

**ATTRACTING, DEVELOPING and  
RETAINING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS**

***Country Background Report for France***

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current situation in France is not characterised by the shortage of candidate teachers experienced in some neighbouring countries. However, the age structure of the French population is not favourable in view of the high demand for new teachers to be met in the coming years as a result of the high expected number of retiring teachers. Hence, France will also be faced with the problem studied by the OECD. In fact, four factors will play a key role in this issue:

- The skewed age structure of the French population which means that the labour market will shift over within a few years;
- The high level of recruitment in the decade 1965-1975 for the schooling of all children until the age of 16 in lower secondary education, which entails massive retirements between 2004 and 2014;
- Extending the retirement age only postpones the problem without making it less acute;
- Increased violence and insecurity in certain urban areas and some schools inhibit many potential teachers, as many students reject the option of passing the selective examinations (*concours*) required to become a secondary education professor.

It is not possible to understand the French education system without a historical background, i.e. the French school system of today is the outcome of a political will to unify its structures and democratise its access. However, three gaps remain: the duality between public and private schools, which subsists but is largely under control; the insufficient cooperation between the primary and secondary level of education and the split between the two existing technical tracks.

Primary and secondary education are organised differently: while the former is much decentralised, the latter remains more centralised. Both levels have been faced over the last twenty years with deep socio-cultural changes and with a policy of endless change emphasising structural more than pedagogical reforms.

Since the framework law on education of 1989, teachers of both levels benefit from initial (and since 1998 from continuing) training at the new University Institutes for Teacher Training (IUFM) set up in each educational district (*académie*).

Next to teachers, other categories of staff work in primary education, e.g. pedagogical advisors, inspectors, specialised staff providing remedial courses to pupils in difficulty, teacher trainers and specialised instructors for fine arts and sports. In secondary education, next to inspectorate and management staff, there are also educational advisors, librarians, plus counsellors working outside schools.

In the private education sector, which counts about 15% of primary education pupils and 20% of secondary education students, teacher recruitment, training and career management has been since 1993 the same as in the public sector.

Designing education policies is not an easy exercise in a centralised country – even though some windows have opened, more in the form of a de-concentration of central authorities than a real decentralisation. Teachers and staff in the French education system are very sensitive, which makes sweeping change impossible and calls for careful consultation.

The looming shortage of teachers already led to some initiatives: a proactive communication policy based on career advantages enjoyed by teachers, a financial bonus equivalent to a one-year minimal wage for aspiring teachers preparing the *concours*, in return for a short commitment to teach in case of success; the introduction of « sensitisation modules » aimed at detecting potential candidate teachers already during the first two years at university; the setting up of a network of IUFM in order to transfer candidates to *académies* with a deficit, etc. In secondary education, internal recruitment

*concours* target staff already in service but working on a time contract; the accreditation of experiential learning opens new opportunities, but the law introducing it is too recent (2002) to make any projections about its potential impact. It would also be important to overcome the current practice consisting in assigning young teachers to the most difficult schools and areas. Another attractive measure would be to adjust the salary of beginning teachers in accordance with their previous experience in another job. Lastly, more intensive European teacher exchanges would broaden their horizon beyond their rather limited national visions. Other aspects, of a more general nature, may be equally important in the choice of the teaching profession, e.g. making it more appealing by treating teachers as intellectuals, doers and managers, developing a stable and motivating ethical framework for the profession and opening up the job towards professional links with other adults, in particular through teamwork.

The professional profile of French teachers has changed significantly over the last twenty years, as a result of: new social expectations, the growing integration of foreign children, the aspiration to equal opportunities, higher school completion rates and the transfer of more educational task to the school system. In addition, the approach based on a single, multi-functional teacher in primary education is not always easily understood. Yet, the main motivations of those choosing to become teachers remain the same: they are fond of their subject area (in secondary education), they want to educate young people and to teach, they appreciate their social/professional status because it allows them to combine autonomy in their job and freedom in their personal life.

In 1990, when the IUFM were introduced, the careers and salaries of the three categories of teachers (primary school teachers, secondary vocational education teachers, lower and upper secondary education teachers) started moving towards a unified system. Such career enhancement still entails significant financial consequences, since staff keeps moving into better paid categories. Training at IUFM is controversial: setting it up and developing it there has not been an easy task, after radical changes unified formerly separate tracks, created joint training programmes and introduced a professional thesis and teamwork between trainers from different backgrounds (practitioners, academics, inspectors, headmasters, etc.). The most vivid criticism concerns content (not in line with school priorities) and the lack of preparation of trainees to their impending entrance into the profession. In secondary education teacher training remains strongly discipline-based.

Recruiting teachers and assigning them to a post are different in primary and in secondary education. In primary education, teachers are hired by, and posted in a *département*, while for secondary education teachers these procedures are organised at national level. Some primary school professors may be assigned to positions outside the classroom as promoters of local or national priorities in pedagogy and policy. Jobs in some *départements* are in high demand with teachers and tend to go to the most senior ones rather than to those achieving the best results with pupils. The whole system of assigning teachers to posts, called the « movement », is a real headache. Recent initiatives have tried to make it easier: the reorganisation of the process into two consecutive phases (a global one and a « de-concentrated » one) has produced a limited positive impact. The unions' insistence on an egalitarian system leaves only limited room to the possibility to identify the right person for any given post. The central administration has been trying various mechanisms using e.g. bonus points or specific job descriptions to customise the assignment of teachers to schools/posts. Three possibilities may be explored: dealing with less attractive posts through a specific administrative procedure; adjusting financial bonuses to attract candidates to these posts; leaving the first assignment of new teachers to the regional authority, at least in the main disciplines, even though the recruitment process may remain based on a national competition (a *concours*).

Teacher career management is also criticised for their insufficient mobility, for the facultative nature of in-service training and its lack of impact on careers as well as for formal and ineffective evaluation procedures.

As many other developed countries, France is faced with serious difficulties to find teachers – if not with the perspective of an actual shortage of teachers. In the foreseeable future these difficulties may

first affect secondary education from 2004 – particularly in the private sector, in professional education and in scientific disciplines. This raises two issues that reach beyond education and question the country's political and social choices at the deepest level:

- staff costs represent well over 90% of the total budget for national education. A key question concerns the locus and ultimate limits of educational investments and their efficiency – while in France educational expenditures have been continuously on the increase in constant Euro over the last fifty years, partly in order to fund the schooling of more students for longer studies and partly because of growing *per capita* costs;

- in view of these budgetary limitations the second question is how to attract to the teaching profession high numbers of young graduates in a highly competitive labour market where the public sector cannot match what enterprises may offer to qualified staff. One way into the future may be to deliberately position the teaching profession as an ethical social activity offering an attractive alternative to profit-seeking, market rationale and competitive relations between individuals that tend to prevail in enterprises.

## INTRODUCTION – RECRUITING TEACHERS IN FRANCE: STILL IN A BETTER POSITION THAN OTHER COUNTRIES ?

1- Overall the current situation in France is not characterised by the shortage of candidate teachers experienced in some neighbouring countries. Thus, during the 2002 recruitment campaign there were 54,826 present candidates at the *concours* for the 12,000 posts open in primary education, and 92,759 present candidates for the 17,200 posts offered to new secondary education professors. But these rather comforting figures should not hide a major cause of concern: the age structure of the French population is not favourable in view of the high demand for new teachers to be met in the coming years. Currently the renewal of generations is marked by many young people entering the labour market and much fewer retiring from it. This pattern will be reversed from 2006. The number of retiring teachers will peak precisely in the decade from 2004 to 2014, in particular in secondary education. During these years it is expected that the number of teacher positions to be filled annually will be of 37,000 for the whole of primary and secondary education in the public and private sector. A recent joint report by the Inspectorate General of National Education and the Inspectorate General of Finance expects that the peak of retirements will take place in 2003-2004 in primary education and in 2007-2008 in secondary education, i.e. when the major recruitment effort at the level of primary education will already be coming to its end. Hence, the total recruitment needs will be met in 2008 and will decline from then on. There are already early signals of the upcoming difficulties: university enrolments have been declining since 1997 and so have first enrolments at the IUFM. The average number of applicants per vacancy in secondary education has been declining for the last three years; finally, there is already a deficit of candidates for posts in certain regions in primary education, in some technical disciplines in vocational education as well as in the private educational sector.

2- In view of these concerns – which are about the labour market for higher education graduates in general – the French government has already taken some measures. In addition, the ministry of national education in 2001 asked two inspectors general to produce reports looking into the issue of teacher shortage and making proposals to address the looming shortage<sup>1</sup>. These measures, analyses and proposals, combined with the statistical data available, are among the main sources of the present report.

