

Training & Employment

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM CEREQ AND ITS ASSOCIATED CENTRES

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP?

Non-Traditional Curriculum Choices and Entry into Working Life

The litany of work-related disparities between men and women is long: risk of unemployment or imposed part-time work, lower wages, more difficult access to managerial posts. These inequalities, which manifest themselves at the time of entry into working life, are often interpreted as the result of gender segregation in the educational process. If this is the case, we may legitimately expect the gaps to be smaller for young women and men who have chosen a programme of study usually privileged by the other gender. The findings presented here indicate that under certain conditions, non-traditional education and training can benefit young women in the school-to-work transition. And that, paradoxically, the most mixed training programmes do not seem to offer protection from traditionally observed gender disparities.

Gender is generally considered to be an important factor for explaining disparities in the school-to-work transition. Indeed, gender-based differences in labour-market entry may be observed at all training levels, and almost always in favour of the young men. Even if these disparities diminish as the diploma level rises, the modes of access to employment and the different socio-economic categories, the risks of unemployment, wage levels and job status, among others, remain correlated to the gender of the individuals concerned.

At the same time, the training profiles of young people entering the labour market are known to reflect sharp gender segregation. Three-quarters of those exiting the tertiary streams at the CAP, BEP (V), baccalauréat (IV) or DUT (III) levels are young women.* But for industrial training programmes at the same levels, only one-sixth of the exiting population are women. At the higher levels—second or third cycle at university or the Grandes Ecoles (levels I-II)—the

situation improves somewhat, with young women accounting for one-third of those exiting scientific and technical streams and two-thirds in humanities, social sciences and management.

Taken together, these observations have traditionally been interpreted to suggest that the difficulties faced by young women in the school-to-work transition are inherent in the 'bad' choices made with regard to their initial training programmes. Since they do not prepare for the same jobs as their male classmates, they do not enter the same labour-market segments at the end of their schooling: the predominately female tertiary sector is characterised by greater precariousness and lack of correlation between training and jobs, leading notably to over-qualification at the time of hiring, while the manufacturing sector, by contrast, accords much more importance to both the diploma and the area of training. The gender gap observed in the transition process is thus largely attributed to structural effects.

In some instances, a non-traditional school orientation towards a field of study mainly chosen by the opposite sex (see box page 4) may turn out to be a more profitable choice at the time of labour-market entry. On the other hand, the choice of mixed streams is not necessarily a guarantee of gender equity in the youth transition.

* CAP (certificat d'aptitude professionnelle) = vocational aptitude certificate

BEP (brevet d'études professionnelles) = vocational studies certificate
Baccalauréat = secondary-education diploma giving access to university studies

DUT (diplôme universitaire de technologie) = polytechnic diploma

'MALE' TRAINING, 'FEMALE' TRANSITION?

The balance sheet for the labour-market entry of young women venturing into non-traditional streams—i.e., highly 'masculine' ones such as mechanics, electricity or construction work, but also computer science, math or physics—remains ambiguous. If it is encouraging relative to that of their female peers coming from other fields of study, it remains disappointing relative to the young men in their own fields. After higher education (levels I-II), however, they and their male counterparts enjoy the same likelihood of avoiding unemployment or an imposed part-time job, of entering occupations corresponding to their area of study and of gaining access to the most respected socio-economic categories (cf. tables below). At these levels, the wide range of training choices open to young women seems to work in favour of gender equity in the transition process. But there is still one catch: equal work does not guarantee equal pay, and their wages remain considerably lower than those of their male peers.

Young women with a lower training level, meanwhile, and notably those exiting CAP or BEP programmes, are faced with a more chaotic entry into working life. Overall, their transition path and hiring conditions are less favourable than those of their male classmates in the same streams. One noteworthy exception concerns 'technician and associate professional' and 'manager' positions, which they obtain at least as often as the young men. But once again, this equity in terms of job classifications is not confirmed by their wage levels, which are systematically lower. We can observe, moreover, that these young women are less often found in the occupational fields corresponding to their training, a situation suggesting that they have encountered greater difficulties in entering these job segments or preferred to reorient their career paths (cf. box page 4).

