

ANALYSIS PER COUNTRY ABOUT EXISTING STRUCTURE OF FORMAL NON FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING AND THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE ACCREDITATION OF PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

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Transferring methods for validation of informal learning to VET institutions in the field of sustainable agriculture

Term/ Acronym/ Abbreviation	Description
Formal learning	Learning that occurs in an organised and structured context (in a school/training centre or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to certification.
Non-formal learning	Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically does not lead to certification.
Informal learning	Learning resulting from daily work-related, family or leisure activities. It is not organised or structured (in terms of objectives, time or learning support). Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective. It typically does not lead to certification.
Learning outcome(s)	the set of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process.
Competence	ability to apply knowledge, know-how and skills in a habitual and/or changing work situation.
Prior learning	the knowledge, know-how and/ or competences acquired through previously unrecognised training or experience
Assessment	the sum of methods and processes used to evaluate the attainments (knowledge, know-how and/or competences) of an individual, and typically leading to certification.
Certification	the process of formally validating knowledge, know-how and/or competences acquired by an individual, following a standard assessment procedure. Certificates or diplomas are issued by accredited awarding bodies.
Validation (of informal /non-formal learning)	the process of assessing and recognising a wide range of knowledge, know-how, skills and competences which people develop throughout their lives in different contexts, for example through education, work and leisure activities.
Validation of learning outcomes:	Confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification. Source: Cedefop, 2008c.
Accreditation of prior learning (APL)	See validation of informal / non-formal learning

Source: CEDEFOP Validation Inventory

FRENCH ACRONYMS

Term/ Acronym/ Abbreviation	Description
APCA.	National Council of Agriculture Chambers
BEPA.	Diploma of Agricultural Vocational Study
BPA.	Agricultural Vocational Diploma
BPREA.	Agriculture Vocational Certificate
BTA.	Agriculture Technician Certificate
BTSA.	Agricultural Technician Certificate
CAPA.	Certificate of Agricultural Vocational Ability
CAPTAV	Professional Aptitude Certificate for Transport of Living Animals
CERTIPHYTO.	Individual certificate for using protection products
CS.	Certificate of Specialization.
CFA	Apprenticeship Training Center
CFPPA	Vocational Training and Agriculture Promotion Center
CIVAM	Initiatives Center for Agriculture and Rural Area Valorisation
CNEAP	National Council for agricultural private Education
FPC.	Vocational longlife training
MFREO.	Rural Education family houses
MS	Specialized Master
RNCP.	National Register of Vocational Certificates
ROME	Operational Register of Occupations and Jobs
UNMFREO.	National Union of Rural Education family houses
UNREP.	National Union of Rural Education and Promotion
VAE.	French framework for Accreditation of prior learning and previous experience
VIVEA	FUNDING for farmers VET

1. Analysis per country of the current situation of non-formal, informal, and formal learning in agriculture.

In France, school attendance is compulsory between the ages of six and 16, although most children start nursery school when they are three years old. At the age of six they enter primary school, which they attend for five years. After that, normally at around age 12, all students go on to junior high school (*collège*). This covers four of the six years of secondary schooling – numbered, in reverse order, years 6, 5, 4 and 3.

On leaving junior high school, usually at age 15, students are steered towards either a general and technical senior high school (*lycée d'enseignement général et technologique*), to spend three years working for a general or a technical diploma, or else to a vocational high school, to study over two years for a certificate of professional aptitude (*CAP*) or a vocational education certificate (*BEP*), or over three years for a secondary vocational diploma (*Bac Pro*).

These courses always include a work placement and they are designed to make the students directly employable. Students who choose the vocational route after junior high school can also continue their studies within the framework of an apprenticeship.

