

Training & Employment

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM CEREQ AND ITS ASSOCIATED CENTRES

EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS IN THE HOTEL AND CATERING TRADE: A FRANCO-AMERICAN COMPARISON

Hotel and catering jobs offer considerable employment possibilities for a young labour force which, with little experience, often places its career hopes on specialised training. In fact, such jobs, which are so attractive to the young generation, are frequently found in structures less prestigious than the palaces or five-star restaurants of the candidates' dreams. In addition, they do not offer longer term career opportunities, in the form of a real employment or profession, to more than a tiny proportion of these young people. From this point of view, the United States, where a distinction is made between odd jobs, regular employment and professions within the hotel and catering trade, permits a prospective look at the activity in France.

Since the 1970s, France and the United States have carried out a veritable transfer of competences in the hotel and catering trade. France has exported its gastronomical expertise and received in return, not without a certain resistance, hotel and catering chains from which it has learned new management methods and a new approach to service in numbers. Today, the chains are improving their positions in both countries. The main growth expected in France is that of the fast-food outlets, but at the very time that these are slowing down in the United States in favour of restaurants offering table service at moderate prices.

France, which is still largely dominated by a tradition of self-run enterprises in the hotel and catering trade, will probably undergo an increase in the share of salaried jobs, especially in supervisory, management and marketing functions. The American advance in this area thus permits us to take a prospective look at employment, while recognising France's advance in the constitution of the different occupations and hotel management training.

RESTAURANTS AS THE SECTOR'S MAIN EMPLOYER

In France, the number of hotel and catering jobs is generally underestimated owing to the large number of canteens, which are run by private and especially public operators. Indeed, France is the European leader in the field, with 40 percent of the turnover for food consumed outside the home, but this sector, known as 'institutional food service', is not very visible in statistical breakdowns since it is generally classified not with the hotel and catering sector but with hospital, school, prison, military and other activities.

If institutional food service is reintegrated into the hotel and catering industry, the profession represents nearly one million jobs. More than one-third are found in restaurants, including three-quarters in 'traditional-style restaurants' and one-quarter in 'fast food'. One-third of these jobs are carried out in canteens and only one-fifth in hotels or other accommodations (cf. Graphic p. 2).

CENTRE D'ÉTUDES ET DE RECHERCHES SUR LES QUALIFICATIONS

In the United States, the same statistical operation leads to an estimate of nearly ten million hotel and catering jobs. Three-fourths are found in restaurants, where table service is less widespread than in France, with the result that such jobs are evenly divided between what are defined as 'full-service restaurants' and 'limited-service eating places'. Canteens, moreover, account for only a small proportion of the jobs (cf. Graphic below) and 13 percent of the turnover for meals eaten outside the home. Indeed, only one-tenth of companies with more than one hundred full-time employees offer eating facilities to their personnel, and the other canteens often provide only a basic service to a needy population, notably elderly persons and school children identified as undernourished. The hotel trade, meanwhile, which is much less developed than catering, offers even fewer employment opportunities than in France: proportionally, the United States has 2.6 times fewer hotels (and 1.5 times more restaurants) than France. On the other hand, going to restaurants is more widespread among Americans, who eat an average of one out of every five meals outside their homes, which is nearly twice as often as the French.

In France, 25 percent of hotel and catering personnel are self-employed, compared to fewer than 5 percent in the United States. Catering remains largely perceived as an opportunity open to all age groups, without significant capital and without diploma requirements. Anyone can open a restaurant, as in the United States, where only some states require a basic training course in hygiene. The growth of hotel and restaurant chains in France is gradually extending salaried work, however, and may thus come to limit the opportunities for creating an independent activity.

