

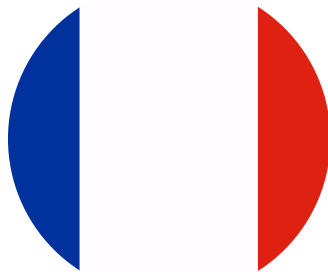


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WOMEN SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

COUNTRY REPORT

FRANCE





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68.04 mil

Population

24%

Females' with tertiary education level

51.61%

Share of females

7.10%

Females' unemployment rate

9%

Females' with low education level

1.9%

Females' long-term unemployment rate

Development of social enterprises

In France, the concept of social and solidarity economy (SSE) is used to describe social entrepreneurship. It is regulated by the Law in France (Law No. 2014-856 of 31 July 2014), which establishes a comprehensive regulatory framework to support traditional SSE organisations and new social enterprises. The law defines the principles, scope and conditions required to claim membership of the SSE. In France, social enterprises take the form of cooperatives, mutual societies, associations, or foundations and various forms of commercial companies (subject to specific criteria), whose internal functioning and activities are based on a principle of solidarity and social utility.

The main economic sectors for social enterprises

Social work (specialised educator, social worker, vocational counsellor, etc.), education and training (e.g. teacher in an association school, trainer), health (e.g. nurse in an EPHAD, care assistant in a mutualist centre), financial and insurance activities (insurance advisor, customer manager, etc.).

The main economic sectors for social enterprises

SSE is actively engaged in addressing various social issues. The most popular are inclusion of people with disabilities and environmental issues.

Ecosystem – women in social entrepreneurship

There is no clear data on the size of the social and solidarity economy, nor is there data on how many enterprises are led by women in France.

However, it is worth noting that more than 68% of employees within the SSE are women. In certain regions of France attempts have been made to estimate the participation of women in the SSE. According to the “Professional equality between women and men in the SSE of the Midi-Pyrénées” report compiled by the local Regional Chamber of the Social and Solidarity Economy, only 31% of women occupy the position of CEO within the region's social entrepreneurship, compared to 69% occupied by men.

According to the INSEE data from 2018, the SSE in France accounted for 9.6% of total full-time equivalent salaried employment – 75% were employed by association; 14% by cooperatives, 6% by mutual companies and 4% by foundations.

Key findings on women social entrepreneurship

Women's participation in the SSE is increasing, but they still face unique challenges and barriers. The “CSESS Report on Gender Equality in the SSE” confirms that although the sector is female dominated (68% of employees), this does not imply to actual gender equality. Although women dominate in terms of numbers in certain sectors such as care professions (e.g., homecare assistants (99% of total), care assistants (90%), nurses (88%)) and education (69%), as well as banking and insurance (62), they tend to be underrepresented in positions of responsibility. This gender imbalance is influenced by traditional gender roles and expectations, which limit women's career choices and contribute to gender inequalities in the workforce.



“
**WOMEN'S SOCIAL
 ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONTRIBUTES TO
 VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SOCIETY,
 INCLUDING THE ECONOMY, SOCIAL
 AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN
 FRANCE**
 ”

Key obstacles

- Gender bias and stereotypes hinder females in France from pursuing roles in social enterprise, specifically in management roles.
- Female entrepreneurs often face difficulties in accessing financial resources to start and scale their social enterprises (first funding to start), specifically those who are coming from less privileged educational backgrounds.
- There is an absence of suitable networks (females often have to rely on themselves) and there is little to no environments which drive empowerment of women in social entrepreneurship.
- The lack of knowledge on the founding and developing social enterprises – business planning, marketing and financial literacy.
- Psychological factors such as a lack of leadership skills, lack of confidence, and fear of failure make it more difficult to launch a SE. There is a need for soft skills training.
- Unlocking women's potential
- Women entrepreneurs consider "best presenting themselves" as an indispensable skill for setting up their businesses and feel the need to be trained in the development of their personal brand.
- Schools do not actively teach or provide training on entrepreneurship.

- Women may struggle to achieve work-life balance due to personal responsibilities and societal expectations, such as caregiving and family obligations.

Key knowledge and skills need

Interviewed experts stressed that there are no skills or knowledge specific only for women (no gender-specifics). Key topics were highlighted:

- Financial education
- Leadership
- Ability to unify
- Ability to make decisions
- Stress management
- Risk management
- Self – awareness
- Project- awareness
- Speeches and Communication skills
- Self-development

Drivers and opportunities

According to interviewed experts, the SSE is a way for empowerment and freedom, which helps women to highlight their soft skills, gain financial autonomy and manage their schedule freely. Women mainly gravitate towards social entrepreneurship because they have a collective subconscious geared towards care.

