INNOVATION IN VET - FRANCE
The Example of the Campuses of Professions and Qualifications
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Introduction

As part of the European Union’s “Europe 2020” growth and employment strategy, the EU has set five ambitious objectives to be attained by the end of the decade. They relate to employment, research and innovation, climate change and energy, education, social inclusion and poverty reduction. Within this framework, the Bruges Communiqué of December 2010 sets out the strategic objectives for the period 2011-2020 and the short-term deliverables for the period 2011-2014. For example, with regard to promoting innovation, creativity and the spirit of enterprise, it recommends that participating countries actively encourage vocational education and training providers (VET) to collaborate with innovative enterprises, design centres, the cultural sector and higher education institutions in forming “knowledge partnerships”.

Reflecting this, in France, the National Pact for Growth, Competitiveness and Employment placed innovation and company growth at the heart of the Government’s strategy for national recovery. Several programmes have been introduced in consequence. One was an ambition, innovation and success programme for schools, middle schools and lycées (ECLAIR Programme*), promoting innovation and experimentation in the fields of pedagogy, school life and human resources, together with safety initiatives. It is underpinned by a system of school networks.

In addition, the national education department is developing numerous measures for cooperation with its professional partners, aiming to initiate school students and adults (on lifelong learning programmes) into economic life and entrepreneurship. For example, it is possible for middle school and lycée pupils in the technological and vocational streams to create “mini-enterprises*”. Another plan, introduced in October 2013, seeks to encourage “student entrepreneurship”. Its primary aim is to spread education in entrepreneurship and innovation to all educational sectors from bachelor’s degree level onwards. The associated plan for 2016 is to establish some thirty student hubs for innovation, transfer and entrepreneurship. Finally, it creates a status of student-entrepreneur for students or young graduates working on business creation projects.

In addition, a new phase of the competitiveness hubs policy* for 2013-2018 aims to transform research and development work into innovative products, processes and services. The new objective of the hubs is to focus more on economic outcomes and employment. France’s national reform programme has also focused on different measures for the labour market and vocational training in order to improve the transition between school and work. These include:

- the establishment of a public regional career guidance service to provide information on training courses and entry into work;
- the creation of 14 initial “Campuses of professions and qualifications” to bring together all the actors involved in training within a single territory around an economic sector;


- the establishment of the national ‘Economy Education’ Council (CNEE)* to develop closer relations between schools and universities and the economic world, and to reinforce their partnerships with the aim of improving the match between initial training and economic activity.

France has therefore embarked on an approach that seeks to foster links between innovation and vocational education and training (VET). In this study, we will describe the “Campus des métiers et des qualifications” (Campuses of professions and qualifications), which seek to facilitate young people’s entry into the workforce and create links between school and the world of work.
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I. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CAMPUSES

I.A What are the campuses of professions and qualifications?

France’s education and training system is divided between “initial training” (IT) for young people, which includes initial vocational training (IVT), and “continuous vocational training” (CVT) for people who have already entered the labour market.4

The campuses of professions and qualifications form part of this model, creating links between the different levels of education.

I.A.1 Skills centres in an identified field of activity

The campuses of professions bring together vocational training organisations involved in a particular economic sector, in a single place or within a network: vocational and generalist lycées, apprentice training centres, training bodies, higher education institutions, including engineering schools, research centres and companies.

They offer young people a range of general, technological and vocational curricula, up to the highest level, in a field of economic activity with a strong innovation focus (in both industry and services).

The campuses facilitate mixed career paths by allowing young people to vary their status throughout their education: school, apprenticeship, internship. The campuses of professions and qualifications can include apprentice training centres (centres de formation par apprentissage - CFA) and continuous training structures for people either in or seeking work.

Operating within the framework of “pôles de compétitivité” (competitiveness hubs)*, structures designed to develop networks of companies and research and education bodies, they are supported by the regional authorities.

They offer residential accommodation and involvement in community life in order to create an atmosphere conducive to education.