AN INDUSTRY SEGMENTED BETWEEN PROFESSIONS, REGULAR EMPLOYMENT AND ODD JOBS

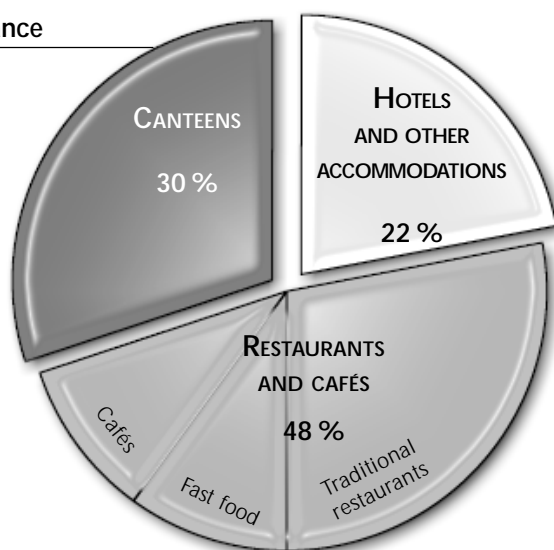
The French hotel and catering industry is characterised by a high turnover and a workforce that is largely young and unskilled. In this respect, it tends to take its inspiration from the American model, where a third of the population has worked in a restaurant at one time or another. It is mainly composed of operating personnel who are often in contact with customers and thus essentially recruited on the basis of behaviour assessment.

In the hotel industry, the majority of jobs involve cleaning, sometimes delegated to specialised companies, and personal services such as hostess-desk clerk, porter, doorman or bell captain. It is possible to arrive at supervisory or managerial posts through internal promotion, but high-level jobs are increasingly reserved for those with specialised diplomas in business, accounting, management, company strategy and so on. The career prospects for operating personnel are thus often limited, especially in reception-desk functions, where the hotel trade is above all a sector for initial labour-market entry before professional reorientation.

Catering is also a two-tiered sector. The cooks, however, notwithstanding their subordinate role, often have real possibilities for advancement. It is true that cooking is still largely the work of skilled personnel, with diplomas or experience, unlike table service and the bottom-level hotel jobs, which involve a personnel that is often very young (under 25), unskilled and employed on a part-time basis.

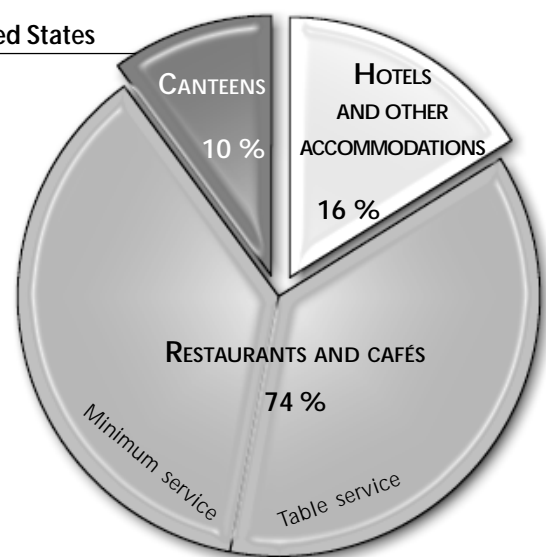
HOTEL AND CATERING JOBS IN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES

France



Sources: INSEE annual business survey, 1998 (hotels, restaurants, cafés); Gira-Sic, 1997 (canteens).

United States



Sources: Bureau of National Statistics, 1997 (hotels, restaurants); National Restaurant Association, 1998 (canteens).

The Americans, meanwhile, long counted the hotel industry, as an essentially non-specialised activity, within the cleaning and personal services sector, while 'food services' were attached to retail trade. Since 1997, hotel and catering activities are included in the same service sector, under the heading 'accommodation and food services'. This change is more indicative of a concern for harmonising international statistics sources than a real linking of the two trades. Nonetheless, the management of the workforce in hotel and catering activities is fairly close to that practised in France: apart from supervisory personnel, generally holding diplomas and employed full time, only competences in culinary production are really recognised. American employers even tend to maintain a three-tiered management of operating personnel.

Two distinct populations occupy the subordinate posts: on the one hand, a considerable student population in need of work to help pay for costly studies, generally in contact with customers and employed on a part-time, hourly basis, and, on the other hand, a population essentially consisting of minority groups who hold the less prestigious full-time jobs such as cleaning or caretaking in the hotels or dishwashing, basic cooking or baking in food services.

Only major hotels and gourmet restaurants seek personnel with a good level of general training for jobs as waiters or other service posts, while insisting that this personnel is 'educated but not skilled' in relation to the job held. They also require their cooks, whose expertise is recognised, to have a specialised diploma.

The occupation of cook is nonetheless becoming more commonplace in the United States. The restaurant chains in particular, whose menus are often developed around a single theme, can rely on standardised work which permits the rapid learning of limited techniques. Thus, the proportion of jobs for short-order or fast-food cooks is sharply increasing and now equals that of traditional cooks.

