

# Training & Employment

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM CERÉQ AND ITS ASSOCIATED CENTRES

## Continuing Training in the Public Service

*In the face of an acute demographic problem and its own changing missions, France's public service might well be expected to give continuing training an increasingly important role. But what do we know about training practices in this sector, notably in comparison with the private sector? If the nature of the disparities in access are similar, the overall access to training is less selective in the public sector. This situation cannot be explained solely in terms of the 'civil servant' status.*

In recent reports on the public service, continuing training is presented as one of the essential dimensions of State modernisation and a motor of "job and competence planning" (*gestion prévisionnelle des emplois et des compétences*, GPEC). Thus, in the face of the changing functions of the public service and the massive number of retirements expected between now and 2010, the recent Cieutat Report on the modernisation of the public service calls for a reconsideration of the initial and continuing training of civil servants in order to "facilitate recruitment and organise it differently" and "make continuing training an obligation taken into account throughout the career". Buttressed by triennial framework agreements, the civil servants' right to training has gradually given agents tools which are similar to those of private-sector employees, including training leaves, skills audits and adaptation leaves. The use made of these tools, however, is closely tied to the aims of the respective training policies and the constraints weighing on employees in each sector.

While the disparities in access to training—to the detriment of those with fewer academic credentials—are identified as a weakness of the training system initiated by the Continuing Training Law of 1971, public-sector agents, who constitute one-fourth of all employees in France, seem to be better off. But this hardly means that the generosity of the public sector's training policy is the sole cause, or that training procedures and content differ radically between the two sectors.

**Figure 1. RATES OF ACCESS TO TRAINING**

	Public-service agents	Private-sector employees
<b>By age</b>		
15-24	47 %	35 %
25-39	49 %	34 %
40-49	47 %	31 %
50 and over	38 %	24 %
<b>By gender</b>		
Men	46 %	32 %
Women	46 %	31 %
<b>By diploma level</b>		
Bac +3 or more years of study	57 %	54 %
Bac +2 years of study	58 %	50 %
Baccalauréat	50 %	40 %
Technical school certificates (CAP, BEP)	40 %	29 %
Lower secondary certificate (BEPC)	42 %	28 %
No diploma	24 %	18 %
<b>By job status</b>		
Permanent – Indefinite-term contract	48 %	32 %
Contract employee – fixed-term contract, temporary	40 %	27 %
Subsidised jobs	47 %	59 %
<b>By occupational group</b>		
Managers	55 %	53 %
Middle-level occupations	55 %	46 %
Office workers	39 %	30 %
Operatives	30 %	21 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47 %</b>	<b>32 %</b>

Percentages of personnel participating in at least one training session of at least three hours between January 1999 and February 2000.  
Source: Continuing Training 2000 survey. Treatment: Céreq.

### MORE TRAINING FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS THAN PRIVATE-SECTOR EMPLOYEES

According to the data from Céreq's "Continuing Training 2000" survey (see Box page 4), the rate of access to continuing training for public-service agents is significantly higher than that of private-sector employees: 47 percent versus 32 percent. It is particularly high in the State sector (Fonction publique d'Etat, FPE) and the health sector (Fonction publique hospitalière, FPH), where it reaches 50 percent, while in the territorial authorities (Fonction publique territoriale, FPT), it is closer to that of the private sector (39 %). In addition, trained public servants most often declare that they have had only one training experience in the territorial authorities and the private sector, while one-half of those in the State and health sectors have had several.

In addition to benefiting from greater access to training than private-sector employees, public servants participate in training sessions which, on the average, are longer. While 60 percent of such training lasts less than twenty-four hours (about three days) in both sectors, training sessions of one to two weeks are more frequent in the public service. In all, civil servants spend an average of 201 hours in training over 14 months, compared to 143 hours for private-sector employees.

