

France

Charles Fage, P Moullet, Charles Consel, Hélène Sauzéon

▶ **To cite this version:**

Charles Fage, P Moullet, Charles Consel, Hélène Sauzéon. France. Michael L. Wehmeyer and James R. Patton. The Praeger International Handbook of Special Education, 2, ABC-CLIO Corporate ABC-CLIO, pp.26, 2017. hal-01354195

HAL Id: hal-01354195
https://inria.hal.science/hal-01354195

Submitted on 17 Aug 2016

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

[FRANCE]

Authors: C. Fage[1], P. Moullet[2], C. Consel[1,3] & H. Sauzéon[1,4]

1. Inria, Talence, France; 2. National Education Inspector Specialized in School Adaptation and Schooling of Students with Disabilities, Bordeaux, France; 3. Bordeaux-INP, Talence, France; 4. Lab. Handicap et Système Nerveux, Université de Bordeaux, Talence, France.

Overview of the Country

Historical information. France, a country in Europe, has seen its education system evolve throughout its history. From the French Revolution (1789) with the precursors of the state school, to the Imperial University (1806–1806) and its *Grand-Maître*[1], followed by the creation of the first Ministry of Public Instruction in 1828, until today, the history of education in France has been first and foremost a movement toward the democratization of access to education and confessional emancipation. In France, education has always been subject to politico-ideological (freedom of education, neutrality, secularism) and economic (cost of schools, children's economic value) issues. Citizens, families, the state and the institutions (religious, economic) are pressure groups that have enabled schooling for everyone, notably through the Jules Ferry laws in the nineteenth century, which introduced compulsory education for 6- to 13-year-olds, secular education, and access to education for women. In 1932, the Ministry of Public Instruction was renamed the Ministry of National Education to promote schooling equality, free education and sharing of a common citizenship culture. During the dark period of the Vichy government or again under the Fourth Republic, no significant change occurred. However, under the Fifth Republic, not only did the Constitution of 1958 stipulate that the "organization of compulsory

[1] Grand Master

public instruction that is free and secular at every level is the duty of the state" *[Translation]*, but also, in the 1960s, the school system was reorganized. It went from being a multi-level system (primary, secondary, and even technical) intended for various types of clienteles (primary was for the working class and students were not intended to pursue further studies, while secondary school was for the middle and upper classes[2]) to a system divided into degrees. The 1st, or primary, degree consists of nursery school, or kindergarten, (ages 2–6 years) and elementary school (6–11 years); while the 2nd degree consists of college for its first cycle (11–15 years) and the *lycée* for its second cycle (15–18/19 years). Furthermore, in 1974, the Ministry of Education became responsible for higher education, which had been independent until then, to finally promote synergy between secondary and higher education, which is why it is now called the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche[3] (MENESR).

Structure of the country. A founding member of the European Union, France is located to the south of Europe's Atlantic coast, and its capital is Paris. Its official language is French, although certain dialects (Basque, Breton, Corsican, Occitan, etc.) are still practiced and taught as French heritage in the schools up to the *lycée*.

France is a semi-presidential constitutional republic (Fifth Republic). The Fifth Republic has been the most stable regime in France (since 1958). It is parliamentarian and qualified as semi-presidential due to the substantial power granted to the President of the Republic, who is elected by direct universal suffrage. There is separation of executive powers (the president and his government, which is composed of the prime minister and the ministers) and legislative powers

[2]While children from regular strata attended preparatory, elementary and intermediate courses, children from higher social strata attended, in the *lycées*, 11th-, 10th-, 9th-, 8th-, 7th- and, finally, 6th-grade courses.
[3] Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research

(the parliament, which is composed of the national assembly and the senate), each of which can overturn the other. Since January 1, 2016, France's territories have been divided into 13 main administrative regions known as territorial collectivities (first-level administrative divisions). Their scope of intervention is vast, ranging from the management of the *lycées* to organizing transportation, but also economic development, training, research or even part of taxation. The second-level administrative division is that of the local collectivities, with its 101 departments. The departments also have various responsibilities, which are continuously growing with the decentralization of powers, including social and medico-social action (child protection, dependency or disability allowance, adult minimum income, preventative health), education (college only), culture (libraries, museums), transportation, economic development, etc. Additionally, a third territorial level, the commons, is deeply involved in the management of nursery and elementary schools (food services, daycare, extracurricular activities), especially since the 2013 school reform, which transferred responsibility for certain physical and cultural activities to the commons. Nonetheless, the teaching staff remain employees of the state.

Population. According to the Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques[4] (INSEE, 2016), France has 66.6 million inhabitants, of whom 64.5 million live in metropolitan areas and 2.1 million, overseas. This year, the population increased by only 0.4%, with a slight drop in births (France still has one of the best fertility rates in Europe) and a very large increase in deaths due to population aging. Population growth is still determined more by births than by migration movement.