The formal training framework offers several ways for learning :

- ✓ Initial training school
- ✓ Initial apprenticeship training (alternating)
- ✓ Vocational education and training

In Agriculture, we can distinguish two levels of diploma :

- ✓ Diplomas awarded in technical agricultural education
- ✓ Diplomas issued in Higher agricultural education

Equivalency Sheet between the french and international diploma classification

French diploma classification	ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education
Level VI	1
Level VI	2
Level V	3
Level IV	4
Level III	5
Level II	6
Level I	7
Level I	8

Diplomas awarded in technical agricultural education :

Level V (=ISCED level 3)

- ✓ CAPA (Certificate of Agricultural Vocational Ability)
- ✓ BEPA (Diploma of Agricultural Vocational Study)
- ✓ BPA (Agricultural Vocational Diploma)

Level IV (=ISCED level 4)

- ✓ BTA (Agriculture Technician Certificate)
- ✓ Vocational and Technologic bachelor degree
- ✓ BP (Agriculture Vocational Certificate)

Level III (=ISCED level 5)

- ✓ BTSA (Agricultural Higher Technician Certificate)

Diplomas issued in Higher agricultural education

Level II (=ISCED level 6)

- ✓ Licence, Vocational licence

Level I (=ISCED level 7)

- ✓ Master, Specialized Master (MS)
- ✓ Engineering Schools

Level I (=ISCED level 8)

- ✓ Doctorate

The main stakeholders : education structures

Agricultural education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest. Students can enter agricultural trades after either initial training (at school or as apprentices) or continuing training. Depending on students' abilities, the courses on offer can lead to qualifications in agricultural engineering, veterinary medicine or research (at doctoral level).

The diplomas provided by the Ministry in charge of agriculture includes a wide range of business sectors and activities:

- ✓ Agricultural Production,
- ✓ Equipment for agriculture,
- ✓ Food processing,
- ✓ Marketing,
- ✓ Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection,
- ✓ Horse Activities,
- ✓ Livestock and Animal Care,
- ✓ Services.

Vocational education for careers in agriculture, forestry, nature and territories is present throughout the national territory.

Agricultural education is delivered at 879 technical and vocational institutions, 26 tertiary colleges of agriculture, agronomics or agrifoods, veterinary or landscape studies, 163 apprentice training centres and 471 continuing vocational training centres. Young people may also opt to study at a Maison familiale rurale (rural family centre). It has a set of 216 public and 614 private institutions within three federations: the National Union of Rural Education family houses and orientation (UNMFREO), the National Council for Education private agricultural (CNEAP) and the Union National Rural Education and Promotion (UNREP). Agricultural education also has a set of 173 training centers for apprentices (CFA), 99 public and 74 private and a set of 421 centers with continuous vocational training (158 public and 263 private center).

Agriculture Vocational lifelong training (called “Formation Professionnelle Continue”, FPC) is the second way, after the academic one, to obtain an agriculture vocational ability.

This kind of training type de formation is intended for people over 18 years old who have at least one year of professional experience, and for first-time job seekers.

FPC can help to complete the achievements in training or work experience, and reach the level required for the issue of farmer capacity.

FPC gives rise to a range of validation and training, from training certificate to obtainment of a professional degree from Level V to Level I, including the recognition of prior experience (VAE). The applicants who wish to obtain a degree are hired after an interview and testing. Prior earning will be identified and eventually validated.

Individualized learning paths (time, terms, content) which take into account the achievements of candidates (job skills, degrees, diplomas ...) can be designed as part of plans for training, professional contracts, individual right to training (DIF) ...

Positioning (assessment of learning) and VAE also allow candidates to installation in agriculture, when they do not hold a degree or certificate granting agricultural or professional ability but nevertheless hold another degree or have professional experience, to value them and to graduate the conferring.

Many training institutions, including chambers of agriculture and public or private agricultural schools also offer a share offering non-degree training.

Regional Authorities, through their regional vocational training program are an essential funder of continuing vocational training.

VET gives the opportunity to workers to update knowledge or learn new skills on specific topics, through short period trainings. Some degree of higher education (BTS, engineer diploma...) are also accessible through this kind of education.