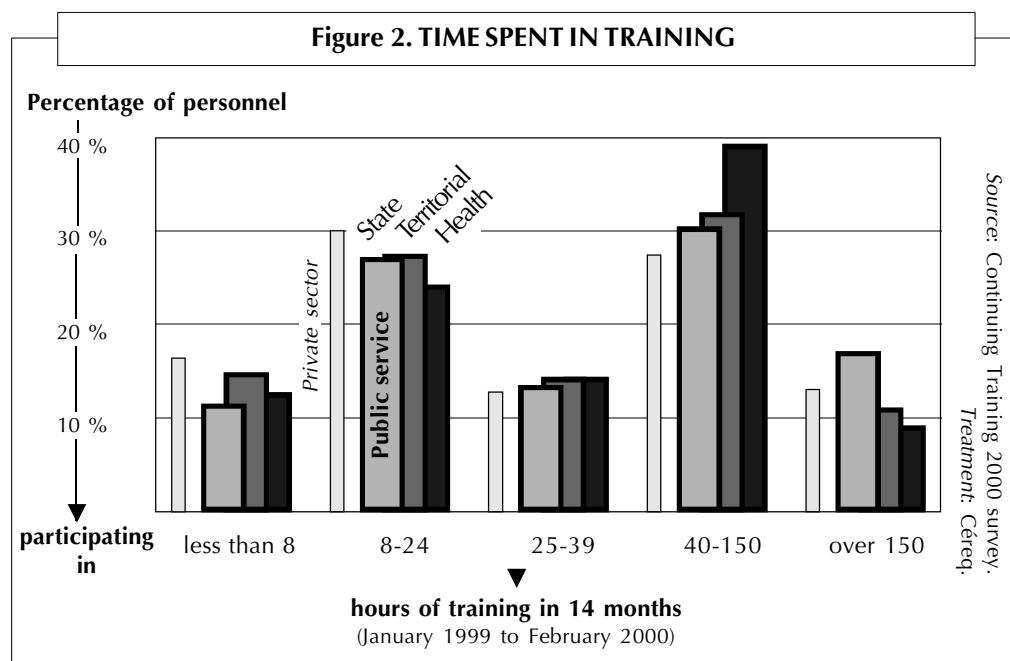
But the main difference between public- and private-sector training has to do with the long-term training programmes. This is not surprising given the initial objectives of vocational training in the public service, as recalled in the preamble to the framework agreement of 22 February 1996: social advancement and preparation for internal competitive examinations. In public and private sectors alike, one-fourth of those queried had participated in less than sixteen hours of training over fourteen months. The total median time spent in training is thirty-nine hours in the public service and thirty-two hours in the private sector, a relatively slight difference amounting to about one day.

On the other hand, one-fourth of the private-sector employees had more than sixty-four hours of training over fourteen months, while one-fourth of the civil servants had more than seventy-hours. This disparity is mainly due to the health sector, where most agents had between 40 and 152 hours of training over 14 months and, to a lesser degree, the State sector, where 18 percent of the agents had more than 150 hours of training (see Figure 2). Thus, civil servants have greater access to training than their counterparts in the private sector and certain of them spend considerably more time in training.

### COMPARABLE DISPARITIES IN ACCESS— BUT TO A LESSER DEGREE

Participation in training is systematically greater in the public service, regardless of the criterion selected (with the exception of personnel benefiting from subsidised contracts; cf. Figure 1). Thus, one out of every two *baccalauréat*-holders in the public service has participated in training, compared to two out of five in the private sector. But the disparities are of a similar nature: the agents who are more likely to receive training are those with diplomas, managers rather than operatives or office workers, permanent civil servants rather than contract employees, and under fifty years of age. But these disparities are considerably less significant in the public sector.

The job structure by occupational group partly explains the greater overall access to training in the public service, where managers and individuals in the middle-level occupations—categories which acquire a great deal of training, in private and public sectors alike—make up about one-half of the public service but only one-third of the private sector. In the territorial authorities, where the distribution by diploma level and job category is similar to that of the private sector, the agents' behaviour seems closer to that of private-sector employees than to that of the agents in the other public services.



The age distribution of public agents is quite different from that of the private-sector employees (cf. Figure 3) but this is less true for access to training by age. Regardless of their age, private-sector employees clearly have less access to training but, in public and private sectors alike, the rates of access to training largely remains at the same level until about age fifty. Although training participation drops afterwards, 43 percent of civil servants in the 50-54 age bracket continue to be trained, compared to 27 percent of private-sector employees of the same age.

