

Advantages in accessing employment and for the modularisation of training courses

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Report by the French Centre for Research on Education, Training and Employment "Ministry of Labour qualifications tested in the field".

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Alongside the qualifications awarded within the national education system and the vocational training certificates issued at sector level, the vocational qualifications issued by the Ministry of Labour (MoL) occupy an unobtrusive but growing place within the certification system. Thus the number of people obtaining such qualifications has more than doubled in ten years. In 2017, three quarters of the 183,000 candidates for the MoL qualifications were successful, the vast majority of them job seekers; 69% of those obtaining the qualifications had found a job six months afterwards [1]. The certificates issued by the MoL (cf. Box 1) constitute a wide-ranging

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Observations in the field confirm some basic tendencies [3]. The MoL's qualifications are universally recognised for the advantages they confer in terms of access to employment. They are also recognised for their progressive, modular design based on vocational competence certificates (CCPs - certificats de compétences professionnelles), which are precursors of units of competence. These advantages in the search for jobs are, nevertheless, counterbalanced by

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sphere made up of more than 250 vocational qualifications, which are regularly updated and encompass a wide range of occupations, although there is an emphasis on service-sector specialties [2]. Ranging from level V to II of the French national qualifications framework, the training courses leading to award of the qualifications are targeted at the lower levels of the framework before rising gradually to the higher levels, thereby emulating the process of upgrading qualifications and jobs and upskilling the working population. A qualitative survey conducted by Céreq provides a broad picture of the uses to which the MoL qualifications are put by the actors in the labour market, in training and in enterprises and their perceptions of their value (cf. Box 2). At a time when the decrees implementing the new legislation on 'the freedom to choose one's professional future' are awaited, this survey offers an opportunity to investigate the way in which the actors on the ground are appropriating the MoL's certification arrangement.

poor image, a lack of clarity in the offer and inadequate visibility among the various users. Frequently associated with job seekers, the MoL's qualifications are, consequently, too little known to other groups (employees, young people not in employment, education or training, known as NEETS, etc.) or to actors in the economic sphere – notably very small and small and medium-sized enterprises – and, more surprisingly, training specifiers and labour market intermediaries. For their part, recruiters say they find it difficult to identify the qualifications, and in particular to distinguish the MoL qualifications from those awarded within the education system. On the other hand, the distinction between the MoL qualifications and those awarded at sector level is more familiar to them, the former being associated with training in a recognised occupation and the latter with training to facilitate employees' adaptation to a job or workplace.

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