We can distinguish four categories of VET :

- **Degree program:** the degree program allows the obtainment of a state diploma or registered in NCPR (National Register of Vocational Certifications).
- **Skills training:** skills training is not validated by a diploma training. It aims to acquire a determined and certified professional qualification. Usually short, it facilitates access to employment.
- **Individual training:** in the field of FPC, custom training programs are in place at the request of individuals or businesses. They meet qualification requirements or specific skills. These courses are usually built on a personalized program that recognizes the achievements and professional status of the applicant. They can lead to obtaining a degree or a title.
- **Upgrading, improvement, modernization, adaptation:** these courses are available for adults who wish to update their knowledge base in the disciplines of general or technical training. These are generally **non-formal trainings**, as they don't lead to certification.

Funding trainings for farmers : VIVEA

VIVEA is the national insurance fund for training of farmers. For employees in agriculture, the fund is called FAFSEA.

This is a mutual fund set up by the farming community established by agreement between the four agricultural representative unions, Chambers of Agriculture (APCA) and the National Confederation of mutuality, cooperation and agricultural credit (CNMCCA).

VIVEA assists entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector and their partners in developing their skills and funding for continuing professional development:

- By pooling vocational training financial contribution;
- By studying the skills needs of its contributors through its monitoring activities about the context and prospective ;
- By orienting the training offer through its expertise in engineering training;
- By purchasing training services to training organizations recognized ;
- By optimizing its resources in research and management of national co-financing and European

The VET courses for farmers fall mainly in the category of "non-formal learning", as they don't lead to certificates. However, some "formal" trainings for compulsory licenses (Certiphyto, CAPTAV) are organized within the VIVEA training framework.

APPRENTICESHIP

Apprenticeship aims to provide to young workers who have passed the compulsory school a theoretical and practical general education in order to obtain a professional qualification with a vocational or technological diploma, an engineer diploma or another recognized certificate. Any young people aged between 16 and 25 can enter an apprenticeship. Exemptions from these age limits are possible.

Learning is based on the principle of alternation between period of courses localized in an Apprentice Training Center (CFA), and period of working and learning with the employer with whom the apprentice has signed his contract.

The duration of the apprenticeship contract, when signed for a limited period, or the period of learning when the learning contract is concluded for an indefinite period, can vary from 1 to 3 years, depending on the type of occupation and the qualification prepared. This period may be adjusted to reflect the initial skill level of the apprentice.

Any private company can hire an apprentice if the employer reports that it takes the measures needed for the learning planning. As such, the employer must ensure that the company equipments, techniques used, working conditions, health and safety, professional and pedagogical skills of the Apprenticeship Master are likely to enable adequate training.

The trainee is necessarily followed by a tutor, the "Apprenticeship Master" (or a team of tutors) who is either the employer or any employee of the company. Its mission is to contribute to the acquisition by the apprentice of the skills needed to obtain the title or diploma course in conjunction with the CFA.

2. Accreditation of prior learning and/or previous experience

2.1 National perspective on validation

The national framework for accreditation is the Accreditation of prior learning and previous experience (called "Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience, VAE).

2.1.1 Description of system of validation

The VAE system gives the opportunity for any person with at least three years of experience as employee, self employed or volunteer, to seek a diploma.

It is an individual right that provides all or part of a degree from the acquired experience.

The gained experience correspond to the practice, continuous or not, for a cumulative period of at least three years as employee, self-employed or volunteer. Activities carried on part-time are taken into account in proportion to the time worked. The benefits must justify all or part of the knowledge and skills required for graduation postulated. All degrees listed on the National Register of Vocational Certifications (NCPR) are concerned.

The gained experience is appreciated by a panel established for that purpose (VAE jury), based on the study of a case built by the candidate, and on an interview. The folder explains, with reference to the requested degree of knowledge, the skills and abilities that the candidate has acquired through experience. It includes documents reflecting the experience and duration of the various activities in which the candidate has acquired and, if applicable, certificates relating to courses taken and degrees obtained previously. The interview takes place on the basis of the VAE case submitted. A methodological support for the description of activities and characterization of knowledge, skills and abilities mobilized, is proposed to each candidate by the institutions of agricultural education.

