

Training & Employment

More skill-demanding jobs, more highly qualified generations:

Towards changing qualification standards

The lengthening of the time spent in initial education and training and the increase in young people's qualification levels, two trends which started in France during the 60s, have been slowing down since the 90s. People in employment continue to be increasingly highly qualified, however, and this trend is moving faster than the increase in the skills associated with occupations. Comparisons between the present situation of seniors and younger employees have shown that from one generation to the next, occupations belonging to equivalent categories, ranging from operatives to engineers, have been taken up by people with higher qualifications than their predecessors. This trend, which has resulted mainly from demographic factors, has been accompanied by great changes in social representations of qualifications and skills, as well as in companies' human resource management practices, which have also had snowball effects on young people's transition to work and their career prospects.

Qualification requirements are sliding upwards

The proportion of those in employment who have obtained at least the baccalauréat (levels I-II, III and IV) has continued to increase since the mid 90s, and this increase was particularly strong between the years 1994 and 2006 (see the inset on page 4). The increase in people's educational levels actually depends on the sector involved (see the table on page 2). It has nevertheless been quite a systematic trend, especially if one compares two successive generations. In 2006, for example, the qualification levels of seniors and youths showed practically opposite patterns. The great majority of those in employment aged 50 years or more were not in possession of the baccalauréat: this was the case of 90% of those in the construction industry, 77% of those in the industrial sector, and 65% of those in the services sector (see the graph on page 2). The situation of those under 30 years of age was more variable. Apart from the construction sector, most of them had obtained at least the baccalauréat: this applied to 57% of those in the industrial sector and 73% of those working in the services sector. In comparison with their elders, far more of them had reached at least baccalauréat level, but many of them had studied for 2 further years after obtaining the baccalauréat and some them for 3 years. The difference between juniors and seniors was particularly conspicuous in the industrial sector, and even more so in the services sector.

The skills associated with occupations obviously differ from one sector to another: there are larger numbers of non-manual workers in the services sector, and larger numbers of operatives in the industrial and construction sectors; supervisory personnel and technicians, along with engineers, executives and the liberal professions predominate in the industrial and services sectors, whereas craftsmen and entrepreneurs feature particularly strongly in the construction sector. From 1994 to 2006, however, there were several common trends. The numbers in the higher categories, consisting of engineers, executives and the liberal professions, and especially the numbers of supervisory personnel and technicians, showed a sharp upward turn. The percentages of skilled operatives and non-manual workers decreased slightly in favour of supervisory personnel and technicians. However, although the numbers of unskilled occupations changed very little in the industrial and construction sectors (where they numbered almost a million in all), they progressed strongly in the services sector, where they increased from 2.6 to 3.8 million.

The qualification levels reached by young people entering the French labour market have increased from one generation to the next. At the same time, occupations are requiring more skills. These two trends are not occurring at the same rate, however, since the former is happening faster than the latter. Occupations are therefore being taken up by people with increasingly high qualifications. This change in qualification standards is mainly due to demographic factors, but it also reflects a complete change in social representations about qualifications and skills. This change has also affected the transition to work and the career prospects of the younger generations.

■ Increasing qualification levels among those in employment in France

(in percentages)

Qualification level of people aged who were working in 2006 in

Industry	Qualification level	50 or more		under 30	
		50 or more	under 30	50 or more	under 30
Industry	I-II	7	14		
	III	6	18		
	IV	10	25		
	V	35	26		
	VI	42	17		

The construction sector	Qualification level	50 or more		under 30		
		50 or more	under 30	50 or more	under 30	
		I-II	3	9		
		III	6	18		
		IV	42	36		
V	48	33				

The services sector	Qualification level	50 or more		under 30		
		50 or more	under 30	50 or more	under 30	
		I-II	13	15		
		III	8	20		
		IV	14	28		
V	25	20				
VI	40	17				

Data source: Insee's 2004 to 2006 «Employment» surveys, not including the public sector. Data processing: Céreq 2008.

From 1994 to 2006, the population in active employment increased in size by 1.3% per year on average; whereas the qualifications and occupational skill levels did not both increase at the same rate. In all the sectors combined, the numbers in active employment holding level I to II qualifications progressed by 5.2% per year on average, whereas the numbers of engineers and members of the liberal professions increased by only 3.2%. Likewise, the numbers of people in active employment with level III and IV qualifications increased by 5%, whereas the numbers of supervisory personnel and technicians increased by only 2.7% per year on average. The numbers of persons in

previously. This increase in the qualification levels has occurred in all occupations and all sectors of activity. If one compares the patterns of distribution of the qualifications held by those in employment in each occupational category with the situation ten years ago, considerable structural differences can be seen to exist in some cases. These differences are particularly striking in the case of the least highly skilled occupational categories.