Racial/ethnic composition. Racial/ethnic composition. The notion of ethnic group does not legally exist in France, except on the territory of New Caledonia; consequently, there is no

[4] National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies

official census available. In fact, in France, the notion of ethnic group or national minority is anti-constitutional according to the principle of citizen equality.

Literacy/numeracy data. The literacy rate (understanding, reading and writing short phrases or doing basic calculations needed in daily life) of people over 15 years of age in France is 99% (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015). Meanwhile, a recent survey by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) of 24 countries, including France, (Survey of Adult Skills, 2013) shows that 21.7% of French adults have the lowest level of literacy skills and 9.1% have the lowest level of numeracy, thus placing France very low on the podium. This disastrous showing is also true for basic information and communication technology skills. These numbers are even more worrisome because they conceal the substantial social disparities also reported in this survey. Furthermore, according to the latest official survey (INSEE, 2011 "Information et vie quotidienne" survey), 2.5 million people are functionally illiterate, that is, 7% of 18- to 65-year-old people having attended school in France. According to the MENESR, the 2014 evaluations conducted as part of the Defense and Citizenship Day (a compulsory civic day for those under 18 years of age), underscore the fact that, although 81.8% of youth 17 years or over are effective readers, 9.6% have difficulty reading, 4.1% of whom have great difficulty. The illiteracy rate in France increases with age, up to 30% among those 56 years old or over. Also, the mother tongue of 70% of illiterate people is French, and 20% of minimum income recipients are illiterate.

Public Education System Overview

Description of compulsory schooling. Since the Jules Ferry laws were introduced in 1881–1882, education has been free, secular and compulsory starting in primary school. This

obligation applies to all French children and foreign children living in France who have turned 6 years old. Since 1959, this obligation has been extended to include 16-year-olds. Children are schooled either in an institution or by their family. The INSEE data indicate that between 2000 and 2013, nearly 100% of 6- to 16-year-olds attend school (ranging from 94 to 100% depending on the age range). In 2014–2015, more than 10 million students received a 1st and 2nd degree education in the public sector, in addition to another 2 million students in the private sector. Concerning those under 6 years old, the INSEE's data indicate a drop (from 34 to 12%), between 2000 and 2013, in the kindergarten education rate for 2-year-old children due to the schools' limited capacities. However, this rate is maximal and stable (between 100 and 98.5%) among 3- to 5-year-olds.

Funding. According to the most recent numbers available from the MENESR, overall spending on education (including teaching and related activities, such as administration, food services, school transportation, textbooks, etc.) was estimated, for the year 2013, at 144.8 billion euros, which represents 6.8% of France's gross domestic product. Furthermore, 80.5% of public spending on education came from the state and the territorial collectivities, 11% from families, and 8.5% from companies.

Organizational structure. In France, the organization and the administration of the entire education system are both centralized at the MENESR and decentralized in the academies. The MENESR action is complemented by other ministries, notably the ministry of agriculture for agricultural studies or the ministry of industry for engineering and technological studies. The MENESR administration is present in every region and every department. It is divided among 17 academic regions (which correspond to the new map of the regions introduced in January 2016, and for which the MENESR appoints an academic region rector), 30 academies (National

Education administrative divisions headed by an academic rector also named by the MENESR), and 97 national education directorates (DSDEN) headed by academic directors from the national education department (DASEN). The goal of this so-called "deconcentrated" territorial network of services is to have local management of the institutions and effective implementation of the education reforms in accordance with territorial contexts, as well as users' and local partners' expectations. In fact, with the laws on decentralization (1982–1983 and 2003–2004), territorial jurisdiction over education has increased, notably with respect to logistical aspects, since the state retains power over everything related to teaching (programs; school calendar; hiring of teaching, educational and supervisory staff, etc.). Therefore, the territorial collectivities perform material functions (buildings, food services, school transportation, etc.) with a financial contribution from the state, the regions and the departments. The public education department is under the responsibility of the commons for the 1st degree (pre-elementary and elementary) and of the departments and regions for the 2nd degree (colleges and *lycées*, respectively).

Graduation rate. In France, the education system is broken down into three degrees. The 1st degree corresponds to pre-elementary and elementary education, which is provided in primary schools to children from 2 or 3 years old to 11 years old. The 2nd degree comprises both college[5] (1st cycle) for 11- to 15-year-olds and the *lycée*[6] (2nd cycle) for 15- to 18-year-olds. The 3rd degree corresponds to higher education, which is also delivered in the *lycées* (senior technician sections, preparatory classes for the *grandes écoles*[7]), as well as in *grandes écoles*, specialized schools or institutions, and in universities. For the 2nd degree, general education and

[5] Junior high school

[6] Senior high school

[7] Elite schools

vocational education must be differentiated. Certification in France begins in the 2nd degree with the *certificat de formation générale*[8] (CFG) for special education students or those with disabling deficiences, and those having left school[9], or the *diplôme national du brevet*[10] (DNB) attesting to a mandatory common core of knowledge, skills and culture required to finish school. This certificate or diploma may be issued at the end of the general education cycle (four years of college) or a vocational studies cycle (vocational or technical *lycée*). According to the INSEE (2014), 5.6% of the population aged over 15 years have earned only this level-VI certification.