**Table 1- Staff Categories**

Staff Categories (public education sector)	Numbers 2000	Age groups in %		% Women	% Part-time
		Under 30	Over 50		
Primary Education Teachers	314,730	12.8	22.6	77.8	6.4
Secondary Education Teachers	420,240	12.5	33.5	56.7	7.5
Higher Education Teachers	71,600	9.0	41.9	33.1	1.3
Trainee Teachers	34,570	72.1	8.0	62.3	0.7
Management/Adm/Technical Staff	303,320	22.5	27.1	64.9	17.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,144,460</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>9.2</b>

Source: Information Note 01-40, DPD, Ministry of National Education, 2001

**Table 2- Evolution of student enrolments (public + private sector)**

Students/pupils enrolled in	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Primary Education (including Pre-primary)	6,371,000	7,220,000	7,124,000	6,705,000	6,552,000
Secondary Education	3,158,000	4,452,000	5,137,000	5,523,000	5,613,000
Total	9,529,000	11,672,000	12,261,000	12,228,000	12,165,000

Source: *Repères et références statistiques*, DPD-Ministry of National Education, 2002

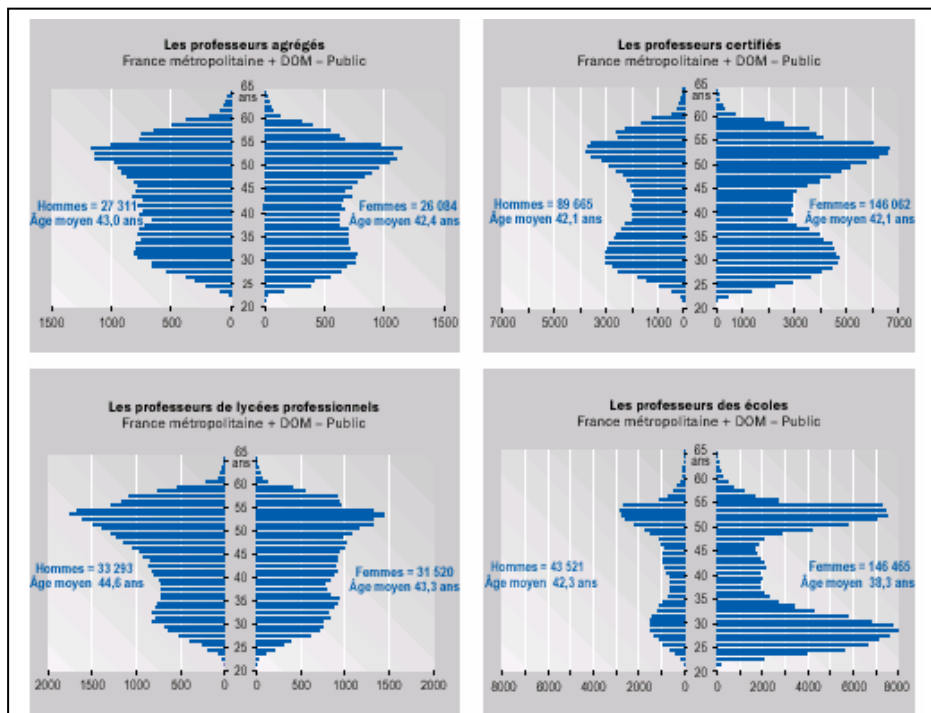
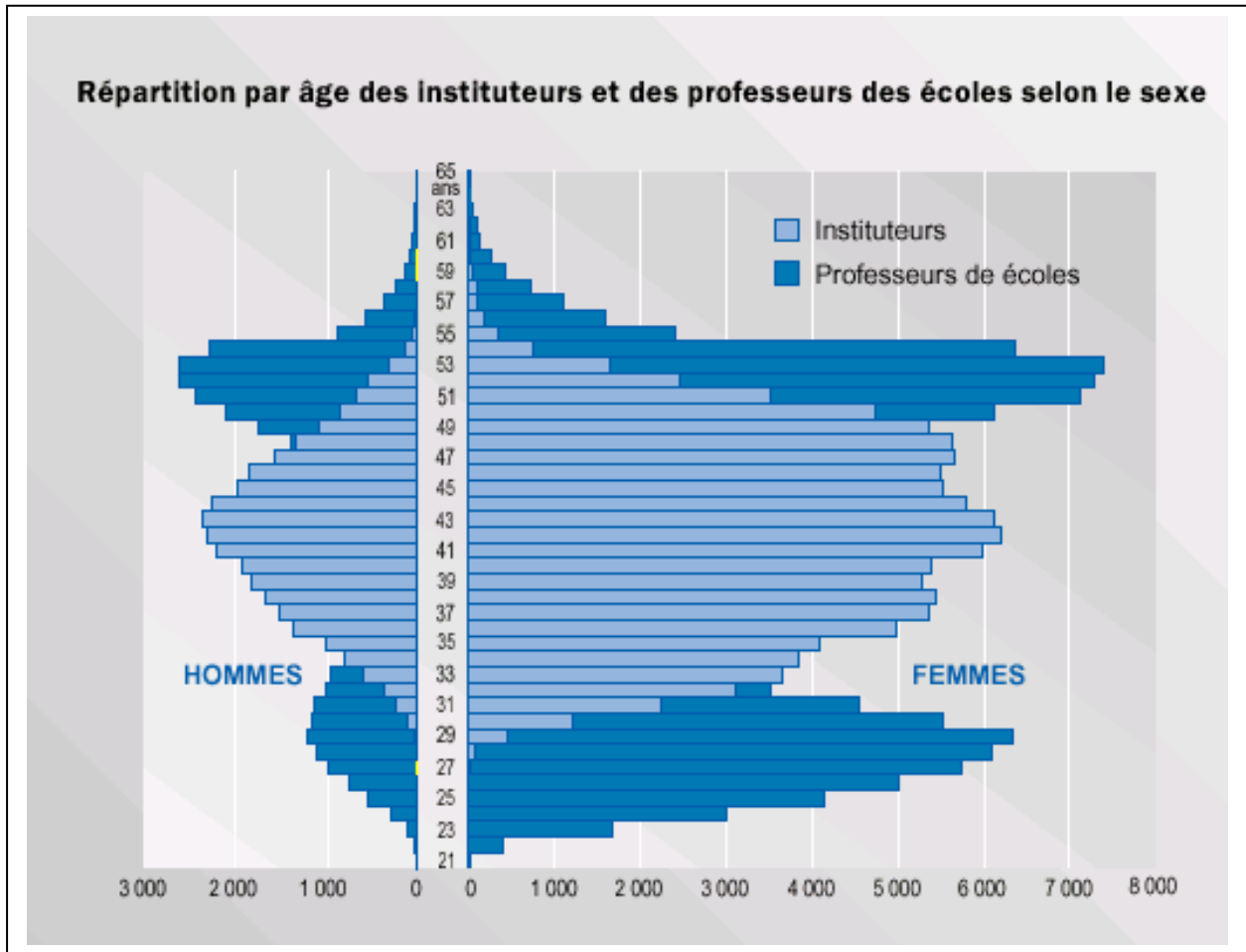
<sup>1</sup> BOTTIN, Y. (2002), *Enseigner en école, un métier pour demain*, Report to the Minister of national education, Ministry of National Education

OBIN, J-P. (2002), *Enseigner, un métier pour demain*, Report to the Minister of national education, La Documentation française



Table 3- Breakdown by age and gender, primary education teachers

Table 4 : Breakdown of professors by category, age and gender



## SECTION 1 – THE FRENCH CONTEXT

3- A historical perspective can best provide an explanation of the uniqueness and specific aspects of the French education system. This is why this section is broken down into three chronological parts: from the 17th century to World War II, second half of the 20th century, the French school system of today.

### **From the 17th century the State has used school as a political lever**

4- The unique situation of France in Europe is probably related to its history, with a State power in place before a nation emerged. The administrative, linguistic, cultural and ideological unification of the various peoples living on the French territory has been a permanent concern of most kings and governments since the end of the Middle Ages.

### *School and the reason of State*

5- The Counter-Reformation in the 17th century for the first time used school as an instrument put at the service of this ambition: twelve years after the repeal of the Edict of Nantes which opened a time of persecution of Protestants, Louis XIV ruled that children of protestant parents must attend catholic schools until the age of 14 (Ordinance of 13 December 1698). Reason of State was again invoked later on, when Louis XV in 1762 expelled Jesuits from their « colleges »; and again when the Revolution continued the same task, transferring to lay authorities the organisation of public education (decrees of September 1789) and later prohibiting religious congregations (decree of 18 August 1792). At that time started the still ongoing debate between followers of La Chalotais favouring a system of « national education », with state schools playing a prominent role in education, and the defenders of « public instruction » who, under the leadership of Condorcet, want « elementary » instruction for all children, boys and girls, while families would keep their educational responsibilities.

### *1802: introduction of public secondary education*

6- But only under Bonaparte did the gradual building up of a system of public secondary education start with the Fourcroy Act of 1 May 1802 creating the *lycée*; it introduced an administrative and pedagogical model that in spite of some amendments still deeply pervades the organisation of today's secondary education. Teaching became in principle a State monopoly with the decrees of 10 May 1806 and 17 March 1808 which set up and organised the imperial University. The political philosophy underpinning this decision was that public secondary education's role is to « train for the State citizens loyal to their religion, their prince, their fatherland and their families »<sup>2</sup>, i.e. to train the elite of the bourgeoisie, where the *grandes écoles* and the main official bodies running the nation will find their constituency.

### *1833: introduction of municipal primary schools*

7- A protestant, François Guizot, scared by revolutionary unrest and the first labour rebellion (that of the silk workers, the *Canuts*, in Lyons in 1832), in 1833 took primary education away from the catholic church and entrusted it to new public municipal schools. He also generalised the training of primary school teachers at *écoles normales* and introduced an upper level in primary education actually delivering secondary education (and even higher education after the creation of the *Ecole normale supérieure* of St-Cloud) to the best graduates of municipal primary schools.

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<sup>2</sup> Decree of 17 March 1808, article 38

8- From then on, for nearly 150 years, these parallel tracks in public education will compete with each other, with primary education differing from secondary education more by the social background than by the age of their respective students. « Universal primary instruction has become a warrant of public order and social stability » declared Guizot to justify this deep transformation<sup>3</sup>. Fifty years later, the founders of the Third Republic would not deny this assertion: following up to the secularisation of primary school, they secularise the curricula, make schooling free and compulsory and above all extent it to girls. There again, political concerns were clearly stated: primary education is an instrument to serve a single cause, the defence of the Republic. Minister Jules Ferry said « I promised religious neutrality; I never promised political neutrality »<sup>4</sup>; the point is no longer the ideological control over an elite, even the control over men is no longer sufficient to transform society, women become stakeholders in social dynamics: Jules Ferry did not hesitate before declaring « He who wins the wife controls it all, first because he gets control over children and then because he reaches the husband »<sup>5</sup>.