The campuses of professions and qualifications are approved (labelled) institutions.

They offer a range of vocational, technological and general curricula, at secondary and higher education level, in a high-rated sector of activity corresponding to a national or regional economic priority supported by the public authorities and companies (development of new industrial sectors, etc.): aeronautics, construction and public works, new energy, digital, metals…

Links between education, innovation and the economy

The campuses of professions and qualifications offer education streams linked with France’s policy for productive recovery:

- job creation sectors such as industry, construction and public works, graphics, energy, digital, but also the hotel and catering industry;
- and other service sectors with potential for the future, notably associated with generic technologies such as digital, health and the life economy, the energy transition or the security of data and transactions.

The special links with local companies make it easier for pupils to enter internships and for employees to pursue lifelong learning objectives. They also foster the production of prototypes, by making technical platforms available to the campuses. They are places that are conducive to technological innovation in all its forms, and to the transfer of skills.

One of the objectives of the campuses is to develop the international dimension of their courses.

These campuses therefore contribute to the economic development of the regions and to the competitiveness of new industrial sectors, by involving vocational training institutions.5

I.B. Gradual introduction of the campuses

A parliamentary act of July 20136 set a national goal of improving vocational education, an essential factor for the recovery of France’s productivity and for the integration of young people into the workforce. The creation of the campuses of professions and qualifications is part of this process.

An initial call for projects was issued to the Regions (regional local authorities) and representatives of national education authorities in 2013 (see map – Appendix 1). An initial 14 campus projects were awarded labels. The labelling process set certain criteria and objectives for

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the campuses, establishing them as models of practice and guaranteeing the quality of their programmes. For projects to attain labelled status, the government opted for a call for projects procedure (see Part II.A on the procedure and actors involved in the campus approval process).

In order to support the development and enhancement of these training and innovation networks, and close relations with the economic fabric, a decree creating the “campus of professions and qualifications” label was promulgated in 2014.

In 2014, a second call for projects attracted a further 26 campus of professions and qualifications project applications. The labelling procedure should be completed in the near future.

A ministerial order in 2014 also appointed the chairman of the group of experts established to examine the project applications and award the “campus of professions and qualifications” label.


8. Ministerial order of 31 October 2014 appointing the chairman of the group of experts established to examine projects submitted for the “campus of professions and qualifications” label: http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000029750501

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION

II.A. The procedure for establishing a campus and the actors involved

II.A.1 Obtaining the “campus of professions and qualifications” label

Campus projects are awarded the label of approval for a renewable period of four years. The “campus of professions and qualifications” label identifies a network of actors operating in partnership in a given area to develop a wide range of vocational, technological and general education programmes, at secondary and higher education level, as well as in initial and continuous training. These education programmes focus on specific areas and on a sector that corresponds to a national or regional economic priority. The network to which the label is awarded is established by formal agreement, and comprises secondary level, second-degree educational institutions, higher education institutions, apprentice training centres, research centres, continuous training organisations, companies and, where applicable, voluntary sector bodies working in the fields of sport, culture or community support. As regards governance, the network includes at least one local public secondary education establishment (établissements publics locaux d’enseignement - EPLE)* and one public scientific, cultural and professional establishment*, with which the above-mentioned parties may enter into partnership. The regions and the State are involved in the labelling process and in funding (see diagram of the different operators in campus life – Appendix 2).

To support the quantitative and qualitative development of the campuses, the economic and educational communities and regional bodies all participate in the labelling procedure.

At regional level, campus of professions and qualifications projects are jointly constructed and submitted by the rector of the academy (education authority) and the chairman of the regional council, after consultation with the consultative body: the Academic Council of National Education (CAEN)* and, in each region, the Regional Committee for Employment, Training and Career Guidance (CREFOP)*.

At national level, the projects are examined by a group of experts, which makes a ruling on their quality. Its members are representatives of regional, national and education authority bodies. The national ‘Education Economy’ Council (CNEE)* is consulted. The decision to award a label is made by the ministers responsible for national education, vocational training, higher education and the economy*.

