

THEME : VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**Initial vocational training in secondary education**

Maryannick Malicot and Bernard Porcher

This article outlines the initial vocational training in secondary education, i.e. as provided by the two main training options: education under student status and apprenticeship. It tackles the successive historical evolutions which led to the current situation, defines today's initial vocational education, specifies and illustrates the responsibilities and contributions of the players on different levels: creation of qualifications, regional offer, funding, certification... Each qualification is described briefly, notably with regard to its purpose, specific characteristics and evolution. The specific educational and organisational characteristics of the two abovementioned educational options are also dealt with. Finally, to conclude, we focus on the current trends, the concrete measures to raise awareness of professions and trades, support young people, diversify the courses and reinforce the quality and appeal of vocational training.

Twenty years of qualification policy: a constant movement of reform

Fabienne Maillard

As part of vocational education, vocational qualifications are regularly transformed so as to participate in the major educational policy objectives as well as to adapt to the labour market, under the guidance of industrial advisory committees. These two objectives and the diversity of partners participating in the definition of qualifications result in a permanent movement of the range of qualifications. Officially in line with a project subscribed to by the different ministers at the head of the ministry of national Education, this movement is however characterised by different options for certain qualifications.

A variety of educational structures and offers in the vocational sector

Carine Lhoste and Fanny Thomas

A pupil in *troisième* class can choose between three types of institution to pursue his initial education: *lycée*, apprentice training centre and *maisons familiales rurales*. Out of these 6,600 initial education institutions, 4,350 offer a secondary vocational education under student status or apprenticeship: 64% are *lycées*, 28% apprentice training centres and 8% *maisons familiales rurales*.

Apprenticeship training structures are over-represented in the Paris and Grenoble academic constituencies. Academic constituencies from Rennes to Montpellier and Corsica offer more agricultural training structures, *lycées* or *maisons familiales rurales*. Vocational education in *lycées* under the authority of the national Education ministry is more represented than in other academic constituencies.

Amongst the 4,350 institutions offering vocational education, 2,170 are public *lycées* and private *lycées* under contract with the ministry of national Education. Seven out of ten *lycées* under the authority of this ministry offer vocational education almost exclusively. The other *lycées* also offer general education.

1995-2005: ten years of agricultural technological or vocational education and vocational integration for young people

Francine Derambure

The period covered by this study roughly corresponds with that of the third national provisional scheme for agricultural education courses (SPNF), established for the 1998-2002 period and renewed for the preparation of the 2003 and 2004 school years.

It tends to show how agricultural education has evolved by diversifying its courses and opening up to all social classes, while remaining present all over the territory and retaining good vocational integration.

Evolutions in vocational *lycées* over ten years: 1995-2005

Florence Defresne

In 2005, public and private institutions of the ministry of national Education prepared 724,000 *lycée* students for a level IV or V vocational qualification, i.e. as many as in 1995, following a peak of almost 750,000 students in 1998. The *brevets d'études professionnelles* (BEP, vocational studies certificates) remain the most attractive courses but have lost ground compared with the *certificats d'aptitude professionnelle* (CAP, vocational aptitude certificates) and vocational *baccalauréat*. The service sector accounts for 57% of vocational *lycée* students and its ratio has continued to increase for the last ten years. CAPs account for one in three students in personal services, while BEPs and vocational *baccalauréats* are more geared

Apprenticeship development since the nineties

Sébastien Durier and Phanit Saing

towards commercial-sales, accounting-management and secretary-office management for support services, electricity-electronics for the production sector. The ratio of the vocational curriculum in the second cycle of secondary education ranges from 24% in Paris to 40% in Lille. This education option, experiencing a slight increase, is still strongly present in the North East of France.

Following a sharp increase between 1992 and 2000, due to the broadening of the educational offer and increasing interest from companies, young people and their families in the system, the number of young people choosing an apprenticeship plateaued in the early 2000s, and increased again in 2004.