#### *1941: Creation of a system of public vocational education*

9- Similarly, the creation of a system of technical education in the 20th century reflected not only economic needs and responded not only to technological change but also to political views. The Astier Act on apprenticeship of 1918 puts the young « apprentice » under the supervision of his/her employer, for fear that public training centres may become the focus of revolutionary unrest. Ultimately it was the government of Vichy who in 1941, under the Occupation, opened not only « youth working camps » but also over 900 « professional training centres » who are the direct forerunners of today's professional *lycées*; the main aim was to control working class youth and to try and educate them to the « moral and political demands of the national revolution » of Marshal Pétain.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Since WW2: partial unification of the three education systems and mass schooling**

##### *Segregation between educational tracks inherited from the 19th century*

10- During the Fourth Republic (1947-1958) the organisation of public education schools stabilised within three education systems (Primary, Secondary and « Professional »), with different schools, teacher training centres, curricula, inspectorates and ministerial departments for each. Their relations were more competitive than cooperative and they were more a reflection of social stratification than of the talent or merit of their students, both with regard to social background of learners and teachers and to opportunities open to graduates: competition in particular between the « complementary courses » of « upper » primary education and the lower cycle of the *lycées*; or else between the technical *collèges* (lower cycle) and later *lycées* (upper cycle) of secondary education and the apprenticeship centres, and later also the technical education *collèges* of the « professional » education system.

11- During the first half of the 20th century these lines of divide between schools inherited from the social stratification of 19th century France are more and more out of tune with a rapidly modernising society (rural depopulation, urbanisation, development of a working class, women's liberation, individualism). As soon as 1918 a group of officers of World War I called for a « single school » no longer organised in separate tracks but rather by « levels »<sup>7</sup>. From then on the movement in favour of the democratisation of school will continue to develop in society and political circles and will lead, 50 years later, to the major reforms of the Fifth Republic.

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<sup>3</sup> François Guizot, Letter to primary school masters, 18 July 1833

<sup>4</sup> Jules Ferry, Address to the Pedagogical Congress of Teachers of 3 April 1883

<sup>5</sup> Jules Ferry, Address of April 1870, Molière room, Paris

<sup>6</sup> LELIEVRE, C. (1990) History of school institutions, Nathan, p.168

<sup>7</sup> Manifesto of the Fellows of the New University

### ***From the 1960': democratisation and unification of school structures***

12- The aim of these reforms proves again to be clearly political: according to their main promoter, General de Gaulle, they should « contribute to gradually erase social classes » by opening up secondary education « to the masses » and by providing « equal opportunities to all young French »<sup>8</sup>. The Fouchet reform in 1963 puts together the classes of the lower cycle of the *lycées* and those of upper primary education into a new type of school, the *collège* of secondary education (CES); twelve years later the Haby reform merges the two tracks of the CES into a « single *collège* » with deliberately heterogeneous classes.

13- While the democratisation of primary education was already completed by the time of World War I, the same still remained to be done in secondary education at the end of World War II. Unexpectedly, the movement was inadvertently initiated by the government of Vichy when for political reasons it put upper primary schools under the responsibility of secondary education, deemed to be more obedient to the regime. In 1942 the introduction of a new track to the *baccalauréat* accessible to pupils of upper primary schools contributed to mainstreaming and boosting this segment of the education system after the Liberation. Enrolments nearly doubled between 1945 and 1962 and at that time, on the eve of unification, it exceeded enrolments in the lower cycle of secondary education schools.

14- From 1958 the unification of educational tracks and the efforts to extent schooling went hand in hand: thus in 1958 upper primary education enrolled 411,000 pupils and the first cycle of secondary education 507,000. When the generalisation of the unified *collège* was completed in 1977, all students attended the same classes and total enrolment reached the figure of 2,500,000: from that time onwards, schooling has concerned the whole age class of 4 to 14-year olds. From then on also, the French education system has been articulated in a sequence of levels corresponding to different school categories: pre-primary schools, primary schools, *collège* (lower secondary education), *lycée* and professional *lycée* (upper secondary education). In 1985 the decision to extent compulsory schooling to the upper secondary level was linked to the diversification of its tracks, in particular by means of the introduction of a « professional *baccalauréat* ».

15- At the same time, the schooling of girls has been growing continuously since the elimination (in 1924) of the segregated structures that used to block the way to the *baccalauréat* to girls and students from upper primary schools. In 1945 the proportion of a generation holding the *baccalauréat* was 3.7% of girls and 4.8% of boys; at the end of the Sixties the figure was already higher for girls than for boys.

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<sup>8</sup> Declaration of the President of the Republic, Council of Ministers of 12 December 1962. Quoted by LELIEVRE, C. and NIQUE, C. (1995), *L'Ecole des Présidents*, Nathan



## **The education system of today: scars from old wounds**

18- As a result of its complex history, despite the unification of structures and the democratisation of access, the French education system of today still suffers from the scars of three wounds left by three lines of divide: between the public and the private sector, between primary and secondary education and within technical education.

### ***Public vs. private education: a temperate duality kept under control***

19- Today private education under contractual agreement with the State is nearly exclusively catholic and relatively well integrated into the public service of education, both with respect to its funding mechanisms and its pedagogical organisation. Public and private education indeed benefit from similar funding support from regional/local authorities. The State budget pays for the salaries of teachers and librarians. The same does however not apply to headmasters and staff in administration, management, educational and support services. The defenders of the full integration of the private sector into a unified and lay public education service failed to achieve their views in 1983 and the ensuing Chevènement Act of 1984 provided for proportional funding between the two educational sectors, thus freezing *de facto* their relative positions on the ground. Hence, the share of the private sector in today's total enrolments is not much different from what it was twenty years ago: 13.5% in primary education and 20.1% in secondary education. The content of, and control over national curricula are the same in the public and in the private sector. In the same way, the recruitment procedure (through a *concours*) and the career of teachers are exactly identical, and secondary education teachers of both sectors now even study together for part of their initial training. An important difference is however that the private sector is allowed to recruit its students without any geographical restrictions, which gives it the possibility to apply admission rules according to its own educational objectives.

### ***Primary and secondary education: insufficient cooperation***

20- The line of divide that used to exist in history between primary and secondary education as parallel tracks rather than consecutive stages still survives under the new organisation. In spite of official instructions requiring primary education teachers and secondary education professors of the same area to cooperate, collaboration remains very limited. Obstacles are mainly cultural, but may also be administrative. For pupils, the shock may be quite strong when they move from primary school, where they are under the supervision of a single teacher, into *collège* where all the sudden and without any preparation they are faced with a dozen adults. In spite of the merger of all formerly separate centres into IUFM in 1990, initial training remains very different for primary and secondary education teachers, concerning both content and organisation. Furthermore, continuing training remains totally separate. The same difference exists in the private education sector where continuing training is organised at the Centres for Pedagogical Training (CFP) on the basis of an agreement with the State. Curricula are not really harmonised between mainly « instrumental » primary education and the *collège*'s more « cultural » priorities. Thus, compulsory schooling in France is not equivalent to a kind of « basic education » that would be self-sufficient with respect to the culture it imparts. The public debate continues between those who would like to bring primary schools and the unified *collège* closer together into some kind of « basic schools » paving the way towards either general or professional studies and those who would prefer the *collège* to serve mainly as a preparation to the *lycée*, offering various tracks and gradually filtering out towards technical education pupils who can no longer cope. Recent surveys have shown that the majority of teachers would currently favour the end of the « unified » *collège* and the introduction of an early separation of students into various educational tracks<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> *Le Monde* of 19 November 2002, page 10, where 52% of primary education teachers, 62% of *collège* professors and 53% of *lycée* professors seem to be in favour of moving away from the principle of a single *collège*.

### **«Technical» education: a split system**

21- The rationale of the split in French « technical » education into two parallel tracks called « technological » and « professional » education is a peculiarity difficult to explain to foreign observers. It mainly results from a history where the training of technicians from the end of the 19th century was organised as part of secondary education, whereas training centres for workers and employees developed from those first established during the years of World War II. These centres were kept after the Liberation, under the then decisive influence of the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) and the French Communist Party (PCF) who were keen to avoid that working class children be mixed up with those of the small bourgeoisie: they favoured the education of an elite for the working class, not one that would ultimately move up these children into another social class. Therefore the dual system still exists today, with two types of schools (the *lycée* for general and technological education and the professional *lycée*), two *baccalauréats* (technological and professional) and two categories of professors. This split survived because of corporatism; it seems not to benefit students, it is expensive for local authorities and the State, not transparent for families and employers and appears to create a *de facto* social segregation.

### **Special education: still not stabilised**

22- The schooling of handicapped children tends to be organised in most cases within the framework of the « normal » school system. There are however also 48,000 primary education pupils (0.74%) who attend special Classes for integration into school (CLIS). In secondary education there are 104,000 pupils attending the Sections for specially adapted general and professional education (SEGPA) linked to *collèges*. In addition, the Pedagogical integration units set up at some *collèges* enrol 1,600 mentally handicapped children. Finally, there are 11,000 more severely handicapped children attending Regional special education schools (EREA).

### **Teacher categories: a unified status, divided cultures**

23- The teaching profession was fragmented into many different categories before its structures were unified. Several parliamentary and ministerial reports (in particular those by Ribot in 1899, Joxe in 1972 and Prost in 1983) underlined the adverse consequences of these extreme diversity of status, workload and wages for teachers who sometimes do the same job in front of the same pupils. The process of « enhancing the teaching profession » launched in 1989 achieved by Minister of Education Jospin unified the status of all teaching staff (whether in primary or secondary or in general, technological or professional education): for all, the same minimal recruitment level (at least a three-year university degree, the *licence*), two years of initial professional training at one of the University Institutes of Teacher Training (IUFM) set up in each educational district (*académie*) and strictly comparable career opportunities. Yet, there are still three categories of professors who share in common the same recruitment, compensation and career conditions: school professors (at pre-primary and primary schools), certified professors (at *collèges* and *lycées*) and professional *lycée* professors. In addition, the traditional *agrégation*, a higher and more prestigious *concours* requiring the higher university degree of the *maîtrise* has been kept for the recruitment of about 10% of secondary education professors. It is remarkable that the culture of the old educational divide into three tracks (primary, secondary and professional education) thus found its way even into the new, level-based structure of the education system.