General education continues at the *lycée* and leads to a baccalaureate, which certifies the end of 2nd degree studies (three years) and opens the door to higher education at the first university level. Vocational studies take place in vocational or technical *lycées*, and lead to a *certificat d'aptitude professionnelle*[11] (CAP), and potentially a vocational baccalaureate, the *brevet d'études professionnelles*[12] (BEP), which has become a simple intermediate certification as part of the 2009 reform of the vocational path. This path is intended to direct more students toward a level-IV certification (vocational baccalaureate). In 2014, the CFG, CAP and BEP represented level-V certification for 22% of those aged over 15 years. At the same time, 15% of those over 15 years old had only the baccalaureate level in France (level-IV certification). However, the proportion of graduates is increasing, since 66% of 25- to 34-year-olds earned their baccalaureate in 2014, and the proportion of baccalaureate holders in one generation reached 78.3%.

[8] General education certificate

[9] Notably inmates who are taking courses to acquire a skill during their detention.

[10] National diploma

[11] Certificate of competence

[12] Certificate of vocational proficiency

The baccalaureate (general or vocational) is followed by the higher education diplomas, namely the *diplôme de licence*[13] (three years, Level II), master's (two years, Level I) and doctorate (three years) in accordance with the European Union's 2002 standardization of diplomas. Other modalities co-exist with short vocational studies lasting two years (e.g., *brevet de technicien supérieur*[14], *diplôme universitaire de technologie*[15], level-III diplomas) or three years (*licence professionnelle*[16], level-II diploma), and long ones lasting four years, in engineering sciences (title of engineer, level-I diploma), which students can usually enter further to a competitive exam after two years of post-baccalaureate preparatory classes. In 2014, only 11% of people over 15 years old had earned a short-cycle post-baccalaureate degree (2–3 years) and 14%, a long-cycle diploma (> 3 years).

Private School Education Overview

Percentage of school-age population attending private schools. In 2014, according to the MENESR, 2,069,867 students attended private schools for the 1st and 2nd degrees**,** that is, approximately 17% of students in France. In 2011–2012, the number of private-sector institutions offering 1st and 2nd degree education was nearly 8,700, that is, about 14% of the total number of schools and institutions in France.

Types of private schools. In France, the freedom of education plan defined by the *Debré Act* in 1959 provides for three types of private educational institutions, based on their legal and financial contractual relations with the state: 1) independent private institutions, which are free to

[13] Similar level to the bachelor's degree in North America

[14] Senior technician diploma

[15] University diploma in technology

[16] Vocational license

choose the content taught; 2) private institutions under simple contract with the state, free to recruit their teachers, who are private law workers but paid by the state; and 3) private institutions under full contract with the state, whose teachers are public agents. Simple- or full-contract institutions represent 97.3% of the private sector, and all private institutions are subject to a MENESR inspection plan. Control over the compulsory educational content was reinforced by law in 1998. Public funding accounts for approximately 10% of the private sector cost.

Description of who attends and of the services provided. Historically, private education in France was developed in the nineteenth century for affluent classes concerned with church-endorsed instruction. Today, most private 1st and 2nd degree institutions are still mainly confessional. The private sector represents 13.41% of 1st degree students and 21.24% of 2nd degree students with an underrepresentation of the underprivileged social classes (scholarship students) in the private sector (on average, 12.1% versus 26.4% in the public sector). Few children with disabilities or disorders (10 to 15%) or newly arrived allophone children attend private schools (Repères et références statistiques, 2015); the very nature of these institutions authorizes them to choose which students to accept or refuse. There is a large number of very specialized private institutions providing higher education, and they are rarely confessional. Their tuition fees are often very high.

Special Education/Special Needs Education System

Current legislative mandates. In member states of the European Union, there are three different special education policies (IGAS, 2003, Rapport thématique sur la politique du handicap en Europe): 1) single-option countries that have committed to inclusive education by providing special services (Sweden, Norway, Spain, Greece, Italy, Portugal); 2) countries with

two education levels (regular and specialized), often governed by different legislations (Germany, Belgium, Netherlands); and 3) multiple-approach countries, including France, which develop intermediate formulas with full-time special classes or mechanisms or that entail cooperation between regular and special facilities (England, Austria, Finland, Denmark). More specifically, in France, education involving school adjustment and schooling of children with disabilities in the 1st and 2nd degrees falls under the authority mainly of the MENESR but also of the Ministère de la Santé et des Affaires Sociales[17] (MSAS). *Act no. 2005-102* states that any child with a disability is legally a student. *La loi d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'École de la République* of 2013[18] recognizes the principle of inclusive school for all children[19], without distinction. These two laws are essential in France's policy on schooling of students with disabilities.

