

# Training & Employment

## Young people from immigrant families are disadvantaged from recruitment onwards

*The urban disturbances which occurred two years ago in France attracted attention to the problems faced by some of the young people from immigrant families, i.e., those who were either born in France of immigrant parents or arrived in this country at a very early age. Access to employment is no doubt the most serious of these problems. Since the early 90s, several studies have shown that people's origins, i.e., the country where their parents were born, are far from being a negligible factor on the labour market. This factor is also associated with characteristics which people do not easily speak about in France, such as the colour of a person's skin. This rather delicate topic necessarily comes to the fore when it is proposed to analyze changing patterns of youth transition to work, since the problems encountered by young people from immigrant families tend to persist, even during periods when better opportunities become available.*

For more than two decades, young people in France, especially those with the fewest qualifications, have been hard hit by unemployment. The barriers to labour market entry seem to be particularly difficult to overcome for those whose families originate from the North African (Maghreb) countries. These young people have more frequently taken general study paths than the others, they have less frequently opted for apprenticeship training and they have fewer social networks liable to help them find jobs. None of these characteristics are particularly favourable to transition to work. There is a huge gap between this group of youths and their French-born counterparts. Other European and North American countries with high rates of immigration naturally have similar problems, which are known as ethnic discrimination or discrimination at recruitment. For several years, most of these countries have been carrying out simulated recruitment tests, which have confirmed the existence of barriers to the recruitment of people whose name or physical attributes are associated with specific ethnic origins. France has only recently adopted these simulation test methods, as the question of ethnic discrimination has been difficult to broach, since the principle of equality between citizens was supposed to mean that people's ethnic origins do not count.

Having access to better diploma levels and the existence of favourable labour market conditions are two highly important factors contributing to occupational integration. But do they provide keys to solving the serious problems with which French society is currently faced? Not if we look at the two surveys on the paths of young people who left the French educational system in 1992 and 1998 (see the inset on page 3). The second cohort arrived during an economic upturn, and also benefited from the move launched in the 60s to make the French educational system more democratic, which increased the numbers of baccalauréat-holders and University students as well as the supply of vocational baccalauréats and higher educational paths. However, young people from immigrant families have gained less advantage than other young people from these developments.

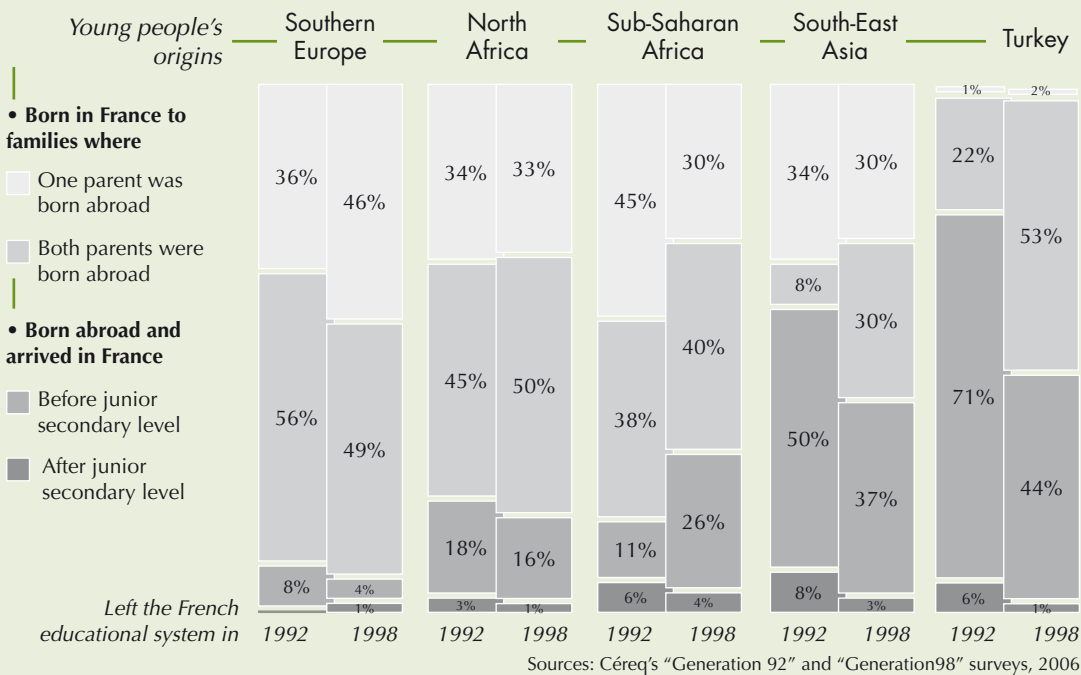
This discrimination does not seem to be due to late arrival on the French national territory. Most of those exposed to this problem descended from long-established immigrants originating from Southern Europe and the Maghreb, and were born in France (see the graph on page 2). The others descended from more recent immigrants originating from sub-Saharan Africa, South-Eastern Asia and Turkey, but since most of them arrived in France before reaching junior secondary school level, they were able to benefit from the diversification and the democratisation of the French educational system.