The structure of qualifications has therefore become top-heavy. Among those with unskilled occupations, for example, the proportions of those with no qualifications (level VI) have greatly decreased in favour of levels V and IV among manual workers and levels IV to III among non-manual workers. Among the skilled manual workers, the numbers in level VI have decreased, whereas those in level V have remained stable and those in level IV are becoming increasingly numerous. Among skilled non-manual workers and supervisory personnel and technicians, levels VI and V are on the decrease in favour of levels IV, III and I to II. There has been only a slight increase during the decade in question in the numbers corresponding to levels I to II among engineers and the liberal professions.

The changing qualification standards

The fact that qualification levels are escalating in all occupational categories can be seen even more clearly if we compare the younger generation with their elders in a given year. As the result of the general trend towards higher educational levels, young people's qualifications are much higher than those of their elders in all the occupational categories investigated. From one generation to another, the same occupations

In active employment • applies to any person with a job

employment with level V qualifications remained stable during this period, as did the numbers of skilled workers. The numbers of those with no qualifications decreased by 1.6%, while the numbers of unskilled workers increased by 2.1% per year on average. Occupations are therefore being taken up by people with higher qualifications than

■ Occupational levels and employees' qualification levels

	Industry		Construction		Services	
	1994	2006	1994	2006	1994	2006
Numbers in employment	4 200 000	4 000 000	1 500 000	1 600 000	10 300 000	13 000 000
Distribution of qualifications (in percentages) depending on the qualification levels involved						
Craftsmen, tradesmen and entrepreneurs	6	5	22	21	10	8
Engineers, executives and the liberal professions	11	15	4	5	14	16
Supervisory personnel and technicians	21	25	11	13	19	22
Skilled non-manual workers*	7	5	6	5	17	13
Skilled manual workers	35	32	44	42	13	12
Unskilled non-manual workers*	3	3	0	0	19	22
Unskilled manual workers	17	15	13	14	7	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Distribution of persons in employment (in percentages) depending on the qualification level						
Levels I-II	7	11	2	3	11	15
Level III	8	12	4	6	11	14
Level IV	10	15	6	12	14	19
Level V	37	34	44	43	29	25
Level VI	38	28	44	36	35	27
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

* based on the definition by G. Burnod and A. Chenu (see the inset on page 4).

Data source: Insee «Employment» surveys, not including the public sector. Data processing: Céreq 2008.

are therefore taken up by people with higher qualification levels, which suggests that qualification standards may be changing. Based on the statistics available, the following statement can be made: qualification standards, defined as the qualification level most frequently corresponding to a given occupational category, are changing in different ways, depending on the occupational category and the sector of activity involved (see the graph opposite).

In the case of engineers, executives and the liberal professions, inter-generation comparisons show that I to II qualification standards have increased. Having qualifications corresponding to at least 3 years' studies after the baccalauréat was already the rule among seniors at this level, but it has now become compulsory for young people in the services sector, and even more so in the industrial sector.