### **Sustained investments with limited efficiency**

24- Since the Liberation the funding effort in favour of education was only seldom denied. Thus, between 1950 and 1980 the ministry of national education's budget for school education was multiplied by 9 (in constant francs). The gross domestic expenditure on education increased from 6.3% of GDP in 1974 to 7.0% in 2001 (with a peak at 7.4% in 1993). The average expenditure per student increased from Euro 3,300 in 1975 to Euro 6,260 in 2001 (in constant Euro). During this quarter of a century the proportion of an age class reaching qualification IV (i.e. the level of the

*baccalauréat*) increased from 30 to 69% while the proportion of young people reaching level V (i.e. vocational certificates like the BEP or the CAP) increased from 80 to 92.1% of a generation. Overall, the proportion of young people who leave the school system without a qualification fell from 38% in 1965 to 7.2% in 2001.

25- However, the latter indicator remained nearly unchanged over the last decade, and so have the rates of attainment of qualification levels IV and V. This is all the more concerning that over the last ten years the number of pupils decreased by 587,000 (of which 440,000 in primary education) and the number of teachers increased by 27,000 (mostly in secondary education). At the same time, the expenditure per pupil increased by 94% in primary education and by 74% in secondary education between 1975 and 2001 (in constant Euro). This genuinely diminishing efficiency leads quite naturally to today's search for progress more in qualitative than in quantitative terms.

### ***A strategy of endless reforms meeting with widespread resistance***

26- The proposals for change in the teaching profession expressed in official reports have shown a remarkable continuity over more than a century<sup>11</sup>: they seek to entice professors to work together, especially in secondary education, to be less absent from classroom, to invest in pedagogical improvement, to adapt their teaching methods to their pupils. To achieve this, the recurrent proposal has been to strengthen the role of headmasters and inspectors as well as the autonomy of schools and other educational institutions. The orientation law for education of 1989 underlines the need for each school to adopt an « institutional project » endorsed by supervising authorities at the level of the *académie*. It is equally remarkable that this strategy of endless change keeps meeting with the same resistance from actors and established bodies – which could lead to questioning its relevance.

### ***Ambivalence in public opinion***

27- The current ambivalence of public opinion towards school is a sign of what sociologist came to call the new « cocktail of values » at work in French society: it tends to combine a quest for more freedom of choice in private matters (which would include choosing a school for one's children) with a quest for authority and order in public affairs (with school seen as belonging to these)<sup>12</sup>. Hence, public authorities are expected to solve a difficult dilemma: to deregulate the educational process – at the risk of increasing inequalities – while at the same time regulating more rigorously schools in their function as a public space, i.e. by enforcing the equality of all in the eyes of the law. It is far from certain that a stable equilibrium between these contradictory demands can be achieved easily !

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<sup>11</sup> OBIN, J-P (2002) op. cit., pages 15 to 22

<sup>12</sup> BRECHON, P. (2000), Les valeurs des Français, A. Colin



## SECTION 2- THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND TEACHER CATEGORIES

### Primary education

#### *Locally administered structures*

28- Primary schools enjoy neither administrative nor financial autonomy; contrary to secondary education institutions, they are not legal entities: administratively they are mere municipal services. School « directors » have no administrative responsibility: for the State, who is responsible for teaching and is the employer of teachers, the lowest level of educational organisation is the local district (*circonscription*).

Each school is part of a *circonscription* headed by an inspector of national education (IEN) with support from pedagogical advisors. Each inspector has the administrative and pedagogical responsibility for a network of schools (often a few dozen) including in particular the delimitation of each school's catching area (the « school map ») and the assignment of posts to schools and of teachers to posts. These inspectors are themselves supervised by an *academic* inspector who is responsible for national education in a *département*. Primary education teachers represent 25.5% of total national education staff and 43% of total teaching staff at public education schools; they are responsible for 56% of all pupils in the school system. On average teaching staff in primary education is younger and counts a higher proportion of women than in secondary education<sup>13</sup>.

29- Each district of primary education is represented by an inspector of national education (IEN) assisted by a district team. Primary education inspectors are close to the field and represent the State in its relations with mayors and other representatives of local authorities; inspectors' role is to warrant the interests of national education policy in their district. The missions of these inspectors have changed over time and their workload has increased. More than 80% of them are highly educated and come from among the elite of primary education teachers; they have increasingly become the managers of the public service of education and endeavour to deliver results and to increase the teaching capacity of schools in their district. To this end they carry out six main roles: to give education a meaning, to organise, to stimulate, to control, to help implementing new directives and to evaluate. In all these activities inspectors are supported by a district team which is a *de facto* reality rather than a legal unit; its configuration may be different in each *département* or district. The core of these teams comprises pedagogical advisors and a district secretary; other support staff includes ICT counsellors and instructors for foreign or regional languages. In addition, inspectors are responsible for the coordination and stimulation of all RASED (networks for special support to pupils in difficulty), also evaluating their running and their teachers.

30- Currently, the lowest level where the functioning of schools and the implementation of new policies are regulated is the local district (*circonscription*), since headmasters (or rather « school directors ») have no power in these areas. Each inspector supervises on average 300 teachers teaching in some 30 to 70 different schools; these numbers are too high to allow management to provide ongoing coaching and regular contacts between teachers and their supervisors. It should however be pointed out that inspectors played an essential role in the introduction of pedagogical cycles in pre-primary and primary education<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Tables 3 and 4 at end of introduction.

<sup>14</sup> PLATONE, F. (1996) « Les inspecteurs de l'éducation nationale et la rénovation de l'école primaire » in CROS, F. et ADAMCZEWSKI, G. *L'innovation en éducation et en formation*. Paris/Brussels: De Boeck Université/INRP, 185-191

### ***A decentralised system in want of a regrouping of schools***

31- The perspective of a further stage of decentralisation accompanied by the setting up of networks of schools raises important new issues. The ministry more and more encourages primary schools to regroup and build up networks of schools – not only in rural or secluded areas – in order to foster the availability and efficient use of educational resources, in particular for language teaching, fine arts and out-of-school activities. In a 1998 report commissioned by the Minister, *recteur* Claude Pair made the innovative proposal of merging schools too small to allow effective teamwork into a new type of public institution with the necessary critical size: public institutions for local primary education (EPPLÉ) organised as legal entities enjoying administrative and financial autonomy. These new institutions could play three roles that would enhance the professional profile of school professors, i.e.:

- in pedagogy: each EPPLÉ would adopt a comprehensive pedagogical and educational project serving as a frame for teachers' teamwork and for the development of multi-functional teams of teachers cross-sharing specific competencies: this new approach would of course entail a change in the professional training of teachers;
- in administrative/financial management: part of the monies provided by municipalities would contribute to a budget for running expenses;
- in the management of teaching equipment and material.

Like secondary education schools these clusters would have an administrative council for discussion, advice and decision making. Thus, the director would be in charge of pedagogy and administration and would take on part of the IEN's current responsibilities.

### ***A changing pedagogical organisation***

32- Primary education's take off and current structure date back to the 19th century, actually to Jules Ferry's acts of 1879-1882 on free, compulsory and secular education. Each municipality already had at least one school and since 1833 each *département* had a teacher training school (*école normale*). Until 1963 primary school was open to pupils until the age of 14; since that date pupils leave primary school at the age of 11 and are transferred to the *collège*. More recently, primary education has been reorganised in three « cycles » covering also the pre-primary phase – which hitherto was itself subdivided in 3 « levels » called lower, middle and upper class. While primary school is compulsory from the age of 6, the preceding pre-primary education at an *école maternelle* is not. However, the ministry's panel that has been used since 1997 to survey primary education pupils during their first years at school shows that their chances to access the second year without having to repeat the first are highest for those who entered pre-primary school at the youngest possible age<sup>15</sup>. The earlier they enter it, the better their achievements at school. In reality, 35% of two-year old and 95% of three-year old children attend pre-primary education.

33- The introduction of a single type of primary schools in 1959 has deeply transformed the missions of primary education. From a rationale based on social classes, where the children of working class and those of the bourgeoisie attended different schools (cf. Section 1) the system moved towards a school for all. The previously dual system was also based on different types of education, with primary schools preparing for life (by way of the Certificate of primary education focussed on the development of the competencies and social skills of ordinary citizens) and primary classes of *lycées* preparing for further studies. Henceforward, at least according to official instructions, primary school is the same for all and focuses on « fundamental learning », i.e. on the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. But this fundamental learning is envisaged in the perspective of studies for all at the *collège*. This opened the way to a public debate on the status and role of primary education, which has lost its essential function of preparing citizens for life and has become a merely instrumental pipeline feeding culture-intensive secondary education.

34- Instrumental learning conceived in this spirit requires a minimal level of subject-based content broad enough to serve as a preparation for the next stage of study. It should be underlined that whilst

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<sup>15</sup> DPD/MEN (2001), Education et formations n°60, *Scolarisation à 2 ans et réussite au début de l'école élémentaire*.

according to official instructions all primary schools provide similar education and learning the reality is very different. Depending on the school's location and profile, educational process and performance tend to vary enormously. The universe of a rural school with a single class is indeed very different from that of a large school with many classes in a poor suburban district. This fuels the fear that ghettos could build up, as middle-class parents choose not to put their children in the local school and thus increase existing disparities even further.

35- Since a decree of 6 September 1990, primary (together with pre-primary) education is organised in a sequence of three « cycles »: the first one for basic learning; the second one for fundamental learning and the third one for the more elaborate learning of the main instruments<sup>16</sup>. The actual functioning of the system depends very much on the efforts of municipalities, who are responsible for providing premises, service staff and teacher accommodation. France counts 18,000 *écoles maternelles* and 33,500 « elementary » schools, of which 5,600 are single-class institutions (mostly in rural areas) where the teacher is usually alone and also takes care of management and administrative tasks.

