

2016 survey of the 2013 cohort

No improvement in the education-to-work transition for young people with lower secondary qualifications only

Against the background of a weak economic recovery, access to employment for young people in the 2013 cohort was slightly more favourable than for the preceding cohort. In 2016, three years after they had left the education system, one young worker in five was looking for a job; in the case of those with only lower secondary qualifications, the figure was one in two. These levels are considerably higher than those recorded before the crisis.

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The young people who left the education system in 2013 and were surveyed in 2016 as part of Céreq's Génération surveys (cf. Box 4, page 4) are slightly less affected by unemployment than their predecessors who left education in 2010. Nevertheless, this tenuous upturn does not apply to all young people or to all aspects of the education-to-work transition.

The 2010 cohort found itself in a labour market that had deteriorated significantly following the 2008 crisis. The 2013 cohort, for its part, left the education system against a background of weak economic recovery: economic growth, initially virtually non-existent, strengthened from 2014 onwards. As a result, the conditions under which young people from the 2013 cohort began their working lives, which were very similar to those experienced by the 2010 cohort, were considerably less favourable than those encountered by the 2004 cohort, who had entered the labour market before the crisis (cf. Figure 1, page 2). In the course of the third year, the 2013 cohort's employment rate stabilised, whereas it had started to decline again for the 2010 cohort as the already poor economic situation deteriorated further. After three years, however, the employment rate for the 2013 cohort was scarcely any higher than that of their predecessors. The crisis was casting its shadow over them, despite the upward trend in qualificational levels.

Above and beyond the economic situation, the education-to-work transition for the 2013 cohort has also to be analysed alongside the evolution of

public intervention and the sharp rise in the use of subsidised employment contracts (excluding block-release training programmes). Finally, this cohort was affected by the reform of the vocational pathway within the secondary education system.

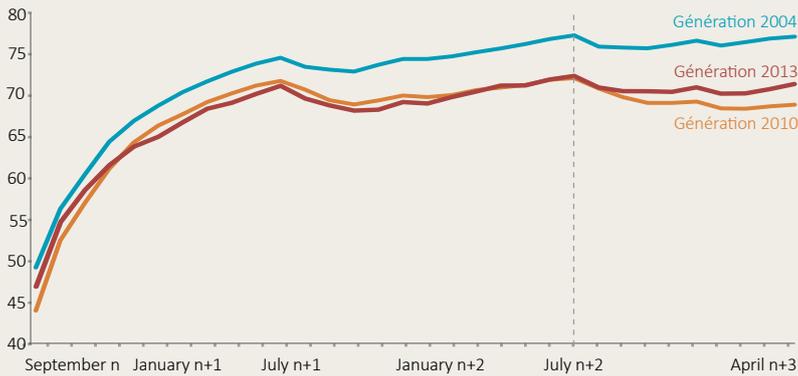
A better qualified cohort

Based on data from INSEE's employment survey, the distribution by broad qualificational levels within the 2013 cohort confirms the effects of a trend towards a prolonging of education. Between the 2010 and 2013 cohorts, the share of those leaving education with only lower secondary qualifications fell to 14% (cf. Table 3, page 3). Although the share of young people obtaining upper secondary qualifications remained stable in overall terms, changes are apparent at a more detailed level. Following the introduction across the country of the three-year vocational *baccalauréat* from the beginning of the 2009 academic year, *baccalauréat* from the beginning of the 2009 academic year, the share of those obtaining the vocational *baccalauréat* rose by four percentage points, to the detriment of the BEP and the technological and general *baccalauréats*. The share of higher education graduates also rose, particularly those completing short degree programmes (up two percentage points). The expansion of access to the *baccalauréat* and the increase in the share of young people staying on in higher education partly explain rise in the numbers in higher education over the past 15 years, and more particularly over the past five years. Overall, therefore, the 2013 cohort turns out to be noticeably better qualified than its predecessors.

