

Training & Employment

Groups dealing with continuing training reforms

The case of Veolia Environment

The French Law of May 2004, which introduced new tools for managing lifelong learning, has had a considerable impact on firms, which are the main players in the vocational training field. Although some firms have responded fairly passively to the new legal requirements, others have decided to take a more aggressive approach to their application. This is the case of the French group called Veolia Environment, which immediately signed an agreement in October 2004 on "the principles governing the development of competences and occupational advancement" with the relevant trade union organizations. However, the implementation of this agreement, which places much of the onus for vocational training on managers and staff representatives, is not likely to be an easy task in this group, which is characterized by the complexity of its structure.

In order to give the French system of vocational training (which was founded by the Law of 1971) a new lease of life, the social partners signed an interprofessional agreement in September 2003, which formed the basis of the Law of May 2004 prescribing new tools and procedures for promoting lifelong learning. The French firms, which play a central role in this system, have been applying various adaptive strategies in response to the newly declared rights of individuals to vocational training (DIF), which constituted one of the main features of this reform. Although some firms have adapted fairly passively to the new legal requirements, others have taken a more aggressive approach to their application, seizing the opportunities provided by the Law to develop their human resource management strategies on new lines. This was certainly the case at the group called Veolia Environment, which only a few months after the Law was voted signed an agreement on "principles for developing competences and occupational advancement" with all the trade union organizations to which the group's employees belonged. The history of how this agreement came into being and how it has been applied sheds interesting light on some of the conditions required to be able to reach the objective explicitly defined by the social partners in 2003: to enable all employees to take charge of their own occupational advancement.

An agreement at the crossroads between competence management and vocational training

Veolia Environment (see the inset on page 2) quickly saw that the application of the new continuing vocational training reforms would provide the group with an opportunity of reinforcing its cohesion by linking together two aspects of its human resource management policy. The first aspect was the voluntaristic occupational training approach adopted a decade previously by the group with a view to improving the level of qualification of the staff in response to the increasing complexity of the occupations involved in providing environmental services. This was the purpose for which the internal vocational training centre known as the Institute for Urban Environments was originally created in 1994 to recruit young people as apprentices via a process of pre-recruitment: the Institute's missions gradually came to include all the group's continuing vocational training activities. This structure, which in 2003 became the Veolia Environment Campus, has contributed considerably to making the vocational training and professionalisation of its employees the key to the group's whole human resource management policy. The second aspect, which has a more recent history, is the fact that the identity of the group is based on a predictive competence management approach intended to improve the quality of the services to users as well as making the firm a more attractive prospective employer, thus anticipating the forthcoming demographic downturn.

In this context, the management of Veolia Environment decided in 2004 to focus the first social negotiations involving the establishments implanted in France on the themes of professionalisation and competence management. The outcome was an agreement ●●●

CDC • *Contrat de développement des compétences (Competence development contract).*

DIF • *Droit individuel à la formation (Individuals' right to vocational training).*

OPCA • *Organisme paritaire collecteur agréé (Accredited social partners' bodies collecting and regulating funds for vocational training).*

PME • *Petite et moyenne entreprise (small and medium-sized enterprises: SMEs).*

UES • *Unité économique et sociale (Economic and social unit: a group of legally separate companies having common interests under the same management, which count as a single firm in terms of the French laws on staff and trade union representation. A UES can be instituted by an agreement between social partners or by a legal decision).*

on "principles for developing *competences and occupational advancement at Veolia Environment*", which was signed in October 2004 by the management and all the trade union organizations to which the group's employees belonged. This agreement took up the main themes of the new legislation, which were presented in terms of the following guiding principle: the "*co-responsibility*" of the group's employees for developing their own competences and forging their own career paths (see the inset on page 3). This principle led in particular to the creation of a "competence development contract" (CDC) defining the conditions under which employees can engage on paths leading to recognized qualifications or diplomas in a field relating to the activities of the group. The employer incites its employees to have the experience they have acquired validated, and proposes to finance the complementary vocational training subsequently required to obtain the qualifications targeted and to define employees' future career prospects. In exchange, the employees undertake to devote their individual training leave to pursuing this specific project.