36- In recent years France has seen a series of strikes of school directors; they have no financial autonomy and are often carrying out teaching activities in parallel, since only schools with at least 16 classes may have a full-time director. The ministry recently introduced an additional bonus to compensate school directors for their management responsibilities.

#### **« Pedagogical » reforms tend to bring only structural change**

37- The reforms of the past decade have focussed on the structure of the learning process (reorganisation into « cycles » which have not yet been fully introduced everywhere), on their pedagogical implementation and on the learning of foreign languages from an early age. Ministerial notes aim to guide teachers into these new ways<sup>17</sup>. In 1997-2000 Minister Allègre launched a proactive policy (the « charter for the school of the 21st century ») led by the National institute of pedagogical research (INRP) with backing from universities and IUFM. The purpose of this charter was to help schools to draw up projects including new pedagogical approaches (such as formative evaluation, need groups, coaching of pupils in difficulty) and to set up structures adapted to their local context based on « local educational contracts ». It seems that these initiatives, like many other reform proposals, vanished into the sands or in some cases never developed beyond academic wishes. Foreign language learning is a recent initiative that is being introduced in stages and according to different patterns depending on locally available resources: sometimes the teachers in place feel able to initiate their pupils to a new language, with the support of pedagogical notes provided by the ministry; in other cases the inspectorate calls on secondary education professors or on other qualified staff.

38- Until 1991 primary and secondary education teachers were trained separately (this is still the case today in the private sector). Primary education teachers in the public sector were trained at *écoles normales*. This system of initial training has changed in several stages:

- before 1979 the *écoles normales* used to recruit their trainees mainly at the end of the *collège*; all aspiring teachers had to pass the *baccalauréat* and one additional year of professional training;
- in 1979 a specific 2-year university curriculum leading to the DEUG (a university degree requiring two years of study) was introduced for those who wanted to become primary education teachers; it included 30 training modules of which 20 were offered in cooperation with a university and the remaining 10 were specific and offered by, and at an *école normale*; the DEUG needed to be complemented with one year of professional training;
- in 1982 this DEUG was discontinued and replaced by a traditional, subject-based one; the one-year professional training was kept;
- in 1986 future primary education teachers must hold this DEUG before entering the *école normale* and where they spend two years of training (i.e. the total training process requires 4 years after the *baccalauréat*);

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<sup>16</sup> The last year of the *école maternelle* has become a part of both cycle 1 and 2.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the document on the objectives of each new learning cycle published by the CNDP.

- the shift towards recruitment at the level of the *licence* (after 3 years in higher education) was a gradual process. Since 1991 the pattern for initial training of school professors is similar to that of secondary education professors: it requires 5 years of higher education, including two at an IUFM (one year to prepare the admission examination plus one for professional training after admission at the *concours*).

### ***Diversified support***

39- Primary education teachers get support from other staff, some coming from the ranks and others from various areas of specialisation.

#### *Pedagogical advisors*

They are former primary education teachers with recognised teaching and training skills; their main mission is to « coach » teachers and help them to improve their pedagogical methods. They are appointed by the inspector of national education and assist him/her in the area of continuing training and evaluation.

#### *Specialists serving in the networks for support to pupils in difficulty (RASED)*

The RASED networks draw on school psychologists (who are former primary education teachers who passed a special *concours*), speech therapists and school professors holding a certificate of professional qualification in special education (CAPSAIS) for children with a particular kind of handicap.

#### *Teacher trainers*

Their task is initial and continuing teacher training, in close cooperation with an IUFM. Their role is defined in official regulations, in particular in a ministerial instruction of 13 December 1976 and an additional information note of 5 December 1995. These documents emphasise « the essential role of field experience in the process of training professional teachers ». Teachers acting as trainers of their peers are the main link between the training centres and the field, but also between theoretical approaches and professional practice. Primary education teachers and professors may pass the certificate to become a qualified trainer (CAFIPMF)<sup>18</sup> once they have at least five years of professional experience. In most cases candidates prepare for this certificate at the suggestion of an inspector of national education; it is awarded by an examination board chaired by a regional inspector (*inspecteur d'académie*).

#### *Specialised instructors in fine arts and sports*

These instructors must hold a State licence and are hired as contract staff, either by the ministry or a local/regional authority. Their role is restricted to their area of specialisation and is seen as an extension of primary education teachers' broad range of skills.

## **Secondary education**

40- After primary education, pupils enter the class of *Sixième*<sup>19</sup> of the *collège*, where they normally spend four years. At the end of this time they either enter a *lycée* to prepare a general or technological *baccalauréat* in normally three years, or a professional *lycée* where they can prepare in normally two years a certificate of professional qualification (i.e. a specialised CAP or a less specialised BEP); the

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<sup>18</sup> The examinations required for this certificate imply that teachers questions their own professional practice and include: a lecture in their own classroom followed by an explanation about the pedagogical approach used; critical comments of the class work of another teacher; drafting and defence of a professional thesis. Yet, this certificate carries no university credentials. In 2000-2001 some IUFM introduced an advanced higher education degree (DESS) in pedagogical counselling offered in cooperation with a university; this shows the ministry's interest to move teacher training curricula closer to a higher education qualification.

<sup>19</sup> A singularity of the French education system is that the sequence of school years are counted in reverse order; before the 1962 reform children would enter the *lycée* at the age of 6 and attend the 11th form, which meant simply that there were 11 years left until the *baccalauréat*.

best students holding a CAP or BEP may then study two more years at a *lycée* for a technological *baccalauréat* or at a professional *lycée* for a professional *baccalauréat*. To the traditional organisation of studies into a sequence of academic years a new one based on one to two-year « cycles »<sup>20</sup> was superposed in 1990. Thus the four years of the *collège* (from the *Sixième* to the *Troisième* class) have been organised into three cycles: induction (6th), middle (5th and 4th) and orientation (3rd). For its part the *lycée* comprises two cycles: path confirmation (2nd) and final (1st and terminal classes); in the same way the professional *lycée* is in two cycles (preparation of the CAP or BEP, preparation of the *baccalauréat*). Another option open to 16-year old pupils is to move into apprenticeship and to prepare a professional certificate (mainly the CAP) while already holding a work contract. In reality this reorganisation into cycles remains rather formal and parents, students and teachers continue thinking in terms of academic years. The only area where the new system has had a practical impact is on the learning path, since students may no longer be requested to repeat a year or change tracks before the end of a cycle (except if the family asked for it). Overall the reorganisation into cycles is still strongly questioned, in particular on the following two aspects.

41- The first question mark concerns the *collège*. Is it reality justified to keep all students throughout the four years, thus postponing the first possible exit point towards a vocational track until the end of the *Troisième*, when students are already 14 or 15 years old ? (The possibility to transfer some to vocational studies or to an apprenticeship at the end of the *Cinquième*, i.e. at the age of 12 or 13, was closed in the courser of the Nineties). If everyone has to go through *collège*, should it continue to offer the same to all or should a more diversified spectrum of tracks be introduced ? In the latter case, to what extent should – or even could – the diversified tracks serve as a determinant for future studies ? These issues have been actively debated in the teaching community and in society at large for a quarter of a century. Several improvement measures were proposed or even tested but none has proven really convincing. Section 1 already underlined that the chronic instability of the *collège* actually results from the difficulty of making a clear choice between two main options that keep dividing society: should the *collège* be the last phase of basic education or the entrance gate to the *lycée* ?

42- The second issue concerns the lack of coherence in the technical education track, which is split into two types of schools and diplomas. The former distinction between « short » studies (leading to the CAP or BEP) and « long » ones (leading to the *baccalauréat* and from there into technical higher education) was a meaningful one, but it has lost its meaning since 1985 with the introduction of the professional *baccalauréat*, which a growing proportion of students use as a key to enter higher education. This raises a fundamental question about the real function of the professional *lycée*: after undeniably serving as a « remedial » school favouring social promotion, in more recent years marked by growing youth unemployment it may well have become a place of segregation and social exclusion. Its poor image and diminishing attractiveness – including in working class families – seems to point in this direction.

### ***A shifting four-layer administrative organisation***

43- The territorial organisation of school education mirrors that of public administration in general. The four levels of public authorities (State, Regions, *départements*, municipalities) correspond to those of school administration: central administration, *académies* (under a *recteur*), *départements* (under an academic inspector) and schools. The power of these various levels of authority have shifted over the last quarter of a century in line with the process of decentralisation (i.e. the devolution of State responsibilities to regional/local authorities and to schools) and de-concentration (i.e. the delegation of decision-making powers to a lower level within State administration). The adoption of a new law in 2003 providing for a further round of decentralisation shows that neither of these two processes has reached the ultimate stage of its political dynamics.

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<sup>20</sup> The word « cycle » as used here should be confused with its meaning in another context: in French, the *collège* has traditionally been designated as the first cycle of secondary education while the *lycée* is the second cycle.

44- In the public sector of education the *départments* are responsible for *collèges* and the regions are responsible for *lycées* and professional *lycées*, both concerning their functioning and their premises (investment in building and maintenance); the State has kept for itself the control over the content of teaching and the recruitment and career of teaching and non-teaching staff as well as administrative and pedagogical supervision. Most decisions concerning staff training and management are at the regional level (*académie*), with a noteworthy exception concerning the recruitment of teachers and managers.

45- As separate legal entities, secondary education schools (contrary to primary education schools) are responsible for the organisation of educational activities: their pedagogical and educational policies must be integrated into an « institutional project » that needs to be formally adopted by their administrative council for a period of three to five years, as a practical consequence of the autonomy granted to the « local institutions of public education » (EPL) introduced by a decree of 25 August 1985. The « training basins » which are currently being put together at the level of groups of municipalities are expected to restrict themselves to a level of coordination and political debate between all primary schools and lower and upper secondary schools in a given geographical area, not taking on any administrative powers.