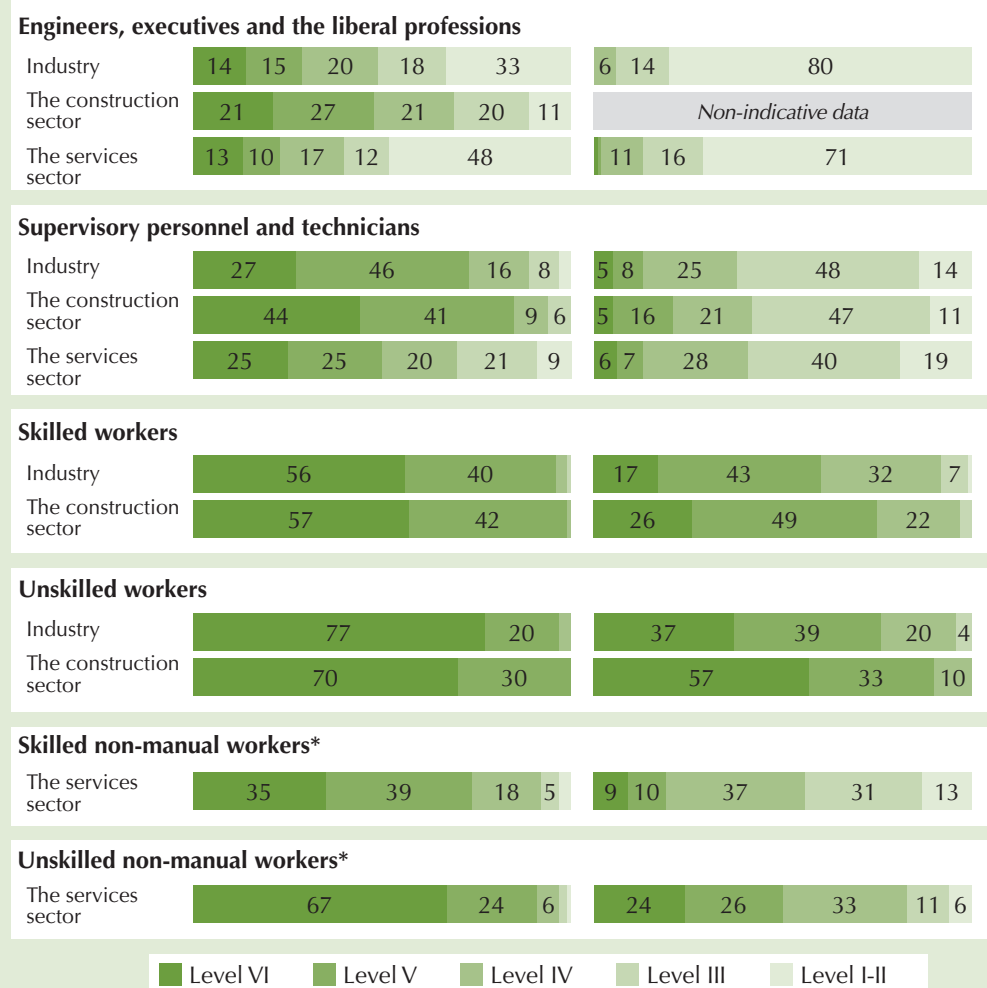
Among supervisory personnel and technicians, qualification standards seem to have undergone something more like a shift. Level VI was previously the standard among seniors in the construction and services sectors, and level V in the industrial sector. The standards have now shifted to level III in the case of young people in all the sectors investigated.

Among non-manual workers in the services sector, qualification standards have also shifted. This change is particularly marked among skilled non-manual workers, since the seniors in this group have only level VI and V qualifications, whereas the younger workers have attained levels IV et III. In the case of unskilled non-manual workers, the shift was from level VI among seniors to level IV among juniors. From one generation to the next, level V has remained fairly stable as far as this group is concerned and the numbers in level VI have decreased, whereas the younger skilled non-manual workers sometimes belong to level III and even levels I to II these days.

On the other hand, qualification standards have undergone a sliding process rather than a shift among manual workers. Inter-generation comparisons on skilled manual workers have shown that a sliding process has occurred from levels VI and V, the levels attained by the seniors, towards the levels V and IV attained by juniors in the construction sector, and especially in the industrial sector. Among non skilled manual workers, the sliding process has differed between the industrial and construction sectors. The standards among those with unskilled occupations in industry have slid from level VI

■ Increasing, shifting and sliding qualification standards (in percentages)

Distribution in 2006 in terms of qualification levels of those aged
50 or more **under 30**



* based on the definition by G. Burnod and A. Chenu (see the inset on page 4).
Data source: Insee «Employment» surveys, not including the public sector. Data processing: Céreq 2008.

in the case of seniors towards VI, V and IV in that of their younger counterparts; whereas in the construction sector, although level VI is still the standard, it is gradually being replaced by level V, and level IV very occasionally occurs among the younger members of this occupational group.

Social representations about qualifications and skills have undergone a complete transformation

Not only the statistics but also social representations about qualifications and skills have changed considerably. The competence management approach has led to greater emphasis being placed on personal criteria such as people's behaviour and their relational skills in addition to the classical occupational criteria (knowledge, skills and experience). Filling vacancies with increasingly high qualifications might reflect the fact that firms need to be reassured about their employees' personal qualities even more than about their occupational abilities.