Relative to their female classmates coming from more conventional streams, young women exiting a 'male' training programme do not suffer from their non-traditional fields of study, however. Although such an orientation does not give rise to a real gain for those coming from CAP or BEP programmes, these young women are not tangibly penalised for their 'transgression', and from the baccalauréat level on, they even derive clear benefits from their non-traditional

curricula. They have the same likelihood of escaping unemployment or imposed part-time work as their female classmates in other streams but, above all, they attain 'manager' or 'technician and associate professional' posts more often and their wages are higher.

From the baccalauréat level on, this non-traditional orientation thus turns out to be a positive choice, even if the gender gap remains. The degree to which the young women profit from their training depends on the occupational field they enter. The only ones who really benefit from these non-traditional orientations are those who obtain the jobs usually associated with their training, in which case they are more often able to avoid imposed part-time work, have easier access to more respected socio-economic categories and obtain higher wages. Overall, they encounter better hiring conditions than young women entering occupational fields less related to their initial training, whose hiring conditions at the time of the school-to-work transition are in fact quite close to those of young women coming from conventional streams.

'FEMALE' TRAINING: A MAN ISN'T JUST ANOTHER WOMAN

The situation of young men choosing non-traditional orientations—towards a 'female' field such as secretarial work, textiles, psychology, literature or languages—in no way constitutes a mirror image of that of the young women coming from unconventional streams. Thus, in spite of this non-traditional orientation, the young men still occupy better positions in the labour market than those of their female classmates in the same fields (but less favourable than those of young men coming from other fields, whether 'male' or mixed).

At the beginning of working life, it is true, they do not seem to benefit from particularly favourable conditions in terms of their gender. One year after exiting the school system, they thus face the same likelihood of unemployment as their female classmates. But five years later, a comparison of unemployment rates, working hours, professional status and wages gives them a clear advantage over their female counterparts, especially up to the baccalauréat level. Thus, after five years of working life, the risk of unemployment is less for young men at baccalauréat, DUT or BTS level while it is similar for young

TRAINING FIELDS AND YOUTH TRANSITION: GENDER DISPARITIES		FEMALES EXITING 'MALE' FIELDS OF STUDY							
		Relative to males exiting same fields				Relative to females exiting other fields			
		Level	I - II	III	IV	V	I - II	III	IV
Upon entry into working life — Avoiding unemployment				-					
During first five years — Being unemployed less than one year		-			-			+	
Five years afterwards — Avoiding unemployment		-	-	-					
Five years afterwards — Attaining manager or 'technician and associate professional' position		-	-	-	+	+	+	+	
Five years afterwards — Wage disparity		- 14 %	- 19 %	- 9 %	- 10 %	+ 24 %	+ 9 %	+ 16 %	

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men and young women coming from 'female' fields at university or Grandes Ecoles level, as well as CAP or BEP programmes. In addition, the young men exiting at baccalauréat, CAP or BEP level are less often subject to imposed part-time work than their female counterparts. And in all cases, young men coming from 'female' streams enjoy higher wages than the young women.

Notwithstanding their privileged transition profiles relative to their female counterparts in the same fields, these young men are still confronted by more difficult situations than male peers who have chosen a conventional curriculum. Their non-traditional orientation thus puts them at a considerable disadvantage. Among higher-education graduates, the young men in 'female' fields are clearly not more exposed to unemployment than those coming from other training programmes but their hiring conditions are generally less advantageous: they are more likely to face imposed part-time work, have less access to 'technician and associate professional' or management posts and above all receive lower wages. Those exiting baccalauréat programmes seem particularly disadvantaged by the combined risks of unemployment and less favourable hiring conditions, while CAP- and BEP-holders in non-traditional fields face greater risks of unemployment and imposed part-time jobs than young men coming from other fields.

