



PARIS (AP) — Marc Winocour and his two sons have enjoyed some success transforming the family farm into a field-to-table company that includes bread ovens, delivery trucks and a boutique. Revenues are climbing more than 50 percent a year.

But even as customer interest grows, adding new employees to their team of 10 is a decision of last resort. For French business owners like them, the financial risk is too great and the government's promises to lighten the highest labor costs in the world and overhaul 3,000 pages of work rules are too remote.

"When we are totally swamped, that is when we start talking about" hiring, said Emile Winocour, the older of the brothers. "Otherwise it's dangerous for the entire business. The (payroll) charges are so high that our income has to already make up for the new position."



Brothers Jules, right and Emile Winocour pose in their bakery in Paris, Thursday, Sept. 11, 2014. Marc Winocour and his two sons Jules and Emile have enjoyed some success transforming the family farm into a field-to-table company that includes bread ovens, delivery trucks and a boutique. Revenues are climbing more than 50 percent a year. But even as customer interest grows, adding new employees to their team of 10 is a decision of last resort. For French business owners like them, the financial risk is too great and the government's promises to lighten the highest labor costs in the world and overhaul 3,000 pages of work rules are too remote. (AP Photo/Christophe Ena)

President Francois Hollande's Socialist government has a plan to lower such payroll charges, cut red tape and make it easier to hire — but only if it can win a confidence vote on Tuesday.

While France has the world's fifth-largest economy, it is seeing no growth and unemployment has been stuck around 10 percent for half a decade. At the cost of fraying the country's social safety net, the government is going for the cuts companies say they need in order to hire.

The reforms championed by Prime Minister Manuel Valls are the kind economists say are necessary across much of Europe, where growth has been disappointing for years and ground to halt in the second quarter of the year. Here's a look at five French businesses and they would be affected.

FROM GRAIN TO JOBS

The Winocours represent the kind of promising small company that the French government wants to thrive, though it sounds strange to call them entrepreneurs.

Their profession — transforming grain into bread — is among the oldest known to man, and their farm has been in the family since 1895. The dawning realization that the Moulin des Moissons farm, a smattering of fields in Grosrouvre 40 kilometers (25 miles) outside Paris, would not be viable much longer pushed them to consider opening a bakery.

"Why don't you bake bread?" Jules asked his father, Marc, 10 years ago. Since then, the family expanded operations. About 20 percent of the grain they grow is now baked into their own bread, sold in grocery stores, restaurants and, since April, an eponymous boutique in northern Paris.

"What gets us up in the morning — and we get up rather early — is our farm," said Emile Winocour, sitting in the basement of the boutique with his family. "There is another satisfaction — being able to create jobs, allowing families to make a living, even on our small scale."

To do that, they say they'll need a drop in payroll charges, which they described as their single largest expense.