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# Good Practices in Social Security

Good practice in operation since: 2016

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## **Occupational integration nurseries**

**National Family Allowances Fund**  
France

## **Summary**

*Occupational integration (à vocation d'insertion professionnelle – AVIP) nurseries allow jobseeker parents to benefit from childcare and specific support with a view to their long-term integration into the labour market. This scheme promotes equality between women and men and makes it easier for single women with children to get jobs.*

*These AVIP nurseries bring families together with employment promotion organisations and offer personalized support for occupational integration.*

*They are committed to:*

- *adapting their childcare to the needs of parents enrolled on a back-to-work programme (emergency childcare or care at unusual times, etc.);*
- *making the childcare solution permanent if parents find a job after six months;*
- *looking after at least 20 per cent of children whose parents are looking for work;*
- *implementing personalized social support linked to the back-to-work programme.*

*The evaluation of the first AVIP nurseries shows that 90 per cent of parents of young children supported have found a job within five months.*

## **The issue or challenge**

*What was the issue or challenge addressed by your good practice? Please provide a short description.*

Work-life balance is often very difficult for single-parent families and this is an obstacle to the vocational rehabilitation of isolated parents. Having somewhere to leave children during a training course, a job interview or a meeting with an employment specialist is the main family restriction to be overcome in the jobseeking process.

Nowadays, many parents of young children looking for jobs are penalized in the process of seeking employment because of the lack of satisfactory childcare. Childcare, particularly for isolated mothers, is a great obstacle to returning to work.

According to the latest survey of beneficiaries of income support, 80 per cent of mothers of children aged under three mention “childcare to explain their absence from the job-seeking process compared with 41 per cent for the mothers of children aged between six and 11”.

Forty-eight per cent of jobless mothers of children aged under three looking for work indicate that they are restricted in their jobseeking activities because of a childcare problem (compared with 29 per cent of those whose youngest child is aged between six and 11).

## **Addressing the challenge**

*What were the main objectives of the plan or strategy to resolve the issue or challenge? List and briefly describe the main elements of the plan or*

*strategy, focusing especially on their innovative feature(s) and expected or intended effects.*

The development of childcare solutions to help parents keep their jobs or go back to work is an important area where the family branch of the social security system (National Family Allowances Fund (*Caisse nationale des allocations familiales* – CNAF) and Family Allowance Funds (*caisses d’allocations familiales* – CAFs)) is involved in partnership with the employment services (Employment Unit) in order to:

- create the conditions to make it easier for parents who have interrupted their employment to take care of their young child to return to work;
- encourage parents of children aged under three to return to work by mobilizing tailored childcare solutions for people involved in an occupational integration process or jobseekers looking for occasional childcare.

In this context, the CNAF has signed a charter with the State and the Employment Unit to support the development of “occupational integration nurseries” (AVIP nurseries).

AVIP nurseries allow jobseeker parents to benefit from intensive social and professional support with a view to long-term integration in the labour market. This system contributes to the development of equality between women and men by promoting employment for women, particularly when they are the heads of single-parent families and in a situation of economic and social vulnerability.

In accordance with this charter, the AVIP nurseries:

- provide care for at least 20 per cent of children aged under three whose parents are looking for work;
- adapt their operation to the needs of families experiencing long-term unemployment: childcare extended to ten hours a day compared with eight at other nurseries and personalized support for parents. This generates additional costs for AVIP nurseries;
- allow the parents concerned to benefit from intensive social and professional support with a view to their long-term integration in the labour market and form part of the overall support provided by the Employment Unit in association with all social agents.

AVIP nurseries offer the beneficiary parents a personalized back-to-work support plan consisting of actions such as: putting them in contact with employers; looking through advertisements; helping them draw up a curriculum vitae; looking for temporary work; casual work, etc.

The parents benefiting from this scheme must sign a three-month contract, with the option to renew it once, committing them to take part in integration processes to look for a job or take a training course. After six months, if the parents have found a job, the childcare place becomes permanent; regular interviews, which can be as often as twice a week, are established to monitor the jobseeking process and adapt the childcare to any new job or working hours.

A place at the AVIP nursery results in an additional average cost of 5,038 euros (EUR) per place per year (about EUR 420 per month) compared to other childcare in the same towns and villages. This extra cost is due to the longer childcare hours for the jobseekers (the difference between an ordinary nursery opening for an average of 10.4 hours and an AVIP nursery opening for 12 hours) and operating costs linked to the childcare and the support for the jobseeker parents at the nursery premises. AVIP nurseries therefore need to hire an additional 1.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff compared to normal nurseries.

More time is also required for regular meetings to discuss the progress of the jobseeker parent's occupational integration plans and coordination updates and meetings with the project partners involved in supporting the jobseeker in returning to work.

## **Targets to be achieved**

*What were the quantitative and/or qualitative targets or key performance indicators that were set for the plan or strategy? Please describe briefly.*

The AVIP nursery scheme, set up in 2016, is gradually growing: 45 AVIP nurseries were counted in 15 states (*départements*) in 2017.

The CNAF and Employment Unit want to develop 300 AVIP nurseries in the country (which means 1,300 AVIP nursery places) by 2020.

The objectives established for this system are to improve the employment rate of parents of young children who have access to this scheme, promote the access of vulnerable people to childcare, and fight child poverty.

## **Evaluating the results**

*Has there been an evaluation of the good practice? Please provide data on the impact and outcomes of the good practice by comparing targets vs actual performance, before-and-after indicators, and/or other types of statistics or measurements.*

The evaluation of the first AVIP nurseries shows that 90 per cent of parents of young children supported in the AVIP system have found a job before the end of their second support contract.

These supported parents have been looking for a job for at least six months. They are often in a situation of isolation (about 30 per cent of them are single-parent families and 99 per cent of them women) and they have poor qualifications.

In a sample *département*, in 2017, the 11 AVIP nurseries helped 495 families, 136 of which were supported by a professional integration organisation. The analysis of the provisional results<sup>1</sup> shows that 99 per cent of parents of young children supported have found a job within five months.

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<sup>1</sup> Further monitoring of the supported parents looking to get back to work as part of the AVIP scheme is in progress.

## Lessons learned

*Based on the organization's experience, name up to three factors which you consider as indispensable to replicate this good practice. Name up to three risks that arose/could arise in implementing this good practice. Please explain these factors and/or risks briefly.*

Three essential factors for replicating this good practice are:

- a national dynamic (support for project leaders, networking, communication strategy, etc.) allowing deployment in the regions where the most important needs are diagnosed;
- financial resources, because supporting parents involves an additional cost;
- project leaders recruited with experience in caring for young children and providing social support.

Three risks that have arisen or might arise:

- isolated initiatives are not linked together and do not allow an exchange of good practices;
- a lack of financial resources;
- the project is judged too restrictive by the managers of establishments providing childcare for young children, notably because of the 12-hour opening period and the obligation to reserve 30 per cent of available places for jobseeking parents.