The projects are assessed for labelling according to the following criteria: the training proposal’s consistency...
II.2. Monitoring after award of label
A progress report and inspection is made for each campus by the labelling committee, with the support of DGESCO (central directorate of school education), two years after the award of the label. The activities and results of approved campuses are assessed in the fourth year after labelling, before the label is renewed. Common assessment indicators are used to assess the results and the impact on the region\(^\text{10}\).

II.B. Incentives for campus development
The purpose of setting up these campuses is to provide a consistent and attractive range of courses, and to enhance the region’s economic dynamic. They also help young people to make the transition to working life.

Once awarded the label, a specific logo provided by the above-mentioned ministries can be used by the campuses on their communication materials.

In addition, to encourage the creation of more campuses, the ministries have decided to issue a further call for projects.

Moreover, the region, the State (through teacher salaries and through funding streams such as the Investment for the Future programme\(^*\)) and possibly the European Social Fund (ESF), as bodies operating in the field of vocational training, can contribute financially to the establishment and development of these campuses.

II.C. Existing campuses
So far, 14 campuses have been labelled under the first call for projects issued in May 2013 (see map of campuses – Appendix 3). The campuses operate in the following fields:
- Aeronautics;
- Public works;
- Housing, renewable energy and eco-construction;
- Industry and energy;
- Metals and plastics;
- Tourism, hotels and catering;
- Digital design.

It should be noted that following the second call for projects, 26 campus projects were submitted, and the labelling process will be completed by the end of 2014. The sectors concerned include the timber industry, shipbuilding and renewable marine energy, aeronautics and aerospace, future mobilities and vehicles, the digital and creative industries, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and biotechnologies.\(^\text{12}\) (See III.B).


III. EARLY OBSERVATIONS AND OUTLOOK

III.A. The first results with existing campuses

Fourteen campuses are currently labelled. Based on a study of three campuses in particular, some initial results have been assessed, pending the first studies conducted under the label monitoring process.

III.A.1 Aérocampus Aquitaine

Aérocampus Aquitaine is a single site that provides all forms of training in aeronautical maintenance. It offers a full range of courses in aeronautical maintenance, running from the baccalauréat to an engineering degree, in the context of both initial and continuous training. The objective of this centre is to adapt training solutions to the needs of companies, to initiate new projects and to reinforce the excellence of Aquitaine’s aeronautics sector.

Its operating budget consists of a subsidy from the region, funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and its own resources. Its investment budget is financed by the region and the Investment for the Future programme*. AEROCAMPUS Aquitaine is an association (non-profit) formed by the principal operators in the aeronautics sector. The structures in the network are: second-degree education institutions (including Apprentice Training Centres – CFA), continuous training organisations, higher education institutions (including CFA), research centres, companies (Bordeaux Aquitaine Business Cluster, aerospace, EADS (including Sogerma), Snecma, Air France Industries Thalès, Sabena Technics, Safran, Groupe Transfex).

Aérocampus is an international benchmark, and the “Aérocampus” concept has also been taken up in Auvergne, and even exported, for example to Dubai, where it will train technicians and engineers. Just two years after its establishment, the campus has already achieved significant results, for example with 100% success in the vocational baccalauréates13.

III.A.2 Aérocampus Auvergne

Aérocampus Auvergne is a project that links together initial [school and apprenticeship] and continuous training, pedagogical and technological innovation, companies and research centres.

In order to encourage interregional exchanges, and also to benefit from the experience acquired by the Aquitaine region and its activities in favour of the aeronautics sector, Aérocampus Auvergne is cooperating with Aérocampus Aquitaine.

In concrete terms, the granting of the label has led to stronger partnership between:
- vocational lycées;
- companies, in a very favourable industrial context: big national corporations, high-skill SMEs, numerous subcontractors with increasing involvement in aeronautics, two competitiveness hubs*, a business cluster, a combined innovation platform, a highly active vocational sector; the site is also sponsored by Airbus;
- a research and higher education hub;
- a technology centre involving members of Clermont Université, the education authority and companies14.