Like the young women who have chosen non-traditional curricula, these young men are much less likely than their female classmates to enter the labour market in a field corresponding to their training. On the other hand, their hiring conditions are the same whether or not they enter the occupations associated with their initial training—as if the fact of being males gave them automatic access to alternative solutions and socially and economically respectable job opportunities.

WHEN MIXED STREAMS DON'T EQUAL EQUITY

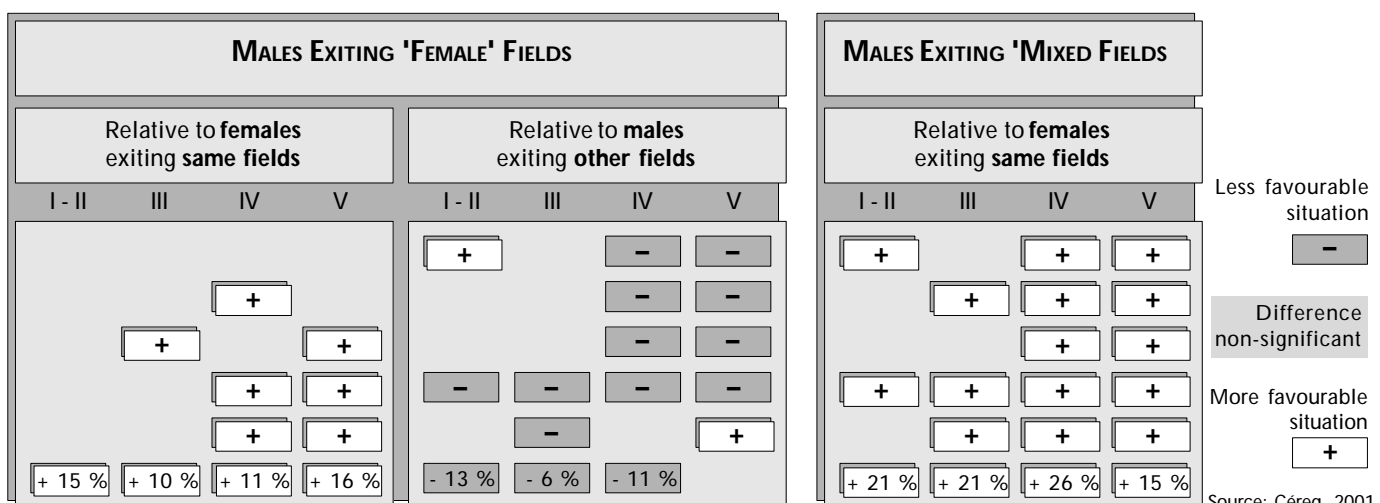
If gender disparities in the school-to-work transition persist in the wake of a non-traditional curriculum, it must be recognised that 'mixed' streams—those chosen by young women and men alike, such as law, chemistry or biology—give rise to even more disparate conditions of labour-market

entry. Following secondary education, the gender gap is systematic, whether in terms of the risks of unemployment and imposed part-time work, access to the most respected positions or wages. And the male advantages persist after higher education: even if, after the second or third cycle at university or the Grandes Ecoles, young men are not more likely to obtain a 'technical or associate profession' or managerial position, their wages are over 20 percent higher than those of their female peers.

Thus, mixed streams do not offer protection from the gender disparities traditionally observed in the school-to-work transition; in the end, they are no less inegalitarian than the others. The extent of the disparities—notably in terms of wages—is such that the mixed nature of the training programmes in general does not seem to constitute a sufficient condition for attaining gender equity in work. And these observations remain valid when we consider the specific occupational segments corresponding to the mixed training streams. For male and female higher-education graduates alike, hiring conditions are quite similar regardless of the occupational field. The same is true for young men with a lower training level, but their female peers, by contrast, seem to be penalised when they do not enter the occupational fields corresponding to their training, and this creates even greater wage disparities with the young men.

COME ON, GIRLS ?