This category-based management of the workforce reflects the coexistence of different kinds of jobs:

- about one-fifth treated as skilled professions and centred on culinary production;
- one-fourth full-time jobs, including the subordinate positions that basically involve minorities;
- a majority of odd jobs for students, more numerous in restaurants than hotels.

If the spread of odd jobs still seems unlikely in France because of the relatively small number of students who work, the downgrading of certain jobs relating to the profession of cook and their opening to unskilled labour is underway, notably among large employers in urban areas.

TWO SYSTEMS OF TRAINING FOR A SINGLE EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE?

French hotel training, mainly taking its inspiration from the luxury hotels, grew out of a large number of specialities basically intended to satisfy a prestigious, independent hotel and catering trade. Over the past thirty years, it has been restructured around basic specialisations: cooking, table service and hotel management. Recently, moreover, its level has been improved to meet the management needs of hotel chains and catering companies providing a service that is often standardised but more diversified in terms of the range of chains, and thus reaching a larger clientele. Hotel education remains dominated by an artistic ideal, however—and this is the case as of the initial levels of vocational training, which begin around the age of fifteen (*certificat d'aptitudes professionnelles* [vocational aptitude certificate, CAP] and *brevet d'études professionnelles* [vocational studies certificate, BEP])—which may explain the frequent dissatisfactions of cooks when they actually enter the labour market.

At present, France and the United States have the same proportion of high school graduates: 62 percent of a given age group. But the American educational system is more orientated to the recognition of higher-education diplomas. In the hotel and catering trade in the United States, there is no real professional recognition for low-level operational specialities such as cleaning, service or assembly cookery (which consists of carrying out simple food preparations on the basis of semi-prepared products from the food-processing industry). Specialisations come into play after the first two or four years of higher education and are thus more limited: they deal only with culinary arts and hotel management. They are generally recognised in terms of job status—with more full-time posts and more attractive wages—and better career prospects. Certain hotel schools subsequently propose narrower specialisations in management, distinguishing, for example, independent hotel management from that of chains or restaurant management from that of canteens, while these options do not yet exist in France.

These two educational systems correspond, however, to a comparable employment structure in both countries. With the exception of gourmet cooking, the traditional activity in the sector remains fairly indifferent to high-level diplomas and privileges on-the-job training. On the other hand, the hotel and restaurant chains have a great demand for higher-education graduates. Such chains are, moreover, more widespread in the United States, where they represent 27 percent of the restaurants and 20 percent of the hotels and employ half of the industry's employees. In France, fewer than 4 percent of the restaurants and only 7 percent of the hotels belong to chains. The essential part of the restaurants' activity is thus still carried out in an artisanal context, within SMEs. Only the canteens generally belong to very large structures, with several thousand salaried employees each.

In both countries, chains and large employers generally have a stronger union presence and often provide better employment conditions, with possibilities of advancement to supervisory and management posts. In France, however, independent of these advantages, working for chains which offer such run-of-the-mill services is viewed as so socially degrading and technically deskilling that they often have difficulties in recruiting professional cooks.

Attached to the image of gourmet cooking, French professionals are less sensitive to objective working conditions than to the socially prestigious nature of the services provided. In a trade that counts above all on its artisanal features and the personal involvement of individuals, the orientation towards canteens or hotel and restaurant chains tends to be seen as a 'comfortable' choice—but also one that cannot be reversed. On the other side of the Atlantic, it is simply seen as a passing chance in the context of constant professional mobility.

In the United States, the economic recovery of the late 1990s saw the average unemployment rate fall to around 4 percent, as compared to 9.6 percent in France (August 2000). Sometimes confronted with a shortage of labour, American employers have lowered their demands for qualifications. They turn, for example, to retired or unemployed individuals seeking work to compensate for inadequate income and also employ large numbers of young people (one-fourth of the employees in the American hotel and catering industry are under twenty years old). This phenomenon remains quite limited in France, where only 10 percent of the 15-19 age group works, as compared to 50 percent in the United States. It is thus not certain that France's hotel and catering trade will follow the same evolution as that of the United States, which provides odd jobs to students, low-skilled employment to a needy labour force and a few professions with real prospects for career advancement.