The difference in access to training between public service and private sector may thus be explained in part by the adage: "Training leads to training". This difference seems less related to the 'civil servant' status or the greater extravagance of the public sector than to the specific nature of the occupations and activities it encompasses. Indeed, half of those employed in the public service are involved in teaching, health or information activities and show a 50 percent rate of access to training. In the private sector, the most frequent activity, production, occupies one-fourth of the employees, whose rate of access to training is 23 percent.

The foregoing observations suggest that access to training cannot be analysed as a simple, rational investment decision to be recouped in function of the worker's age. Rather, they call for a broader search for the motivations in workforce management policies, work activities or even individual strategies. If civil servants have greater access to training, can we say that they are trained differently from private-sector employees?

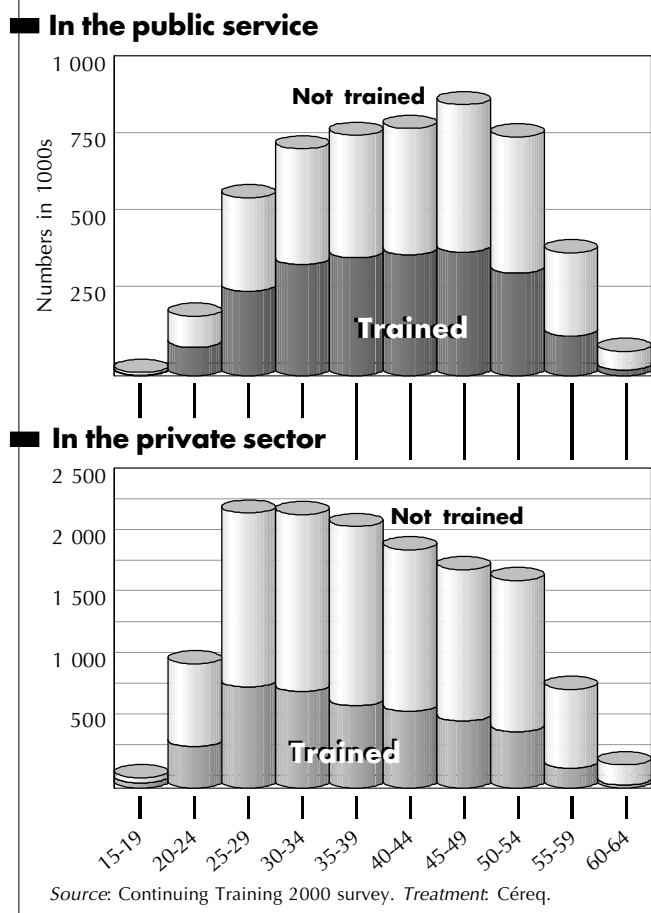
### TRAINING CONTENT: MORE SIMILARITIES THAN DIFFERENCES

In fact, where training content and procedures are concerned, the similarities between public service and private sector seem greater than the differences, insofar as we are basically dealing with employer-financed training sessions aimed at job adaptation. Such sessions represent 80 percent of the training carried out in the public service and this traditional formula is dominant in the private sector as well, albeit for 70 percent of the cases. More precisely, the proportion of training sessions appears to increase with the qualification level of the jobs—they represent 75 percent of the training in the territorial authorities and 80 percent in the State sector—regardless of whether training programmes for educational personnel are taken into account. Overall, one-third of the sessions are devoted to pedagogical training for educators and trainers or medico-social training. In-service training (most often related to office automation or computer skills) represents one-fourth of the total in the territorial authorities, which is the same as in the private sector. Last of all, self-training represents only a small part of the training effort in the public service (4 %), as in the private sector, but it is particularly present among educational personnel (9 %).

In the public service, as in the private sector, the personnel state that what they mainly expect from the training they receive is "adaptation to the job". This is by far the most frequent objective, associated with three out of four training situations. It must be noted, however, that in the public service, this goal can cover more varied motivations given the specific nature of certain training programmes in this sector, such as training prior to granting of permanent status (known as 'initial training' in contrast to training after the granting of such status, known as 'continuing training'). Obtaining a new job, meanwhile, constitutes the main objective of 7 percent of the training, which probably includes preparation for competitive examinations.