These findings suggest that the gender disparities observed in the school-to-work transition cannot be interpreted solely in terms of gender segregation—young women and men do not have the same forms of labour-market entry because their educational orientation is different—but must also be understood in terms of discrimination—with the same training, young women always encounter more difficulties than their male counterparts because the opportunities awaiting them on the labour market are less favourable. This argument is all the more easily advanced because male domination remains widespread: whether in areas traditionally reserved for men, in those reserved for women or in those open to both, gender differences always go in the same direction. And as recent studies carried out by the French National Statistics Institute (INSEE) show, change is slow in coming. Thus, as Pierre Bourdieu has written,



"Whatever their position in the social space, what women have in common is the fact of being separated from men by a negative symbolic coefficient which . . . has a negative impact on everything they are and do". And for Christian Baudelot and Roger Establet, "Failing to do justice to young women's educational qualifications is not simply iniquitous in moral terms. It is a source of social discontent and an anti-economic waste of competences".

Beyond such admittedly pessimistic observations, a few encouraging trends may nonetheless be brought out. For one thing, gender inequalities tend to diminish as training levels increase. Furthermore, young women who choose non-traditional training programmes and subsequently enter a corresponding occupational field do benefit from their curriculum choices. These trends coincide, moreover, with certain transformations of the labour market in France—the tertiarisation of economic activity, the introduction of the 35-hour work week, a recent economic situation favourable to employment—as well as gradual changes, reinforced by government policy, in social representations of gender stereotypes. Albeit in the long term, these developments give hope, to cite Bourdieu once again, for a "gradual decline of male domination", in the work sphere at least.

Thomas Couppié and Dominique Épiphané (Céreq)

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TRAINING FIELDS: MALE, FEMALE AND MIXED

The findings presented in this issue of Training and Employment are derived from the '92 Generation survey carried out by Céreq in 1997 among young people exiting the French school system in 1992, regardless of their level and field of training (cf. "Génération 92", Céreq Bref no. 149 [January 1999]).

For the purposes of the present study, the training fields were divided into three groups ('male', 'female', mixed) for each of the four main training levels: CAP/BEP (Level V), baccalauréat (IV), second or third cycle at university or Grandes Ecoles (I-II). The 'male' training fields include less than one-third young women while the 'female' fields include more than two-thirds. Fields falling between the two are considered to be 'mixed'. The overall number of young people exiting each of these three categories is the same, but there are considerable variations according to training level.

- 58 percent of the young people exit at Level I-II of the 'mixed specialities', as compared to 17 percent at Level V. Within this group, 48 percent are young women at Level IV and 60 percent at Level V.
- Almost half the young people at CAP/BEP level exit 'male' fields and only one-fourth at other levels. The proportion of young women in these fields, which are atypical for them, varies from 4 percent (Level V) to 21 percent (Level I-II).
- Nearly half the young people at baccalauréat level exit 'female' fields and only 16 percent at Level I-II. The proportion of young men with atypical training paths varies between 11 and 19 percent.

Young people following non-traditional training programmes are thus relatively rare. In the 'male' fields, moreover, the distribution of young women is very different from that of their male counterparts. At CAP/BEP level, for example, 42 percent exit food-processing training programmes as compared to 7 percent of the young men; conversely, only 15 percent come from training in mechanics as compared to 28 percent of the young men. In order to limit these structural effects, information on the training field, diploma obtained and parents' socio-economic category was systematically taken into account during statistical processing.

The wages declared at the time of the survey were analysed via an earnings function (inspired by Jacob Mincer, 1974) using as control variables the fact of working part-time, seniority in the job, the experience accumulated in prior jobs, the training field and the diploma held. The selection bias linked to the fact of being in employment at the time of the survey was also taken into account.

The findings presented distinguish between habitual and sporadic opportunities on the basis of the occupational families to which the largest number of those exiting the educational system gain access in function of their training level and field.