### **The diversification and the democratisation of the educational system have had contrasting effects**

Youths originating from immigrant families have naturally been affected by these overall patterns of change. However, although they all benefited from the expanding educational system, the two longest established groups of immigrants showed quite different patterns. In 1992, many youths of Southern European origin were still leaving the French educational system at an early age with no diplomas; whereas in 1998, thanks to the recent development of vocational training paths, increasing numbers of these youths joined the labour market with CAP or BEP diplomas or vocational or technological baccalauréats. They also underwent higher educational studies more frequently than in the past (see the table on page 2).

Youths of Maghrebi immigrant origin, on the contrary, are still leaving school with very low levels of qualification. They are also still somewhat excluded from the overall shift towards vocational specialities. However, larger numbers of this group obtained general baccalauréats

## Young people from immigrant families and their origins



than previously, without participating much in the overall move to take higher educational diplomas. Among the members of the "Generation 98" cohort, those of North African origin had access to higher education less frequently than those of Southern European origin. All in all, youths from North African immigrant families tended to lag behind the others. The fact that they showed a preference for general educational streams indicates that these youths had high educational targets, but at the same time, their lack of success became more conspicuous with time, contrasting with the overall increase in the level of education observed in this survey during the 90s.

The trends are more difficult to assess in the case of more recent streams of immigrants, of which the present study population included fewer

representatives. Children of Turkish immigrants seem to have taken similar paths to those adopted by those from Southern European families, since they have shown a preference for vocational diplomas and vocational baccalauréats. The pattern is less clear-cut in the case of youths from sub-Saharan Africa, who formed a more heterogeneous group. The most recent arrivals seem to have benefited less than the other members of this group from the move to democratise the French educational system. The percentages of sub-Saharan youths who underwent higher educational studies increased less with time than among youths originating from Southern European families.

### Even when unemployment is on the decrease, people's origins can still be a disadvantage

These figures were particularly low in the case of youths of Turkish origin, whereas those whose families had immigrated from South-Eastern Asia continued to show high rates of enrolment at higher educational institutions. The economic situation improved in France during the second half of the 90s. Although this upturn did not last very long, it was sufficiently strong to be worth examining its impact on youth transition to work. It decreased the unemployment figures among all those who left the educational system in 1998, including those from immigrant families. However, despite this decrease in the rates of

BEP • Vocational Studies Certificate

CAP • Vocational Competence Certificate

## Qualification levels of youths from immigrant families

		Youths having at least one parent born											
		in Southern Europe		in the Maghreb		in sub-Saharan Africa		in South-Eastern Asia		in Turkey		Both parents born in France	
Date of entry into working life		1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998
Last diploma obtained before leaving the educational system (percentages)													
No diploma, but studied up to	Junior secondary level	3	1	5	2	3	3	6	2	21	6	3	1
	End of secondary school	9	5	15	8	16	11	11	7	43	13	9	4
	CAP, BEP vocational diplomas	25	15	27	24	25	17	19	18	21	38	18	12
CAP-BEP diplomas		22	28	15	22	13	28	8	15	10	24	21	23
General baccalauréat		7	8	6	11	10	12	7	13	1	3	6	9
Vocational or technological baccalauréat		14	16	9	11	10	10	13	14	1	10	13	16
2 yrs' studies or more after the baccalauréat		20	27	23	22	23	19	36	31	3	6	30	35
<b>Total</b>		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The figures in italics are intended as an indication only. They are not completely reliable because of the small numbers composing these categories. Sources: Céreq's "Generation 92" and "Generation 98" surveys, 2006.

unemployment, some conspicuous differences persisted, depending on these young people's ethnic origins.