Vocational training is therefore at the heart of the individual negotiations between each employee working at this group and the employer, in line with what occurs at many French firms which have adopted the competence management approach. This challenge requires the players involved to make a change of strategy. Employees are expected to realize that developing their competences is no longer the prerogative of the management, but that it depends also on

their own will to develop suitable career paths corresponding to their occupational skills and their hopes of mobility. The management of the group, on the other hand, is required to extend its role of supervising employees' progression, which used to be mainly a question of drawing up training plans and seeing that they were properly executed. Its new role still consists in managing individual career paths via vocational training, but longer-term career guidance objectives are now involved. Several of the tools mentioned in the Veolia Environment agreement, such as personal assessment interviews, vocational training passports, the validation of acquired experience and the CDC contribute to achieving this objective. Lastly, the agreement calls on the internal social partners to engage in decentralized social dialogue in order to adapt the dispositions it contains to the various contexts and priorities of the group's various divisions.

The agreement signed at Veolia Environment therefore goes beyond the objectives of the 2004 reform in terms of the changes of strategy to be made by the players involved and the tools mobilised. However, given the structural complexity of the group, the implementation of this project will certainly not be a straightforward task.


Applying the agreement within a multifarious organization

During the first few months after the agreement was signed, the new system was promoted within the group mainly by the Human Resource managers, according to the classical top-down transmission scheme. An internal information campaign was carried out: a document was distributed outlining the terms of the agreement and explaining in detail how it was going to be applied; at the same time, many meetings were held at the companies belonging to the group. This top-down awareness campaign gradually familiarized the many entities in the group with the terms of the agreement. It may not have been assimilated by all the employees, but it has at least started to be applied in various ways, depending on the modes of organization and representation specific to each of the group's divisions.

Veolia's Water Division, for example, consists mainly of Générale des Eaux, which itself is composed of a large number of smaller companies. Social dialogue is facilitated in this division by the existence of an "Economic and Social Unit" (UES) in which all the trade union organizations to which the employees belong are represented. This Unit negotiates agreements at national level for a staff amounting to more than 15 000 employees. The composition of Veolia's Energy Division is fairly similar, since it consists mainly of Dalkia France, which accounts for more than half of all the employees in this division.

Veolia Environment: the Group

Veolia Environment is a multinational group implanted in more than 60 countries, which specialises in environmental services. In 2006, there were almost 300 000 employees on the payroll, 38% of whom are working in France, 34% in the rest of Europe and 28% in the rest of the world. The group came into existence officially under its present name in the year 2003. It consists of four divisions corresponding to four main fields of activity (see the table below). The four divisions include many firms differing greatly in size and status, several of which are long-established firms, such as Générale des Eaux, the oldest of them all, which was founded back in 1853. Many of the group's activities are carried out by small companies employing anything from a dozen people to several hundreds: they include water processing units, waste burial units, bus transport networks, urban heating plants, etc.

Divisions	Water	Cleaning	Energy	Transport
Activities 	Managing water distribution and processing services	Cleaning and waste sorting and recycling services	Energy- and climate-related services	Delegated management of public transport systems
Numbers employed in 2006				
Total	78 000	89 500	49 000	82 000
In France*	29 000	34 000	19 000	30 000

* These data do not include the staff at the group's headquarters or the Veolia ENVIRONMENT Campus staff (amounting to 470 employees).

Source: Veolia ENVIRONMENT'S Human resource management department: the 2006 figures have been rounded off.

An agreement on principles for developing competences and career advancement

On 4th. October 2004, the management of the Veolia Environment group and all the trade union organizations to which its employees belonged signed an agreement "on the principles for developing competences and career advancement at Veolia Environment".

- In the **preamble** to this agreement, it is stated that "the development of the competences of Veolia Environment's employees is a requirement which stems from the very nature of the group's activities", in which the accent is placed on the quality of the services provided. The agreement stipulates that since firms providing environmental services are more sensitive than others to labour market changes, it is particularly necessary that they should predict the competences required in the future.