See *Familles professionnelles. Un classement des emplois fondé sur l'analyse des contenus d'activité [Occupational Families. A Job Classification Based on the Analysis of Activity Content]*. Céreq Document no. 83 (January 1993).

Recent Publications

Documents

Les six premières années de vie active des jeunes sortis de l'enseignement secondaire en 1994

[The First Six Years of Working Life for Young People Exiting Secondary Education in 1994]

✍ Jean-François Giret and Alberto Lopez in collaboration with Françoise Cedo

Between April 1996 and February 2000, Céreq carried out five surveys of a sampling of young people exiting secondary education during the 1993-1994 school year. This enquiry constituted the third telephone panel survey carried out since 1986. The present volume includes both a methodological assessment of the survey and selected findings.

The situation of these young people, faced with a depressed labour market at the time of their exit in 1994, showed considerable improvement six years later, even if many of them still had fixed-term work contracts in February 2000. The longest periods of job-seeking coincided with their labour-market entry, and in their opinion, the difficulties encountered were inherent in their lack of experience and training. Most of them subsequently had recourse to a public job scheme; their remunerations have since shown a small increase, although their chances for promotions remain relatively slight, especially where those with the fewest qualifications are concerned.

Document no. 163, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, April 2002, 15 €.

Former pour adapter et recruter: Usage des certificats de qualification paritaires dans la métallurgie

[Training to Recruit and Adapt : The Use of Joint Qualification Certificates in the Metallurgy Industry]

✍ Elsa Personnaz and Patrick Veneau

The presence of the Occupational Qualification Certificates (certificats de qualification professionnelle)—a fairly recent phenomenon—on the certification horizon has given rise to questions and debates. It is true that these certificates, whose content and organisation are the exclusive prerogative of the occupational branches, encourage adaptability to the specific needs of the company. But given the fact that they are prepared for in the context of a skilling contract, is their use related to the search for flexibility? How do the training courses offered respond to company needs? Are these certificates synonymous with successful labour-market entry for the young people concerned? Given that they are obtained in the context of the training plan, how do they relate to employees' career paths and the company's training policy? And more broadly, how do they articulate with the educational system's diplomas?

This report, based on an investigation combining certificate-holders' itineraries and the analysis of company policies, suggests answers to these questions through the specific cases of four joint qualification certificates in the metallurgy industry.

Document no. 162, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, April 2002, 15 €.

La construction de la certification. Quelles méthodes, pour quels usages ?

[Developing Certification: A Question of Ends and Means]

✍ DESCO-Céreq seminar - Paris, 13-14 September 2001

How do teachers draw on diploma standards to organise their courses? What concrete uses do juries make of them? With the spread of the accreditation of past experience (validation des acquis de l'expérience, VAE), such questions are increasingly raised. In the process, methodological discussions on the establishment of diplomas are being shifted into the context of the relationship between education and work, a comparison between their guidelines and the uses which are actually made of them and a new look at the question of relations between knowledge and activity in terms of theory and practice alike. Such interrogations lie at the heart of this publication, which includes the papers of various actors in the areas of training and education who participated in a September 2001 seminar jointly organised by the Ministry of Education's Department of School-Based Instruction (Direction de l'enseignement scolaire, DECO) and Céreq.

Document no. 161, "Séminaires" series, Céreq, February 2002, 20 €.

These 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 4 91 13 28 89, fax 33 4 91 13 28 80. E-mail: antonucci@cereq.fr. Orders must be accompanied by payment (please add 4 € for postage and handling).

**La formation professionnelle financée par les entreprises
Exploitation des déclarations fiscales des employeurs n° 24-83. Année 1999**
[Company-Funded Vocational Training.