The several steps for validation in VAE system :

- 1 Meeting with a Information and Orientation Adviser (more than 800 offices are recognized at national level)
- 2 Constitution of Admissibility case
- 3 Study of Admissibility case
- 4 Constitution of the Validation File
- 5 Submission of Validation File
- 6 First passage jury
- 7.1. Total validation
- 7.2. If no Validation :
- 8 Establishment of a Supplementary File
- 9 Second pass jury
- 10.1 Total Validation
- 10.2 Partial validation
- 10.3 No Validation

VAE Figures (2011)

Information and Orientation Adviser : more than 800 centers are recognized at national level, and more than 58.000 persons were advised.

- ✓ 2/3 are women,
- ✓ more than 50% are between 30 and 44 years old,
- ✓ 16% don't have any diploma or qualification,
- ✓ almost 50% are unemployed,
- ✓ for 70% of persons who consulted the adviser, the idea to apply for a VAE is confirmed,
- ✓ 36.000 VAE cases go to jury
- ✓ 60% of candidates receive certifications.

2.1.2 Links with existing national qualification framework and standards used for validation

Before applying for VAE, a candidate must verify which certificate is in relations with its experience. The Operational Register of Occupations and Jobs (ROME) provides access to descriptions of business and directs you to the certifications recorded in the RNCP (National Register of Vocational Certificates).

Certification is a global term used to call any capacity, diploma and certificate of qualification. It officially certifies that its holder has the skills to take up employment with a precise degree of responsibility given.

There are three types of certifications :

- ✓ Diplomas and work-oriented delivered on behalf of the State: Certificate of Vocational Competences (CPC), Vocational Bachelor degree, agricultural senior technician (BTSA), Professional Title (TP) ...
- ✓ Diplomas and work-oriented delivered by organizations in their own name: graduation created by private training, qualifications of the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts (CNAM) or GRETA, university diplomas (DU)....
- ✓ Certificates of Qualification (CQP) delivered by the various professions in their own right: commercial and administrative assistant in the property business, child care home in the branch of the family employment ...

2.1.3 Forms of identification and recognition of non-formal and informal learning

2.1.4 Target groups requiring assessment of the prior learning and/or experience

The main target group concerned by the VAE system are the employees in agriculture sector who wish to obtain a higher qualification, in order to get a personal advancement (in the same company/organism or in an other one) and to access to jobs with higher responsibility.

The farmers are not clearly involved as target groups by assessment of the prior learning and/or experience. Most of the trainings they are following don't result in an accreditation or a certification. Their goal is to improve their knowledge and practices, to adapt their production to new markets or new regulations, or to create innovative activities in their farms.

Naturally, the assessment of prior learning makes part of the selection of trainees, and the trainings programs use to present the target groups and the skills needed for following the training. More the training will be specialized and more the skills required are detailed. But it means also that few centers will provide it.

But in an other hand, as farmers can hardly move from their farms for a long time, it is essential to offer a range of accessible training and located in rural area, that's why local training centers try to offer available and suitable trainings, which sometimes means that the required competences have to be open.

2.1.5 The situation with regard to validation of informal and non-formal learning and/or experience in the field of agriculture

The diplomas provided by the Ministry in charge of agriculture includes a wide range of business sectors and activities:

- ✓ Agricultural Production,
- ✓ Equipment for agriculture,
- ✓ Food processing,
- ✓ Marketing,
- ✓ Spatial Planning and Environmental Protection,
- ✓ Horse Activities,

- ✓ Livestock and Animal Care,
- ✓ Services.

Two types of certifications available through VAE may correspond to agricultural activities:

1. Degrees of technical and higher secondary education short agricultural :

- ✓ CAPA: Certificate of Agricultural Vocational Ability,
- ✓ BEPA: Diploma of Agricultural Vocational Study,
- ✓ BPA: Agricultural Vocational Diploma,
- ✓ Bac Pro : Bachelor degree in Agriculture,
- ✓ BTSA: Agricultural Technician Certificate,
- ✓ CS: Certificate of Specialization.