Apprenticeship has undergone a transformation as well as developing significantly. It is no longer reserved for young people freshly out of *collège* and wanting to quickly join the labour market. The qualifications on offer now range from the vocational aptitude certificate (CAP) to engineer qualifications, with a focus on the service sector. Girls and the children of higher category parents are significantly more represented in higher apprenticeship courses than in secondary apprenticeship courses.

While providing young people coming from general and technological education with an additional option to pursue their studies, notably after the *baccalauréat*, apprenticeship has also developed into a vocational curriculum, for certain education specialties, from the CAP qualification to *baccalauréat* level and, to a lesser extent, to the *brevet de technicien supérieur* (BTS, higher technician certificate).

Three approaches to the geographical mobility of pupils entering the vocational courses of the ministry of national Education

Marie-Laurence Jaspard

At the end of the *troisième* class, pupils either choose a general and technological seconde class or a vocational curriculum. Pursuing studies in the second cycle of secondary education sometimes involves commuting between the place of residence and the educational institution. These displacements are measured based on the municipal division and affect two in three pupils, due to the absence, for three quarters of these pupils, of institutions under the authority of the national Education ministry in their municipality. By integrating the notion of conurbation with zoning in urban units, it is possible to distinguish between the forced mobility of the pupils living in rural municipalities and the mobility of those benefiting from a general and technological or vocational education offer near them: only 9% commute to their educational institution and this mobility varies depending on whether they live in the city centre or in the suburbs. Finally, if zoning is considered in terms of urban areas, these areas turn out to be working and living areas as well as schooling areas: less than seven in one hundred pupils commute to another urban area.

Pupils' career following a BEP or CAP

Caroline Coudrin

Since the late nineties, the vocational studies certificate (BEP) no longer constitutes an end of studies qualification. Whether or not they pass the examination, the majority of BEP *terminale* pupils continue their initial education, either in vocational education or by entering the second technological cycle by access to an adapted *première* class. Predominant amongst pupils continuing their education in the eighties, this option is currently overshadowed by the vocational *baccalauréat*. A natural continuation of the education provided in the first two years of the BEP curriculum, and often offered in the same *lycée*, the preparation for a vocational *baccalauréat* currently accounts for over three quarters of the pupils pursuing their studies at level IV following a BEP *terminale*.

What factors affect the continuation of studies after the end of the BEP? Is the choice to continue initial education connected with educational conditions in BEP classes, with schooling history or other individual characteristics such as the social environment or gender?

This article attempts to answer these questions by using the information collected in secondary pupil panels enrolled in 1995 and 1989.

Vocational *lycée* teachers

Nadine Esquieu

Characterised by a common mission, primarily recruited at the same level (three years of higher education after the *baccalauréat*) and now trained in the same place, i.e. teacher training university institutions, teachers form a well-defined social group, which at first glance appears to be homogenous.

Out of the 384,300 permanent teachers in the public secondary education, 62,200 are vocational *lycée* teachers (VLT).

Distinguishable by their professional experience, social origin and educational history, VLTs are however similar to other teachers when it comes to the motivations for their choice of profession: to pass on a valued subject and be in contact with the pupils.

This contact can be perceived as difficult due to pupils' behaviour and educational level. However, even though their role as an "educator" is essential, VLTs believe that "passing on knowledge" is the most important task involved in their teaching position.

Because not many of them believe their job has lost some of its credit in the eyes of society, most would recommend it to their children.

Flashback on a few milestones in the history of alternating vocational courses

Ruby Sanchez and Philippe Zamora

There are two systems of alternating courses under employment contracts in France: apprenticeship and alternating course programmes per se, which are the subject of this article. After over twenty years in existence, these contracts were reformed by management and labour within the framework of the national inter-professional agreement of 20 September 2003. Their objective is to extend their role in the definition of alternating course policies, in particular to adapt the content of the courses and the qualifications or certifications to actual business requirements.

This reform constitutes a new step in the takeover of this system by the management and labour. The purpose of this article is to briefly look back on the successive steps which – as dictated in particular by successive electoral changes and economic cycles – have regulated the design and institutional organisation of the alternating system. The recent creation of the professionalisation contract is reinterpreted in this context.