III.A.3 Oyonnax-Bellignat Plasticampus – Rhône-Alpes

The aim of the Oyonnax-Bellignat campus of professions project is to bring together industries and vocational training institutes relating to the plastics sector. It is situated in “Plastics Valley”, an area where there are already strong synergies in this field. A key location for the plastics sector, in fact Europe’s leading plastics industry concentration, this valley houses a technical cluster that comprises lycées, the group of adult training institutions (GRETA), apprenticeship training units, the city of Lyon’s INSA (national institute of applied sciences), the “Plastipolis” competitiveness hub, the European plastics cluster and 200 companies in the sector. The internationally recognised Plastipolis competitiveness hub, supported by the Rhône-Alpes region, coordinates the activities of all the parties involved.

The “Plasti Campus” campus of professions and qualifications project is a response to expectations expressed by all the “Plastics Valley” institutions: they all expect this project to lead to better structured exchanges, and the pooling of practices and resources.

The companies in the sector will become more competitive as a result of greater coherence between training and research on the one hand, and industry on the other. Finally, making scientific and technical education more attractive will bring benefits to an industry that needs employees whose qualifications are in tune with technological advances15.

III.B. Prospects and plans

III.B.1 Objectives

The process of labelling campuses of professions and qualifications is set to continue, with the aim of creating new campuses in a variety of innovative economic and industrial sectors with strong future potential (digital, services, health and life economy, energy transition…). The ultimate aim is for each region to have a campus.

III.B.2 Maintaining the impetus with the second call for projects

In order to maintain the impetus of labelling and achieve the goal of one campus per region, a second call for projects was issued in 2014, attracting 26 campus project submissions.

In this second call for projects, details are provided on the criteria applied in assessing label applications, notably the preference for a European or international dimension, with an emphasis on innovation and the inclusion of sustainable development issues.

Campus projects have been proposed in the following fields:
- Aeronautics in Midi-Pyrénées;
- Aeronautics in Poitou-Charentes;
- Construction and energy efficiency in Alsace;
- Sustainable construction and eco-rehabilitation in Limousin;
- Marine industries in Brittany;
- Civil engineering and smart infrastructures in Limousin;
- Timber in Lorraine;
- Timber in Aquitaine;
- Innovative processes and product development in Champagne-Ardenne;
- Composite materials and plastics in Lorraine;
- Mechatronics, smart materials, sensors and connected objects (MMICO) in the Centre region;
- Future mobilities and vehicles in Franche-Comté;
- Materials design and innovation in Auvergne;
- Railways, land transport and eco-mobility in Nord-Pas-de-Calais;
- Propulsion, materials and on-board systems in Normandy;
- Fashion leather textile in Rhône-Alpes;
- Digital in Auvergne;
- Digital technologies and uses in Brittany;
- Digital in Poitou-Charentes;
- Digital imaging and creative industries in Nord-Pas-de-Calais;
- Biotechnologies and bio-industries in Upper Normandy;
- Cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries in the Centre region;
- Gastronomy, hotels and tourism in Languedoc-Roussillon;
- Hotel skills and mountain tourism in Rhône-Alpes;
- Land and sea culinary production and gastronomy in Poitou-Charentes;
- Customer relations in Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur.

III.B.3 Monitoring of existing campuses

A progress report and inspection on each campus will be conducted by the labelling committee, with the support of DGESCO (central directorate of school education), two years after the label is awarded.

The activities and results of approved campuses will be assessed in the fourth year after labelling, prior to renewal of the label. Common assessment indicators will be used to evaluate the results and the impact on the region.

CONCLUSION

This new campus concept is an illustration of the potential for cooperation between different actors in the educational and professional worlds.

It facilitates access to the labour market for young workers who, in the course of their studies, are able to cooperate directly with companies in their future sector of activity.