2. diplomas of higher education along agricultural :

- ✓ Professional License,
- ✓ Engineering,
- ✓ Masters,
- ✓ Doctorates.

2.2 Overview of existing initiatives

2.2.1 Examples of local, regional or national based initiatives

CERTIPHYTO : Individual certificate for using protection products

Any professional act of use, distribution, consulting, sales of plant protection products, is subject to holding the individual certificate for plant protection products, commonly said Certiphyto, which demonstrates sufficient knowledge to use pesticides safely and reduce their use.

The certificate was required:

- ✓ October 1, 2013 for professionals working in the areas of distribution, services and consulting (advisers, trainers...);
- ✓ October 1, 2014 for professionals working on their own account such as farmers and agricultural workers, foresters, employees of local government.

In order to ripe the conditions for the 800,000 professionnels involved, and to be sure than they could get the individual certificate on time, the agricultural vocational training centers have planned many trainings in the three last years. For instance, the Chamber of Agriculture have trained more than 80 farmers per year, through more than 10 courses per year. Others stakeholders, like cooperatives and Farming Unions, also provided these courses.

There are four routes to the individual certificate:

- ✓ by diploma obtained in the five years preceding the application (as after a BTSA or BPREA),
- ✓ by training adapted to each business and each class of certificate
- ✓ by training and knowledge test,
- ✓ by an assessment test.

2.2.2 Description of methods used

We detail here the training provided by the Chamber of Agriculture to obtain the certificate CERTIPHYTO. This two-day training offered to agricultural farm managers, recognized as 'decision makers,' comprises five modules.

Module 1: Identifying the risks associated with the use of pesticides, for the safety of people and the environment.

Reading a tag, pathways, populations more sensitive difference between a point source pollution and pollution. Prevention and protection needed to reduce these risks and what to do in case of poisoning or injury.

Module 2: assessing risk at the farm size or at the treatment area in a given situation.

Conducting a process to analyze the occupational hazards to people and the environment. The environmental impacts of practices at the company level and at the spaces for users (neighboring houses, strollers). Ways to reduce or eliminate these risks in a given situation.

Module 3: Defining a strategy to reduce the use of products and mitigate environmental impacts Practices and facilities to limit dispersal in the environment during transport, storage, handling or spills. Planning interventions.

Module 4: adapting the use of pesticides to the needs and organize their implementation.

Value of monitoring of pests and evaluation of the intensity of their attack. Choose a product based on the expected, toxicity, target treatments to reduce doses, adapt the method of treatment effectiveness to actual conditions.

Module 5: applying products with minimal risk

Synthesis of all the elements seen in previous modules: risk assessment, identification of practices that can minimize these risks by detailing the various phases of use: storage transport, the preparation of the slurry, spraying and the storage of materials; traceability throughout the process.

2.2.3 Advantages/disadvantages of the methods used

We can compare the advantages and disadvantages for the several routes to the individual certificate:

✓ **by diploma obtained in the five years preceding the application** (as after a BTSA or BPREA),

The certificate is embedded in the program; the content of the training Certiphyto is the specialty of the diploma course: field crops, viticulture, pasture crops, etc ... But the certificate is issued if the application is made within 5 years of obtaining the agricultural degree.

✓ **by training adapted to each business and each class of certificate**

This is the most used route for the majority of farmers who obtained agricultural graduated more than 5 years track. The content, combining theory, demonstrations and practice corresponds to farmers' concerns. Farmer groups are formed by types of agricultural production; educational place can be adjusted.

✓ **by training and knowledge test,**

It's a training which needs few hours, followed by testing. Few training centers offer this formula, most farmers prefer to follow the full 2-day training.

✓ **by an assessment test.**

This route, generating a significant failure rate, is not widely practiced.