Analyses of Employer Tax Declaration Form 24-83 for 1999]

✍ Elyes Bentabet, Christelle Gauthier and Isabelle Marion

This new volume devoted to company-funded continuing vocational training presents the findings from the processing of form 24-83 tax declarations for 1999. It shows that the rate of company participation in continuing training continued to decline in 1999, although the level reached (3.22 percent of the wage bill), nonetheless remained more than two times higher than the legal minimum of 1.5 percent. The rate of employee access to training, however, ceased to rise. Also included in this document are long-term analyses which show that while disparities in access to training persist between socio-economic categories, they are diminishing between employees of different-sized companies.

Document no. 160, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, December 2001, 16 €

Maintenance industrielle: quels emplois ? quelles formations ?

[Industrial Maintenance: What Kinds of Jobs and What Kinds of Training ?]

✍ Benoît Cart, Pierre Hallier, Valérie Gosseume, Jean-Louis Kirsch, Françoise Kogut-Kubiak and Marie-Hélène Toutin

This document analyses training and employment in the industrial maintenance stream. It begins with a description of the role of maintenance and its changing function within the company, which has gone from that of a repair activity (responding to breakdowns) to a preventive one (anticipating breakdowns). But as the authors indicate, this overall trend covers different realities depending on the sector, company size, the nature of the equipment involved and so on. Also presented are the new job profiles which have emerged in the course of these transformations, as well as the content of the activities carried out by industrial maintenance personnel. A final section offers a portrait of employees, and especially the new arrivals, in this field.

Document no. 159, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, November 2001, 19 €.

La professionnalisation de l'emploi associatif. L'exemple des permanents des associations intermédiaires

[The professionalisation of community jobs. The example of permanent staff in intermediate associations]

✍ Agnès Legay

Intermediate associations, created in 1987, are structures for integration through economic activity whose objective is the reintegration of persons with severe social and vocational difficulties. Offering a cross between sheltered jobs and temporary work, the intermediate association is a kind of social laboratory for the invention of new forms of employment—intermediation on the labour market for the permanent employees and temporary jobs for the beneficiaries, in between work, training and labour-market entry. The study bears on the processes of creation, consolidation and professionalisation of the permanent jobs. It brings out the relationship between this process and the history of the associations and identifies the conditions surrounding the emergence of a culture and

professional identity common to the permanent staff of the different intermediate associations, based on the gradual integration of management imperatives within an approach which continues to be based on an activist commitment.

Document no. 158, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, July 2001, 22.87 €

**La formation professionnelle continue financée par les entreprises.
Exploitation des déclarations fiscales des employeurs n° 24-83 – Année 1998**

(Continuing vocational training funded by the companies. Analysis of employers 24-83 tax declarations for 1998)

✍ Elyes Bentabet, Christelle Gauthier and Isabelle Marion

This new volume on continuing vocational training funded by the companies not only provides the results of the analysis of the 24-83 tax declarations for 1998 but also traces the long-term evolution of the main continuing vocational training indicators.

The figures presented for 1998 confirm the results already observed in recent years: while the rates of financial participation were still declining (3.23 percent, or more than twice the legal minimum of 1.5 percent), the rate of access continued to increase, attaining 37.7 percent. Furthermore, these disparities between employer effort and employee access according to company size are still present, and inequalities of access according to occupational categories persist. However, the observation of long series shows that the disparity between socio-economic categories exists throughout the entire period studied while the inequalities according to company size decline over the years.

Document no. 157, "Observatoire" series, Céreq, June 2001, 15.24 €

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These 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 4 91 13 28 89, fax 33 4 91 13 28 80. E-mail: antonucci@cereq.fr. Orders must be accompanied by payment (please add 4 € for postage and handling).

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Agnès Legay

LA PROFESSIONNALISATION DE L'EMPLOI ASSOCIATIF
L'EXEMPLE DES PERMANENTS DES ASSOCIATIONS INTERMÉDIAIRES

NUMÉRO 158 / JUILLET 2001

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d o c u m e n t s
observatoire

Quand l'école est finie...