The fact that the baccalauréat (level IV) is being increasingly required to gain employment as a skilled worker is said for instance by representatives of occupational branches to

The qualification levels defined here correspond to the highest initial qualifications obtained (note that in the French system, the lowest level is level VI and the highest level is level I):

- Levels I to II** • qualifications corresponding to 3 years' studies or more after the baccalauréat
- Level III** • qualifications corresponding to 2 years' studies after the baccalauréat
- Level IV** • baccalauréat or any equivalent qualifications
- Level V** • the CAP or BEP or any equivalent qualifications
- Level VI** • no qualifications other than the CEP, BEPC or junior school certificate

Relationships between training and employment in the various sectors

The article published in this issue of Training and Employment was based on statistics published in the "Portraits statistiques de branche" (Statistical branch portraits) (PSB) database set up by Céreq, using several sources including the INSEE "Employment" survey. The PSB database gives sector-by-sector information about companies, the workforce and human resource management practices in the private sector. It can be consulted via Céreq's website, www.cereq.fr, "Bases de données" (Databases).

For the sake of statistical reliability, the data presented in this issue on the year 2006 were based on those obtained in the 2004 to 2006 "Employment" surveys combined, and those presented for 1994 were based on those obtained in the 1994 to 1996 surveys combined. The qualification levels mentioned correspond to the highest qualifications obtained. The skill levels associated with occupations were assessed on the basis of the French nomenclature of occupations and occupational categories (PCS), in which the distinction is made between skilled and unskilled manual workers but not between skilled and unskilled non-manual workers. In order to make this distinction here, the data were processed using the definition proposed by G. Burnod and A. Chenu, which was based mainly on criteria such as the hourly wage and the age at which people completed their studies (see "Employés qualifiés et non qualifiés: une proposition d'aménagement de la nomenclature des catégories socioprofessionnelles": Skilled and unskilled workers: a proposal for adapting the nomenclature of occupations and socio-economic categories), G. Burnod, A. Chenu, Travail et Emploi, no. 86, April 2001).

is less fierce than in the industrial sector. In the services sector, the large numbers of unskilled occupations which have developed provide potential openings for young people with few qualifications, but these candidates are having to compete with their more highly qualified congeners and with employees of all ages both with and without qualifications.

The fact that youths with increasingly high qualification levels are being recruited for jobs has increased the risk of people's careers being blocked. For this reason, the upward promotions which have been on the increase during the last few years, especially among those in the 30-35 age group, can be taken to have resulted from the fact that young people who were initially declassified have been applying for promotion to occupations more in keeping with their initial training levels. Now the numbers of opportunities for promotion are liable to decrease in the future, especially in the services sector, because of the strong process of polarisation which is expected to occur by the year 2015 between unskilled and highly skilled occupations.

The demographic about-turn should predictably change the deal, however. Between now and 2010-2015, the size of the population is expected to stabilize before actually decreasing, so that the present superabundance of young people leaving the educational system will be followed by a more balanced situation and then by a shortage. Companies making provision for the forthcoming lack of young people with good qualifications will have to devise new human resource management policies in order to attract suitable candidates and keep their staff, which will mean using less selective recruitment methods and introducing better career prospects. Firms revising their strategies on these lines will promote the transition to work of young people on the whole and prevent the enforced mobility imposed on the least well qualified members of this population.

Dominique Fournié
and Christophe Guitton (Céreq)

be justified by the need to engage young people equipped not only with a basic educational background, but also with minimum relational and behavioural skills, although CAP qualifications (level V) would actually suffice to master the technical skills involved in a given industrial occupation.

A different outlook prevails in the construction sector. Since level V continues to be the standard in this sector for recruiting skilled workers and level IV is required only in the case of highly technical occupations and those involving maintenance work, qualification standards have not been snowballing here as greatly as elsewhere. This sector may not have had much choice in the matter, however, since the occupations it includes are not very attractive and this has resulted in chronic recruitment problems. For the same reason, the salary scales in this sector now include several skilled worker levels instead of being based on the traditional two-fold opposition between skilled and unskilled workers. The construction sector is nevertheless the sector in which the largest numbers of youths with VI qualifications are to be found.

The services sector shows a different pattern, which is characterized by the fact that the whole concept of qualifications is rather fuzzy. In this sector, the people in each occupational category, from non-manual workers to managers, have educational qualifications of all possible levels. This great heterogeneity raises the question as to whether there are any qualification standards at all in the tertiary sector. This situation is certainly due to labour market factors, which have weighed even more heavily here than in the industrial sector. The fuzziness observed in the services sector reminds us that one of the specificities of service providers' activities is the fact that the distinction between skilled and unskilled work is not taken into account. This makes it difficult to analyse changes in the relationships between vocational training and employment in terms of existing occupational categories.