What jobs for young people coming out of *lycée* or apprenticeship in 2004 and 2005?

Christophe Jagers

In 2004-2005, two thirds of the young people coming out of apprenticeship found a job, as did half of *lycée* pupils. The jobs occupied reflect not only the characteristics of these young people but also those of the sectors that recruit them. Most of the apprentices followed level V courses in the production sector and were employed in the sectors recruiting this type of profile, whereas for *lycée* pupils, benefiting from more diverse courses, the opportunities span a broader range of professions. Four activity sectors represent half of the recruitments: retail, construction, "mechanics, electricity, metallurgy" and the hotel and restaurant industry, the latter three experiencing recruitment difficulties. As suggested by their education, half of the young people freshly out of apprenticeship occupy production functions, which is the case for only one in three *lycée* pupils. In the short term, the quality of the jobs held by former apprentices is better: they more often sign permanent employment contracts and less often work part time as they are less frequently employed in the sectors with this type of work. The socio-professional self image of young recruits varies mainly depending on the position held; however, all characteristics being equal, apprentices think of themselves as workers more often than *lycée* recruits.

The future of vocational *baccalauréat* holders

Sylvie Lemaire

Most vocational *baccalauréat* holders, who have pursued significantly different curriculums from other *baccalauréat* holders, leave the education system once they have obtained their *baccalauréat*, the primary purpose of which is to prepare for immediate integration into the labour market. However, nearly four in ten *baccalauréat* holders continue studying, even though the courses they enrol in are not always part of higher education. This is a particularly common occurrence amongst *baccalauréat* holders who have passed with honours or come from a privileged background, but the demand is also significant among foreign vocational *baccalauréat* holders.

Most vocational *baccalauréat* holders who continue their studies prepare for a higher tech-

nician certificate (BTS), in nearly half of the cases with an apprenticeship or vocational qualification contract. However, the failure rate is high: two in three vocational *baccalauréat* holders who enrol into higher education come out of the education system without a qualification higher than the *baccalauréat*.

Entry flows and DUT success rate

Sylvaine Péan and Danielle Prouteau

New *baccalauréat* holders represent the majority of incoming students in the first year of university institutes of technology (IUT). The gap between the enrolment rates of new general and technological *baccalauréat* holders has been progressively closing in the last four years, highlighting a better treatment of technological *baccalauréat* holders. The breakdown in these new *baccalauréat* holders varies significantly depending on the professional sector concerned, women being the majority in the tertiary sector. Technological *baccalauréat* holders from the "industrial science and technology" (STI) option have passed with honours more often than other *baccalauréat* holders. Nearly four in five *baccalauréat* holders enrolling into IUTs have remained in the same academic constituency.

The observation of a student cohort enrolling into the first year of IUT for the first time reveals that two thirds obtain the university diploma in technology (DUT) within two years. The previous curriculum of these students has a considerable impact on their success. While students' chances of success vary depending on the professional sector observed, women enjoy a higher success rate than men in both sectors (secondary or tertiary). Success also varies depending on the specialty and institution in which the student prepares for the DUT.

Students enrolled in paramedical courses in 2004

Sophie Dantan and Rémy Marquier

In 2004, 947 training institutes for paramedical professions educated 108,601 students enrolled into these courses. Over two thirds of them prepare for the nursing profession and 17% for the nursing aid profession.

Women are largely predominant in all courses and enjoy higher qualification success rates and fewer repeats than men. Over half of the students benefit from financial aid, which mostly concerns nursing, nursing aid and paediatric nursing auxiliary courses.

Between 28% and 59% of the students enrolled into one of these three courses were already working the year before their enrolment. Newcomers are primarily *baccalauréat* holders and, in most courses, primarily come from a clerical or working class background, even though certain courses such as masseur-physiotherapist or pedicure-chiro podist courses cater for a larger proportion of students coming from privileged backgrounds.