The Commission des droits et de l'autonomie des personnes handicapées[20] (CDAPH), which works within the Maisons Départementales des Personnes Handicapées[21] (MDPH), makes decisions regarding the direction and assistance to be provided, in response to the requests of people with disabilities or their representatives, and establishes a personal compensation plan (PPC), which includes notably a personalized schooling plan (PPS). The application files are examined, at the MDPH, by multidisciplinary evaluation teams (EPE), which include doctors, teachers, occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, among others. National education implements the CDAPH's decisions, with respect to academic orientation, allocation

[17] Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

[18] *Act concerning orientation and programming for the reform of the School of the Republic*

[19] Children with learning difficulties and with disabilities, as well as allophone children, traveler children, etc.

[20] Commission on the Rights and Autonomy of Persons with Disabilities

[21] Departmental Centers for Persons with Disabilities

of human assistance or teaching materials. Since 2014, several decrees have modernized the procedures and tools designed to better assess the needs of students with disabilities: actors' roles, creation of standardized tools (Guide to assessing compensation needs in terms of schooling - GEVASCO), and modification of the composition of the MDPH multidisciplinary team.

Besides the PPS, which targets students with disabilities, there are other mechanisms for supporting students with particular educational needs: the individualized assistance plan (PAI) with schooling arrangements, and medical and emergency protocol for sick children and adolescents integrating the community, chronic pathology carriers, those with food intolerances and allergies; the personalized assistance plan (PAP) with pedagogical arrangements and adjustments for students with learning disorders (specific types of learning disorders, attention-deficit disorders with or without hyperactivity [ADHD or ADD], or depressive states); and the personalized program for academic success (PPRE) with diversified and differentiated teaching for students having difficulties in school.

In cases of persistent school difficulties, students in the two school degrees are eligible for adapted teaching: those in the 1st degree may be taught by specialized teachers from the Réseau d'aide spécialisé aux élèves en difficulté (RASED)[22]. Each of these RASEDs is connected to a national education inspector in charge of the first degree sectors (IEN-CCPD) and is composed of three to five school psychologists and a variable number of specialized teachers responsible for educational aid (work on learning difficulties, notably methodological and metacognitive ones), remedial assistance (work on the ability to be a student, to abide by the school's structure and rules, to be part of a group, to test one's physical limitations, and to learn to integrate a

[22] Network of specialized assistance for students with difficulties

group). These RASEDs are integrated in the sectorial resource centers, where there are special education teachers from the RASED, educational counselors, remedial teachers responsible for monitoring the schooling of students with disabilities, and teachers specialized in normal information and communication techniques, educating in the French language (for allophone children), teaching traveler children, etc. These various clienteles are concerned with the concept of inclusive school.

Second degree students with permanent and persistent learning difficulties may be eligible for special education. This decision will be made by the education director of each department, as part of the work performed by the departmental commission for special education orientation (CDOEA). They will then be taught in the general and pre-vocational special education section (SEGPA), from grade 6 to 3, in a college or a regional adapted teaching institution (EREA/LEA), generally from 6th grade in CAP / *lycée* special education classes, for post-3rd classes or from the 3rd preparatory for the vocation path). With the school reform that is underway, grade 6 students will have the possibility of being pre-referred to the SEGPA but their final orientation will be effective only in year n+1, as per the CDOEA's decision. The aim of this mechanism is to reduce the number of segregated paths as much as possible and to promote inclusive schooling. The EREA/LEAs recruit regionally and thus usually have boarding schools. Students receiving adapted teaching are provided with individual training plans.

Age range for special education/special needs education. In France, free education for students with disabilities covers the period from age 3 to 16 years, which may, however, be prolonged to age 20. Free care is also offered to children under 3 years old through health and medico-social services. After age 18, the students either study in a regular setting and pursue a

higher (general or vocational) education or they receive vocational training in specialized medico-social facilities.

Population of students eligible to receive special needs education. In European Union member states, the percentage of children with disabilities is estimated at 2% of the total population of school-age children (IGAS, 2003, Rapport thématique sur la politique du handicap en Europe). Nearly 20,000 school-age children do not attend school (Senate report, 2012). According to the *Repères et statistiques* report by the MENESR (2015), 330,200 children or adolescents with disabilities were being schooled in 2014, a 6.2% increase compared with the previous school year. Three quarters of the students concerned are schooled in regular settings and the other quarter, in specialized institutions. In 2014, an additional 20,800 students were schooled in regular settings, 7% of them in the 1st degree and 11.2%, in the 2nd degree, for a total increase of 8.7% (versus 6% in 2013), and the drop observed in specialized institutions was confirmed (-1.6%). Schooling in special classes in regular settings is growing more slowly in the 1st degree than in the 2nd degree (1.5% and 11.9%, respectively).