After three years of active life, the rates of unemployment of young people of Southern European origin differed very little from those of young people of French origin, whereas those of Maghrebi origin were still in great difficulty. The rates of unemployment decreased in the latter group with time, but they were still twice as high as those of their French congeners (see the table below). The small numbers representing the other immigrant streams studied make it difficult to draw any definite conclusions, especially as regards the fluctuations observed, but the rates of unemployment in these groups were generally much higher, except for those whose families originated from South-East Asia, whose situation seems to have improved, approaching that of youths from French-born families. The risk of unemployment was aggravated among the groups in difficulty by the fact that these young people often had low levels of qualification or diplomas for which there was little demand on the labour market. For example, 34% of the young men from North African immigrant families who left the French educational system in 1992 with no qualifications after taking general educational streams were still unemployed after three years on the labour market; and this figure was still as high as 35% among those who left the educational system in 1998.

On the whole, those who gained most from the economic upturn were holders of the baccalauréat and higher educational diplomas, especially those with a vocational bias. This trend was not in favour of the immigrant populations, in which high proportions of the youths still had few if any qualifications. However, the handicap from which these youths suffered at recruitment cannot be attributable solely to educational differences, since it was still present among those with equal levels of attainment. Young people of Maghrebi origin who left the educational system in 1992 with CAP or BEP diplomas were 1.6 times more frequently in unemployment after three years on the labour market than their French-born counterparts. This handicap was found to persist from the one survey to the other, since unemployment was still 1.6 times higher among the members of this group in 1998 (see the table on page 4). These figures did not differ much between the sexes, although the unemployment rates of girls of all ethnic origins were consistently higher than those of boys.

### Looking at young people from immigrant families

The analyses presented in this issue are based on the data collected in the "Generation 92" and "Generation 98" surveys on the first years in the working lives of young people who left the French educational system in 1992 and 1998. In these two surveys, young people from immigrant families were identified on the basis of their place of birth and that of their parents, and it was established whether those born abroad arrived in France before or after reaching junior secondary school level.

Young people from immigrant families were taken here to be those having at least one parent born abroad, while those whose parents were both born in France were taken to be of French origin. These individuals were divided into five groups, depending on their parents' place of birth: Southern Europe (the majority originated from Portugal, but some of the families were from Italy or Spain), the Maghrebi countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), South-Eastern Asia (Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam), Turkey and sub-Saharan Africa (including only Cameroun, Mali and Senegal in the case of Generation 98). Approximately 10% of the youths from immigrant families were not included in the present analysis because they originated from other geographical regions and these groups were too heterogeneous.

In comparing the results of the "Generation 92" and "Generation 98" surveys, the focus was placed on the parents' place of birth, as the parents' nationality at birth was ascertained only in the second survey, and the distinction was also made in this survey, but not in the previous one, between the children of immigrants and those of expatriates who had returned to France. In addition, the scope of these analyses was perfectly consistent. In the case of Generation 92, the survey dealt with a sample of 26 356 youths, including 4 270 from immigrant families. In the case of Generation 98, the survey dealt first with 47 041 youths, including 10 085 from immigrant families, who were questioned after their first three years of working life; and secondly with 18 371 youths, including 3 375 from immigrant families, who were questioned after their first five years of working life.

It is more difficult to analyse the situation of youths whose families originated from sub-Saharan Africa and South-Eastern Asia, since their numbers were too small to be able to draw any definite conclusions. It is worth noting, however, that if we take all other factors to be equal, these youths had higher rates of unemployment than their French-born peers after three years on the labour market; whereas youths of Southern European origin do not seem to have been disadvantaged at recruitment, nor do those whose parents were of Turkish origin, although here again, these results should be handled with care.

After two further years on the labour market, the situation of young people originating from Maghrebi immigrant families had improved very little on the whole. After spending five years in all on the labour market, those who left the educational system in 1992 with CAP or BEP diplomas were still 1.3 times more frequently in unemployment than their French-born peers (see the table on page 4). In the '98 survey, this figure increased to 1.5 among the members of this ethnic group. In fact, it increased from 1.6 to 2.1 in the case of boys between the third and fifth year of their working lives, which corresponded to the early 2000s, a period during which another economic downturn was beginning to occur.

