately, we have no current information on that.
- The state may also subsidize the OPACs (Barkholdt 2004: 57).

6. Financial Structure of the Collectively Negotiated Schemes

General information:

- The three main sources of funding for CVT are, first, companies, second, central state, and third, regions (Lochard/Robin 2009). Furthermore, money from the European Social Fund (ESF) is an available source for financial CVT incentives (Giaccone 2009: 20).
- Following Lochard/Robin (2009), in 2005, the total spending on CVT (and apprenticeships) amounted to 25.9 billion EUR (an increase of 3.5 per cent compared with 2004). 10.5 billion EUR of this sum was provided by companies, 4.4 billion EUR by the

state, and 3.2 billion EUR by the regions. Between 2002 and 2005, the country's payments for vocational training and apprenticeships remained at 1.5 per cent of the GDP. Between 1999 and 2005, the regions' payments for CVT increased by 58 per cent, with the priority of apprenticeships and CVT for young people. In 2005, civil service spent 5.5 billion EUR on CVT for their workers.

- A minimum compulsory amount for enterprises is defined by law: compulsory contributions by companies to training have to be equal to 1.6 per cent of total payroll in companies with 20 employees or more, 1.05 per cent for enterprises with 10-19 employees and 0.55 per cent for enterprises with fewer than 10 employees (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83). Enterprises with more than 20 employees must also pay 0.2 per cent of total payroll to a training fund dedicated to individual training leave (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81). Independent workers pay contribution of 0.15 per cent of their gross annual pay (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83).
- Enterprises do not have to pay their money for CVT to an OPCA (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81): they may fulfill their obligation by spending on training by themselves the minimum compulsory amount and prove the expenditure through the official annual accounts and a fiscal form (*declaration fiscale 2483*) presenting all the company's annual training spending (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81). As many enterprises choose this option the OPCAs actually pay less than 50 per cent of all employers' expenditures on CVT. But the companies can also pay all or part of mandatory contribution to the representative OPCA (CEDEFOP 2008a: 81).
- Higher contribution in certain business sectors have been set by collective agreements (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83). Notably, this is the case for companies with fewer than ten workers (ETUC et al. 2006: 52). For example, enterprises in temporary agency sector have paid 2 per cent of their total payroll in line with a sectoral agreement since 1991 (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83).

OPCAs:

- In the framework of the OPCAs, the enterprise's global contribution is divided into two or three separate funds that are dedicated to different activities, namely training plans, sectoral priorities, and individual training leave (CEDEFOP 2008a: 83):
 - enterprises with less than 10 employees pay 0.4 per cent to training plans and the remaining 0.15 per cent to sectoral priorities;
 - enterprises with 10 to 19 employees pay 0.9 per cent to training plans and 0.15 per cent to sectoral priorities;
 - enterprises with 20 or more employees pay 0.9 per cent to training plans, 0.5 per cent to sectoral priorities and 0.2 per cent to individual training leave.

- Different fund types allocate their resources to different benefits (see section 7 for more details on the benefit types) (CEDEFOP 2008a: 84-85):
 - Benefits within the *Plan de formation* (training plan), are paid with resources dedicated to the training plan.
 - Following the *Contrat de professionalisation* (professionalization contract), the funds dedicated to sectoral priorities are used.
 - Regarding the *Période de professionalization* (professionalization period), the allocation is unclear because CEDEFOP (2008: 84-85) names two versions of financing benefits: Benefits are financed by training plan resources if initiated by employers. If initiated by employees they are financed by individual training leave benefit resources.
 - The *Droit individuel à la formation* (individual training right) regulates that if the training corresponds to sectoral priorities (defined by sector's national employment parity committee), the training is financed by funds dedicated to sector priority actions. Otherwise, it is financed by training plan funds.
 - In the case of *Congé individuel de formation* (individual training leave), in some cases, OPCAs receive official approval for receiving contribution and financing individual training leave. Otherwise, request must be made to a special type of OPCA fund which is called OPCACIF (an approved collecting organization managing individual training leave; e.g. the *fonds de gestion du congé individuel de formation*). A commission of social partners examines the request.
 - The *Bilan de compétences* (assessment of competences) is paid by an individual training leave fund.
 - The *Validation des acquis de l'expérience* (validation of experience) is also financed with individual training leave funds.
- Rules for financing the benefits: When training leave is accepted by an OPCA, all costs will be paid back by the OPCA. Criteria for acceptance are decided by law or by the national employment parity committee in each branch and for each benefit type; the OPCAs cannot decide unilaterally (CEDEFOP 2008a: 86). The definition or priorities for financing of CVT conducted in companies with fewer than ten employees is formulated in sectoral agreements (ETUC et al. 2006: 49).