Schooling modes depend on the disabilities. Students with intellectual or cognitive disabilities account for almost half of the students with disabilities (42%) in the 1st and 2nd degrees. The majority of them are taught in regular settings (> 70%) but in special classes (59,200 students versus 46,400 students in regular classes), and they represent 46.1% of enrolments in hospital or medico-social institutions. They thus seem to have more difficulty with regular schooling. Students with psychological or psychiatric disorders represent 21% of the students with disabilities, and those with language and speech disorders represent 13%. In both cases, most of the students are integrated in regular settings and classes (> 70%). Sensory disturbances (hearing, vision) represent 4.7% of disability situations in the schools, motor disorders represent 7.5%,

visceral deficiencies represent 2.7% and other disorders, 2.6%. The vast majority of students in these four situations are taught in regular settings and classes (> 80%). Children with multiple associated disorders represent 7.8%, and the majority attends regular classes in regular settings (> 60%). Finally, children with multiple deficiencies represent 0.4% of the total clientele and are all in specialized institutions.

How students are identified. Severe sensorial, motor or intellectual deficiencies are generally detected very early, by medical actors. Centers for early medico-social assistance (CAMSP), which are most often located in a hospital, are designed to facilitate the screening, diagnosis and remedial education of children under 6 years of age. For other types of deficiencies, schools are often the first to detect the difficulties. The difficulties are then closely observed and discussed with the student's parents, who receive assistance from the education team (teachers, school directors, national education doctors, school psychologists, etc.) in learning about the disability. The parents of students with disabilities are assisted in applying to the MDPH for compensation. Guidance for the parents by the education teams and national education doctors is fundamental for learning about the difference, recognizing the disability, and then building an academic path adapted to the particular learning needs. Doctors are expected to help the teachers to gain a good understanding of each student's specific needs, and it is up to the teachers to select, or even invent, teaching and didactic strategies adapted to these specific needs.

Where special education/special needs education services are provided. Children with disability condition are schooled either part time or full time in regular and/or adapted settings, and/or in a protected area in a specialized (hospital or medico-social) institution.

In regular settings, for the 1st and 2nd degrees, schooling may be "individual" (the student attends a regular class) or "collective" (the student attends a special school-inclusion class), supported or not by certain compensations (human assistance or adapted teaching materials). Some students with disabilities may benefit from adapted teaching, and they will be referred for these services by the MDPH, as part of the development of their PPS by the EPE and of its validation by the CDAPH.

"Collective schooling" involves special arrangements, such as localized school inclusion units (ULIS). These inclusive facilities located in regular settings have a theoretical capacity of 12 students for the 1st degree and 10 students for the 2nd degree. The students, whose academic path is defined in their PPS, receive an education tailored to their specific needs from a specialized teacher and have inclusion time in regular classes.

In adapted settings, the students are schooled in the general and adapted teaching sections (SEGPA) and the regional adapted teaching institutions (EREA). The latter type of institution includes a boarding school that more than half of the students attend. SEGPA students are educated by teachers from colleges, schools specialized in managing school difficulties, and vocational *lycées* for pre-vocational studies in five fields (housing, rural land – environment, sales-distribution-warehousing, health-food-services, industrial production). In EREAs, vocational studies are more diversified and focused, like in vocational *lycées*, on specific trades (bricklaying, mechanics, horticulture, hairdressing, etc.).

In protected settings, specialized medico-social and health institutions provide global, academic, educational and therapeutic management, which may also include partial school inclusion in some cases. Among the medico-social facilities, the medico-educational institutes (IME) take care of children and adolescents with intellectual or cognitive deficiencies. IMEs function as

boarding schools, day schools, and day-boarding or temporary accommodations. They are specialized according to the degree and type of disability that they manage. Therapeutic, educational and pedagogical institutes (ITEP) deal more with children who have behavioral disorders. Other types of institutions focus on motor or sensorial disorders. Finally, the health facilities also teach according to multiples formulas: 1) home hospitalization in the child's own environment; 2) the most common one, day hospitalization, where schooling can be provided as part of the hospital services by a public-sector teacher, through televised teaching or through specific sequences in a school; and 3) full-time hospitalization, during which schooling and socialization activities are offered to the child or adolescent by 1st and 2nd degree specialized teachers whom the MENESR makes available to the hospital facility.