✓ For further information about the "Generation 92" and "Generation 98" surveys, contact: [www.cereq.fr](http://www.cereq.fr), under the heading "Databases".

### ■ Unemployment rates of youths from immigrant families

Youths having	at least one parent born										Both parents born in France	
	in Southern Europe		in the Maghreb		in sub-Saharan Africa		in South-Eastern Asia		in Turkey		1992	1998
Date of entry into working life	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998	1992	1998
Rate of unemployment	(percentages)											
• after 3 years of working life	14,6	11,8	26,5	20,1	25,3	21,0	27,4	14,3	33,8	19,6	14,9	10,2
• after 5 years of working life	15,9	12,6	27,3	21,1	24,3	19,4	14,0	12,9	44,1	26,1	15,2	10,4

The figures in italics are intended as an indication only. They are not completely reliable because of the small numbers composing these categories. Sources: Céreq's "Generation 92" and "Generation 98" surveys, 2006.

These findings are particularly alarming in view of the educational characteristics of most young people whose families originated from the Maghreb. Many of this group left school with few if any qualifications, or after pursuing general studies: none of these characteristics are particularly favourable to finding employment. All in all, the young people of Maghrebi origin who left the educational system without any qualifications at junior secondary school level were five to six times more frequently unemployed after spending five years on the labour market than the French youths who had obtained a CAP or BEP diploma.

To make matters worse, even the most highly qualified youths of Maghrebi origin continued to be disadvantaged, especially the boys with at least one parent born abroad (not counting French expatriates who returned to France) who left the French educational system in 1998. Those with no baccalauréat were six times more frequently unemployed after three years on the labour market than their peers whose parents were both French. Among those who had reached at least baccalauréat level, this rate of unemployment was still four times higher than among the French youths included in these surveys.

### A type of discrimination which tends to persist

The discrimination to which young people from Maghrebi immigrant families are subjected at recruitment therefore persisted despite the improved labour market conditions. This group was the most severely disadvantaged, although the quantitative effects were underestimated because the members of this group were taken in these surveys to include young expatriates who had returned to France, who were not affected in this way. Youths whose families were from sub-Saharan Africa or South-Eastern Asia were also disadvantaged, but to a more variable extent. Those who encountered the greatest difficulties seem to have been the boys from sub-Saharan African families; whereas the youths of Turkish origin, who tended to favour vocational training streams but still often ended up with no qualifications, fared much better. It turns out that these youths encountered unfair discrimination much less frequently at recruitment and that their situation was similar to that of young people from Southern European immigrant families.

The date of arrival of these immigrant streams in France does not seem to account for these disparities, since large proportions of all these youths, including even those whose families immigrated fairly recently, were born in France. Only having one parent born in France was found to be a factor which significantly improved these young people's situation, to the extent that it resembled the situation of youths whose parents were both born in France. On the other hand, it can be seen quite clearly that the youths with the lowest qualifications were always disadvantaged in comparison with the holders of vocational baccalauréats or higher vocational diplomas. Youths from Maghrebi families therefore pooled several unfavourable characteristics. Now these

characteristics are liable to result in what the economists have called "statistical discrimination", i.e., a type of discrimination based on the mean characteristics of a group of individuals. This would explain

why youths of Maghrebi origin are penalized at recruitment, even when they are suitably qualified. This hypothesis would mean, however, that individuals are identified with specific groups at recruitment, on the basis of "visible features" which have been previously integrated by the recruiters as the result of a social process.

The "statistical discrimination" from which youths of North African origin suffer cannot be a separate process, and it is not really distinguishable from racist discrimination. The extent of the discrimination involved and its highly persistent nature are consistent with this conclusion, especially as similar disadvantages were found to weigh, although to a slightly lesser extent, on those from sub-Saharan African and South-Eastern Asian immigrant families, two groups which are also characterized by "visible features". On similar lines, youths from Maghrebi immigrant families were not unfairly treated at recruitment in the public sector, where the modes of recruitment used are much more formal. These youths are even present in abnormally high proportions in the French public sector, if one includes subsidized contracts, whereas their rates of access to qualification contracts in the private sector are known to be excessively low.