UNEDIC and ASSEDIC:

- Concerning UNEDIC and ASSEDIC, the unemployment insurance is funded by contributions from employers and employees. The rates are set by the social partners. In 2008, on January 1st, the contribution rate was 6.4 per cent of an employee's earnings; the employers' part was 4 per cent and the employees' part was 2.4 per cent. There is a

maximum limit of contributions: They must not exceed the amount deductible from a salary to 8.5 times the guaranteed minimum wage (Unijuridis 2008: 6).

FPSPP:

- In the framework of the FPSPP, between 5 per cent and 13 per cent of the total sum (about 900,000,000 EUR) comes from company payments linked to the current compulsory CVT funding. The precise percentage of contributions of companies is defined each year per government decree (Alleki 2009).

7. Benefits and Measures of the Collectively Negotiated Schemes

Some general information (individual right to training and gender equality in training):

- The 2003 intersectoral agreement, implemented by the 2004 law, introduced the 'individual right to training' (*Droit individuel à la formation*, DIF) by establishing a credit of 20 hours a year of training, which could be accumulated over six years. This credit is fully paid when the training is performed during working hours and is 50 per cent paid when it is performed outside of working time (Giaccone 2009: 23). In the 2007/8 intersectoral agreement, the individual right to training (as it is established in the 2003 intersectoral agreement) is made transferable across companies in case of job mobility (Giaccone 2009: 23; Lefresne 2008).
- Professional equality between men and women in training actions is regulated in sectoral CLAs that are based on the 2003 intersectoral agreement (ETUC et al. 2006: 49).

OPCAs:

Benefits paid by OPCAs: concerning the recognition of courses, only courses leading to national diploma or an approved title are certified. Courses must therefore be defined at national or sectoral level (CEDEFOP 2008a: 85). The recognition of qualifications acquired through training actions is regulated in sectoral agreements that are based on the 2003 intersectoral agreement (ETUC et al. 2006: 49). Specific types of vocational training activity financed by OPCAs (CEDEFOP 2008a: 84-85):

- The *Plan de formation* (training plan) includes the annual planning of enterprise's training activities. As it is based on employers' initiative, the employee cannot refuse to participate. There is a limit of 80 hours per year and per employee (CEDEFOP 2008a: 84). The definition of training objectives and priorities are formulated in sectoral agreements (ETUC et al. 2006: 49).
- Within the *Contrat de professionalization* (professionalization contract), the aim is to foster professional integration of young people (16-26) and reintegration of jobseekers over 26

years through acquisition of a qualification. Contracts are signed for six to 12 (sometimes up to 24) months. The OPCA pays EUR 9.15 per hour to the enterprise if there is no different rule in a sectoral CLA (CEDEFOP 2008a: 84). The specific publics or the nature of particular certificates for which the contract can be increased up to 24 months is regulated in sectoral CLAs (ETUC et al. 2006: 49).