Besides these mechanisms, the Centre national d'enseignement à distance[23] (Cned) offers a public distance education service. For 6- to 16-year-olds, the Cned offers specific arrangements related to the PPS that may include home intervention by a private remedial teacher paid by the Cned.

Focus of services/intervention/curriculum. In France, global management of children with disabilities includes three fields of intervention: educational (refers to special education), teaching (refers to schooling) and therapeutic (refers to caregiving). With regard to schooling, like all students, children with disabilities have learning objectives. These objectives are based on the school programs in effect and the common core of knowledge, skills and culture. Meanwhile, teaching and therapeutic plans are defined based on the needs identified by the MDPH's multidisciplinary team and are translated into the personalized compensation plan (PPC), the personalized coaching plan (PPA) or the individual coaching plan (PIA). The PPS,

[23] National Center for Distance Teaching

which is an integral part of the PPC and of the PIA or PPA, specifies the academic orientation, the potential use of human assistance or adapted teaching materials and, finally, the pedagogical arrangements. The duties of the educational component are vast: development of socio-educational, cultural and sports activities; citizenship and recreational education; participation in the management of the individual education plan; and guidance through the social and vocational insertion process. Also provided for are financial and material resources: education allowance for children with disabilities, disability card, and specialized transportation for the school year. All these assistive measures are in place to support the students' life plan.

Related services. The two most important specialized services are the medico-psychological centers (CMPs) and the special education and homecare services (SESSAD), which are free, multidisciplinary and geographically sectored. CMPs provide combined services from health professionals (doctors, psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, psychomotor therapists, speech therapists, specialized educators, social workers) who are specialized either in "children" or "adults." SESSADs provide specialized support to children and adolescents who remain in their regular living and educational environment. SESSADs are often specialized by type of deficiency (sensorial, motor, cognitive, etc.). Care and remedial education may also be provided by other departments (hospital-based consultations in such sectors as infant-juvenile psychiatry, day hospitals, etc.) or by private practitioners.

Graduation rate for students with disabilities. In 2014, among the population of children with disabilities being schooled, 65.71% were educated in the 1st degree, 32.85% in the 2nd degree, and 1.4% at an undetermined level. These figures conceal the fact that in specialized institutions, eight out of ten students have an education level equivalent to the 1st degree, which indicates a significant academic delay. This finding is consistent with the broader one from the

Cneso (Conseil national d'évaluation du système scolaire, 2016 report), which notes that although nearly all 3- to 5-year-old children with disabilities in France are educated in a regular school; the same is true for 80% of those aged 12; for slightly more than 60% of those aged 15; and for only 44% of those aged 18. These children rarely pursue a higher education: only 6% of 20- to 24-year-old youth with disabilities have higher education diplomas.

Prevalent practices used in special education services. Adapted teaching (SEGPA and EREA) or special education (ULIS in regular settings and teaching units for protected settings) offer schooling adapted as closely as possible to the students' needs and most often targets a future direction toward vocational studies in view of earning a CAP or a BEP. It is always provided by a specialized teacher. Adapted or specialized teaching consists in pedagogical differentiation and individualization practices, where high-level requirements concerning the common base of knowledge, skills and culture are maintained. The objective of adapted teaching is the mastering of work methods and techniques, stabilization and assimilation of the lessons learned, and awareness-building of what leads to success. Meanwhile, specialized teaching corresponds to the specific implementation of the objectives laid out in the PPS. It is structured around educational and remedial aids and interventions that must be orchestrated to foster the desire to learn and the adaptation of behaviors in school settings and in daily life alike. The adaptations and compensations (sign language, learning of braille, use of an enhanced communication system, decomposition of tasks by pictogram, system for developing fine motor skills, etc.) vary according to the nature of the disabilities and capabilities. The objective is always to help the students to progress toward partial or complete individual studies in an adapted vocational or general program and to develop their autonomy.

Post-School Options for Students Receiving Special Education/Special Needs Education Services. Post-school disability-recognition services lead to two types of placement arrangements—placement in protected settings or insertion in regular settings—depending on the nature and severity of the disability. Protected settings developed due to the pressure or initiative of parents' associations cater mostly to people with major intellectual or cognitive deficiencies. Specialized care homes accommodate those with the most disabilities. Today, organized in a network (national group of institutions and assistance services through work), 135,000 workers with disabilities are employed in protected settings spread across 2000 institutions, of which 1400 are specialized occupational assistance institutions and another 600 are adapted companies. This mechanism concerns mostly subcontracted trades. Work in regular settings has developed with the implementation of the Cap-emploi network (comprising 118 facilities), which delivers proximity services to people with disabilities. Its missions are fulfilled by private interim-employment agencies and associations (ADAPT, JobBoard Handicaps, etc.). Since 1987, the law has required that 6% (previously 10%) of employees recruited by companies must be people with disabilities. Yet, this minimum has never been attained in France, the employment rate is 4%, and the unemployment rate today for people with disabilities is still double that of the general population**.** Companies that do not abide by the law are subject to sanctions involving an increase in their contribution to specialized public funds intended to finance employment assistance for people with disabilities.