### ***Deep socio-cultural trends and a policy of endless reforms***

46- The impact of the economic crisis on school is related to certain well-known factors (like unemployment, increasing inequalities in particular between age groups, hugely different living conditions and segregation between city districts, etc). To these changes one should add deep-reaching socio-cultural trends that are less often mentioned but may be even more important.

- The first is related to the general decline of authority in society that affects in particular the educational/pedagogical link; teachers are faced with students' lack of discipline to such an extent that they often come to doubt their own professional legitimacy.

- The second trend is related to the transformation of families; it is partly linked to the issue about keeping discipline but also develops its own dynamics: deconstruction and reshaping of the role of parents, children as the core of family links, focus on schooling combined with a consumerist attitude towards school. These socio-cultural changes led to a new kind of behaviour of families which is in contradiction with the values of school actors (children's absenteeism, position taken by older brothers and sisters, aggressive attitude towards professors, etc.).

- The third factor concerns the integration of children from immigrant families. The traditional school model of the Republic, which implies an attitude of « indifference to differences », sometimes seems to be destabilised: teachers are faced with new difficulties for which their training hardly prepared them, such as the uneasy social integration of groups that are severely hit by unemployment, the transformation of certain urban areas into « ghettos », the ongoing arrival of sometimes illegal newcomers, the rise of racism and xenophobia, the emergence of a rationale emphasising community links in some circles of immigrants, etc.

47- In view of these changes reforms in pedagogy and education tend to promote a way to adapt school to deeply transformed social and cultural realities. But their main directions tend to remain obscure to school actors in the field. The main question is whether their ultimate mission is to strengthen the resistance of school to social trends that need to be contained, or on the contrary to adapt school to new social dynamics that are a given and should not be questioned. Many recent reforms (e.g. the evolution of the structure of the *collège*, of curricula content, of teaching methods to be applied, of the type of sanctions) that cannot be presented here in detail were influenced by this debate and are sometimes marked by hesitations or back steps or else by the search for an equilibrium between « conservatives » et « innovators » which does not contribute to increasing the readability of underlying education policies.

### ***Teacher recruitment, training and evaluation: an area little affected by reforms***

48- This wave of reforms over the last twenty years has repeatedly affected the organisation and content of teaching of the *collège*, the *lycée* and the professional *lycée* and often gave teachers the feeling of a « permanent reform » the ultimate goal of which they could not understand. In view of the reluctance of most unions to continue in this direction, the Minister in charge of school education in 2002 announced a « reform break ». Yet, teachers themselves have been comparatively spared in this whole process of change: the recruitment process based on national *concours* focussed predominantly - in fact nearly exclusively – on the knowledge of the chosen discipline remains nearly unchanged; the same is true with respect to evaluation procedures and career management, in spite of those who criticise them for being purely formal and « egalitarian ».

49- Nonetheless, initial training was marked by a major change in 1990 with the introduction of the University institutes for teacher training (IUFM) and the regrouping in the same premises (usually those of the former *écoles normales*) of the training hitherto provided separately to primary education school teachers and the various categories of general, technological and professional secondary education teachers at a level equivalent to the *licence* at university. The organisation of studies is in two years: during the first one participants are registered as students and prepare for the examinations of the recruitment *concours*; those who pass it become trainee professors during the second year which is spent on sandwich training leading to a professional qualification examination and the admission into civil service as a permanent State official.

50- The creation of the IUFM seems to have produced two main positive effects: a quantitative one by contributing to lifting the number of candidates per vacant post from about 3 to nearly 8 in the course of only seven years (1990-1997); and qualitatively thanks to a more positive vision of the teaching profession amongst new teachers<sup>21</sup>. Yet IUFM are still strongly criticised, not only in the most conservative circles of the teaching community still favouring the previous structures but also by young teachers themselves as revealed by certain surveys (cf. Section 4).

### ***Next to professors: other categories of public education staff***

#### ***51- Inspection staff***

Inspection staff is recruited by means of a series of *concours* organised at national level for professors of a given discipline, followed by two years of sandwich training. Inspection staff falls into two categories with a different status: academic/regional pedagogical inspectors (IA-IPR) in general secondary education at *collèges* and *lycées*, national education inspectors (IEN) for education at professional *lycées*. All these categories of staff are placed under the supervision of the head of the educational region (the *recteur* of the *académie*) and are responsible for inspecting and grading professors and for the organisation of examinations and all pedagogical questions in the discipline from which they came.

#### ***52- Management staff***

Since 1989 headmasters and their deputies share the same status. They are recruited from among teaching (or « equivalent ») staff by means of a national *concours* followed by two years of sandwich training organised at the level of each educational region. School directors represent the State and are also the chairperson and executive officer of the administrative board. They are supported by administrative staff in charge of daily operations and financial management and in most schools have one or two deputies providing assistance in educational and pedagogical matters.

#### ***53- Educational advisors***

The recruitment, training (at IUFM) and career of this specifically French category of staff are the same as those of teachers; they are responsible for the organisation of education (i.e. discipline) and school life: control of absenteeism, keeping of discipline, invigilators, socio-educational activities, etc.

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<sup>21</sup> OBIN, J-P (2002), op. cit., pp. 36-37

They sometimes supervise a substantial department for « school life » employing a variety of non-permanent staff: invigilators (who are permanent officials), educational support staff and young graduates (called *contrats emploi solidarité*) holding private law work contracts and (from 2003) «educational assistants ».

#### 54- Librarians

Librarians are responsible for the Documentation and information centres (CDI) arranged at each secondary education school. They enjoy the same status as professors but play a different type of (nonetheless pedagogical) role than teachers; they collaborate with the whole teaching team and are at the focus of pedagogical activities in their school. The development of ICT has entailed major changes in the work of librarians and the organisation of the CDI.

#### ***Teachers in the private sector: similarities and differences***

55- Since 1993 the recruitment, initial training and career management of teachers of the private sector of education have been in line with those of the public sector. According to statutes professors of private sector schools that have entered an association agreement with the State (i.e. nearly the whole of catholic secondary education) hold private law work contracts with the organisation running their school (usually a charity with parents as members). They are recruited by means of national *concours* organised by the State that are strictly parallel and identical (in format and requirements) to those for certified professors of *lycées* and professional *lycées* of the public sector. They are trained at the same IUFM and have the same career as their colleagues. Their continuing training, however, is the responsibility of bodies specific to the private sector of education (cf. Section 4).

#### ***High recruitment needs signalling a risk of shortage in the coming years***

56- France not yet suffers from an actual shortage of teachers but difficulties are foreseeable in the near future. Four factors will play a key role in the coming years.

- First factor: the skewed age structure of the French population entails a turn-around in the labour market within a few years. Currently the difference between the age classes leaving the labour market and those entering it leaves an annual surplus of some 300,000 people. From 2006, the situation will reverse and there will be a deficit of 100,000 people. Altogether, the net deficit is predicted at some 400,000 people per year. It is likely to be felt more on the labour market for graduates, since there seems to be a parallel disaffection of young people for higher education, especially concerning long curricula.

- Second factor: the high number of teachers recruited in the decade from 1965 to 1975 in order to provide for the schooling of all children until the age of 16 will mechanically entail from 12,000 to 18,000 retirements per year in the period from 2004 to 2014. Adding to this the outflows due to other reasons (in particular transfers to higher education) foresight studies estimate the annual recruitment needs during this decade at 20,000 (on the basis of stable enrolments) or 17,000 (taking into account the consequences of the anticipated decrease in student enrolments) for the public sector of education alone<sup>22</sup>. Together with the needs of the private sector, the total number of secondary education professors to be recruited each year during this period is likely to be between 20,000 and 24,000 (in addition to the 17,000 primary education professors that will need to be found). Largely unforeseeable economic circumstances may increase or reduce these expected difficulties: in times of recession, concern about unemployment seems to have influenced the decision in favour of the teaching profession of one in five young teachers.<sup>23</sup>

- Another factor is that from the economic viewpoint it will be increasingly difficult to continue serving pensions at the current level without extending the duration or raising the level of contribution from those in service. In other words, if teachers currently in service have to postpone their retirement in order to gather the number of years in work required for a full pension, the recruitment of young

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<sup>22</sup> AUSSANT, D. et LEPETIT, B. (2002), « Les besoins en personnels d'enseignement dans le second degré public entre 2004 et 2010 », *Education et formations* n° 63

<sup>23</sup> ESQUIEU, N. (1999), Les débuts dans le métier d'enseignant du second degré, Information Note, DPD-MEN



teachers will be differed; this would spare the education system the worst effects of a teacher shortage – at least for a while. A decision about pensions is expected from Parliament later in 2003.

- Fourth factor: increasing violence and insecurity in some urban areas and some schools seems to act as a repellent, with many students rejecting the possibility to pass the *concours* organised for the recruitment of secondary education professors<sup>24</sup>. From this viewpoint it seems that the 2002 recruitment campaign was marked by a strengthening of the shift towards primary education that could already be somewhat felt in previous years, with a significant number of students choosing a career perceived as less dangerous and offering (thanks to staff management confined to the *département*) a protection against an otherwise possible assignment to a particularly difficult school or region. Figures confirm this trend: in 2002 the number of present candidates at secondary education *concours* decreased by 6.7% while in primary education it increased by 16%.

## **Shaping education policies**

### ***Real change takes time***

57- The shaping of education policies is not easy in a highly centralised and politicised country like France. Even minor proposals for change are usually faced with the combined opposition of several groups in society who see them as a threat to their own interest or routine. As the biggest line in the State budget and the main area of concern of citizens, education is certainly no exception to the rule. It is therefore not surprising that the Prime Minister recently expressed the view that the Minister of Education had the most difficult and risky job in government<sup>25</sup>. Under these circumstances, policy reforms are seldom imposed from the top; rather, they tend to be the outcome of a lengthy political and administrative process. While a century ago the proposals made in a report by MP Alexandre Ribot in 1899 could be implemented three years later in the reform of the *lycée*, it took over twenty years before the democratisation of secondary education advocated by the Langevin-Wallon Commission in 1945-1947 entered a first phase of implementation with the Foucher reform of lower secondary education in 1965-67; in the same way, the decentralisation process and school autonomy envisaged in 1968 at a colloquium held in Amiens were achieved only in 1986, some fifteen years later.