The French public service encompasses a great variety of occupations and activities, which means that the range of

Figure 3. NUMBERS OF PERSONNEL TRAINED IN FUNCTION OF AGE



training fields is quite broad. As in the private sector, the largest group concerns computer training (15 %), mainly devoted to office automation and the use of computer programmes. This is followed by training more specifically related to the occupations in each sector: pedagogical training for educators and trainers and medico-social training each represent slightly more than 13 percent of the training in the public service. In the private sector, this occupation-related training bears on industrial techniques, trade and sales. Training related to human resources and management, which is encouraged by the Public Service Ministry in the context of job and competence planning, represents 12 percent of the total training (compared to 9 % in the private sector). General and discipline-based training, as well as that dealing with economics, administration or law, each represent 9 percent of public-service training.

The crossing of the different training dimensions—duration, speciality, expectation—and the characteristics of the trainees—age, category, status—allows us to identify two large groups of training:

- Training focused on specific occupations and aimed at job adaptation of permanent civil servants.
- Long training programmes, both general and disciplinary, which are aimed at changing jobs or obtaining a diploma and concern agents who are fairly young or non-permanent and who finance part of their training themselves.

### BUT BEHIND THE SIMILARITIES, DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIPS TO TRAINING

In both private and public sectors, the employer is the main source of financing for three-quarters of work-related training. However, only 21 percent of public-service agents, as compared to 34 percent of their counterparts in the private sector, state that their training was imposed on them. This difference does not seem to be tied to the qualification level of the jobs, for only one-fourth of the territorial agents, whose levels are similar to those of private-sector employees, were faced with compulsory training. Likewise, 40 percent of the public-service agents, as opposed to only 24 percent of private-sector employees, indicate that the training resulted exclusively from their own initiative. In this area, we find no significant difference between the different public services, since the behaviour of the territorial agents is in line with that of other civil servants.

Thus, the apparent similarity of the training procedures might hide differences in the relationship to training from one sector to another. We observe, for example, that training is more often declared to have been imposed in the private sector than in the public service, where the agents, better informed of their rights, seem more likely to exercise them.

In its function as a form of regulation in the modernisation of the State and a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge, continuing training could lie at the heart of the transformations affecting both the missions and internal management of the public service. These issues, raised in the official reports, closely associate the managerial and economic dimensions of training. However, they overlook at least one crucial question if continuing training is to be mobilised, along with recruitment, to meet the imminent demographic challenge: how can the objectives of job and competence planning be made compatible with the principles presently governing mobilities? Indeed, if the acquisition of competences through continuing training comes more easily in the public service than in the private sector, it has little chance of being translated into upward mobility when the competitive examination and seniority remain the two main channels of professional advancement.

Coralie Perez (Céreq)

#### FURTHER READING

- *Fonctions publiques: enjeux et stratégies pour le renouvellement*. [Public services: issues and strategies for modernisation.] Report of the group headed by Bernard Cieutat, Commissariat général du Plan. Paris: La Documentation française, 2000.
- *La formation des agents de l'Etat en 1999. Enquête statistique sur les actions de formation réalisées par les ministères en faveur des agents de l'Etat*. [The training of

State agents in 1999. Statistical survey on training activities for State agents carried out by the ministries.] Direction générale de l'Administration et de la Fonction Publique, Bureau des statistiques, des études et de l'évaluation. 2 vols. April 2001.

- H. Lenoir. "Fonction publique et formation: approche comparative". [Public service and training, a comparative approach.] *Actualité de la formation permanente* no. 140 (January-February 1996).

#### The "Continuing Training 2000" survey

The data presented in this issue of *Training and Employment* are drawn from the "Continuing Training 2000" survey which complements the Employment survey conducted out by the French national statistics institute (INSEE) in March 2000. "Continuing Training 2000" was designed by Céreq and INSEE in partnership with the French Planning Commission, the Ministry of Employment's Department of Research and Statistics (Dares) and its Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training, the Ministry of Education's Planning and Development Department and the Junior Ministry for Women's Rights and Vocational Training.

