



Federation of European Accountants
Fédération des Experts comptables Européens

FEE Qualification and Market Access Working Party

Structure and Organisation of the Accountancy Profession

Key features

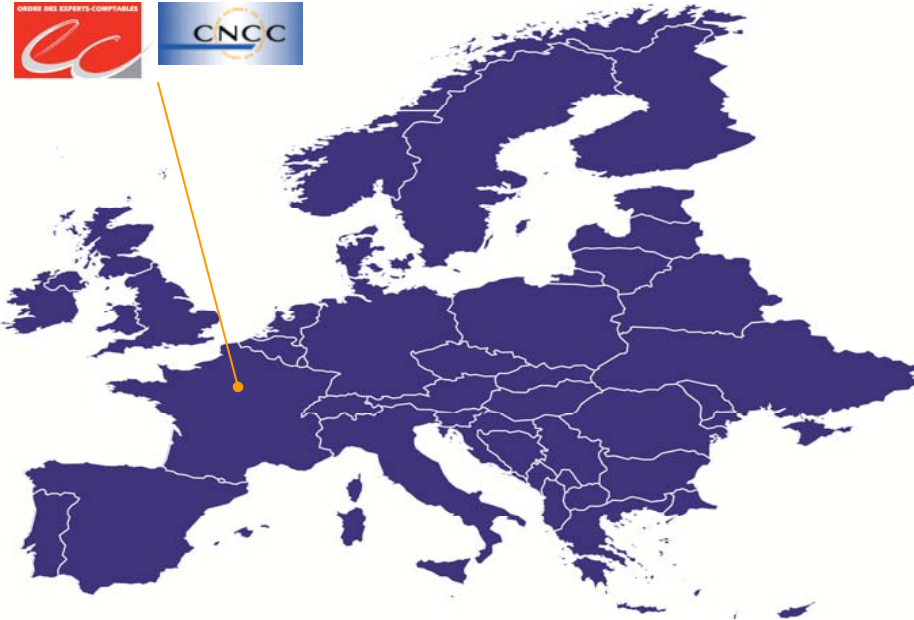
France

Status: January 2012

Contact persons: Hélène Michelin, OEC, e-mail: hmichelin@cs.experts-comptables.org

Jean-Luc Doyle, CNCC, e-mail: jldoyle@dipacint.com

France



Flag :



Population:

approx. 65,000,000

Capital:

Paris

Language :

French

In the EU since: Founder

| Professions | Expert-comptable Professional Accountant | Commissaire aux comptes Statutory Auditor |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Protected title | <p>Yes.</p> <p>Delivered after registration on the professionals list “Tableau de l’Ordre des experts-comptables” drawn up by each Regional Council of the Ordre des Experts-comptables.</p> | <p>Yes .</p> <p>Delivered after registration on the professionals list drawn up by the Court of Appeal for each administrative region.</p> |
| Reserved activities | <p>Contractual audits, reviews and compilation of financial statements; accountancy services to business enterprises.</p> | <p>Statutory audit leading to the expression of an audit opinion and specific verifications; additional tasks related to the overall mission.</p> |
| Included authorisations | <p>Tax, social, financial and legal advices when they are retained as accounting advisers to a client. Since a short time, they are authorised to provide assistance to individuals.</p> | <p>Related assignments stated in specific laws.</p> |

| | Expert-comptable Professional Accountant | Commissaire aux comptes Statutory Auditor |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Regulated profession | Yes | Yes |
| Supervision | Yes | Yes |
| Competent authority | <p>Two competent authorities :</p> <p>The Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry: www.finances.gouv.fr</p> <p>and</p> <p>The Ministry of Budget : www.bercy.gouv.fr</p> | <p>Competent authority :</p> <p>The Ministry of Justice www.justice.gouv.fr</p> <p>And an oversight authority :</p> <p>The Haut Conseil du Commissariat aux Comptes (H3C) set by the Ministry of Justice</p> |

| | Expert-comptable Professional Accountant | Commissaire aux comptes Statutory Auditor |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| No. of qualified professionals | Approximative amount 19 230 | Approximative amount 14 500 |
| No. of new trainees per year | Approximatively 1 700 | Approximatively 130 (for the specific route to become a commissaire aux comptes; the main route is the expertise comptable one) |

| | Expert-comptable Professional Accountant | Commissaire aux comptes Statutory Auditor |
|--|--|---|
| General initial education steps (without possible exemptions) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ University degree (master, 5 years): Diplôme supérieur de comptabilité et de gestion (DSCG); ➤ 3 years practical training organised and controlled by the profession; ➤ Diploma of Expertise Comptable (DEC) delivered by the Ministry of Higher Education: final examination (2 written tests in audit and ethics, and a thesis). | <p>Main route : Diploma of Expertise Comptable (DEC).</p> <p>Full reciprocity if 2/3 of the 3 years practical training has been realized in an accounting <u>and</u> auditing firm with a statutory auditor (Audit Directive).</p> <p>Specific route : Certificat d'aptitude aux fonctions de commissaire aux comptes (being modernised).</p> <p>Mastered by the Ministry of Justice.</p> <p>Equivalent to the DSCG + 3 years practical training.</p> |

Market access resident professionals

| | Expert-comptable | Commissaire aux comptes |
|---|--|---|
| Registration required | Yes | Yes |
| Competent authority for registration | OEC, Regional Councils | Courts of Appeal |
| Cost of appointment/ registration | Membership annual dues includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a national amount: 2010-2011: 672 € including professional and liability insurance; ➤ + a regional amount fixed by the Regional Council; ➤ + social contribution. | Same approach : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a national amount : 2010-2011 : 405 € |
| Oath required | Yes | Yes |
| Insurance required | Yes (insurance group contracted at a national level) | Yes (insurance group contracted at a national level) |
| Professional address required | Yes | Yes |