2013 COHORT
EDUCATION-
TO-WORK
TRANSITION
UNEMPLOYMENT

1 An employment rate below pre-crisis level

Evolution of the employment rate over the first three years of the working life



Source: Génération 2004, Génération 2010 and Génération 2013 surveys (provisional data).
Field: Metropolitan France.

A moderate improvement in access to employment for the cohort as a whole

State-subsidised employment contracts (excl. block-release training programmes) include 'jobs for tomorrow' (les emplois d'avenir), single integration contracts-employment initiative contracts (les contrats uniques d'insertion contrat initiative emploi or CUI-CIE) and employment support contracts (contrat d'accompagnement dans l'emploi or CUI-CAE).

In the spring of 2016, three years after they had left the education system, the unemployment rate for the 2013 cohort reached 20%. This was three percentage points less than the equivalent figure for the 2010 cohort, but was nevertheless at an historically high level.

This slight improvement in the situation after three years is reflected in the young people's trajectories during their first three years in the labour market, with 63% of the cohort obtaining their first job in under three months, an increase of two percentage points over the 2010 cohort. For 11%, the beginning of their working lives saw them far removed from

employment, with less than 10% of their time spent in work; this was a slightly lower share than for the 2010 cohort. On the other hand, a comparable share (28%) found themselves in near-permanent employment (more than 90% of their time spent in work).

While the young people in the 2013 cohort were slightly less affected by unemployment, their employment conditions after three years showed no visible signs of improvement. Thus the share of those on open-ended contracts, at 61%, was four percentage points lower than for the 2010 cohort, to the benefit of temporary agency work and subsidised jobs. Between 2013 and 2016, as the so-called 'jobs for tomorrow' (emplois d'avenir) ramped up, the number of young people in subsidised jobs rose sharply, in contrast to the reduction that had been recorded between 2007 and 2012. A slight reduction in starting salaries for first jobs can be also be observed between the 2010 and 2013 cohorts. This reduction is no longer apparent after three years, with pay increasing more between the first job and that held after three years for this cohort than for the preceding one. In the spring of 2016, the median net monthly wage for the 2013 cohort was 1,460 euros.

Fewer leavers with just lower secondary certificates, but they remain on the margins of the labour market

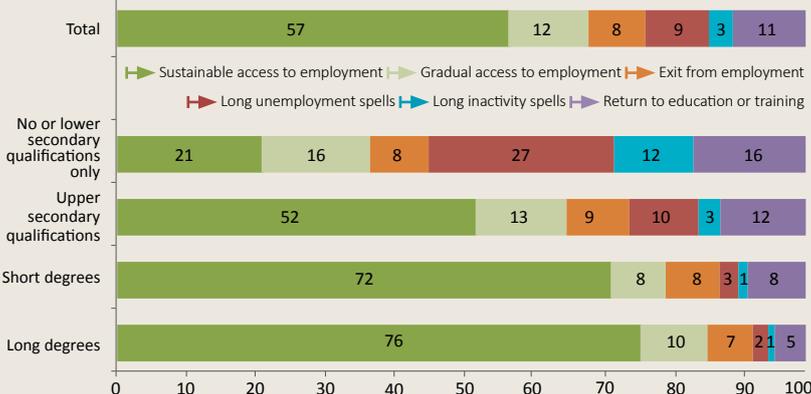
Fewer young people left education in 2013 with no qualifications higher than lower secondary certificate, but there was no improvement in their school-to-work transition. Three years after the start of their working lives, the unemployment rate for this group, which averaged 50%, was more than 20 percentage points higher than the levels observed for the cohorts who entered the labour market before the crisis. Despite the high share of subsidised jobs (particularly 'jobs for tomorrow'), the employment rate for this group barely reached 40%.

The jobs held are more likely to be involuntary part-time jobs (23%) than those held by young people with upper secondary qualifications (14%) and monthly wage levels are low (a quarter of those with just lower secondary certificates earn less than 900 euros, half less than 1,200 euros). Only 32% obtained their first jobs quickly and barely 12% were in near-permanent employment (more than 90% of their time); finally, 31% had not held any job at all between 2013 and 2016. Their trajectories over the first three years of their working lives also reflect the great difficulties they encountered in accessing and keeping jobs (cf. Box 2 opposite).