Nonetheless, in France as well the profession seems to be having difficulties recruiting young, low-skilled personnel, to whom it often offers inferior employment conditions and few possibilities for career advancement. In the face of a labour force which is less 'flexible' than in the United States, it would seem to be lacking in attractiveness and, above all, to have difficulties in keeping its employees. It does not always give clear indications to young people about the



The Hotel and Catering Industry, an International Comparison

This article is based on an initial study carried out by Céreq in 1997 and 1998 in the context of a reform of hotel and catering diplomas.

The data on the United States were obtained through additional research carried out for the French Ministry of Tourism, under the direction of Professor Jean Gadrey of the University of Lille 1 (Clerse-CNRS). This project involved an analysis of employment determinants and prospects in the hotel, restaurant and café sector in France, including an international comparison with the United States and Japan. A joint report was issued in November 2000 and a formal publication will follow in 2001.

content of hotel and catering jobs and their middle-term prospects and has yet to adopt less irregular working hours or offer better recognition of experience in the trade and employees' involvement in their work. From the educational system onwards, this sector is too often described as a prestigious artisanal and artistic activity rather than as an efficient commercial activity serving a broad public.

Sylvie-Anne Mériot (Céreq)

FURTHER READING

- Geste and Obea. *Hôtellerie, restauration, cafés : analyse et enjeux en matière d'emploi et de formation professionnelle*. [Hotels, Catering, Cafés: Analysis and Issues in the Area of Employment and Training.] Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité. Paris: La Documentation française, 1997.
- Florence Jany-Catrice. "Niveau et qualité des emplois dans l'hôtellerie et la restauration américaines : comparaison avec la France" [Level and Quality of Jobs in the American Hotel and Catering Industry: A Comparison with France.] *Formation Emploi* no. 71 (July-September 2000).
- Sylvie-Anne Mériot. *La restauration collective. Analyse des besoins de formation pour une rénovation des diplômes*. [Institutional Food Service. Analysis of Training Needs for Reforming Diplomas.] Document no. 129, "Evaluation" series. Marseilles: Céreq, 1998.

Updates

Chile: Longitudinal Survey of Exits from Higher Technical Education

In Chile, higher technical education is open to high school graduates and is offered by three different institutions: university, vocational institute or technical training centre. Each of these bodies is authorised to grant its own diplomas, without co-ordination among them. All students pay for their courses and tuition costs are roughly the same regardless of the institution, but loans are available only to students enrolled in State universities. Each institution is responsible for its admissions choices.

There is a general feeling that the system functions with great obscurity, if not inequality, in relation to students, their families and the companies which use their services:

- access to a higher-education diploma is held to offer protection against unemployment and favour social mobility, but higher technical education suffers from an inferior social image;
- students choose orientations without knowing the likely effects of their choices, which are based on supposed reputations and opportunities, while the cost of the studies often constitutes a considerable sacrifice for their families;

- employers are seeking qualities of initiative, autonomy and adaptation, which higher education does not always provide, while the technical competences expected may be at a lower level;

- the directors of the higher technical education institutions would like the diplomas they grant to be better recognised both officially and socially.

The Ministry of Higher Education is planning an overall reform of the system but, in line with the recommendation of the World Bank, is waiting for advice from an employment observatory on the paths to be promoted.

In this context, Céreq, the French Ministry of Employment and Solidarity and the University of Marne-la-Vallée participated in a seminar on "Higher Education and Labour-Market Entry of Young Graduates" held in Santiago on 15-17 September 2000. This meeting brought together experts from Chile, other Latin American countries and France. Representatives of the Chilean Ministry of Education presented the results of a survey of two thousand graduates exiting the higher-education system between 1995 and 1999. This survey,

carried out by telephone, is representative at the level of Chile's main regions and covers graduates of the three cycles of higher technical education as well as graduates of full higher education programmes. It thus offers the first statistical findings on the opportunities for young graduates in the Chilean labour market. It notably brings out sharp disparities between university and non-university streams, as well as those between technician training and full training programmes, in terms of both access to employment and remuneration: while university graduates come out quite well, the school-to-work transition of those exiting vocational institutes and technical training centres is much more problematic. Among university graduates, moreover, those coming from the former public universities generally encounter less unemployment than graduates of the other private universities. These results will be consolidated by those of a postal survey carried out among five thousand graduates from the class of 1995.

✓ *Contact:* Jean-François Giret,
Michel Théry, Céreq

New Publications and Special Events

YOUTH JOBS

Aide éducateur : quel avenir pour la fonction, quel devenir pour les jeunes ?