Snowball effects on youth employment

Changing relationships between vocational training and employment have affected both the transition to work and the career prospects of young people who have recently completed their initial training. The unemployment rates of youths with few qualifications are as high as 30%, and their transition to work prospects vary from one sector to another. Unskilled jobs are on the decrease in industry, and young people with level VI qualifications are competing strongly with those who have reached levels V and IV for access to unskilled workers' occupations. The situation is more favourable *a priori* in the construction sector, where the numbers of unskilled workers is still increasing slightly, and competition between those in levels V and IV

Further reading

- *Panorama sectoriel de la relation formation-emploi* (A sector-by-sector panorama of training/employment relationships), D. Fournié, Ch. Guitton, *NEF 31*, July 2008.
- "Changer de groupe social en cours de carrière. Davantage de mobilité depuis les années quatre-vingt" (Making a change of social group in mid-career. Greater mobility since the 80s), O. Monso, *Insee première* no. 1112, December 2006.
- "Les logiques de l'élevation des niveaux de formation: de la hausse à la stabilisation" (The logics underlying increasing qualification levels: from upsurge to stabilization" C. Bédoué and J.-F. Germe, *Formation Emploi*, no. 85, January-March 2004.

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Briefing

Updates



Event

The International EurOccupations Congress in Marseille

21 and 22 May 2008

The aim of the international EurOccupations Congress which took place in Marseille on 21 and 22 May 2008 was to create the first European Dictionary of Occupations. This congress was attended by 80 sectoral and ministerial experts from the 8 countries participating in this project (France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and the United Kingdom). The similarities and differences between jobs and occupations were discussed in detail at 8 work sessions covering all the economic sectors of activity. The first conclusions to be drawn included the fact that especially in agriculture and industry, some occupations naturally feature importantly in terms of both the numbers employed and their economic contribution to the country's development. Secondly, the terms used to refer to some occupations and their content reflect the various stages of development reached in a given sector. The greatest differences observed between countries result from economic and political decisions, especially in the service sector. These differences were mainly observed in the following fields :

- social work, where the numbers employed and the definition of the missions pursued differ considerably. The tasks involved in career guidance work tend to vary, for example, and French social and family guidance workers do not always have exact equivalents in other countries;
- personal services, where the differences focus more on the status of employees than on the content of their jobs. In the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, hairdressers can be self-employed while working for an employer who is also self-employed: they hire their workspace on the premises, pay an entry fee, pay their own social contributions, and their earnings are proportional to the amount of work they do. This is similar to the "free lance" status adopted in the UK by people with occupations such as riding instructors working alongside the employees hired by riding clubs;
- in the healthcare setting, wage bargaining between occupational representatives is of great importance: this is how specialities and the responsibilities of each occupational category are defined, up to and including the legal codification of medical interventions. The resulting occupational practices tend to differ between countries. In the field of dentistry, for instance, the patients in many countries consult dental hygienists, who are less highly qualified than dentists, for basic interventions such as the scaling and filling of teeth;
- more recent occupations which have come into existence at international level, such as those of computer and telecommunications specialists, were found to be fairly similar in all the European countries compared.

The EurOccupations project financed by the European Commission Directorate for Research has now reached its last year. The experts must submit their descriptions of the 150 jobs targeted (out of the 1350 jobs listed jointly by all the partners) and/or comment on the descriptions already submitted by the end of December 2008. This can be easily done via the link www.euroccupations.org. The contributors to this database will be included in the list of experts and will receive the final version of the Dictionary. They will also be invited to take part in the final congress, which is to take place in Belgium next spring.

✓ For further information, please contact Sylvie Anne Mériot: meriot@cereq.fr

New Publications

Matériaux pour la construction et l'industrie. Etude d'opportunité sur la création de diplômes de niveau IV et de niveau III dans les branches « Granulats », « Industrie du béton » et « Béton prêt à l'emploi »

[The building material industries. A study on the appropriateness of creating level III and IV diplomas in the "Granulates", "Concrete industry" and "Ready-made concrete" sectors]

Net.Doc. 33, February 2008

> Nathalie Aguetant, Christophe Guitton and Jacques Pillemont

In response to the recruitment problems arising in the building material industries, the occupational branches have decided to launch a scheme for developing human resources by examining the possibility of creating new diplomas and/or updating the present diplomas, for example. Upon being requested to assess whether this project was appropriate, Céreq conducted a survey comprising the following three complementary modules:

- the current trends in activities and jobs in the main sectors;
- companies' human resource management practices;
- assessing companies' requirements in terms of recruitment and qualifications.