2.2.4 Benefits for the individuals (target group)

2.3 Condition on implementation of the APL in the country in the context of organization, individuals and VET teachers, counsellors

See above 2.1.1 Description of system of validation.

The APL framework is a very few part of VET : 36.000 VAE cases go to jury each year, whereas more than 20 millions of trainees participate each year to a vocational training.

The french vocational training makes working **58 668 training organims** in 2011. It covers an activity about 13,1 billions €, with **23,8 millions of trainees** and 1 152 billions of hours of training.

Most of vocational trainings are non-formal training and don't lead to a certificate for the gain of competencies. Trainees receive certificate of attendance, they participate in balance assessment, but these tools are focused on conditions of training realisation, more than in the improvement of the trainee.

2.3.1 Relevant organisations, stakeholders helping in the implementation process of new tools

We can list the main agricultural advising and training **networks** in France :

- Ministry of Agriculture, the APL framework and all its education institutions.
- The Regional Councils (26), in charge of vocational trainings.
- Chambers of Agriculture (each ones is both advising and training) : 88 district chambers, 21 regional chambers, one national head.
- Specific organic agriculture associations : GAB (Organic Agriculture Group), CIVAM BIO (Initiatives Centers for Agriculture and Rural Area Valorisation).
- Cooperatives and economic actors which provides advices and trainings in agriculture field.
- Vocational training centers integrated in Agricultural Education institutions, like CFPPA (Vocational Training and Agriculture Promotion Center).
- Fundings for VET VIVEA (for self-employed farmers) and FAFSEA (for agricultural employees, in farms, cooperatives, development organisms).

2.3.2 Awareness of VET teachers, counselors, advisers on the importance of the validation of non-formal and informal learning

We can give here a short summary of the national offer in non-formal and informal trainings relating to Organic Agriculture. It shows that these trainings study all the thematics relating to organic agriculture.

Thematics	Training content	Training Center
All production	Organic Agriculture : practices, benefits, channels.	Agro Paris Tech (75)
	Knowing fertilizers in organic farming, including compost	Chambre d'agriculture de la Creuse (23)
	Understanding your soil to optimize fertilization	Agrobio Poitou-Charentes. Melle. (79)
	Techniques of small farm equipments self-building in Organic Farming	CFPPA d'Yvetot (76)
	What is biodynamic agriculture? Lively and practical approach	Mouvement de l'agriculture bio-dynamique
Crops	Organic ambition : field crops, issues and innovations	CEZ Rambouillet (78)
	Fonctionnement du sol et itinéraire cultural en grandes cultures biologiques	CIVAM BIO des Landes (40)
Production : mixt farming	Organic Ambition : Organic mixt farming system	CEZ Rambouillet (78)
Production :gardening, horticulture	Driving a gardening activity in organic farming.	CFPPA Quetigny (21)
	Teaching organic farming in horticultural crops	ENFA Toulouse (31)
Production : breeding	Successful conversion to organic farming	Groupement d'Agriculture Biologique(GAB) de Charente maritime (17)
	Converting its dairy cattle farming ion organic agriculture.	Chambre d'agriculture de l'Aveyron (12)
	Knowing the basics of homeopathy and its application in breeding	AgroBio Périgord. Périgueux. (24)
	Innovation in dairy cattle grass farming system	Chambre d'agriculture du Calvados (14)
	The benefits of organic farming to lead his sheep flock independently	CFPPA de Montmorillon
	Pathology of dairy cows: prevention and care in organic farming	Chambre d'agriculture de l'Allier
Production : arboriculture	Bio-dynamic arboriculture: size and care	Mouvement de l'agriculture bio-dynamique
Production : beekeeping	First School-Apiary in bio-dynamic	Mouvement de l'agriculture bio-dynamique
	Plants and insects	Mouvement de l'agriculture bio-dynamique
Food processing	Making bread: Biodynamic approach	Mouvement de l'agriculture bio-dynamique
	Knowledge of medicinal and aromatic plants	CFPPA Quetigny (21)
	Key points for a successful diversification: organic processed products.	Adria. Quimper 29

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