Premiers pas dans la vie active de la Génération 98

[When School Is Over: The '98 Generation's First Steps in Working Life]

In spring 2001, Céreq queried a sample of 54,000 young people exiting initial training in 1998, from all training levels and specialities, out of the total of 742,000 who had left the educational system for the first time that year. This survey, entitled "Génération 98", follows the "Génération 92" survey and pursues the same objective: analysing the first years of the school-to-work transition in relation to initial training.

This publication presents the initial findings of the survey by main training levels and areas of study: an overall profile of the generation of young people entering the labour market in 1998, the principal events and high points of their school-to-work transition, the main paths of labour-market entry, a preliminary analysis of mobilities and their role, and the situation of the '98 generation three years after its entry into the labour market. The work is intended to provide a wide variety of users with an initial overview, from different vantage points, of an entire generation's conditions of entry into working life. A clear visual presentation, with graphs and tables on the right-hand pages and data and basic definitions on the left-hand pages, gives access to both a broad overview and a varied body of detailed information.

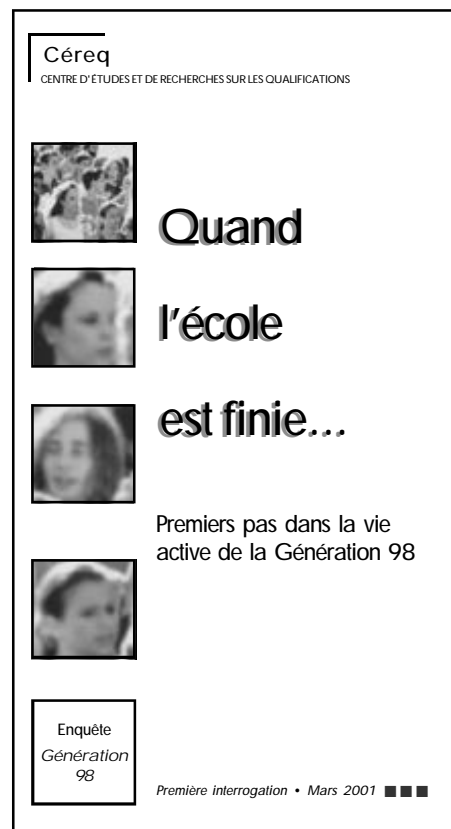
Document, 15 €.

ROME Bibliographies

In collaboration with the French National Employment Office (ANPE), Céreq's documentation centre has compiled fifteen occupational bibliographies over the past two years. Five additional bibliographies are anticipated in 2003. These documents are intended to provide basic materials for the ANPE teams currently revising the national Occupation and Job Register (Répertoire opérationnel des métiers et des emplois, ROME).

The first five bibliographies, published in January 2002, are devoted to hotel industry personnel, information and communication professionals, administrators, distribution and sales personnel and social service, local development and employment professionals. The following ten, published in April 2002, deal with government administration personnel, building trades, transportation and logistics, mechanics, electricity and electronics, processing industries, industrial supervision, industrial technicians, banking, insurance and real-estate trades, tourism and sales executives. Each bibliography was compiled in the same way: an initial group of references from Céreq's 'Training-Employment' database was analysed by theme and date (1995-2002). This selection was then complemented by recent articles, books and reports published by generalist or specialist sources (occupational branches, ministries, employers' organisations and labour unions, but also Websites, bookstores and documentation centres). The resulting references are presented under four headings: main trends in the sector (historical, economic, sociological); the labour market and context of the work activity (recruitment practices, labour-market entry); changes in qualifications (technological transformations, professionalisation); the occupation and related training programmes (job contents, standards). Complementary information concerning the periodicals cited in the bibliographies, acronyms and additional resources available from public bodies is presented in the appendices.

ROME bibliographies, 15 €.



These 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 4 91 13 28 89, fax 33 4 91 13 28 80. E-mail: antonucci@cereq.fr. Orders must be accompanied by payment (please add 4 € for postage and handling).