[Assistant educator: What Prospects for the Function, What Future for the Young People? Follow-Up/Evaluation of the Implementation of the "New Services, Youth Jobs" Programme at the Ministry of Education.]

✍ Jean-Paul Cadet, Laurence Diederich-Diops, Dominique Fournié, Christophe Guitton

The arrival of sixty thousand assistant educators in the schools since autumn 1997 through the "New Services, Youth Jobs" programme raises three groups of questions for the Ministry of Education:

- To what extent do the activities assigned to the assistant educators prefigure new functions likely to become permanent?
- Does the integration of assistant educators give them a particular identity in relation to teaching and administrative personnel and can this serve to modify the practices of the latter?
- What is the impact of the assistant educators' experience within the school system on their chances of labour-market entry, given that they are not supposed to remain in this function beyond the five years of their Youth Jobs contract?

Some initial responses and resulting recommendations are provided by the first phase of a study, which combines the results of a panel survey of three thousand assistant educators and analyses of activities based on the ETED (typical job studied in its dynamic) method.

Document no. 151, Céreq, September 2000, 170 pp., 150 F (22.87 €).

Emplois-jeunes : le pari de la mutualisation. L'exemple des agents de proximité et d'information sur l'espace public

[Youth Jobs: The Gamble of Mutualisation. The Example of Community-Service and Information Agents in the Public Space.]

✍ Chantal Labruyère, Josiane Teissier, Alain Savoyant, Nicole Mandon

The "Partenaires pour la ville" (City Partners) scheme encourages a pooling of means to set up orientation, information, arbitration and social mediation activities in the public space. Beyond the question of how these activities can become self sustaining, it may be asked whether the associations and their young employees actually have the power to orient their public-service activity in function of a shared notion of the common good to be defended. Such a process assumes that the young agents occupy a recognised role in identifying needs and instituting new activities. In practice, their room to manoeuvre varies considerably. Imagining a future in this new vocational stream is very problematic insofar as the profession's institutional viability and social recognition remain to be developed.

Document no. 152, Céreq, October 2000, 109 pp., 110 F (16.77 €).

▼
These documents are available from the Céreq bookstore or by mail from Marie-Christine Antonucci, Céreq, 10, place de la Joliette, BP 21321, 13567 Marseilles cedex 2. Tel. 33 4 91 13 28 89, fax 33 4 91 13 28 80. E-mail: antonucci@cereq.fr. Payment must accompany orders; please add 25 F (3.81 €) for shipping and handling.

Debate

▼
On the occasion of the Salon de l'Education trade show organised last November by the Ligue de l'enseignement with support from the Ministry of Education, Céreq organised a public discussion on the professionalisation of youth jobs. Focusing on the cases of the Ministry of Education and the Paris transportation authority (RATP), the event was intended to analyse the two jobs of community service agent and assistant educator in terms of content, positioning, professionalisation and social recognition in order to examine to what extent and under what conditions these might constitute new occupations. The discussion took place in the presence of some one hundred young people invited to bring their questions to bear on the studies of the researchers and the experiences of the institutions employing them.

Forum

▼
A discussion group on assistant educators has been opened on Céreq's Website (www.cereq.fr). Among the questions to be addressed: What is the future of the assistant educator function? What career prospects will the assistant educators have, given that they are not supposed to remain in the post for more than five years? What changes have they brought to the functioning of the schools?

This forum is open to all.

✓ *Contact:* Jean-Paul Cadet, cadet@cereq.fr

France's Presidency of the European Union

On the occasion of France's presidency of the European Union (July-December 2000), Céreq participated in three special events.

- **A conference on professional equality between women and men** (Paris, 24 November), which brought together two hundred participants from companies, civil-service administrations, non-profit associations and the research community. Nicole Péry, junior minister for women's rights and vocational training, recalled that women's work activity, far from countering that of men, contributes to economic growth. A first round table, following the conclusions of the Lisbon summit, was devoted to women's access to the labour market; voluntarist strategies for reducing inequalities were thus presented, with emphasis on the importance of a linkage between regional, national and European levels. A second round table focused on means of working towards professional equality in the companies; it brought out the importance of integrating economic rationale, social development and professional equality. A third round table dealing with life cycles emphasised problems which justify the inclusion of this topic as a key issue in the European employment guidelines for 2001: in France, for example, women with families take charge of 80 percent of household activities and childcare.