For social entrepreneurship in France, there are various support and skills/competencies development opportunities dedicated to women's entrepreneurship in general or SSE sector in general (loans, fundraising, incubators, networking opportunities, mentoring initiatives, etc (see more information below).



Policy recommendation to empower women

To simplify the access to the relevant information through a unique offer (a one-stop shop for information with centralised and easily accessible resources and database of all the fundings suitable for social enterprises). There is also a need to tackle the issue of complex administrative structures (“un millefeuille administratif”),

which creates barriers and discourages individuals from engaging in certain activities or initiatives.

Additionally, improvements should focus on considering the unique challenges faced by women in entrepreneurship, in particular the combination of professional and family responsibilities.

POLICY MAKERS AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

- [Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty](#)
- [Ministry for Equality between Women and Men, Diversity and Equal Opportunities](#)
- [BPI France](#)
- [Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#)
- [Network of Territorial Authorities for a Solidarity Economy](#)

ORGANISATIONS AND NETWORKS REPRESENTING SE SECTOR

- [MOUVES – Movement of Social Entrepreneurs](#)
- [BGE](#) - entrepreneurial network
- [France Initiative](#)
- [Le Labo \(association\)](#) – brings together diverse stakeholders to build and disseminate innovative work on the SSE

KEY FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

- [Aides-entreprises](#)
- [EGALITÉ women's guarantee \(ex EGIF\)](#)
- [The Honour Loan \(Le prêt d'honneur\) by Initiative France](#)
- [France Active](#)
- [Wom'energy, the women's entrepreneurship program](#)
- [SISTA Fund](#)
- [Ashoka France - SE accelerator programme](#)

DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE & MENTORING

- [Willa](#) – Start-up incubator for women entrepreneurs
- [Bouge ta Boite](#) – female entrepreneurial network
- [Force Femmes](#) – free of charge helps unemployed women 45+ to construct business idea or develop professional competences
- [Les Audacieuses](#)
- [Les premières](#)
- [Willa](#) – includes experts available for mentoring
- [Les Premières](#) – helps with development of innovative enterprises
- [Alter'Incub](#) – supporting the project in all its phases

FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS

- [SSE economic model \(Modèle économique des ESS\) – a guide for entrepreneurs in the SSE](#)
- [Micro-social regime](#)
- [Actual news on the fiscal characteristics of personal services](#)

OTHER

- [Bouge ta Boite](#) – networking events for over 1,800 women members and 115 local clubs of various sectors
- [EmpowerHer](#)
- [ENACTUS](#) - helps students, teachers and professionals to develop their transversal skills
- [Entreprendre au féminin](#)
- [Féminin Entreprendre \(business network\)](#)
- [Femmes Cheffes d'entreprises \(Women Business Leaders\)](#)
- [Femmes Entrepreneures \(national network\)](#) – organises events for women entrepreneurs to build their business projects
- [Make sense](#) – global community of social entrepreneurs to solve social and environmental challenges
- [PEPITE](#) - students' entrepreneurship
- [PWN Paris](#) - provides training and mentoring programmes for women entrepreneurs
- [Réseau Entreprendre \(Wom'Energy – entrepreneurship network\)](#)
- [The WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMIT](#) - annual summit dedicated to women's entrepreneurship

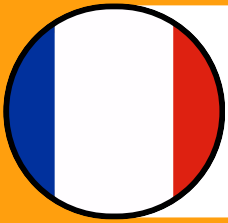
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- CRESS (2013), [L'égalité professionnelle Femmes-Hommes dans l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire en Midi-Pyrénées](#)
- CSESS (2022), [2021-2024 CSESS report on gender equality in the SSE](#)
- European Commission (2020), Social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe – France, Authors: Petrella, F., Richez-Battesi, N.
- Eurostat (2022, 2023)a
- INSEE (2018), [Social and Solidarity economy in France](#)
- OECD/European Union (2017), Boosting Social Enterprise Development Good Practice Compendium, Chapter 7 - [The Law on the Social and Solidarity Economy \(SSE\), France](#)
- The [Euclid Network](#) Knowledge Centre, [Ecosystem mapping: Country factsheet, France](#)
- U.POWER Country Report of France (analysis of data and expert interviews) by Tandem Plus



SUCCESS STORIES





FRANCE

Bloom Success Story



AURÉLIE DUFLLOT (FOUNDER)

Sector: Business Service

[facebook.com/BLOOMCoworkingValenciennes](https://www.facebook.com/BLOOMCoworkingValenciennes)

<https://bloomcoworking.fr>

LESSONS LEARNED AND TIPS

"It is very important to develop networking in order to gain new skills and to have the best training to know how to sell a product and how to access finance."