In the spring of 2016, those young people with only lower secondary certificates were less likely to have returned to education than their counterparts in the 2010 cohort (9% compared with 12%) and more likely to be inactive (11% compared with 9%). Inactivity among girls with no more than lower secondary qualifications, an indication of long-term remoteness

2 Trajectories of young people with no or lower secondary qualifications only still very precarious

Distribution of the types of trajectories over the first three years of the working life (%)



Source: Génération 2013 survey (provisional data)
Field: the whole of France

The Génération survey provides the data to track each young person's situation month by month, whether they are employed, unemployed, back in education or training or inactive. Analysis of this timeline leads to the identification of six types of trajectories. Sixty-nine per cent of young people in the 2013 cohort have trajectories characterised by employment, access to which may be sustainable or gradual. The vast majority of young people with a qualification have this type of trajectory; those with the highest qualifications are at a clear advantage. Those with no qualification higher than the lower secondary certificate stand out from the rest: while four out of ten have trajectories that include employment, the same proportion have trajectories that are taking them away from employment and are scarred by unemployment or inactivity. Sixteen per cent are in the process of returning to education or training and eight per cent have left employment after having obtained jobs at the start of their trajectories.

from the labour market and already traditionally high in this population, once again increased sharply: 17% of them had left the labour market three years after their exit from education, compared with 12% of those in the 2010 cohort.

The first effects of the reform of the vocational *baccalauréat* felt in the secondary sector

Holders of upper secondary qualifications had seen their unemployment rate three years after their departure from education rise sharply following the crisis (+10 percentage points between the 2004 and 2010 cohorts). It is this population in the 2013 cohort that has seen the greatest reduction compared with the preceding cohort (-3 percentage points). On the other hand, this improvement in access to employment has been accompanied by a clear reduction in the share of permanent jobs (-7 percentage points for the job held after three years). These developments can be explained in part by an increase in the share of young people in subsidised jobs, which more than doubled between 2013 and 2016; at the survey date, they accounted for 7% of the employment contracts held by young people with upper secondary certificates.

The effects of the national roll-out of the three-year vocational *baccalauréat* can be observed for the first time in the 2013 cohort. This reform changed the structure of upper secondary level qualifications as the share of young people leaving education with the BEP declined in favour of the vocational bac. In 2010, 6% of leavers held the BEP; by 2013, that share had fallen to just 2%. At the same time, the share of holders of the CAP rose from 7% to 9% between the two cohorts and the share of holders of the vocational bac rose by four percentage points. Furthermore,

the share of apprentices among the new holders of the vocational bac fell by 7 percentage points. Thus at the end of the reform process, three groups can be identified, for whom the conditions of labour market entry have evolved in different ways: holders of the CAP, holders of the vocational *baccalauréats* and holders of the technological and general *baccalauréats*.

The employment rate for holders of the CAP and BEP rose by four percentage points in the 2013 cohort. Nevertheless, as many of them are still far removed from employment (in both cohorts, 15% spent less than 10% of their time in employment during the first three years of their working lives).

Holders of the vocational bac saw a slight drop in their employment rate and a deterioration in their career paths: the share of them obtaining a job in less than three months fell by 2 percentage points, as did the share of those employed for more than 90% of the time during the three years observation period (-4 percentage points). Overall, however, the education-to-work transition for holders of the new vocational bac is much better than it used to be for holders of the BEP, which suggests that the reform has had a generally positive effect on this transition.

For their part, holders of the technological bacs saw their employment rate after three years in the labour market rise by six percentage points, the biggest improvement of all the groups. Finally, the employment rate for holders of the general bacs rose by four percentage points. They are even more likely than holders of the technological bacs to leave higher education without a qualification. The proportion returning to education, which is still the highest in the cohort, fell, nevertheless, by three percentage points to 23% in 2016.