- **Chapter I** defines **general principles**. Individual employees' career advancement within the group is to be favoured by promoting "true co-responsibility" for the development of competences, based on the "mutual commitment" of each employee and the employer.

- The group undertakes to "promote employees' career advancement", via human resource management policies "giving priority to the diversification of each employee's competences in the framework of greater mobility within the occupational space occupied by the group". This involves making the career advancement possibilities available more legible for the group's employees.

- in exchange, employees are expected to give priority to acquiring competences relating to the field of environmental services.

- **Chapter II** describes the **means deployed for this purpose**.

- The group intends to promote the recruitment of new employees by pursuing efforts already launched on apprenticeship training lines, in particular.

- It proposes to provide career path guidance and facilitate employees' decision-making about their careers by setting up a series of tools and

procedures, including competence maps, personal assessment interviews, vocational training passports, competence assessments, and validation of acquired experience.

- Employees' access to vocational training will be improved by introducing a system of "competence development contracts" for employees who want to evolve towards a different type of employment. These contracts between an employee and the firm will be based on "a project which has been accepted by the management [...], who examines with the employee what the prospects of advancement within Veolia Environment may be at the end of the contract". The beneficiary "will abstain from using previously acquired DIF rights to pursue projects other than vocational training ones".

The group relies mainly on the Veolia Environment Campus for its vocational training supply. Its objective was expressed as follows: "Within two years of signing the group agreement, at least 3% of the group's employees should be set every year on vocational training paths leading them to obtain recognized qualifications".

- **Chapter III** deals with the **modes of concertation and follow-up defined in the agreement**. The agreement should be applied at the various units of which the group is composed "taking their specificities into account", via consultations with staff representatives. Company agreements may possibly be signed at the end of this phase. Annual concertations focusing on the vocational training plan will provide an opportunity for specifying what actions will be taken by the firm to provide the various tools and procedures defined in this agreement. Lastly, a specific mutual scheme will be set up for managing part of the vocational training funds of the firms in the group, in order to "enhance the solidarity between the member firms of Veolia Environment". ■

Source: the agreement "on competence development and career advancement principles at Veolia Environment" signed on October 4, 2004. Summary by Céreq.

Configurations of this kind lend themselves particularly well to handling the negotiated application of the Veolia Environment agreement. Negotiations were initiated within a very short time and agreements signed in many cases, such as those reached at Générale des Eaux and Dalkia France by the second term of 2005.

The situation is very different in the group's other divisions. The main activity of Veolia's Cleaning Division is waste management, and this structure employs approximately 18 000 people. Veolia's Transport Division includes approximately 150 urban and interurban transport networks of various sizes in terms of the numbers employed, which range from 50 to 2000, and each of these networks is a separate juridical entity.

In the latter two divisions, social dialogue takes place at widely dispersed establishments, at which human resource management is handled variably and social relations are subject to tension. The application, if any, of the group agreement therefore less systematically takes the form of a local agreement. It generally has to be impelled by the management, which informs staff representatives about changes in the vocational training plan in the framework of normal consultation procedures.

After the group agreement was signed, the trade union organizations did not immediately grasp the opportunity of exerting pressure at shop floor

level to open negotiations within the group via the companies' trade union sections. They seemed to feel that the application of the agreement was not their responsibility but that of the group management. In addition, they may have given priority to other matters such as wage bargaining and working conditions, which looked more urgent at the time.

The great differences in the way the agreement has been applied within the group seem to have been largely due to two main factors. First there is an external factor, which is the fact that social dialogue in France focuses strongly on the interface between the occupational branches and firms. Groups are therefore obliged to follow the same pattern. The second factor is an internal one: it stems from the fact that it is difficult for a group to communicate its predictive approach to human resource management to the grassroots operational units.

The difficulty of setting up social dialogue within a group

The first problem to arise with the application of the agreement was due to the incompatibility between the group's approach and the way social dialogue is traditionally organized in France, which privileges the occupational branch approach. It so happens that the group's activities involve about a dozen different branches. The trade union organizations are therefore having

Members of the following trade unions are working at the Veolia Environment group:

CFDT • Confédération française démocratique du travail.