Students and graduates from social profession courses from 1985 to 2004

Pascal Grenat

In 2004, social profession courses accounted for over 50,000 students compared with 20,000 in 1985. Amongst these, 23% opt for the special education teaching profession, 19% for medical and psychological care and 16% prepare for a social welfare worker profession. Half of the increase in enrolments is due to the development of courses preparing for medical and psychological care as well as social care worker professions (formerly home help). The latter two represented approximately one third of all the students in 2004, compared with less than 10% in 1985. In 2004, 23,000 qualifications relative to social professions were awarded, i.e. three times that of 1985. The rise in the number of State social care worker qualifications is partly due to the implementation of the accreditation of prior learning system. Students graduating from social education schools are mostly women (85%) and relatively old (27 years old on average). 75% of them are granted financial aid during the course of their studies. Admission into some of these courses is highly selective: in total, 25% of the applicants are admitted.

Promote the "school – company" concept abroad

Michel Le Devehat and Pierre Charle

National agreements between the ministry of national Education and major industrial groups, governing the "school – company" partnership, have been effective on an international scale for ten years. Twelve centres educating technicians, higher technicians and engineers have been set up in Asia, Europe and Latin and Central America, unquestionably promoting our technical and vocational education while enabling our "business partner" to find the staff (mostly middle management) who meet their expectations in terms of production.

Each of the showcase centres, always involving an educational partner from the host country, is managed by a French teacher. The experiments conducted are beneficial on both educational and technical levels and reintegrated into our own system.

THEME: STUDENTS' LIVING CONDITIONS

The analysis of the observations collected in 1997, 2000 and 2003 by the National Observatory of student life (OVE) outlines the main characteristics of the living standards of the population enrolled in university or higher lycée classes, and highlights how precarious these living standards are. These observations show that the economic conditions of student life cannot be assessed using the conceptual framework designed to measure the resources, expenditure and assets of ordinary households. The scarcity of monetary resources received and managed by the students is not however incompatible with a relatively comfortable material life, due to the importance of the range of goods and services "in kind". Conversely, resources apparently far superior than average can threaten the pursuit of education if these resources are the result of a part time job affecting the student's learning and completion of academic assignments. The comparison between the three editions reveals that this type of precariousness is on the increase, not poverty in the traditional sense of the word, even though poverty affects certain students, notably foreign.

Permanently increasing for the last ten years, the number of scholarship students in 2006 was down 4% compared with 2005. This decrease seems primarily due to an increase in the purchasing power, in particular for the most privileged scholarship population categories. In total, the proportion of scholarship students amounts to 29.4% (compared with 30.2% in 2005), i.e. lower than that of 2001. This drop affects all higher education courses.

The structure of the scholarship population, in terms of socio-economic characteristics, varies depending on the courses. Students enrolled in higher technician courses are particularly disadvantaged. Similarly, within the university, those in administrative, economic and social courses account for a high proportion of scholarship students, high aid figures and a low propensity to reach the master's curriculum.

Within the fifth stage, which accounts for 40% of scholarship students, there are marked differences: children of manual or clerical workers mix with children of parents without an activity experiencing serious financial and social difficulties. In addition to their revenue, these students are characterised by their limited presence in selective courses and high concentration in *licence* courses.

The family Budget survey, carried out every five years by the national institute of statistics and economic studies, is an opportunity to accurately measure household expenditure (food or housing as well as restaurants, travel, services etc.) and resources.

Due to a specific student characteristic, placing their housing situation as well as their potential independence with regard to their family at the heart of their material life, we are limited to the study of two very distinct student populations: those living in independent accommodation during the week and those living with their parents seven days a week.

The family Budget survey therefore facilitates the comparison between the situation of the student groups considered and that of other groups of young people of a similar age, or even with all French households. Thus, unemployed young people of the same age spend less than students, who themselves spend less than young people with a job. The category complaining most about their financial situation is not students but unemployed young people.

Students' expenditure and living standards evolution (1997-2003) Focus provided by the OVE's triennial survey "Living conditions"

Louis Gruel, Ronan Vourc'h
and Sandra Zilloniz

Scholarship holders in higher education in the last ten years 1997-2001, 2002-2006: two highly contrasted periods

Jérôme Fabre

Students' budgets in 2006

Vanessa Bellamy