The *unemployment rate* is the share of unemployed persons in the total active labour force (in this case, all young people in the cohort in employment plus those who are out of work).

The *employment rate* is the share of young people in employment in the cohort in question.

CAP • *Certificat d'aptitudes professionnelles* - A level V vocational qualification.

BEP • *Brevet d'études professionnelles* - An intermediate diploma in the 3-year programme leading to the vocational *baccalauréat*.

BTS • *Brevet de technicien supérieur* - A national higher education diploma requiring 2 years' post-secondary education/training. Level III in the French qualification system.

DUT • *Diplôme universitaire de technologie* - two-year degree in technology. Level III in the French qualification system.

M1, M2 • One-year and two-year master's.

3 Between 2013 and 2016, slight improvement in the education-to-work transition, but not in employment conditions

| Highest qualification obtained by young people leaving initial education ↓ cohort of leavers → | Young people's situation three years after leaving the education system | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|--|-----------|--|--------------|
| | Percentage shares (%) | | Employment rate (%) | | Unemployment rate (%) | | Share of young people on open-ended contracts* (%) | | Median net monthly wage ** (in constant euros) | |
| | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 | 2010 | 2013 |
| No or lower | 17 | 14 | 40 | 40 | 50 | 49 | 39 | 34 | 1 140 | 1 200 |
| Secondary qualifications only | 43 | 43 | 64 | 67 | 25 | 22 | 58 | 51 | 1 290 | 1 300 |
| CAP, BEP, further specialist qualification | 15 | 13 | 61 | 65 | 32 | 28 | 56 | 49 | 1 270 | 1 300 |
| Vocational bac | 13 | 17 | 74 | 72 | 20 | 20 | 66 | 57 | 1 310 | 1 330 |
| Technological bac | 6 | 5 | 61 | 67 | 24 | 17 | 50 | 44 | 1 260 | 1 280 |
| General bac | 9 | 7 | 54 | 58 | 22 | 19 | 51 | 44 | 1 270 | 1 280 |
| "Short" degrees | 23 | 25 | 81 | 81 | 12 | 11 | 74 | 70 | 1 540 | 1 560 |
| BTS-DUT, other 2-year degrees | 11 | 11 | 78 | 80 | 15 | 12 | 72 | 68 | 1 470 | 1 450 |
| Bac +2/3 health and social care | 4 | 4 | 96 | 93 | 2 | 3 | 83 | 81 | 1 720 | 1 700 |
| Vocational (bachelor's) degree | 3 | 4 | 85 | 87 | 10 | 9 | 77 | 73 | 1 610 | 1 620 |
| Other 3/4-year degrees | 5 | 5 | 72 | 70 | 14 | 16 | 70 | 63 | 1 510 | 1 520 |
| "Long" degrees | 17 | 18 | 88 | 86 | 9 | 10 | 80 | 79 | 2 120 | 2 100 |
| M2 and other bac+5 qualifications | 9 | 9 | 84 | 83 | 12 | 12 | 75 | 74 | 1 910 | 1 830 |
| Business and engineering schools | 5 | 6 | 93 | 90 | 6 | 7 | 93 | 90 | 2 350 | 2 370 |
| PhDs | 3 | 3 | 92 | 91 | 6 | 6 | 69 | 71 | 2 410 | 2 300 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 68 | 70 | 23 | 20 | 65 | 61 | 1 450 | 1 460 |

* Among the young people in employment

** Median net monthly wage (including bonuses, all working times together, in constant euros as at July 2016), among young wage-earners.

Source: *Génération 2010 and Génération 2013 surveys (provisional data)*. Field: the whole of France.

From April to July 2016, Céreq surveyed a representative sample of the 693,000 young people who left the education system for the first time in France during or at the end of the academic year 2012-2013.

Some 19,500 young people of all levels of education responded to this telephone survey; the average interview duration was 30 minutes.