Formation Emploi

Articles in Céreq's quarterly journal, no. 75, July-September 2001

L'articulation de l'école et de l'entreprise: une combinatoire incertaine [School and Business: An Ambiguous Connection]

✍ Bernard Fusulier

In French-speaking Belgium, a technical high school and a major iron and steel company have developed an extremely close and well-balanced collaboration around an alternating training programme. This effort, which has been termed the 'Rolls-Royce' of alternating training, is atypical of Belgium's educational system, characterised by a pronounced school-based orientation in vocational training and only a halting attempt to develop the alternating training model. How is this collaboration to be explained? To answer this question, the author analyses the development of the project from three different points of view: the participants' interests and strategies, the principles of justification invoked and their objectivity, and the risks involved in the exchange and the building of mutual confidence. One of the aims of this approach is thus to arrive at a better understanding of the social negotiations called into play by the school-company connection.

L'expérience revisitée à l'occasion de la validation des acquis professionnels [Practical Learning Re-examined for the Accreditation of Work Experience]

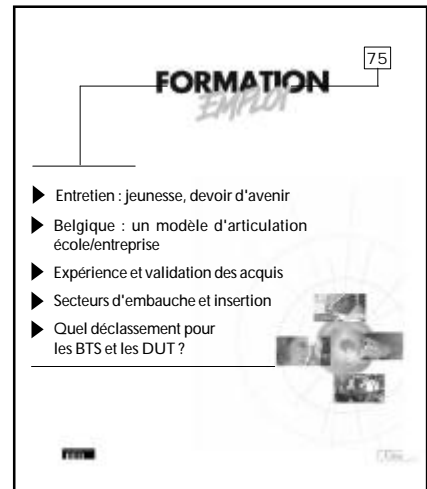
✍ Jacqueline Magnier and Christiane Werthe

This study, carried out in the context of the national education system's Accreditation of Work Experience (validation des acquis professionnels, VAP), focuses on the analysis of the work activity and the way experience is developed. The coaching of candidates offers an area of potential development for their experience and knowledge alike. The study shows that VAE standards provide coaches with an indispensable working tool in the course of conversations with the candidate. Alternately seen as an obstacle or an advantage, it structures their interactions. Debates over the place and role of the standard were at the core of exchanges between professionals within the working group in Nantes. In addition to confirming its importance not only as a coaching tool role but also as a guarantee of the value of the diploma, these debates brought out possibilities for its future development. The research presented here follows an initial study focusing on the difference between knowledge obtained through work experience and that resulting from training.

Gestion sectorielle de la main-d'oeuvre et insertion des débutants dans les années 90 [Sector-Based Work-Force Management and Youth Transition in the 1990s]

✍ Nathalie Moncel

Earlier research has already brought out the importance of the forms of work-force management in the analysis of labour-market entry. Applying such an approach at sectoral level for the 1990s, this study considers the transformations in the conditions of beginners' access to employment and changes in the replenishing of the workforce. On the basis of Céreq's '92 Generation survey, a typology of sector-based patterns of young entrants was established in order to characterise current trends. These trends raise questions not only about the transition process but also about the way that process is analysed.



Mesurer le déclassement à l'embauche: l'exemple des DUT et des BTS [Measuring Downgrading at the Time of Hiring: The Example of DUT and BTS Diplomas]

✍ Jean-François Giret and Charline Hatot

Downgrading at the time of hiring has marked the labour-market entry of recent graduates in France over the past two decades. Generations of increasingly well-trained graduates have encountered growing difficulty in obtaining a job which corresponds to their level of studies. This article focuses on a particularly vulnerable group, those with higher technician (BTS) and polytechnic (DUT) diplomas. Data from Céreq's "Génération 92" survey offered the possibility of analysing this phenomenon among young people exiting in 1992. Two basis criteria were applied: a subjective one based on the young people's own opinions, and a more normative one postulating a correspondence between training level and occupation. The results show that the extent of the downgrading does not necessarily correspond to objective, widely accepted empirical evidence. In fact, the choice of the evaluation method may lead to considerable differences in the rates of downgrading for those exiting a given stream.

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