The results of this survey were presented in three monographs entitled "Granulates", "The Concrete Industry" and "Ready-made Concrete".

Les politiques des entreprises en matière de certification et l'utilisation de la validation des acquis de l'expérience

[Companies' policies on qualifications and the validation of acquired experience]

Net.Doc. 34, February 2008

> Marie-Christine Bureau, Marie-Christine Combes, Solveig Grimault, Yves Lochard, Nathalie Quintero and Carole Tuchsirer

Since the French legislation on the validation of acquired experience (VAE) was passed five years ago, companies and occupational branches have had time to start integrating these measures into their own strategies. This is the subject of the first part of this document, which includes fifteen case studies describing the specificities of individual firms and the many different practices adopted: some of these practices are innovative and all of them raise questions worth discussing. In the second part, the authors present a typology of the practices adopted in response to the recent legal requirements and compare these practices with companies' previous worker qualification practices. They examine how VAE has contributed to labour market regulation. They also describe the tensions generated by the collective use of individual rights and the differences between employers' and employees' perceptions. Based

on these findings, some recommendations are put forward as a contribution to the present nation-wide effort to reassess this legislation with a view to amending it.

Une analyse de la professionnalisation des formations de l'enseignement supérieur à partir de l'insertion de leurs diplômés

[The professionalisation of higher educational courses, based on the graduates' transition to work]

Net.Doc. 35, February 2008

> Jean-François Giret and Stéphanie Moullet

The aim of this study was to analyse the professionalisation of higher educational courses, based on the transition to work of graduates completing these courses. Céreq's "Génération 98" survey provided several indicators which can be used to describe various aspects of the link between training and employment. Targeting occupational goals, the importance attached by graduates to practical training courses and young people's skills being used to the full are factors which can be used to classify courses in terms of professionalisation with respect to the labour market requirements. Some educational paths have a traditionally vocational bias: those corresponding to level III in the field of healthcare and social work (training colleges for nurses and social assistants), DESS degrees in the exact sciences, IUP diplomas in industrial specialities and engineering school diplomas, for example, whereas the classification of other educational institutions such as teacher training colleges and doctoral schools depends on the criteria adopted. Lastly, paths such as that leading to the BTS (higher technician's certificates), which are often said to be highly professional because these diplomas are strongly rooted in occupational standards, often tend to resemble more general higher educational paths such as the DEUG and bachelor's degrees. It is also worth noting that training courses focusing on industrial specialities often turn out to be more professional than those focusing on the service sector.

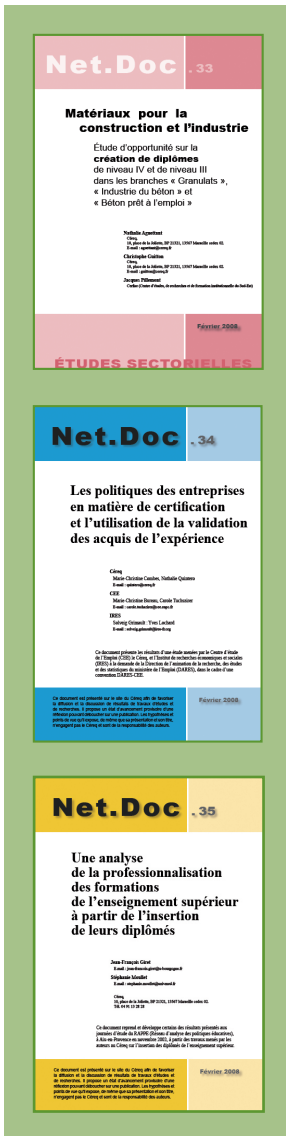
Formation professionnelle continue et changement de poste dans l'entreprise

[Vocational training and job mobility at firms]

Net.Doc.38, April 2008

> Isabelle Marion, Martine Möbus and Jean-Claude Sigot

The aim of this study was to identify the links between employees' participation in vocational training and the job mobility they have experienced while working at a firm. The following two methods were used to determine the most significant factors contributing to job mobility and participation in continuing vocational training schemes: the first method consisted in modelling the likelihood of undergoing continuing vocational training