As a basis for investigating the differences in the conditions of access to employment depending on the initial education completed and various individual characteristics (gender, social background, national origin), the survey gathered information on each respondent's educational trajectory and its specific characteristics (such as time spent abroad, for example) but more particularly on their month-by-month employment situation from the time they left the education system to the spring of 2016.

This public statistical survey is part of a regular observation system and follows on from the 1992, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2010 *Génération* surveys. In order to conduct the survey, Céreq compiled a database of almost 1,300,000 young people assumed to have left the education system in metropolitan and overseas France, from which a representative sample was drawn.

This publication draws on a database that is comparable between the 2010 and 2013 cohorts; it contains 713,000 individuals from the 2010 cohort and 678,000 from the 2013 cohort. Graduates of the teacher training establishments (IUFM* and ESPE*) were excluded from the analysis. Data from the *Génération* survey were stratified in accordance with the leavers' structure provided by INSEE's employment survey. These data are liable to be revised.

For more information on the *Génération* surveys:

<http://www.cereq.fr/sous-themes/Enquetes-Generation-Sous-Themes/Generation-2013-enquete-2016>

* Institut universitaire de formation des maîtres - École supérieure du professorat et de l'éducation.

Thirty-three per cent of holders of upper secondary vocational qualifications completed the final year of their education in an apprenticeship. This pathway is certainly an asset for them when it comes to the school-to-work transition. At the survey date, their unemployment rate was 12 percentage points lower than for those who had obtained upper secondary qualifications through the academic path.

No improvement for higher education graduates

Eighty-five per cent of the higher education graduates in the 2013 cohort were in employment three years after leaving the education system. Their unemployment rate, at 10%, was identical to that of their counterparts who left in 2010. After three years in the labour market, the share of HE graduates on open-ended contracts had declined slightly, as had their median net monthly wage, averaging 1,710 euros.

Among the young people leaving higher education with qualifications below master's level, referred to here as graduates of short degree courses, it is those graduating with the BTS or DUT who have seen the most evident improvement in the conditions of labour market entry, with a drop in their unemployment rate of almost three percentage points. Holders of vocational degrees, who had been

relatively well protected from the crisis, did not see any significant improvement in their employment situation. However, three years after leaving education, they were as likely as graduates of long degree courses to be in employment (87%) and their unemployment rate was close to 9%. They kept their advantage among graduates of short degree courses in terms of access to employment and pay levels, behind graduates of 2/3-year courses in healthcare and social work. Among university degrees, the general (bachelor's) degree and one-year master's are no longer worthwhile final qualifications, and this is reflected in their value in the labour market: the unemployment rate for holders of the general bachelor's degree and one-year master's rose once again to 16% and the share of permanent jobs fell significantly (-7 percentage points). However, it should be noted that young people graduating from the *Écoles supérieures du professorat et de l'éducation (ESPE)*, the French teacher training establishments, are not included in this study.

For graduates of long degree courses (requiring five or more years' post-secondary study), the conditions of entry into the labour market deteriorated slightly: the unemployment rate remained unchanged at close to 10%, rapid access to employment was less frequent (-2 percentage points) and the share of graduates in employment for more than 90% of the time during the first three years of their working lives decreased (-4 percentage points). Finally, with the exception of graduates of the *grandes écoles*, these young people suffered a loss of purchasing power at the three year mark. Nevertheless, entry conditions for *grandes écoles* graduates and for PhDs remained very good, among the best in the cohort: levels of unemployment rate were moderate, employment rates three years after graduation were above 90% and they still enjoyed the highest salary levels (median salary around 2,300 euros).

The crisis had had a very adverse effect on the young people in the 2010 cohort with just lower secondary certificates as well as on those with upper secondary qualifications. For the 2013 cohort, the gap between qualificational levels has far from narrowed. Overall, those young people with upper secondary qualifications enjoy improved access to employment; on the other hand, those with just lower secondary certificates remain severely affected by unemployment, despite the increase in subsidised jobs from which this cohort has benefited. These findings highlight the structural nature of the difficulties young people leaving the education system with few, if any, qualifications face in the labour market. ●