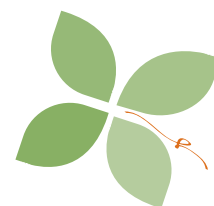
CFE-CGC • Confédération française de l'encadrement-Confédération générale des cadres.

CFTC • Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens.

CGT • Confédération générale du travail.

FO • Force ouvrière.

UNSA • Union nationale des syndicats autonomes.



to think up a new form of trade unionism for the group based on cross-communications between structures, which have so far relied on the various labour organizations to which the employees at each structure belong. It is worth pointing out here that the affiliated union representatives' lack of response to the agreement no doubt reflects the difficulty they had in finding suitable modes of coordination. Only a few affiliated unions have managed to set up networks of staff representatives in the group's four fields of activity for distributing and discussing the agreement.

The traditionally branch-oriented approach has also affected the funding of vocational training at Veolia Environment. To finance the implementation of its strategy, the group developed a special mutual scheme in the framework of the agreement, for managing vocational training funds while still keeping to the rules of the OPCAs (accredited social partners' bodies collecting and regulating funds for training) of all the branches to which its divisions belonged. This decision placed heavy constraints on local vocational training budget managers, since it made them more dependent on the group's objectives and less free than previously to pursue their own policies.

The complex task of applying the agreement

Applying the agreement also involves coping with another constraint: that of dealing with the gap between the group's human resource management objectives and the local realities experienced by the managers on the field. These managers, who are often working in an SME environment, have to constantly make short-term compromises between the economic, commercial, managerial and human aspects of their activity. In fact, it is difficult for them to make medium-term human resource management predictions. Although they are well aware of the issues involved in providing employees with vocational training, they often feel that this should be their own prerogative and do not see the point of sharing with employees the responsibility for deciding what competences need to be acquired.

Under these conditions, the local social context contributes decisively to determining whether or not companies are willing to apply the principles set out in the group agreement. The most favorable ground for the agreement to take root is provided by units at which a human resource manager has regular discussions with staff representatives, and where agreements have already been negotiated on career management and vocational training

A study on the application of a social agreement signed by a group

In the framework of a co-operative contract with Veolia Environment, Céreq carried out an assessment in 2005 and 2006 of how the agreement "on the principles for developing competences and career advancement at Veolia Environment" signed at this group in October 2004 was being applied. This study dealt with the application of the terms of the agreement during the two-year period following its signature. It was based on a qualitative analysis of documents and 86 interviews carried out with union representatives, top management, human resource and vocational training managers working for the group, as well as for a sample of firms corresponding to its four main fields of activity. ■

matters; whereas firms with few human resource management staff, at which social conflicts frequently occur (mainly on wage-related issues), are less inclined to put the terms of the agreement into effect.

Even when the commitment of a local manager meets up with favourable social dynamics, there is one last obstacle to be overcome: that of developing appropriate managerial tools for applying the agreement and especially, for fulfilling the group's commitment to giving priority to "the diversification of each person's competences in the framework of greater mobility within the scope of their occupational group". Designing tools such as maps of the skills required at the various divisions with a view to "giving career paths greater visibility" has turned out to be a more complex undertaking than it seemed. Developing tools of this kind while at the same time implementing the agreement makes it all the more difficult to appropriate the agreement.

The way in which Veolia Environment has responded to the challenge of the vocational training reforms has therefore raised questions about the point of the group's social policy and its effects. The economic strategy on which this policy is based consists in shifting the emphasis placed on the environmental services provided, i.e. replacing the "price war" approach by a "quality war" approach, thanks to voluntaristic human resource management and vocational training policies. The way these policies are being applied shows what ambitious objectives they involve in terms of both the quality of social dialogue and the management of change, in a sector (the services sector) where competence management practices are not yet being applied to the same extent throughout.