✓ *Contact:* Christine Fournier

- **The European Forum for the Transparency of Qualifications** (Marseilles, 23-24 November), which held its sixth meeting in Céreq's headquarters. Created on the initiative of the European Commission and the Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), this forum is aimed at encouraging the transparency and mutual recognition of vocational qualifications among EU Member countries. Three tools developed within such a perspective were presented: an addendum to the certification specifying the competences it covers and the jobs for which it prepares, a standardised model of a European CV and a network of contacts in each country to provide information on national and foreign certifications.

✓ *Contact:* Annie Boudier and Jean-Louis Kirsch

- **A seminar on life-long education and training** (Biarritz, 4-5 December), which was opened by Nicole Péry, junior minister for women's rights and vocational training, and Jean-Luc Mélenchon, minister for vocational instruction. Discussion was launched by Hugues Bertrand, Céreq's director, who traced the role of continuing training in the light of the economic and social challenges facing Europe today, followed by a presentation of the European Commission memorandum on life-long education and training by Domenico Lenarduzzi, deputy director of the General Directorate for Education and Culture. Exchanges continued in five workshops devoted respectively to access to life-long training, recognition of professional and personal experience, construction of individual paths to encourage employability throughout working life, development of new training methods and investment in human resources. Three examples of 'good practices' provided the point of departure for each workshop, which was then called upon to propose recommendations at national and European levels. Sweden, which succeeded France in the presidency of the Union, will now have to continue the elaboration of tools intended to encourage life-long training and is organising a conference on "Adult Learning in a Europe of Knowledge" to be held in March 2001.

✓ *Contact:* Annie Boudier

Formation Emploi

Recent articles in Céreq's quarterly journal

Formation Emploi

no. 72 October-December 2000

CONTINUING TRAINING AND UNEMPLOYMENT

"Réduction du chômage et formation tout au long de la vie"

[Reduction of Unemployment and Life-Long Training]

✍ Interview with André Gauron and Jacques Freyssinet, members of the Prime Minister's Council of Economic Advisors

ALTERNING TRAINING

**"Le fragile équilibre de la formation en alternance :
Un point de vue économique"**

[The Fragile Equilibrium of Alternating Training: An Economic Point of View]

✍ Alexandre Léné

The success of alternating training programmes hides numerous difficulties, stemming notably from the functioning of the companies and the labour market.

LEARNING

"La motivation : Critère d'évaluation de la performance scolaire ?"

[Is Motivation a Criterion for Evaluating Academic Performance?]

✍ Stéphanie Leloup

Motivation is taken as the key to performance, but it is extremely difficult to evaluate. And calling it into play avoids asking questions about the difficulties encountered in the school environment.

GREAT BRITAIN

"La suréducation : L'abus des bonnes choses ?"

[Over-Education: Too Much of a Good Thing?]

✍ Francis Green, Steven McIntosch and Anna Vignoles

Over-education clearly exists, but there is no indication of diploma inflation. How to explain this situation?

VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND THE NTICS

"Les PME françaises et Internet : Connaître les usages collectifs d'Internet pour guider les offreurs de formation professionnelle"

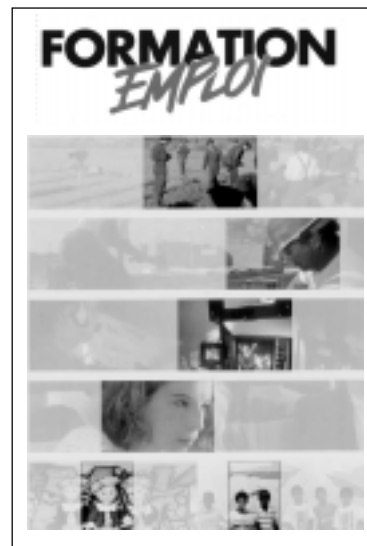
[French SMEs and the Internet: Determining Collective Uses of the Internet in order to Guide Vocational-Training Providers]

✍ Alain d'Iribarne and Martine Gadille

More than half of French SMEs are connected to the Internet. But how can public schemes be channelled to accelerate its spread?

BOOK NOTES

Paul Bouffartigue and Charles Gadea, *Sociologie des cadres* (Paris: La Découverte, 2000). A new work on the sociology of managers presented by Henri Eckert.



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