The survey was carried out among a sample of 28,700 individuals who were under 65 years of age, had completed their initial training and were not doing their military service at the time. These subjects were queried, in the form of face-to-face interviews, on their training experiences after exiting the school system, with more detailed questions posed about the fourteen-month period prior to the date of the survey. It notably permitted analysis of the **rates of access to continuing training** of the different categories of employees, or in other words, **the percentages of individuals involved in at least one training activity of at least three hours—regardless of the goal (explicitly professional or more personal) and the forms (training course, alternating training, in-service training or self-training)—between January 1999 and February 2000**.

Establishing the number of agents in the "public-service galaxy", to borrow the expression of François de Singly and Claude Thélot in *Gens du privé, gens du public: la grande différence* [Private-sector people, public-sector people: the big difference (Paris: Dunod, 1988)], is no easy task, as demonstrated by the latest report of the inter-ministerial Observatory on Public Employment. The exploratory approach undertaken here thus remains open to improvement. The number of agents in France's public service was estimated from INSEE's Employment survey, on the basis of the legal status and activity of the institutions employing the individuals queried. The economic activity corresponding to their job and occupation was used to identify the public service to which each agent was attached. In all, the number of public-service agents was estimated at 5,260,000, including 2,873,000 in the State sector (including teachers in private schools), 1,553,000 in the territorial authorities and nearly 833,000 in the health sector. Between January 1999 and February 2000, over 2,400,000 of these agents participated in a total of some 4,350,000 training activities of more than three hours.

The data presented here are drawn from a report prepared at the request of a unit of the National Council for the Evaluation of Public-Service Training Policy (C. Lowezanin and C. Perez, *La formation des agents de la fonction publique* [The training of public-service agents], Céreq, January 2002).

## In Focus

### Continuing Training and Public Administrations in Italy

The latest report on training in the Italian public administration, which deals with 2001, indicates a constantly growing investment. Indeed, expenditures for training in the State's central administrations are close to the threshold of 1 percent of total wages and they remain above 0.6 percent in the administrations which spend less (e.g., local authorities). This percentage is clearly higher than that of the private sector, where the overall threshold is established by company payments to the Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale (INPS, National Social Security Institute), namely 0.3 percent of the payments for compulsory insurance against involuntary unemployment (which is itself equal to 1.63 % of the wage).

The proportion of public-service employees participating in training is over 60 percent and reaches 100 percent in certain departments. By contrast, a 2001 study carried out by the Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori (ISFOL, Institute for the Development of Workers' Vocational Training) shows that only 32 percent of workers in the private sector indicate their participation in continuing training activities over the two previous years, although this figure reaches 54 percent in companies employing more than 250 persons.

With regard to training content, we find a gradual convergence of the subjects treated by private and public sectors. Regulatory issues, which constituted the major part of training content until recently, have now given way to computer science and telematics, organisation and personnel and economic and financial dimensions. The aim of the training is also undergoing

a significant change: the latest directive of the Public Service Department no longer presents it as a tool for the adaptation of individual competences to new management needs but as an annual programme for developing the administration's resources.

In spite of the solid, ever-increasing similarities between public- and private-sector training, one feature remains specific to the public administrations, more particularly at regional level: that of reconciling actions appropriate to human-resources development with the requirements of the administrations and their employees. And this is especially important insofar as these two actors must make efficient, rational choices.

In this context, the Public Training Department (which is responsible for continuing training activities in the public sector and jointly funded by the Social Fund for Employment) and ISFOL (responsible for corresponding activities in the private sector) co-signed a collaboration agreement in April 2002 in order to develop what is common to their respective activities and contribute to the effectiveness of training aimed at the private sector but programmed in the public sector so as to reinforce public policy.

Franco Frigo,  
Co-ordinator of ISFOL's  
Continuing training project

✓ For more information about training in Italy's public administration:  
[www.funzionepubblica.it](http://www.funzionepubblica.it), [www.formapubblica.it](http://www.formapubblica.it),  
[www.anciform.it](http://www.anciform.it)

## Updates

**A protocol agreement** between Céreq and its Algerian counterpart, the Centre d'études et de recherches sur les professions et les qualifications (CERPEQ), a public authority placed under the supervision of Algeria's Ministry of Vocational Training, was signed last June by the directors of the two research centres, Hugues Bertrand and Mourad Chamekh. This agreement permits the two bodies

to resume regular exchanges and participation in joint studies through funding provided by the Algero-German co-operation between CERPEQ and the Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit.