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and making a change of job; and the second method consisted in describing the links between continuing vocational training and job mobility, depending on the characteristics of the employee and those of the firm. A positive correlation was found to exist between job mobility within a firm and the continuing vocational training undergone. Other things being equal, the likelihood of having access to vocational training is practically twice as high when a change of job is involved, and vice-versa: employees are twice as likely to make a change of job when they have participated in vocational training. These probabilities depend strongly on the characteristics of the employees and those of the firms, giving a two-fold pattern. Sectoral analyses were carried out to establish which sectors of activity show the greatest interdependence between training for a job and job mobility within firms. This approach can therefore be used to analyse continuing vocational training in terms of its contribution to employees' professionalisation.

Objectif 50 % de diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur versus déclassement des jeunes

[50% of the population with Higher educational qualifications for 50% of the population versus the downgrading process]

Net.Doc. 39, June 2008

> Philippe Lemistre

The author of this document proposes to outline the challenges and issues involved in the extension of education in France. The main disadvantage of the project to enable 50% of all young people in France to obtain higher educational qualifications between now and 2015 seems to be the downgrading to which young people are currently being subjected. Downgrading is the price to be paid in the short term for educational expansion. The long term effects are bound to result from both negative aspects such as the devaluation of qualifications and positive effects such as endogenous growth processes: the latter seem to be prevailing over the former. This pattern, which is in line with human capital, signal filtering and queuing theories, is discussed here in relation to the current debate between the supporters of educational expansion and the economy of innovation.

Derrière les diplômes et certifications, les parcours de formation et leurs effets sur les parcours et l'emploi

[Vocational training paths leading to qualifications. The XVth meeting on the use of longitudinal data in labour market analyses]

Relief no. 24, May 2008

> Benoît Cart, Jean-François Giret, Yvette Grelet and Patrick Werquin (coordinators)

Training paths and the modes of access to qualifications are visibly affecting people's

modes of access to employment. This was the theme addressed at the XVth Longitudinal Meeting organized in Lille in May 2008, which focused in particular on the following five topics:

- the firm as an actor in vocational training;
- formal training versus VAE;
- are "occupational markets" expanding?
- the links between vocational training and employment revisited;
- vocational training paths and their short and long term effects on employment paths;
- public training policies: their effects and their efficiency.

Étudier l'insertion des étudiants. Les enjeux méthodologiques posés par le suivi de l'insertion des diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur au niveau local, régional et national

[Studying students' transition to work: the methodological challenges set by monitoring higher educational graduates' transition to work at local, regional and national level]

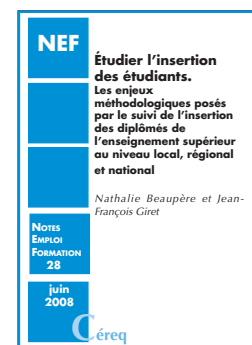
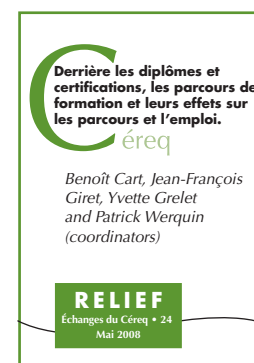
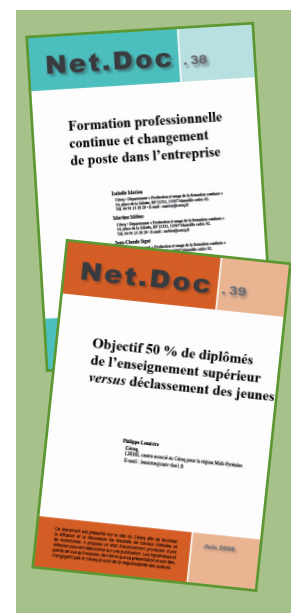
Nef no. 28, June 2008

> Nathalie Beaupère and Jean-François Giret

The authors of this paper review the methods used to monitor the transition to work of graduates from higher educational establishments in a number of surveys conducted at local, regional and national levels. They examine the various methodological decisions made at each stage in the procedure (setting up a database, choosing the procedures to be used, designing questionnaires, sorting and processing the data obtained, choosing suitable indicators for presenting the results and the types of publication in which they should be presented, etc.).

A planning schedule is also proposed for setting up and managing transition-to-work surveys at universities and other higher educational institutions conducting surveys of this kind for the first time.