- The *Period de professionalization* (professionalization period) was created by Law of 2004 and aims to help some categories of employees to keep their job; especially employees who have been working for more than 20 years and who are at least 45 years old. Target groups can be identified by a sector or an interprofessional agreement. The training is theoretical and practical. It may be initiated by employer or by employee (CEDEFOP 2008a: 84-85).
- The *Droit individuel à la formation* (individual training right) was created by intersectoral agreement 2003 and by law of 2004 (Giaccone 2009: 23). This is an obligation. The individual right to training has now been extended to civil servants (Lochard/Robin 2009). It includes the following points:
 - Employees with a permanent contract are allocated 20 hours of training account activity every year. The account can cumulate over six years, thus 120 hours (CEDEFOP 2008a: 85).
 - Employees that work part-time acquire hours of training calculated at a pro rata rate using working hours. Any absence due to maternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave or parental childcare leave is fully taken into account (Lochard/Robin 2009).
 - To identify the needs, an agreement must be reached between employer and employee (CEDEFOP 2008a: 85). The request must be made by the employee. CLAs may include timescales for putting in a request (Lochard/Robin 2009). The priorities can be defined by collective company, industry-wide or inter-trade agreements.
 - The minimum number of training hours accrued has already been altered by several sectoral CLAs. It includes 21 hours in the cleaning sector and 24 hours at the SNCF (*Société nationale des chemins de fer français*, French National Railway Corporation) for scheme leading to a higher level of skills and qualifications (Lochard/Robin 2009).
 - According to an intersectoral agreement of 2008, employees are guaranteed certain rights including during periods of unemployment. They, thus, keep 100 per cent of what is left of their right to training time that has accumulated in the framework of the individual right to training (Lefresne 2008).
- The *Congé individuel de formation* (individual training leave) is usually requested by the employee. The training periods are long (e.g. 12 months or 1200 hours, duration can even be longer if defined in branches). The employee develops competences that are not directly related to their actual job, following the idea of changing activity or profession

(CEDEFOP 2008a: 85). 50 per cent is paid when training is outside of working time and 100 per cent when during working time (Giaccone 2009: 24).

- Within the *bilan de compétences* (assessment of competences), employees can analyze their professional and personal competences (for example in order to define a new professional career). It includes 24 hours, divided into 3 phases (CEDEFOP 2008a: 85). This benefit was first introduced by the 2003 intersectoral agreement (Bosch 2003: 7-8).
- The *Validation des acquis de l'expérience* (validation of experience) was created in 2002 (CEDEFOP 2008a: 85). Improvements were introduced by the 2003 intersectoral agreement (ETUC et al. 2006: 50). It can be used by every person who has been working for at least three years. All experiences are considered (also non-salaried activities). The aim behind it is the official acknowledgment of experience by a diploma or qualification certificate. Employees get 24 hours to achieve validation, the courses takes place during working time (CEDEFOP 2008a: 85). The implementation of these validations is regulated in sectoral CLAs (ETUC et al. 2006: 49).

UNEDIC and ASSEDIC:

- Regarding benefits, ASSEDICs can grant retraining allowances for persons that are covered by unemployment insurance. If a job seeker is considered (by an agency of the state) to require training in order to get and to be able to stay in a new job, the ASSEDICs may deliver direct financial support: They take in charge parts of the expenses related to approved training costs and part of the accommodation and transportation costs (UNIJuridis 2008: 8-10).
- Most important conditions to be eligible are that job seekers must seek work actively and continuously and must be within the framework of the Personalised Plan for Accessing Employment (*projet personnalisés d'accès à l'emploi*, PPAE). This PPAE is based on an interview between the job seeker and a state agency. The purpose of this is to find appropriate solutions for the unemployed person (UNIJuridis 2008: 9).
- Specific conditions for being eligible for unemployment benefits is having already worked for at least 6 months in the last 22 months, not having voluntarily left the last employment, being physically capable of working, being registered as a job-seeker (or to be in training), being in process of genuinely and actively seeking employment (see above), and being under the age of 60 (UNIJuridis 2008: 10-11).

FPSPP:

- The FPSPP pays benefits with the aim of providing CVT to least qualified workers and increasing the number of unemployed who benefit from CVT by a third. This refers to involving about 200,000 further unemployed in CVT (Alleki 2009).