It facilitates mixed career paths, by allowing young people to vary their status throughout their education – school, apprenticeship, internship – and also by including continuous training organisations.

Finally, it contributes to the recovery in production, by encouraging the creation of campuses in sectors that create jobs or that show strong potential, and by incorporating an international dimension.
Appendix 1 **MAP OF FRANCE’S EDUCATION AUTHORITIES AND REGIONS**

Education authorities (Académies): bodies representing the Ministry of Education around the country
List of France’s regions, as regional local authorities

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<td>Rhône-Alpes</td>
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Appendix 2  **THE DIFFERENT OPERATORS IN CAMPUS LIFE**
Appendix 3  NATIONAL MAP OF CAMPUSES OF PROFESSIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS IN FRANCE

February 2014
http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid25535/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=77287
Appendix 4 GLOSSARY

“Mini-enterprise”: a way of initiating students in technological and vocational streams in secondary education into business creation. These companies are formed by young volunteers. They are supervised by a teacher and a professional adviser and develop a product or service for market distribution (see page 2).

Ministries of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and the Economy: they award labels to the selected campuses. They are, for example, responsible for initial vocational training, for defining and issuing professional qualifications and setting national programmes, for managing the regulation of continuous vocational training and for initiating negotiations with the social partners (see page 8).

Programme ECLAIR: ECLAIR programme is a national programme whose central administration provides the framework and the global assessment in concert with education authorities. The aim of this programme is to promote the success of each school pupil in an atmosphere conducive to learning, equality of opportunity, and to team stability, cohesion and motivation of teachers. It promotes innovation and experimentation in the fields of pedagogy, school life, human resources, as well as safety initiatives, and it is underpinned by systems of school networks (see page 2).

Programme Investissements d'Avenir (PIA) [Investment for the Future programme]: nationally, €47 billion have been allocated to this programme. The purpose of Investment for the Future is to promote French excellence in higher education and research. The programme employs a system of national calls for projects to fund a continuum of initiatives, running from fundamental research to industrial innovation, from education to technology transfer. In higher education and training, the aim of this programme is to foster the emergence of academic hubs of excellence capable of tackling global competition. Campuses of professions and qualifications can be among the projects funded (see pages 9 and 11).

Comité régional de l’emploi, de la formation et de l’orientation professionnelles (CREFOP) [Regional Committee for Employment, Training and Career Guidance]: this body is responsible for identifying, studying, tracking and assessing the policies needed to maintain coordination between organisations involved in career guidance, vocational training and employment, and coherence between training programmes in the region, in concert with the National Council for Employment, Training and Career Guidance (see page 8).

Competitiveness hubs: a competitiveness hub is a structure in a well-circumscribed area that brings together large and small companies, research centres and training institutions to focus on a targeted topic. National and local authorities are closely associated with this dynamic. The purpose of a competitiveness hub is to support innovation. It promotes the development of particularly innovative collaborative R&D projects. It also supports the development and growth of its member companies, in particular through the launch of new products, services or processes arising from the results of the research projects (see pages 3, 4 and 12).

Conseil académique de l’éducation nationale (CAEN) [Academic Council of National Education]: consultation structure within the Académie (education authority), which considers any question relating to the organisation and performance of the public education service in the education authority (see page 8).

Conseil national éducation économie (CNEE) [National ‘Economy Education’ Council]: brings together representatives from the economic and professional communities, and from the world of education. This dialogue and forecasting body seeks to achieve a better match between educational and economic priorities. After the project is examined by the group of experts, it gives its opinion on that project (see pages 3 and 8).

Etablissements publics à caractère scientifique, culturel et professionnel [public scientific, cultural and professional establishments]: national higher education and research establishments (see page 7).

Etablissements publics locaux d’enseignement (EPLE) [local public education establishments]: public administrative institutions encompassing middle schools, general, technological and vocational lycées, and special education institutions (see page 7).