Damien Brochier, Christophe Guitton,
Agnès Legay and Julien Machado (Céreq)

Further reading

- *Les syndicats face à la logique compétence : nouveaux risques, nouveaux enjeux* (Trade unions' attitudes to the competence management approach: new risks, new challenges), D. Brochier, P. Kalck, C. Marquette and S. Monchatre, *Bref*, no. 173, March 2001.
- *La firme locale-globale : Lyonnaise des Eaux* (1980-2004) (Lyonnaise des Eaux, a local yet global firm 1980-2004), D. Lorrain, *Sociologie du travail*, no. 3, vol. 47, 2005.
- *Le management par les compétences: un essai d'analyse* (Attempting to analyse competence management), J.-D. Reynaud, *Sociologie du travail*, no. 1, vol. 43, 2001.

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Briefing

Updates

Portraits Statistiques de Branches (PSB) [The Statistical Branch Portraits]

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The Statistical Branch Portraits (PSB) were recently updated, based on Unedic's 2006 statistics (<http://www.cereq.fr/PSB.htm>). This update comprises the following data:

- more detailed information about the trends in the levels of qualification obtained by various socio-economic categories and by various broad age-groups,
- some indicators about apprentices, trainees and the beneficiaries of subsidized contracts.

The PSB include a series of "sectoral indicators" based on the various statistics available at public bodies and those published by Insee, Unedic, DARES and Céreq. They provide a standard overview consisting of a set of indicators, in which the nomenclature (that used in collective agreements) corresponds to the fields of activity of the occupational branches. They should provide a useful tool for discussions between the social partners and for initiating prospective procedures at the branches. ■

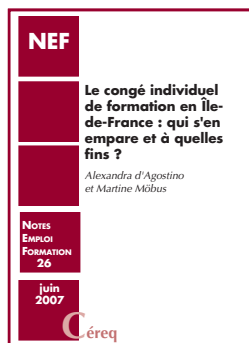
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The screenshot shows the Céreq website interface for 'Portraits statistiques de branche'. The page has a teal header with navigation links: 'Qui sommes-nous?', 'Nouveautés', 'Bases de données', and 'Portail documentaire'. Below the header, there's a search bar with '51 368' results and a 'Dernière mise à jour : 15/11/2007' date. The main content area features a search form with dropdown menus for 'Secteurs' and 'Sous-secteurs', and a search button labeled 'Rechercher'. A sidebar on the left contains links for 'Page d'accueil', 'Bases de données', 'Contacts', 'Liens', 'Aide', and 'Sources', along with the Céreq logo and the French Republic emblem.

<http://www.cereq.fr/PSB.htm>

New Publications



Le congé individuel de formation en Île-de-France : qui s'en empare et à quelles fins ?

[Individual vocational training leave in the Île-de-France region:
who benefit most and for what purposes?]

> Alexandra d'Agostino and Martine Möbus

Nef no.26, June 2007

Based on a survey conducted on the beneficiaries of individual vocational training leave (CIF) in the framework of the "Fongecif" training leave fund in the Île-de-France region, this issue of Nef attempts to determine how employees decide to apply for training leave and what becomes of the trainees in the short term. The present beneficiaries' initiatives were motivated by the desire for self-advancement: they wanted above all to make a change of occupation. Trainees' perceptions differed considerably, however, depending on their status, i.e., on whether they were on steady employment contracts (CDI) or fixed term contracts (CDD) at the time when they applied for CIF. The beneficiaries of CIF who had only CDD contracts stated more frequently that they had applied for CIF for employment reasons, they were considerably younger than those with steady jobs, and most of them were non manual workers. Among the applicants for CIF who had steady contracts, four groups were defined, depending on the time spent on the labour market, as follows: the most senior applicants in this group were characterised by higher than average qualifications, executive status, and greater stability within the firm; applicants with 10 to 19 years' seniority consisted of two sub-groups:

- 1) non manual workers and executives in their thirties and
- 2) technicians and supervisors;

the group of applicants with 5 to 9 years' seniority also consisted of two sub-groups, which differed in terms of their projects:

- 1) non manual workers, technicians and supervisors with fairly high levels of qualification and stability, and
- 2) manual and non manual workers showing some mobility, working in sectors such as safety, transport, and the hotel and catering industry; the latter group, which consisted of beginners, included a high proportion of non manual workers and holders of higher educational diplomas, which suggests that the members of this group were over-qualified for the jobs they held, and that they were looking for other jobs corresponding more closely to their expectations. ■

✓ This publication is 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.
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DOCUMENTS
NEF

Douze ans de vie active et quelles carrières ? Approche compréhensive des parcours professionnels dans quatre familles d'emploi

[After twelve years on the labour market, what kind of careers did they have? A comprehensive approach to occupational paths in four occupational groups]

> Jean-Paul Cadet, Laurence Diederichs-Diop, Arnaud Dupray (co-ordinator), Christophe Guitton, Agnès Legay and Sylvie Monchatre

Relief no. 21, July 2007

Céreq's «Generation» surveys form a continuous chain. They are sometimes extended, either by conducting telephone interviews based on a similar procedure (the members of Generation 98 were re-questioned five years and seven years after they left the educational system, for example: this part will be published shortly) or by running qualitative face-to-face interviews in order to determine what changes have occurred since the respondents' first few years on the labour market. The aim is to note all events responsible for breaks and continuities at the start of people's careers. The idea is not so much to decide whether the situations encountered by a Generation are representative as to note all significant events marking a person's career path, apart from the effects of initial training. This issue of *Relief* therefore draws a 12-year picture of 70 young people who left the French educational system in 1992 and were in employment in 1997 in the hotel and catering industry, human resource management, commercial activities or the artistic and cultural field. It was seen from their itineraries that the principles governing advancement and progress in these people's working lives depended on factors of various kinds, and on the field in which they worked. In the case of human resource managers and people with commercial professions, the most decisive factors seem to be linked to the rules of career advancement applying in their specific walks of life, such as the three-fold rule "competence, availability and mobility" in the case of the former group, and the ability to negotiate good wages in exchange for their commercial skills in that of the latter group. In the other two occupational fields, the start of people's careers depends on more personal motivations: compensating for a poor school record, coping with family problems or geographical constraints, responding to the need for independence and freedom in the case of those in the hotel and catering field; and obeying a sense of vocation and a strong inner drive in the case of those with artistic and cultural occupations. In addition to the specificities of each occupational group, some common characteristics were also observed. The first of these was the fact that they were all hoping to obtain a job giving them financial independence and enabling them to raise a family. The network of

contacts and being firmly integrated socially were found to be also important factors contributing to these young people's chances of obtaining jobs and advancing, although these chances also depended on their educational capital and the region to which they belonged. Another common characteristic was the amount of occupational commitment, especially in terms of being willing to work at all hours. Family demands, especially at the arrival of a second child, tend to clash with this characteristic and affect people's decisions about their work, often by tempering their career ambitions in the case of both men and women. ■

DOCUMENTS
RELIEF

Ruptures et irréversibilités dans les trajectoires : comment sécuriser les parcours professionnels ?

XIVes Journées d'étude sur les données longitudinales dans l'analyse du marché du travail

[Interruptions and irreversible turns in occupational paths: how to make occupational paths safer? The XIVth. Meeting on the use of longitudinal data in labour market analyses]

> Jean-François Giret, Yvette Grelet, Christophe Lavielle, Joaquim Timoteo and Patrick Werquin (editors)

Relief no. 22, July 2007

The authors of many studies focusing on topics such as employment contracts, transitional labour markets, flexsecurity and lifelong learning have been ringing warning bells about the need to make mobility on the labour market safer. The real risks to which employees are exposed lie mainly in interruptions which break up their career paths and the irreversible situations to which they may lead. Making career paths safer might therefore consist in making sure at every turn in the trajectory that the situation continues to be reversible. Under these conditions, the motto "mobility risk knowledge" might well serve as the basis for new wage agreements satisfying both employers' need for flexibility and individuals' need for security. This was the idea it was proposed to explore at the XIVth. meeting on the use of longitudinal data, which was held at the Orléans Economics Laboratory, one of Céreq's Associated Centres. This theme was addressed at this meeting in terms of three questions: the first was about the kind of occupational interruptions liable to occur and what causes them; the second question was about how interruptions can perturb pathways while shaping them at the same time; and the third question was about how the public authorities as well as firms and employees themselves might contribute to introducing the idea of ensuring that the states and events occurring during occupational itineraries are reversible. This issue of *Relief* includes the 33 papers presented and discussed at this meeting. ■