Although this cannot be counted as formal evidence, it is nevertheless worth mentioning that regardless of their situation and their qualifications, many young people whose families immigrated from the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa or South-Eastern Asia stated that they had suffered at least once from discrimination at recruitment. More than 40% of the boys from Maghrebi immigrant families claimed that their name had given rise to discriminatory practices, as the simulated recruitment tests mentioned above have shown. A similar statement was made by 40% of the boys from sub-Saharan African immigrant families, but in this case the reason given for the discrimination was their colour. However one interprets this feeling of having suffered from unfair discrimination, this feeling does exist, and it plays a role in the relationship between a prospective employer and a candidate for a job, and may aggravate the downward spiral in which some young people from immigrant families are caught up. It therefore seems most unlikely that the recent decrease in unemployment, which was fairly slight in any case, is going to solve all the problems encountered by these young people.

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(Centre Maurice Halbwachs, CNRS)

## ■ Unemployment rates of youths from Maghrebi immigrant families

	Date of entry into working life		1992		1998	
	3 years	5 years	3 years	5 years		
<b>Unemployment rates of holders of CAP or BEP diplomas</b>						
• Those from Maghrebi immigrant families	1,6	1,3	1,6	1,5		
• Those of French origin (control population)	1	1	1	1		

Sources: Céreq's "Generation 92" and "Generation 98" surveys, 2006.

### Further reading

- "Quelles discriminations à l'encontre des jeunes d'origine maghrébine à l'entrée du marché du travail en France" (What kinds of discrimination weigh on young people of Maghrebi origin entering the French labour market?), A. Dupray and S. Moullet, *Marché du travail et genre, Maghreb-Europe*, Éditions du Dulbea, 2004.
- "Les débuts dans la vie active des jeunes issus de l'immigration après des études supérieures" (The early working lives of youths from immigrant families having undergone higher educational studies), A. Frickey, J. Murdoch and J.-L. Primon, *NEF*, no. 9, February 2004.
- "France and the unknown second generation: preliminary results on social mobility", P. Simon, *International migration review*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2003.
- "Les enfants d'immigrés sur le marché du travail : les mécanismes d'une discrimination selective" (Children of immigrants on the labour market: the mechanisms underlying selective discrimination), R. Silberman and I. Fournier, *Formation Emploi*, no. 65, January-March 1999.

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# Briefing

## Updates

### Resources, rights and capabilities: finding social foundations for europe

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Since 1st January 2007, Céreq has been associated with 25 European research institutes in a 4-year project which is part of the 6th CRDP (Community Research and Development Programme) headed by Robert Salais (CNRS-IDHE). The aim of this project, which is called CAPRIGHT, is to assess social and employment policies and the reforms carried out in this field at European level. Bringing together specialists in the fields of philosophy, economics, sociology, anthropology, history, law and political science, CAPRIGHT is taking an innovative approach to the processes involved in the relationships between initial and continuing vocational training, employment and social protection in Europe. By focusing on different patterns of resources and applying Amartya Sen's capabilities approach to public policy, it is proposed to analyse labour markets, employment and social protection with a view to promoting individual and collective capabilities, based on the fair and efficient use of the right to monetary and institutional resources by and for individuals. The idea is to enable people, wherever they are living and working, to develop their own future with the resources at their disposal.

Céreq will participate in this project by studying many different personal and occupational paths observed in Europe in terms of unequal access to resources and unequal freedom of choice and action in the personal and occupational fields. It is proposed to analyze how a combination between life-long learning, the labour market, people's occupations and the conditions of social welfare contribute to personal experience: whether the resources available at key moments suffice to sustain and develop capabilities, especially when factors favouring risks and discontinuities prevent personal and vocational development. This will involve examining company policies and the processes involved in the making of individual choices in various regional and national contexts in order to determine the effects of institutional frameworks. Special attention will be paid to gender equality, career paths and job restructuring.

Along with the University of Stockholm, Céreq will be in charge of this part of the project, which involves 13 European groups and one group from Argentina. Six research workers from three of Céreq's departments will be involved in this project.