Teacher Training/Preparation

Minimum requirements to be a general education teacher. The requirements to become a tenured 1st and 2nd degree teachers are to have earned a level-one teaching diploma or

a master's in education and to have won the teacher-recruitment academic (1st degree) or national (2nd degree) exam. Teachers are also recruited without competitive exams for specified-period contracts. First degree teachers are generalists and 2nd degree teachers are specialized by school subject.

Minimum requirements to be a special education/special needs education teacher. In addition to being 1st or 2nd degree generalist teachers, special-education teachers hold a *certificat d'aptitude professionnelle*[24] in adaptive aids, adapted teaching and schooling for students with disabilities (CAPA-SH) for the 1st degree or a complementary certificate in adapted teaching and schooling of students with disabilities for the 2nd degree (2CA-SH). Various possible versions exist of this certificate: those that are dominantly pedagogical for adapted teaching and those centered on the specificity of one disability for a clientele with sensorial, motor, and/or cognitive deficiencies.

Types of special education personnel. Specialized educators either practice as remedial teachers for a given geographic sector or they work in adapted teaching or in a specialized facility. In all cases, they apply or ensure the application of the schooling arrangements (PPS; PAP, etc.). Depending on the needs assessed by the MDPH, the presence of human assistance (individual, mutualized or collective school life assistants; AVS) helps make schooling possible for these students. An AVS receives 60 hours of employment adaptation training in order to provide flexible assistance, available in accordance with the student's needs. Since the end of 2013, an AVS can go from a determinate contract to an indeterminate one and be promoted based on index-based grids published by the MENESR. A diploma corresponding to their missions is currently being developed.

[24] Certificate of competence

Nature of in-service training/professional development provided to special education/special needs education teachers. Teachers' continuing education on issues related to disability has been identified as a priority by the MENESR. For instance, the M@gistère platform, dedicated to the continuing education of 1st degree teachers, includes a training module devoted to disability in general. In 2015, two new modules were proposed to teachers: schooling students with autism spectrum disorders or other pervasive developmental disorders; and schooling students with specific language and learning disorders. Furthermore, the MENESR's Éduscol portal offers resources for any teacher schooling a student with disabilities in the first or second degree. Moreover, four new themes have just been introduced: 1) schooling of students with specific language and learning disorders; 2) schooling of students with pervasive developmental disorders; 3) schooling of students with conduct and behavioral disorders; and 4) disciplinary resources for schooling students with disabilities in the 2nd degree.

Barriers/Issues to Providing Quality Special Education/Special Needs Education Services.

In recent decades, France has clearly embarked on the road to schooling youth with disabilities. Inclusion in regular settings is very effective for the 1st degree. However, for the 2nd degree, France has opted rather for the intermediate option of "adaptation" through specialized institutions or special arrangements in regular settings. France is thus far from complete inclusion of everyone in regular settings. Additionally, the numbers concerning access to higher education are rather alarming in terms of the prognosis for a quality work life for people with disabilities, since it has been established in France that employment stability is associated with higher education levels. Also, these youth's academic paths are relatively "chaotic": grade-

repeating, failing, and more reorientations, which contribute to a more negative experience of the education system.

Several barriers are at the origin of these findings. First, there are the physical barriers, such as non-compliance with accessibility standards in some educational institutions in France (1st and 2nd degrees), such that students are heavily burdened by the need to travel every day (loss of time and sleep) or to use alternative schooling arrangements. Many disability associations frequently denounce the situation.

In addition to these physical barriers are cultural, social and organizational barriers creating multiple layers of obstacles encountered daily by the students, their families and their professional caregivers. The disability culture in the general population in France is still predominated by medical and individual conceptions of disability leaving the door open for the diktat of normality, a breeding ground, on the one hand, for prejudice and stigmatism surrounding disability (that must be repaired and compensated for…) and, on the other hand, for the assertion of an identity by people with disabilities ripe for the constitution of a social group that can no longer be ignored. Even if the MENESR declares its political will today to change things, this disability culture remains latent among the current groups of actors in the education system, and can be manifested daily through attitudes supporting rejection or even maltreatment of people with disabilities, yet without any initial intention of hindering: students exclude those who are different to better assume socially desirable normality, and teachers do not adopt sufficient diversified teaching to ensure a socially desirable equal treatment of students. Unfortunately, the forums of parents of students with disabilities still report events that clearly reveal France's delay in assimilating a disability culture based on a biopsychosocial approach where the society and the social environment assume their responsibility in the genesis of

disability. While the 2005 law attempts to force this cultural barrier and to stimulate a new collective conscience, other obstacles, notably organizational ones, are present. The divide between the education system and the health and medico-social system contributes to tensions between academic and caregiving priorities, even if joint practices are undeniably progressing. The initial or continuing education of teachers is condensed, and the portion left for disability remains summary and incomplete. Although now linked to the universities (since 2013), higher education institutions offering teaching and education programs have long worked in isolation on their academic territories, so much so that the approaches based on instructional design or the more recent universal design for learning—which help enrich teachers' repertory of educational strategies to be selected according to the learner's characteristics—are a far cry from being generalized and thus implemented by teachers.