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Une redéfinition des politiques de formation. Le cas de l'apprentissage dans les grandes entreprises

[Redefining vocational training policies: the case of vocational training at large firms]

> Prisca Kergoat

The social factors which used to predominate in the framework of vocational training schemes have now become just one of the aspects of vocational training, along with competence and knowhow. This change has resulted not only from the codification of training and work in terms of competences, but also from policies promoting contracts between large firms and the French educational system and regions. These changes have contributed to transforming vocational training into an experimental arena.

En quoi la compétence devient-elle une technologie sociale ? réflexions à partir de l'expérience québécoise

[How is competence becoming a social technology? Some reflections on the Quebecer experience]

> Sylvie Monchatre

Vocational and technical training has become an ideal arena for testing curricula designed on "competency- based education" lines. The "social technology" which has thus developed in Quebec has led to the professionalization of vocational training courses by placing the emphasis on pupils' participation in apprenticeship situations. It has also led to defining the competences required in terms of technical procedures, which has actually strengthened the role of those involved in forging links between training and employment.

"Jeunes vendeurs" contre "vieux techniciens", des compétences spécifiques ou des trajectoires divergentes ?

["Young salesmen" versus "old technicians": specific competences or divergent trajectories?]

> Guillaume Huyez-Levrat

The author seeks to explain the antagonism between "young salesmen" and "old technicians" at three large firms in the services sector. The divides observed in these employees' work practices were not found to depend on their age but on the ability to have the relevance of their competences recognized and on their ability to cope at firms where the hierarchy of occupational specialities and the modes of management of occupational paths have been redefined.

La gestion des émotions aux pompes funèbres, une compétence reconnue ?

[Coping with emotion at funeral undertakers' firms. Is this competence properly recognized?]

> Julien Bernard

Based on a study performed *in situ*, the author describes how handling emotions is a collective task, how this task is regulated and how it is recognized as an occupational competence. The coordination of the work, the occupational skills required and the emotional coping methods applied are all part of complex interactions: mastering these interactions is the main challenge involved in professionalizing this sector.

Faire valoir ses compétences : les pigistes et le placement de sujet

[Asserting their competences: Free-lance journalists and how to sell their wares]

> Olivier Pilmis

Free-lancers often have to compete with each other for work opportunities with various publishing firms. Selling their wares involves using a whole set of techniques to orient the requirements of publishing firms towards the type of article a journalist has to offer and selling them this article.

De la formation professionnelle à la professionnalité d'une formation

[From vocational training to its professionalization]

> Catherine Bédoué, Jean-Michel Espinasse and Jean Vincens

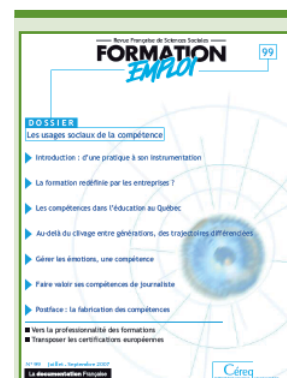
The professionalization of vocational training has been associated with increasing diversification of the specialities available. Those assessing educational policies therefore need to be able to account for these specialities when analysing the links between vocational training and employment. Two approaches are compared here. The first is based on making *a priori* comparisons between qualifications and jobs. The second consists in recording all the recruitments occurring during the post-training phase and analysing the uptake of each training course among the jobs available.

Certification européenne : rapprochement des structures nationales de formation ?

[European qualifications: Should national vocational training structures be made more uniform?]

> Joachim Haas and Maurice Ourtau

New forms of qualification are being imposed on member States in the framework of European regulations. The ways in which these regulations are applied depend, however, on how qualifications have always been set up and recognized in the various countries, since each country has its own traditional approach to these matters. ■



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