During the first 18 months, Céreq will be dealing with the following three stages in the project: describing national institutional contexts, defining a common quantitative and qualitative approach, and performing a longitudinal assessment of national and European resources. ■

✓ For further information, please contact Josiane Vero, phone: 04 91 13 28 28, e-mail: [vero@cereq.fr](mailto:vero@cereq.fr)

#### **Resources:**

All goods and services available to a person, whether or not they are produced on the market. By extension, resources also include legal rights. In line with A. Sen, resources are viewed in terms of the functionalities they are liable to serve *a priori*.

#### **Capabilities:**

All the things a person can do with the resources available. Sen called all possible combinations of really accessible states and really practicable actions "capabilities": they amount to that person's real freedom of action. This depends on people's personal and occupational freedom of choice, which could be defined as their range of possibilities.

In the framework of a **national report on the proposed European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)**, Céreq and the DREIC (the French Ministry of Education Directorate for European international relations and cooperation) organised a one-day round-table meeting, which took place on 5th March in Marseille. The participants in this meeting were members of the inter-ministerial steering group responsible for this report run by the DREIC, the heads of the organizations consulted (CNCP) and members of labour-management organizations. Members of Céreq who had worked on the issue of ECVET also attended the meeting.

The aim of this one-day meeting was to discuss in detail the main subjects addressed in the report, taking the time to define the concepts and issues involved and to present the results of previous studies and surveys, such as those conducted by Céreq, which were liable to shed light on these questions. The meeting consisted of the following three main sessions:

- the first session dealt with European schemes in the field of vocational training and certification, the objectives announced and their cohesion (Annie Boudier, from Céreq). In a second paper, Isabelle Le Mouillour from the German BIBB explained the principles underlying this new proposal. The debates focused on relationships between ECVET, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit Transfer System for higher educational systems (ECTS).
- The subject of the second session was the impact of ECVET on the certification system and the initial and continuing vocational training supply in France: integration or dispersion, units or modules, allocating credit points, etc. (Josiane Teissier from Céreq). The experience acquired in France, and by many of the participants at the meeting, as far as introducing units and modules is concerned gave rise to much interesting debate.
- The third session focused on the outcomes of various kinds of learning processes (schooling, alternance training, work experience) and the various outcomes involved (knowledge, skills, competence). Special emphasis was placed on the lessons to be learned from French VAE (Validation of acquired experience) practices (Jean-Louis Kirsch, Bernardine Rivoire and Alain Savoyant from Céreq). The discussions were mainly about the question of assessment in general. ■

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### A European initiative: and thereafter

In 2006, Céreq took part in the development of a French response to the European proposal to create a European Qualifications Framework (EQF). In France, these efforts have resulted in the publication of several documents focusing on the issues involved in this project, including a publication by Céreq and an official French statement about the problems posed. By the end of June 2007, the European Council is expected to have ratified the creation of this Qualifications Framework.

Meanwhile, the European Commission (in the framework of the Leonardo programme) has called for proposals to test the implementation of EQF principles experimentally. The CNCP has submitted an EQF Testing proposal on behalf of Belgium, Italy, Spain, Rumania, Poland, Scotland and Wales. The French Ministry for Youth and Sport has decided to conduct these EQF tests on water sport, equestrian sport and golf. This application is of great interest, since it focuses on qualifications in occupational fields which are regulated at European, national and sectoral level. The first meeting of the French work group took place in March 2007 in Paris. ■

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## EurOccupations: the second meeting

At the second meeting of the **EurOccupations** project held in January 2007 in Barcelona, the methodological options on which the project will be based were fixed. The following eight European countries are involved in this project to draw up the first European dictionary of employment and occupations: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The aim is to draw up a nomenclature of 1 500 occupations and to find jointly agreed definitions for the content of each of the 150 most common jobs and occupations.

These occupations, which will cover the whole economic sphere, will be selected in the following 8 main sectors of activity and types of occupation:

- Care and Welfare,
- Construction and cars
- Education, research and personnel,
- Information, communication, finance and legal,
- Manufacturing (food, metal, oil, gas) and mining,
- Clerks, staff, management and army/police,
- Trade and agriculture,
- Transport, logistics, travel and cleaning/garbage.

Sector by sector, each of the 150 occupations selected will be described by referring to existing documents and consulting experts (social partners and/or employment specialists in specific sectors). Professionals exercising the occupations in question will also be consulted. A questionnaire has been drawn up for this purpose, and the occupational branches have been asked to promote this project by adding links to this questionnaire on their websites. The address of the project and international network website is: [www.eurooccupations.org](http://www.eurooccupations.org) ■

✓ For further information, please contact Sylvie-Anne Mériot (Céreq), phone: 04 91 13 28 28, e-mail: [meriot@cereq.fr](mailto:meriot@cereq.fr).