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)

N/A



INTRODUCTION TO THE CEO

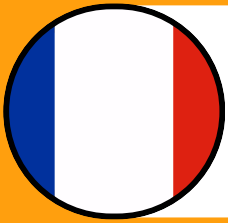
Aurélie Duflot was a student in the ICN Business School in Nancy. She has a background in department and customer management and merchandising gaining her experience while working in retail.

THE MAIN AIM

- Help companies to grow their business through networking opportunities
- Reduce the problem of isolation among entrepreneurs
- Propose resources such as training, and a base location, and provide advice for entrepreneurs
- Support new entrepreneurs who want to launch a company by providing low cost office space, flexibility, proximity to clients or customers, and many additional services.

QUOTATION FROM THE CEO

"THERE ARE DIFFERENCES WHICH CREATES WEALTH."



FRANCE

Holiway Success Story



LUCILE VIOLET (CEO)

Sector: Sustainable Living

[facebook.com/holiway_green](https://www.facebook.com/holiway_green)

<https://holiway.green>

LESSONS LEARNED AND TIPS

“Integrating an incubator into your action plan is mandatory especially if you are alone and/or if it is your first company.”

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)

N/A



INTRODUCTION TO THE CEO

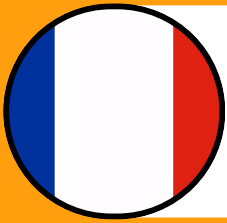
Lucile Violet has over 20 years of travel industry experience working in major international companies such as TUI Group, and Thomas Cook Group. It was this experience that gave her the idea to launch HOLIWAY. With the current issues linked to global warming, it seemed obvious to rethink the consumption model on a daily basis as well as when travelling. So the idea came to create a fun program that would allow everyone to act and consume better, according to their convictions... to become an eco-imperfect!

THE MAIN AIM

Lucille knew that our society of overconsumption is not compatible with a sustainable world for tomorrow. However, it is important to recognise and promote eco-responsible actions and purchases because they have an impact today. However, the path towards more eco-responsibility is complicated to follow. So, instead of rewarding by encouraging you to consume more, they offer you leisure experiences that you will remember!

QUOTATION FROM THE CEO

“THERE IS A TIME TO SUCCEED IN LIFE AND A TIME TO SUCCEED IN YOUR LIFE”



FRANCE

Lilaea Success Story



ANNE GASPAR (CEO)

Sector: Environment

facebook.com/lilaea.sas
www.lilaea.net

LESSONS LEARNED AND TIPS

“Never give up, even if you think you are alone, it is not true, look around and you will meet people who trust you and will be caring. Choosing these people well will be the key to success. Building a network is more important than anything else, including finances.”

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)

In 2 years, 250 people have participated in trainings – 85% of them are women. 75-80 women have gone through practical training, many of them became amateur producers. 8 of them are part of BeeLife’s honey producers’ network, collaborating closely with the social enterprise. Beekeeping was considered a dying profession, many old beekeepers. Now, a younger generation is doing it, and more women are involved.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CEO

Anne Gaspar has been a volunteer for several years in an organisation that is committed to democratising science, in priority districts, for a young public that is often discouraged. Being always appalled by the consumer society that no longer knows how to look around and see nature, She worked to find a technological solution that could preserve the environment. While working on it, people told her that it was not worth the effort. Which is why she committed herself to develop this solution.

THE MAIN AIM O

Democratise and popularise the monitoring of freshwater quality, the understanding and the preservation of our environment through public awareness, creation of playful games or innovations with production of technological solutions to measure. Additionally, they are

working with local suppliers, creating content to raise awareness about the actions of the territory, setting up partnerships with nearby schools to create cohesion, and bringing together multidisciplinary actors who are not used to working together.

QUOTATION FROM THE CEO

“FROM MY VALUES, SHARED WITH MY CO-FOUNDER, WE WANTED TO SHOW THAT PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT CAN BE DONE BY EVERYDAY GESTURES AND THAT IT IS ALL TOGETHER THAT WE CAN ACHIEVE THIS.”

UPower

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