Professionals from other EU Member States

Temporary provision of non-audit services*

| | |
|--|---|
| Pro-forma declaration | Yes, written declaration, to be renewed each year. |
| Requested data | Yes, legal texts : amended Ordinance of 1945; specific decrees (1996 and 2009) |
| Requested documents | <p>Yes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Document attesting conditions of nationality, personal situation and personal residence; -Document attesting that this person is regularly established and registered as a professional accountant in public practice and is not subject to any disciplinary measures including provisional suspensions; -A proof of professional qualification; -When “expertise comptable” (accountancy services) is not a regulated activity in the country of origin, a proof by any means of having been in public practice for at least 2 years on a total of 10 years; -Any demand should be addressed in written form by registered mail or by electronic means to the CSOEC (see below). |
| Competent authority | Conseil Supérieur de l’Ordre des Experts-Comptables (CSOEC) |
| Factual checks | No, except in case of difficulties or complains of the public. |
| Standard form | No |
| Compliance with host Member State rules | Yes: insurance, disciplinary and professional ethics rules. |

* Not relevant for statutory auditors

Market access

professionals from other EU Member States

Establishment of Statutory Auditors

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Required procedure | Yes, admittance to the aptitude test, registration, oath |
| Infrastructure | Not required |
| Professional address | Yes, in France |
| Competent authority | Ministry of Justice and Courts of Appeal |

Aptitude test

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Competent authority | Ministry of Justice |
| Frequency | Once a year |
| Form | Written and oral exam |
| Main Subjects | Legal environment: company law, civil law, tax, commercial and social security law and judicial organization in France |
| Language | French |
| Repetition | Unlimited |
| Statistics | Not significant, very few applicants |

Market access

professionals from other EU Member States

Establishment of accountants not providing statutory audit

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Compensation measure | Yes, written and oral aptitude test |
| Competent authority | CSOEC and Ministry of Higher Education (for the aptitude test) |
| Procedure | Application form, aptitude test, registration, oath |

Market access

professionals from Third Countries

Temporary provision of non-audit services*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pro-forma declaration | Yes, written declaration, to be renewed each year |
| Requested data | Yes, legal texts : amended Ordinance of 1945 establishing the profession of expert-comptable, article 26.1 + specific decree (8 September 2009) |
| Requested documents | Yes |
| Competent authority | Conseil supérieur de l'Ordre des experts-comptables (CSOEC) |
| Factual checks | No, except in case of difficulties or complains of the public |
| Standard form | No |
| Compliance with host country rules | Yes: insurance, disciplinary and professional ethics rules |

* Not relevant for statutory auditors

Market access

professionals from Third Countries

Establishment of Statutory Auditors

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Required procedure | Yes, admittance to the aptitude test, registration, oath |
| Infrastructure | Not required |
| Professional address | Yes, in France |
| Competent authority | Ministry of Justice and Courts of Appeal (for registration) |

| Aptitude test | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Competent authority | Ministry of Justice |
| Frequency | Once a year |
| Form | Written and oral exam |
| Main Subjects | Legal environment: company law, civil law, tax, commercial and social security law and judicial organization in France |
| Language | French |
| Repetition | Unlimited |
| Statistics | Not significant |

Market access *professionals from Third Countries*

Establishment of accountants not providing statutory audit

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Compensation measure | Yes, written and oral aptitude test (same approach as for the EU professionals) |
| Competent authority | CSOEC, Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Procedure | Application form, aptitude test, registration, oath (same procedure as for EU professionals) |

| | Expert-comptable | Commissaire aux comptes |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Professional bodies | <p>Ordre des Experts-comptables (OEC)</p> <p>-One national institute (CSOEC)</p> <p>19 rue Cognacq-Jay</p> <p>75007 Paris</p> <p>-23 regional institutes (CROEC)</p> <p>www.experts-comptables.fr</p> | <p>Compagnie des Commissaires aux comptes - One national institute</p> <p>(CNCC)</p> <p>16 avenue de Messine</p> <p>75008 Paris</p> <p>-33 regional institutes (CRCC)</p> <p>www.cncc.fr</p> |

| | CNCC | OEC |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Membership | Yes, mandatory | Yes, mandatory |
| No. of members | 14 500 | 19 500 |
| Institute staff | National Institute (60 pers.) | National Institute (120 pers.) |
| Date of establishment | 1966 | 1945 |
| Local branches | Yes, 33 Compagnies régionales des commissaires aux comptes (CRCC) | Yes, 23 Conseils régionaux de l'Ordre des Experts-comptables (CROEC) |
| Subject to public oversight | Yes | No |
| Oversight authority | Yes : H3C (see slide 4) | No |

| Involvement in Qualification and Market Access | CNCC | OEC |
|--|---|---|
| Initial education | Yes (practical training and final examination) | Yes (master degree DSCG, practical training, final examination) |
| Examination | Yes | Yes |
| Approval and registration | Yes | Yes |
| Continued Professional Development | Yes, legal base (legal text : departmental order, 30 Dec. 2008) | Yes, legal base (Code of Ethics published by decree, 27 Sept. 2007) |

| Activities | CNCC | OEC |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Standard setting | Yes, under the oversight of the H3C | Yes, under the supervision of the Ministry of Budget |
| Quality assurance | No, but H3C delegates some tasks to CNCC | Yes |
| Disciplinary measures | No, separate body | Yes, at a regional and national levels; in both case, court chaired by a judge |
| Representation of interests | Yes | Yes |