### ***Reforms tend to start upstream***

58- Hence the political strategy used by Ministers to initiate reforms usually starts by commissioning a report (i.e. an analysis and some proposals for improvement) from a prominent, possibly uncontested, MP or university professor or from a commission of independent experts. A less common method, which was however used quite often during the Sixties, is to convene a high-level meeting (a « colloquium ») gathering reform-minded academic leaders, politicians and governmental experts to discuss issues and proposals prepared by expert working groups. A third strategy consists in convening at regional or national level a large gathering of the main institutional and social actors – or rather their representatives – in order to discuss policy priorities or reform proposals. The effectiveness of these various methods depends directly on the coverage of the event in the media, which may vary significantly. Their common goal is threefold: to demonstrate a political will to undertake reforms, as a step towards the more difficult process of actually adopting and implementing such reforms; to identify and understand the main difficulties and bottlenecks and the objections raised by certain groups, in order to avoid mistakes at the forthcoming stages; to explain and discuss the proposed change with the various unions, parents' associations and main lobbies.

### ***Consultative bodies***

59- At the more formal (or administrative) level, structural or curricular reforms have to follow a defined and sometimes lengthy path before they are ready for adoption; in this process the consultation

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<sup>24</sup> OBIN, J-P (2002), op. cit. p. 25 and pp. 80-81

<sup>25</sup> Interview given to the newspaper « *Le Monde* » of 1 December 2002

of mixed bodies plays an essential role – even though it may be more formal than substantial. They do not make decisions but submit proposals for such decisions to the authorities. These consultative bodies are of two types: mixed administrative commissions (CAP) set up at the *département*, *académie* and national levels must be consulted on all individual and collective questions concerning the career of a particular staff category; mixed technical committees (CTP) deal with questions related to the organisation/reorganisation of work at the level of a *département*, an *académie* or the whole nation. For curricular change there are expert groups for each discipline (in general education) and professional consultative commissions (CPC) of experts and representatives of employers and employees of a given economic sector (in professional education); their role is to draw up proposals for curricular change that will be submitted to the National Council on Curricula and then to a national consultative debate following their publication in the Official Bulletin of National Education (BOEN). Furthermore, each structural or curricular reform must be submitted to the High Council of Education (CSE), a body with representatives of administration, staff and users (students and parents). Finally certain reforms require a change in law and hence a decision by Parliament or the approval of the State Council. Very few Ministers would actually attempt to impose a reform by « forcing the door », e.g. against the opinion of the CSE. They would rather enter an informal process of negotiation on the proposed text with a view to gain the support, or at least the abstention, of the main unions and other influential groups and lobbies – a process improperly called « *concertation* ». Such give-and-take discussions tend to happen behind closed doors and may last a very long time, especially since the opinions and interests of the various organisations involved may not be reconcilable; this may explain why some reform processes tend to be so lengthy or to happen in gradual stages.

### ***Taking field factors into account***

60- The change and reform process is sometimes based on experiments that may be more or less known or controlled. Research and Development (R&D) is hardly used as a basis for strategic decisions. However, in recent years, the trend has been towards involving teaching staff more directly into the consultation process on new curricula or planned structural reforms. Official instructions tend also to come now more often together with not-compulsory recommendations and teaching material<sup>26</sup>. More and more, change tends to come from the dissemination of suggestions leaving each teacher or each team the freedom to adapt the new directives in the most relevant way in line with field conditions, learners' profile and teachers' own experience. Finally, the ministry has set up a mechanism to identify innovative approaches in order to filter out « good » practices before disseminating them, thanks to a bottom-up approach breaking with the traditionally top-down methods of bureaucratic systems. It is likely that the upcoming new round of decentralisation will better recognise the right to experiment and in this way reinforce this new perspective.

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. for example the documents produced by the *Centre national de documentation pédagogique* concerning the content and the interpretation of the new learning « cycles » in primary education

## SECTION 3- ATTRACTING MOTIVATED TEACHERS

### The risk of a shortage of teachers

61- This is a recurrent question for three reasons:

- The difficulty of the teacher recruitment task varies in inverse proportion to the unemployment rate: when unemployment peaks, the teaching profession becomes attractive and applicants to the IUFM are many; in these times it is not uncommon that some applicants hold much higher degrees than those required (e.g. in engineering, pharmacy or even in medicine), the average age tends to be higher and the proportion of men increases. When unemployment declines, there are fewer applicants and the ministry has to organise communication campaigns to attract candidates.
- Teachers' salary in itself is unattractive and young graduates with scientific qualifications find it easy to earn a better living in private enterprises; this is the reason why so few applicants hold science degrees: in particular in primary education, the vast majority of teachers hold degrees in humanities.
- The proportion of female teachers keeps growing, to such an extent that a gender-balanced approach to education becomes difficult. Since it has become unconstitutional to recruit separately for men and women, the question of how to attract more male teachers no longer finds an answer, all the more that until recently the teaching profession has been seen as an easy job suitable for women seeking a top-up income compatible with raising a family.

62- Hence, teacher recruitment looks like a rather erratic process, with ups and downs linked to external circumstances. Thus, enrolments in the first year of IUFM doubled between 1991 and 1994 before declining in more recent years. Over the past decade a series of measures has been designed to attract enough candidates to the teaching professions even in less favourable years:

- publicity campaigns underlining the positive side of teachers' profession;
- the payment of an allowance equal to minimal legal wage during the first year at IUFM, in exchange for a commitment to spend a minimal number of years in teaching if admitted; this allowance is limited to subject areas with a deficit and the number of beneficiaries varies between years and regions.
- the introduction of « seed modules » in the curriculum of the first two years of university studies; they aim to stimulate the demand for the teaching profession and include a short « internship » in a classroom.
- the creation of IUFM networks which make it possible to transfer applicant secondary education teachers from *académies* with a surplus to others with a deficit.

### Primary education

#### *A radical change in the profile of teachers*

63- While most primary education teachers agree on their two main responsibilities (get pupils to learn reading, writing and arithmetic and stimulate their appetite for learning and knowledge) there are differences between the old and new generation of teachers: the former put more emphasis on the autonomy of children, while the latter stress the importance of citizenship education.

64- A recent comparative study between older and younger teachers illustrates this shift in priorities<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Information Note 01.46, DPD-MEN, 2001

**Table 6- Aims of school according to primary education teachers**

<b>Aims of primary education</b>	<b>Beginner teachers (%)</b>	<b>Senior teachers (%)</b>
To teach how to read/write/count	60	59
To education future citizens	38	26
To train pupils to develop working methods	20	19
To prepare pupils to group life	12	11
To develop children's autonomy	20	29
To develop a taste for knowledge and learning	48	52

65- The changing profile of pupils and the broad shift in the social demand for education entail a radical change in the profile required of primary education professors. This is related to various factors.

#### *The integration of foreign children*

Over time Western countries will not be in a position to sustain their economic growth solely with their native human resources. A Europe-wide immigration policy of which France is part will become an urgent necessity. The influx of people with different languages and cultures requires a change in teachers' professional competencies and in the development of their intercultural skills through specific training. Learning how to deal with heterogeneous groups of learners is a major issue: what criteria should be applied in such groups in order to foster the learning process in each individual ?

#### *Equal opportunities*

This issue has different aspects: equality between boys and girls (at all levels of the education system girls achieve better results than boys); integration of handicapped children into normal school tracks; equal opportunities for pupils from different socio-cultural backgrounds; equality between schools and educational areas, acknowledging that pupils' achievements depend on the school they attend as well on the quality of their teachers.

#### *Preparing pupils to succeed in secondary education*

As was already said before, primary education professors no longer prepare children for daily life since primary school has mainly become the entrance room to the *collège*. Hence, its purpose is no longer that students acquire skills required in normal life, but to develop « attitudes » fostering the competencies required to « learn to learn » and to « learn to be ». Cognitive learning can no longer be separated from educational and social factors.

#### *School's role in education*

The mission of school in citizenship education and civic instruction is more important than ever before, in close relationship with the other factors mentioned above. It is no longer possible for school professors to leave aside their educational role because it would be the sole responsibility of families, for two different reasons: the profile of families has considerably changed and many are no longer in a position to fulfil their educational role by themselves; all content-based learning has an educational side and since the role of teachers is no longer to prepare pupils for daily life but to build up their ability to cope with further studies in a lifelong learning perspective, they do actually deliver implicit educational norms and it is in their own interest to understand the stakes and consequences of this process.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> A recent study carried out in 6 countries of the European Union (Spain, Finland, France, Greece, Italy and Sweden) shows that whilst official speeches tend to be very generous with lifelong learning and training, the theme remains conspicuously absent from the teachers' initial training. Yet, how will it be possible to prepare pupils for lifelong learning when their teachers are not prepared to it in their own initial training ? (Cf. Initial Teacher Training and Lifelong Learning, Interim report, Scientific coordination F. Cros, INRP/EU, 2002, 200p.)