Promising Trends in the Future. France is one of the very first countries to have signed (2007) and then ratified (2010) the *International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. And, one decade after the Act of 2005, the schooling situation in France has improved considerably, particularly from a quantitative perspective. France's pursuit of inclusive school now awaits qualitative progress, some of which could be reasonably achieved through recent government measures (*La loi d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'École de la République* of 2013) and incentives.

At the student level, building an awareness of disability is an integral part of the new civic and moral education introduced in 2013 and implemented since 2015. This will surely promote togetherness, prevention against prejudice between peers, and thus the quality of school life for students with disabilities.

The qualification and professionalization of AVSs will undoubtedly lead to an improvement in the quality of academic coaching for the children, as will the possibility of keeping the same coach for the year or even throughout their schooling, when necessary. The state's commitment to opening more AVS positions will undeniably serve as a lever for school inclusion. Also, the outsourcing of teaching units of specialized institutions in regular settings gives hope that, failing full and complete social participation in this environment, the number of children attending regular school settings will grow. The creation, since 2014, of 100 specialized teaching units, including 90 for autism spectrum disorders for kindergarten (one unit per department) is an indication, firstly, of better screening for these disorders in France and, secondly, of a growing awareness of the relevance of early, multidisciplinary management specifically for this clientele.

Advocated by UNESCO in 2012, the MENESR's investment in digital technology is also a source of optimism, although expectations for progress must be kept within reason. Thanks to the MENESR's project for accessibility and adaptability of digital school resources, recommendations have been published for authors and publishers of school books to help them produce digital resources that are accessible to all students. Furthermore, the list of computerized materials certified by the MDPH has grown: braille keyboard, adapted sensorial transcription peripherals, specific software, etc. First degree programs available in braille throughout the territory are some of the advances made, along with the MENESR's web service that converts the resources and returns them in a document format accessible to students with selective cognitive deficits (dyslexia, dysgraphia, etc.). The MENESR is investing in the development of specialized tools: *Logiral*, a video-speed reducer; *Vis ma vue (StreetLab),* a serious game designed to simulate visual deficiencies for students without visual deficiencies, etc. And coming soon is *Collège+* on digital tablet, a set of applications to support primary inclusion in regular

classes (prompting to assist in the performance of socio-adaptive behaviors and socio-cognitive remedial software for people with ASD in college; http://phoenix.inria.fr/research-projects/school) will demonstrate the MENESR's commitment to developing psychoeducational resources accessible to students with disabilities.

The enhancement of the EDUSCOL portal, which provides teachers with pedagogical resources for preparing accessible teaching sequences, is underway, even though there is still a long way to go, especially for the 2nd degree. The *Canal autisme* website designed for teachers, parents and professionals receives new training courses every year.

Finally, for higher education, inter-university conferences and the 2012 *Charte Université-Handicap*[25] are promising measures for social progress with respect to access to higher certification levels for youth with disabilities: coaching services, accessibility, and vocational insertion assistance have now been identified, and doctoral allowances have been earmarked to entice students with disabilities to take on university trades.

Country-Specific Resources and Reports

1. MENESR website: http://www.education.gouv.fr/

   MENESR Guide for parents and professionals: http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/Maternelle_baccalaureat/65/9/Guide_pour_la_scolarisation_des_enfants_et_adolescents_en_situation_de_handicap_469659.pdf;

   MENESR Report on Inclusive School: http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/12_Decembre/11/7/ecole_inclusive_dossier_complet_376117.pdf;

[25] University-Disability Charter

Disability Report: http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/2012/95/7/2012-100_-_rapport_handicap_226957.pdf

2. Website of France's national institute for statistics: http://www.insee.fr/
3. "Handicap & University" public website: https://www.sup.adc.education.fr/handiu_stat/
4. Public Digital resources for education; EDUSCOL website: http://eduscol.education.fr/pid25584/les-eleves-en-situation-de-handicap-ou-malades.html
5. OECD report: http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/pisainfocus/48572011.pdf
6. Aide Handicap & École (free public support service for persons with disabilities living in France); email: aidehandicapecole@education.gouv.fr or toll-free number: 0810 55 55 00