Four points are covered in the agreement: analysis of the youth transition, access to Céreq's expertise as well as its national and international networks, co-ordination of publication and distribution

policies and the development of a documentation network. By the end of this year, a group of seven CERPEQ researchers will visit Céreq's Department on Entries into Working Life for an introduction to the methodology and tools used for Céreq's '92 Generation and '98 Generation surveys.

✓ Contact: Jean-Louis Kirsch (Céreq), tel. 33 (0)4 91 13 28 17, [jlkirsch@cereq.fr](mailto:jlkirsch@cereq.fr) ■

## Updates



A seminar on “Lifelong Learning Centres in Times of Change—Management Challenges for Educational Support Institutions”, organised by the European Research and Development Institutes of Adult Education (ERDI) consortium, was held in Frascati, Italy, on 27-29 September 2002. The gathering brought out the variety of situations found in six European countries—Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, Romania and Slovenia.

Discussions dealt mainly with the link between national and regional levels, the dependency of adult training institutes with regard to the

State and the nature of the interventions of the institutes belonging to the ERDI consortium.

In addition, European Commission representative Alan Smith presented the Socrates-Grundtvig project devoted to adult education and non-formal learning paths.

Two fields of Céreq’s activity were of considerable interest during this seminar: first of all, vocational training, because most of the participants in the gathering are basically involved with general training of disadvantaged populations and expect lifelong learning to confront them with new

needs in vocational training, and second, the accreditation of past experience, an area where two countries, France and Norway, would seem to be at the forefront.

✓ For further information on ERDI: [www.erdi.info](http://www.erdi.info)

✓ For further information on the Socrates-Grundtvig project: [europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/adult/home.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/adult/home.html)

✓ Contact: Jean-Louis Kirsch (Céreq), tel. 33 (0)4 91 13 28 17, [jlkirsch@cereq.fr](mailto:jlkirsch@cereq.fr)



**In the framework of Leonardo da Vinci II**, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) organises a European programme of study visits for persons interested in vocational training, including training coordinators, trainers, administrative or research personnel, companies and social partners. The aim of these visits is to stimulate exchange and reflection between participants on subjects of common interest at European level. They offer the possibility of meeting those responsible for vocational training policy and visiting representative sites where it is implemented.

Two Céreq researchers, Coralie Perez and Alain Savoyant, participated in two of these study visits, one on the subject of adult vocational training, which took place in Sweden, and the other on the recognition, accreditation and certification of adult competences acquired in a context of non-formal and informal learning, held in Portugal.

Sweden has a long tradition of lifelong learning, particularly through the Folk High Schools and the

Komvux programme. Funded by the State but set up and run by the local governments, these programmes allow adults over 20 years of age who have left the school system to complement their primary and secondary education. In recent years, Sweden has also undertaken a special effort to encourage adult vocational training, notably through the Kvalificerad Yrkesutbildning (KY) launched in 1996. This scheme, aimed at employees or students with a secondary education, offers one- to three-year training programmes which are developed in partnership at regional level and partly provided on the job. The study visit, which took place in Malmö, permitted participants to meet the main actors involved in these schemes, including institutional representatives, heads of establishments, trainers and trainees.

In Portugal, where, in 2000, more than 60 percent of the labour force had not completed the nine years of compulsory schooling, the public authorities have set up a national system where the recognition, validation and certification of competences (RVCC) acquired through experience play a crucial

role. This context gave rise to the creation of the National Agency for Adult Vocational Education and Training (ANEFA), responsible for designing a national RVCC system. To this end, ANEFA has developed guidelines for key competences in four areas: civic conscience and employability, language and communication, mathematics for daily life and information and communication technologies.