8. Coverage Rates of the Collectively Negotiated Schemes

- In theory, 100 per cent of the workers are covered by collective bargaining on CVT. The number of workers benefitting from the scheme is increased by the implementation of CLAs at industry and sector level (Lochard/Robin 2009).
- Possibly, the majority of agreements covering the majority of sectors have been made at sectoral level (Lochard/Robin 2009).
- Sectoral CLAs are obligatory for all companies and all employees in the respective sector (Lochard 28.05.2009, interview).
- Provisions of the CLAs on the unemployment system are made mandatory for all private sectors by the state (UNljuridis 2008: 5).

9. The Politics around the Collectively Negotiated Schemes

Linkages to Public Reform Policies

- As described above, national intersectoral agreements have been very important for public reforms concerning vocational training. Both the reforms in 1971 and in 2004 were made on the basis of such agreements (Bosch 2003: 2; Seillier 2007: 144; Giaccone 2009: 23).
- Also as described above, the training benefits paid by UNEDIC and ASSEDICS to job seekers are bargained and paid within the context of the French unemployment insurance scheme (UNljuridis 2008).

Linkages to Wage Agreements and Wage Policy (e.g. Wage Restraint, Tripartite Agreements) and Other Agreements

We have not found any evidence.

Actors' Strategies and Conflicts among and between Them (State, Political Parties, Employers, Trade Unions)

We have not found any evidence.

10. Recent Developments and Other Interesting Information

We have not found any evidence.

11. Contacted Experts

We thank the following expert and colleague for providing information and answering very specific questions:

- Lochard, Yves, 28.05.2009, Institut de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, e-mail interview.

12. List of Abbreviations

- AGEFOS-PME: Association de Gestion des Fonds d'Assurances Formation des Salariés des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (no translation found)
- ANPE: *Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi* (National Agency of Employment)
- ASSEDIC: *Association pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce* (Association for Employment in the Industry and Trade)
- CEDEFOP: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
- Centre Info: *Centre pour le développement de l'information sur la formation permanente* (a French information centre on vocational education and training)
- CFDT: *Confédération française démocratique du travail* (French Democratic Confederation of Labor)
- CFE-CGC: *Confédération française de l'encadrement – confédération générale des cadres* (French Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff – General Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff)
- CFTC: *Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens* (French Christian Workers' Confederation)
- CGPME: *Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises* (General Confederation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises)
- CGT: *Confédération générale du travail* (General Confederation of Labor)
- CLA: collective labor agreement
- COPIRE: *Commission paritaire interprofessionnelle régionale de l'emploi* (Regional Joint Interprofessional Employment Committee)
- CPNE: *Commission paritaire nationale pour l'emploi* (National Bipartite Employment Commissions)
- CPNFP: *Comité paritaire national pour la formation professionnelle* (Joint National Committee for Vocational Training)
- CVT: continuing vocational training

- DIF: *Droit individuel à la formation* (individual right to training)
- ESF: European Social Fund
- ETUC: European Trade Union Confederation
- EUR: Euro
- FAF.TT: Fonds d'assurance formation du travail temporaire (fund of temporary workers sector)
- Forthac: *Formation textile-habillement-cuir* (OPCA for the textiles and clothing sectors)
- FPSPPF: *Fonds paritaire de sécurisation des parcours professionnels* (Joint Fund for Rendering Career Paths Secure)
- FUP: *Fonds unique de péréquation* (Single Equalization Fund)
- GDP: Gross Domestic Product
- MEDEF: *Mouvement des entreprises de France* (Movement of French Enterprises)
- OPCAs: *Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés* (sectoral training funds)
- PPAE: *projet personnalisés d'accès à l'emploi* (Personalized Plan for Accessing Employment)
- SNCF: *Société nationale des chemins de fer français* (French National Railway Corporation)
- UEAPME: European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
- UNEDIC: *Union Nationale pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce* (National Union for Employment in Industry and Commerce)
- UNICE: Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe
- UPA: *Union professionnelle artisanale* (Craftwork Employers' Association)

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