In 2021, the number of assisted contracts rebounded slightly

In 2021 the number of beneficiaries of assisted contracts (excluding sandwich contracts) rebounded slightly after five consecutive years of sharp decline. These contracts are intended for a public who are furthest from the labour market and they are mainly filled in the non-market sector. There was only a limited number of these contracts in 2021 and they therefore had little effect on payroll employment during the crisis, as employment support measures were mainly applied through other channels (e.g. massive take-up of short-time working and the growth of sandwich contracts for young people).

The number of beneficiaries of assisted contracts (excluding sandwich contracts) rebounded slightly in 2021 after five consecutive years of decline

Assisted contracts reduce the cost of hiring and training certain employees, by providing direct or indirect aid. These assisted jobs usually target specific groups, those who are furthest from the labour market, with the aim of helping them enter this market or return to work. The number of assisted contracts is determined by the public authorities: they are often used for counter-cyclical purposes, with an increase in their number usually intended to lessen the effect on total employment of a slowdown in activity.

Assisted contracts, excluding sandwich contracts, apply for the most part to the non-market sector, with employers in the public sphere (State, territorial authorities, hospitals) and the private sector (associations). Non-market is defined here as any activity provided free of charge or at prices that are not economically significant, namely: the public administration sector, education, health and social action and the so-called "other service activities" sector (especially associative activities and arts and entertainment).[1] In the last ten years, the non-market sector has had three main types of assisted contract at its disposal: the single integration contract in the non-market sector (CUI-CAE), which was the one used most until 2017, when it was replaced by the "employment skills programmes" (PEC) from January 2018 (► **Focus** "Assisted contracts in 2018" *Conjoncture in France* March 2019); in parallel, Future Contracts in the non-market sector (EAV-NM) were introduced from 2012, aimed at young people with few qualifications and on longer-term contracts. No new Future Contracts have been possible since 2018.

The number of beneficiaries of assisted contracts has decreased since 2016, falling sharply since 2017, in the context of an improved economic outlook, until the health crisis emerged (► **Figure 1**). Their number declined from 436,000 beneficiaries at the end of 2015 (of which 336,000 were in the non-market sector) to 69,000 beneficiaries at the end of 2020 (of which 65,000 were in the non-market sector). The stock of assisted contracts thus decreased more than five-fold in the non-market sector between 2015 and 2020 and has virtually disappeared from the market sector.

1 When we talk about assisted contracts, the "non-market sector" means all host bodies such as local municipalities, the State, associations, etc. that do not sell their products and are funded mainly by compulsory levies or subsidies. This definition goes slightly beyond the usual strict grouping of "Tertiary mainly non-market" in the French classification of activities (NAF) which covers only public administration, education, health and social action.

► 1. Stock of assisted contracts at the end of the year

raw data in thousands

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	**286**	**267**	**250**	**350**	**374**	**436**	**400**	**260**	**139**	**88**	**69**	**144**
Variation		*–19*	*–17*	*99*	*25*	*62*	*–36*	*–140*	*–121*	*–51*	*–19*	*75*
Non-market	**231**	**220**	**218**	**300**	**314**	**336**	**328**	**227**	**128**	**84**	**65**	**85**
Future Contract	0	0	1	60	91	98	77	46	18	5	0	0
CUI-CAE	231	220	217	241	223	238	251	181	6	0	0	0
PEC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	104	79	65	85
Market	**55**	**47**	**32**	**49**	**60**	**100**	**72**	**33**	**11**	**5**	**4**	**59**
Future Contract	0	0	0	12	24	31	28	16	7	1	0	0
CUI-CIE	55	47	32	37	36	69	44	17	5	4	4	59

Scope: All of France
Source: DARES, Agence de services et de paiement (ASP)

Nevertheless, in 2021, the number of beneficiaries of assisted contracts bounced back, increasing for the first time since 2015: +75,000 between the end of 2020 and the end of 2021, of which +20,000 were non-market and +55,000 were market (► **Figure 1**). This rebound was part of the "1 young person, 1 solution" plan, introduced in July 2020 to support employment in the context of the health crisis. At the end of 2021, however, the number of beneficiaries of assisted contracts was still three times less than at the end of 2015.

Since the start of the health crisis, assisted contracts have been few in number, with little effect on the impetus of employment

In the context of the health crisis, total payroll employment fell substantially in 2020 (–1.2% or –317,000 jobs between late 2019 and late 2020). Nevertheless, this fall mainly concerned the tertiary market sector as over the same period, payroll employment increased in the non-market tertiary (public administration, education, health and social action): +0.7% or +55,000 jobs. This increase was mainly due to public employment (+43,000 against +12,000 in the private sector).

Private payroll employment in the so-called "other service activities" sector (including associative activities and the arts and entertainment) fell more sharply and more permanently during the crisis (–69,000 between the end of 2019 and the end of 2020), only getting back to its pre-crisis level in summer 2021.

All in all in 2020 and 2021, the change in the number of assisted contracts was secondary given the magnitude of the changes in total employment. Given the unprecedented context of the health crisis, employment support measures were mainly directed through other channels, especially the massive take-up of short-time working, then the increase in sandwich contracts for young people (► **Focus** on sandwich contracts). ●

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