It has also defined RVCC procedures and supervised the creation of a network of RVCC centres, the number of which has increased from six in 2000 to forty-two in 2002, with eighty-four anticipated in 2006. Through its discussions at ANEFA, the study group was precisely informed of the principles underlying the system, and through visits to three RVCC centres, it was able to determine the conditions of their concrete application.

✓ Contacts: Coralie Perez or Alain Savoyant (Céreq), tel. 33 (0)4 91 13 28 28, [perez@cereq.fr](mailto:perez@cereq.fr), [savoyant@cereq.fr](mailto:savoyant@cereq.fr)

## New Publications

### **Dynamiques du local. 10 ans de recherches sur l'approche localisée de la relation formation-emploi**

[Local dynamics. Ten Years of Research on the Localised Approach to the Training-Employment Relationship]

✍ Joaquim Timotéo and Michel Vernières (eds)

The localised approach to the training-employment relationship lies at the heart of the studies carried out by the network of Céreq's associated regional centres. Over the past decade, they have been organising workshops on this theme with their regional partners. The network's last such gathering, organised in October 2001 by Céreq's associated centre in the Ile-de-France region, the MATISSE research unit, was intended to review existing studies and identify the main lines of analysis to be pursued in this field of research.

This document brings together the papers which were presented and discussed in the course of the workshop. It emphasises first of all the contribution of the different disciplines on the localised approach to the training-employment relationship, followed by the importance of the roles played by local actors in this area.

It concludes with an analysis of the advantages, but also the limitations, of the different tools used to identify local dynamics.

**Document** no. 167, "Séminaires" series, Céreq, September 2002, 230 pp., 20 €

### **Approches territoriales. Des regards différents sur les problèmes d'insertion, de formation et d'emploi**

[Territorial Approaches. Differing Views on the Problems of Labour-Market Entry, Training and Employment]

✍ Françoise Dauty (ed.)

This publication presents three contributions stemming from studies carried out in the context of a working group on "Labour-market entry and territory". For several years, this group, composed of members of Céreq, its associated regional centres and the Ministry of Education's Department of Planning and Development, has been analysing the tools used to gain knowledge about relations between training, employment and labour-market entry at a decentralised level.

This work is structured around three questions repeatedly raised by those in charge of local and regional policies:

- how to examine requests for the opening and closing of sections and schools?
  - how to define the notions of publics with "low qualification levels", of those "exiting without qualifications" and of "disadvantaged young people"?
  - what are the jobs of tomorrow, the job pools, the jobs of the future?
- Through these three seemingly unrelated themes, common elements of analysis emerge around the relevance of information systems, of the analytical categories used and of different action strategies. The heterogeneous nature of the three contributions included in this work reflect both the extreme diversity and the richness of the studies in a field which remains relatively little explored.

**Document** no. 168, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, October 2002, 95 pp., 12 €

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

**Competencia laboral**, the Spanish-language bulletin of the CINTERFOR (Inter-American Centre for Research and Documentation on Vocational Training), which is a department of the International Labour Organisation, has devoted its August 2002 issue to "vocational competence and the evaluation of learning". It features different articles on the origins, characteristics and stakes of certification as well as a variety of national experiences.

In an article entitled "Evaluating Past Experience. Between Certification Standards and the Uniqueness of Personal Itineraries", Edith Kirsch (Céreq) argues that certification is no longer considered the conclusion of a training programme but also permits greater visibility to be given to knowledge acquired in the work context and the professional experience. As such, it revives the question of constructing evaluation criteria which, in order to be reliable, equitable and relevant, must be at once general and adapted to the specific competences to be evaluated. For the author, this situation constitutes a paradox: how can general standards be used to evaluate informal knowledge arising from experiences which are necessarily unique?

This issue also presents the results of a study carried out with the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) by a group of Céreq researchers including Annie Boudier, Laurence Coutrot, Edith Kirsch, Jean-Louis Kirsch, Josiane Paddeu, Alain Savoyant and Emmanuel Sulzer. The authors demonstrate the way that certification systems respond, from an institutional and methodological point of view, to the problem of the identification of competences. They also analyse the role that such systems of certification, taken in the broad sense, can play in the various ways competences are recognised by the companies and the working world.