## New Publications

INTERNET "Net.Doc"

### Les certifications du tourisme : panorama et tendances

[Qualifications in the tourist industry: an overall view and a look at the trends]

> Françoise Kogut-Kubiak

*Net.doc* 26, April 2007

This study was based on the use of the REFLET database, which focuses on vocational teaching fluxes and provides a record of French vocational and technical teaching diplomas. After briefly presenting the main types of employment provided by the tourist industry, the author lists the qualifications delivered by the various French ministries, as well as by the occupational branches and various private organizations. Some statistics are presented, which help to give a more concrete picture of the situation. The figures available in most cases correspond to the numbers of students in their last year of vocational training, depending on their previous paths (school or apprenticeship), gender and administrative sector. The results of examinations are also given, in terms of the number of candidates and the pass rates, depending on the previous paths taken (school, apprenticeship, continuing vocational training and independent candidates). This database can therefore be used to draw up statistical series covering a period of several years. In the case of each diploma, it is also possible to consult the legal texts and the standards specifying the skills which have to be acquired, the content of the training course and the examination regulations. One of the most original features of REFLET is the fact that it can be used to trace the history of each diploma by consulting the graphic genealogies associated with each vocational training speciality. The REFLET database and the *Net.Doc* series are accessible on the Céreq website: [www.cereq.fr](http://www.cereq.fr) ■



> This publication is available on the Céreq website : [www.cereq.fr/net.htm](http://www.cereq.fr/net.htm)

**Les diplômes de l'Éducation nationale dans l'univers des certifications professionnelles.**

[French national educational diplomas in the world of occupational qualifications]

&gt; F. Maillard and J. Rose (editors)

**Relief no. 20**, March 2007

The French Ministry of Education's Directorate for schools and Céreq have been working together for more than a decade on the theme of "vocational qualifications" (the whole set of vocational diplomas, qualifications and certificates), in terms of both the training involved and national and European policies for increasing the numbers of those with diplomas.

A workshop on this theme was organized jointly by Desco and Céreq from November 2004 to January 2006. Desco included these issues in its programme for 2003, and Céreq organized an internal symposium, an account of which was published in *Relief* no.16, July 2006 entitled *Qualifications, a new tool in the field of training and employment: the challenge facing France and Europe*. Twenty or so regular attendants met up at this workshop with other research workers, institutional actors and representatives of four European Union member countries.

The contributions presented at this workshop come under the following five headings:

- From vocational training to qualifications. Developments and challenges, with a contribution by José Rose: *Diplomas and qualifications: the terms of the debate and guidelines for a research programme*.
- The diplomas delivered by the French Ministry of Education: from one model to another.
- The new order in the realm of qualifications: collective strategies and individual mobilisation, with contributions by Dominique Maillard, Emmanuel Sulzer and Patrick Veneau: *Thirty years of homologation: the political alternative to the action alternative*, Joachim Haas and Maurice Ourtau: *The move towards standardization in Europe and aeronautic maintenance workers' qualifications*, and Bernardine Rivoire: *Aren't the relationships between vocational training and qualifications being completely transformed by the 2002 legislation?*
- Collective strategies and individual mobilisation, with contributions by Guillaume Delignières: *Setting up and using vocational qualifications: the birth of telephone health and social networks*; Chantal Labruyère and Josiane Teissier: *The role of qualifications in the setting up and recognition of occupations, skills and competences by the social partners*; Elsa Personnaz and Fred Séchaud: *Motives for obtaining qualifications via the VAE pathway (Validation of Acquired Experience)*.
- Quality and nomenclature issues, with a contribution by Dominique Maillard, Emmanuel Sulzer and Patrick Veneau: *The classification practices of the technical homologation commission, or standardising vocational training levels*.

The proceedings of two sessions are also available: *Diplomas, vocational training and qualifications. Roles and modes at work among our European neighbours* (Annie Boudier) and *Setting up a supply of vocational training and qualifications at higher educational level* (Josiane Teissier).

(CPC document no. 3, 2006 also gives an account of this workshop). ■

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