This paper is based on a series of interviews with the heads of monitoring centres and their staff as well as with experts who have been involved in information systems focusing on the transition to work of higher educational graduates. The aim of these interviews was to identify the methods most frequently used and to determine their strengths and limitations: some similarities can be detected between the phases in the survey processes adopted at monitoring centres, which should favour greater cohesion between different sources of information on graduates' transition to work. In this spirit, a few suggestions are made for harmonising approaches, especially in terms of the content of questionnaires, the processing of non-responses, the timing of the observation period and the main indicators to transition to work used to present the data obtained in these surveys.



These publications are available at the Céreq bookstore or by mail order to Marie-Christine Antonucci, Céreq, 10, place de la Joliette, BP 21321, 13567 Marseille cedex 2. Tel. 33 (0)4 91 13 28 89 - Fax 33 (0)4 91 13 28 80. E-mail: antonucci@cereq.fr. Orders must be accompanied by payment (please include 4 € for postage and handling).

Une nouvelle dynamique des marchés du travail réglementés, à l'aune de trois professions

[Recent dynamics on regulated labour markets viewed in the light of three occupations]

> Anne Moysan-Louazel and Gérard Podevin

It is proposed here to study the dynamics of some regulated labour markets. The evidence suggests that many of these markets have recently been undergoing considerable changes due to the need to attract and retain suitable clients. These changes are especially visible in the case of the legally regulated professions, on which this paper focuses in particular. However, as the authors show, the regulatory changes which have been introduced have not necessarily opened up the markets in question. Opening up professions would mean not only increasing the inputs: it would also mean adopting new practices, creating new career paths and providing new scope for mobility in the respective occupational frameworks.

Esquisse d'une profession consultante : les intermédiaires du marché du travail en Wallonie

[Portrait of a consultants' occupation. Mediators on the Walloon labour market]

> Jean-François Oriante and Christian Maroy

This paper deals with the contribution of public labour market mediators to actively orienting Belgian employment policy. The authors first present the work of these agents in terms of interactionist occupational sociology. They then describe these agents' activities as belonging to the category of consultancy: their work consists in assisting the unemployed, using quasi-clinical procedures to diagnose and treat their lack of employability. The authors point out that the work of these consultants differs from the definitions proposed on conventionalist economics lines and discuss the future of these occupations, which have resulted from changing modes of public action, i.e., from the "activation" of employment policy.

Scénarios des pratiques de formation post-réforme de mai 2004

[Vocational training scenarios since the May 2004 reforms]

> Nora Alleki and Catherine de Géry

This paper focuses on the initial effects of the May 2004 reforms on vocational training practices at French firms. Based on a 4-fold typology of training practices (defined as

aggressive, opportunistic, case by case and conservative), and assuming that vocational training practices can be explained in terms of path dependency, some post-reform vocational training scenarios were drawn up and tested on a sample of fourteen firms. The authors conclude that these reforms have had little effect so far on training practices.

Entreprises de travail temporaire : former pour renforcer l'intermédiation sur un territoire

[Temporary employment agencies enhance their territorial role via vocational training]

> Christine Guégnard, Marie-Claude Rebeuh and Emmanuel Tribay


Field studies carried out on four French employment pools (Haguenau and Wissembourg in Alsace and Beaune and Chalon-sur-Saône in Burgundy) have thrown light on the mediating activities of temporary employment agencies, as well as on how these regions are being developed. In response to the labour market shortages and the need felt by firms to adopt safer recruitment practices by engaging immediately operational workers, there has been a sharp increase in vocational training at temporary employment agencies. In this way, these agencies are not only reinforcing their role as mediators, but also enhancing the resources available in the territories to which they belong.

Les « niveaux de formation » à l'heure européenne. Un examen à partir de l'homologation des titres

["Vocational training levels" on the European scene. Some ideas about the homologation of diplomas]

> Patrick Veneau and Dominique Maillard

This study is part of an attempt to review the nomenclature of "vocational training levels", in the framework of the European approach to qualifications and the policies designed to harmonise qualifications between member countries. The authors suggest the need to revise the classification practices of the Technical Homologation Commission (THC), which has been responsible for almost thirty years for attributing levels to diplomas initially designed in the framework of continuing vocational training. They suggest that the consensus about the levels attributed may be due to the fact that the underlying principles and classification logics have never been challenged, even when it was decided in 1993 by the THC to change the criteria on which these assessments are based.



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