*The journal Competencia laboral is available on the CINTERFOR website: [www.cinterfor.org uy](http://www.cinterfor.org uy)*  
Contact: Jean-Louis Kirsch (Céreq), tel. 33 (0)4 91 13 28 17, [jlkirsch@cereq.fr](mailto:jlkirsch@cereq.fr)

## Formation Emploi

Recent articles in Céreq's quarterly journal no. 78 April-June 2002

### La formation continue française et le système laissez-faire corporatiste britannique : quelles chances pour les femmes ?

[French Continuing Training and Britain's Corporatist Laissez-Faire System: What Future for Women?]

✍ Catherine Fletcher

This comparison between the French continuing education system and that of Great Britain, defined here as "corporatist laissez-faire", is aimed at examining the situation of women in the two countries through a societal approach bringing out similarities and differences. The quantitative data on equal opportunity for women in access to continuing training reveals a slight improvement; however, the qualitative data highlight sector-based differences and the persistent problems in the two countries. These problems stem from employers' attitudes and the absence of domestic parity, which limits women's availability for work. The article is based on a case study of the insurance sector.

### Mobilités des chercheurs et transformations de l'activité de "recherche-développement" des entreprises

[Mobilities of Researchers and Transformations of R&D Activities in the Companies]

✍ Pierre Berret

In France, there are few statistical studies dealing with the labour market for researchers. The use of the MENRT surveys (Ministry of Education, Research and Technology) permits advances in this direction. The article analyses changes over the 1984-1997 period stemming from two major and interrelated transformations:

- the increased company needs for fundamental research, coupled with the expansion of the higher education system, which led to sharper competition among diplomas;
- the emergence of corporate models involving a greater integration of R&D and other production activities.

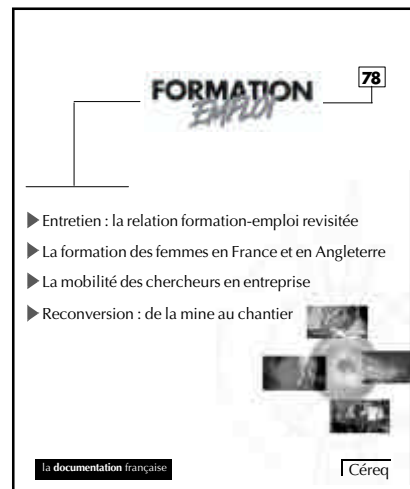
Among research jobs, the proportion of PhDs and other university graduates increases, while that of engineers and those with lesser qualifications is reduced; a growing share of the mobilities take place on the firm's internal market. All of these transformations are closely tied to company size.

### Vers une nouvelle norme des temps de travail? Temps subis ou temps choisis ?

[Towards a New Standard for Work Times? The End of the Time Clock?]

✍ François-Xavier Devetter

The temporal dimensions of work (duration, location, predictability) are the subject of 'agreements' which facilitate transactions between employers and employees by distinguishing between standard and atypical time. From the 1930s to the 1980s, the Fordian time system predominated with legitimacy and visibility and thus provided a frame of reference for the players. Changes in the temporal environment and the mechanisms of social dialogue have called this typical time scheme into question. It is more frequently circumvented and its legitimacy is contested, notably by a temporal system based on freedom of choice. But this new system has not yet been able to yield a stable compromise.



### De la mine au chantier : conversion ou socialisation professionnelle d'anciens mineurs/futures maçons

[From Mine to Construction Site: Conversion or Socialisation of Former Miners/Future Masons]

✍ Gilbert Leconte

At the same time that the last coal mines were shutting down in the north of France, the construction and public works enterprises in the Savoie region had a shortage of workers for the construction sites of the Albertville Winter Olympics. This situation gave rise to the idea of organising a labour transfer, given the numerous similarities, in theory at least, between the work practices and qualities of miners and masons. But how do occupational referents get transformed when someone 'crosses over' from the mine to the construction site? How are new collective identities constructed? What is a conversion process? By describing the confrontation of two ideal types of vocational identity, the miner and the highly skilled craftsman (*compagnon*), this article brings out the lived dimensions of a labour situation which, although current in the world of work, still remains little known because it has not often been studied.

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