### ***Teachers' multi-functionalism: a notion difficult to define and implement***

66- Multi-functionalism topped-up with some specific requirements in content fields (e.g. in foreign and regional languages) is the very basis of professional practice for all primary education professors, both at primary schools and (even more so) at the pre-primary level. It is worth looking into this core notion in defining the profile of future teachers. The kind of multi-functionalism referred to here goes beyond the plurality of tasks inherent in all teaching or the broader knowledge required from those who teach more than one subject<sup>29</sup>. For the Inspectorate General of National Education (IGEN)<sup>30</sup> the multi-functionalism of teachers (« *polyvalence* ») has a dual meaning: it defines the professional position of primary education teachers (who are in charge of all teaching to their class, while secondary education professors are specialists of a particular discipline); at the same time, « true multi-functionalism » refers to certain requirements that are specific to primary education schools: beyond the parallel teaching of different subjects it requires the ability to enhance the meaning and coherence of the learning process through which children acquire and organise their knowledge. For the IGEN the stakes of this core notion change with the transformation of the social context: as a consequence of the massive influx of new students into secondary education (from 1959) and of the creation of the « single *collège* » (from 1975), multi-functionalism has gradually become less « natural » (or spontaneous) and now serves more as a defined « reference ». This reference characterises elementary school, both as a result of the closer contact to the *collège* and of the resistance against « *secondarisation* » (i.e. the replication of methods and structures of secondary education at the level of primary education). Other factors of change are related to the increasing number of small schools, the acknowledgement that professional practice needs to be different in some cases (e.g. in the Zones of Priority Education or in rural areas), the emergence of specialised professional teachers (in physical education/sports - EPS -, plastic arts, music or ICT), the practice of team teaching and the growing use of non-permanent external staff.<sup>31</sup>

67- According to a study commissioned by the ministry<sup>32</sup> a strong majority of teachers (80%) have a positive opinion of *polyvalence*, even more among the younger ones (87%) than among the former generation (70%). Nonetheless, the kind of multi-functionalism required in primary education is a source of difficulties, according to 27% of school professors who entered the profession after passing the internal *concours* or being chosen on a list of qualified candidates (*liste d'aptitude*)<sup>33</sup>, but only 8 to 10% of those who passed the external *concours*. Would this mean that multi-functionalism is though a complex exercise, but that teachers have learnt to master it better ? This is however not certain, according to another survey conducted in 1998 which came to the clear conclusion that « the school master responsible for everything in « his/her » class is already a character of the past: because of the number of part-time teachers and exchanges between classes, as well as the frequent presence of specialists for the teaching of languages, arts or sports, pupils who meet only one adult during a week at class have rather become exceptions. Consequently, the notion of *polyvalence* may look like a mere « ideological artefact » used to promote an idealistic but old-fashioned view of the profession, not in tune with actual practice and trends in progress ».<sup>34</sup> The authors of this report point out that the number of lecture hours actually attended by primary education pupils may vary very significantly from one class to another, even in disciplines seen as essential; these fluctuations may sometimes mean that the teacher is not involved at all in the teaching of some subjects to his/her pupils (e.g. in history, geography, technology or physical education); it seems that 55% of primary education teachers are not alone in teaching their class.

68- French is rightly considered to be the discipline best suited to underpin the practice of multi-functionalism, because it includes a set of transversal competencies that are useful in all other

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<sup>29</sup> We use here the excellent synthesis on *polyvalence* provided by Y. Bottin in his report « Maître d'école, une profession en devenir », MEN, 2002

<sup>30</sup> « La polyvalence des maîtres à l'école élémentaire ». Paris: IGEN-MEN, 1996.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. the INRP colloquium of 22 September 2000 on the theme « *Multi-functionalism and training of school professors* »

<sup>32</sup> ESQUIEU, N. and PERIER, P. (2001) *Devenir professeur des écoles*, MEN/DPD

<sup>33</sup> These notions are introduced in Section 5.

<sup>34</sup> BAILLAT, G. and GUILLON, R. (2000), *Polyvalence des maîtres et formation des professeurs des écoles*, Paris: INRP

disciplines. Teaching to each other's class, taking in students from other teachers for the teaching of certain disciplines, contributions from external staff are activities seen as compatible with the practice of *polyvalence*, provided they are all coordinated by the teacher in charge of the class – even if some critics see them as a risk of « dispersion of activities ». The inspectorate general found that the practice of exchanging classes concerns 57% to 70% of all teachers, depending on the learning cycle. They are most frequent in the teaching of arts, physical education, history, geography, science and technology, but never concern arithmetic or French.

69- The presence of external staff has led to more flexible timetables for school and out-of-school activities, as a response to initiatives or demands from local authorities, parents associations or the State (in particular the ministry of youth and sports). The outcomes of these changes are rather ambiguous and the relationship with partners may sometimes take on a competitive dimension. The report of the inspectorate general adds that there is external staff in two third of classes during learning cycle II and three quarters during cycle III (based on a panel of 317 classes that were visited).

70- In other words, multi-functionalism is claimed by teachers who however find it difficult to implement and stands as an « impossible » distinctive feature of elementary school, as an identity flag rather than as a concrete project, split between an ideal function - the promotion of children – and a real one – the defence of primary school. Anne-Marie Chartier, researcher at the INRP, observed however interesting trends. Thus « teachers still view their profession with reference to polyvalence as an ideal and identity, even though their practice reflects its current questioning. Under this light contributions from external teachers or other specialists may be seen as a mere complement that needs not to be part of a shared pedagogical project. This is particularly true with respect to foreign language instructors, sports instructors hired by municipalities and specialists dealing with pupils in difficulty ». In this kind of organisation « teachers request targeted support from their specialised colleagues and expect from them a specific contribution to the overall improvement of learning ». Another change is that « the work of specialised teachers has drastically changed in recent times; this may be directly related to a change in the way in which multi-functional teachers have learnt to deal with specialised support staff in order to meet the needs of their pupils and lead them to school completion. In all cases, there is a relationship between the pattern of collaboration with support staff and its shorter or longer planned duration. »<sup>35</sup>

71 Overall, *polyvalence* is part of the essence of primary education. It is a key factor in its organisation and a key feature of the identity of primary education and is claimed as such by its teachers with respect to secondary education and colleagues at *collèges* and *lycées*. However, its practical implementation has become increasingly complex and may sometimes be more of a « virtuous » property flawed with difficulties and problems, especially in learning cycle III where the disciplinary dimension tends to become stronger in the run-up to the *collège*.

### ***A shifting professional identity in view of new social and behavioural patterns***

#### *Change in the behaviour of pupils*

72- Primary school is no longer immune from the spread of violence, even though it consists in isolated cases and remains far below the level now affecting secondary education schools. Teachers – in particular beginners - working in Priority Education Zones (ZEP) mention fights between pupils, verbal violence, insults and intimidation coming from parents or bigger brothers, damage to equipment and theft. The answer from school seems to include mainly citizenship education, the inculcation of norms and rules for living together, dialogue with parents and above all solidarity within the teaching team. These answers require a change in the profile of the teaching profession: teachers need to be able to work together with partners and as a team.

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<sup>35</sup> CHARTIER, A-M. (2000), *Polyvalence des maîtres et formation des professeurs des écoles*, Paris: INRP

### *The new cultural, technological and sociological context*

73- Television, media, information technologies are at the doorstep of school and professors cannot be indifferent to them. The actual opening up of school to these tools depends more on the possibilities to equip schools than on continuing training of teachers: if teachers are indeed more and more faced with external partners and staff, these contributions depend primarily on local authorities' efforts to equip schools<sup>36</sup>. The big social differences between schools need also to be taken into account: school professors should be prepared to deal with pupils from all social categories, whether working in a secluded rural area or in the suburbs of a city populated mainly by families of immigrant workers. Much literature on this theme has been published this year<sup>37</sup>.

### *The integration of handicapped children*

74- On this question France uses the same approach as Italy, i.e. as far as possible handicapped children are integrated into so-called « normal » classes; school professors benefit from the support of a specialised colleague and tend to use learning units where all pupils learn together.

### *New demands from families*

75- Families not only have come to see the failure of their children at school as intolerable and unjust in the eyes of families: they also have demands concerning the attractiveness of activities at school, the timetable for in-class and out-of-class activities, a better distribution of school work over the academic year (one third of public secondary education schools have changed their school calendar), financial support from urban development plans or from the ZEP budget and the development of support services like the cafeteria, after class child-minding, etc.

### *Motivations and reasons for choosing the profession*

76- There are two broad categories of reasons for choosing to become a primary education teacher: the wish to teach and the wish to deal with children. A survey carried out during the academic year 1999-2000 provides an insight into the motivation to become a school professor; in the sample of surveyed school professors, 50% were graduates of an IUFM who passed the external *concours* in 1999 and the other half were experienced teachers who had already been promoted internally<sup>38</sup>.

**Table 7- Motivations to become a primary education teacher**

<b>Motivations</b>	<b>Beginner teachers (%)</b>	<b>Senior teachers (%)</b>
Autonomy at work	5	5
Free time, holidays	0	1
A secure job	3	5
A guaranteed balance between professional and private life	6	4
Wish to deal with children	25	31
Wish to teach	43	35
Esteem for this profession	2	4
To play an educational role	15	8
Salary	0	0
Career outlook	0	1
Serving public needs	0	2
Other motivations	1	4

<sup>36</sup> The report of the IGEN « *L'aménagement des rythmes scolaires à l'école primaire* » shows that the annual budget per pupil varies between municipalities from Euro 15 to over 1,000.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Les ZEP, des pôles d'innovation et de dynamisme*, Cahiers Pédagogiques n°407, 2002 and *Les Zones d'éducation prioritaires*, Revue Française de Pédagogie n°151, 2002

<sup>38</sup> Information Note 01.46, DPD-MEN, 2001

77- Another study carried out in 1999<sup>39</sup> shows that in their vision of their role two third of school professors emphasise the transmission of knowledge and one third stress their educational mission; among beginners, the proportion is even three quarters to one quarter. But when it comes to what actually happens in class the proportions are reversed: the educational role comes first (52% of respondents), knowledge transmission is second (39%) and the social role of teachers enters the picture. This corresponds to the emergence of a new profile of school professors who give priority to educational and social activities rather than to knowledge acquisition. There is a sharp contrast of opinion between those seeing their role as knowledge providers or as educators. These two visions have stood in opposition to each other at least since the Revolution (cf. Section 1) and unfortunately French mentality seems reluctant to seek a synthesis between them. Table 8 shows that the reasons for choosing primary education vary with seniority<sup>40</sup>.

**Table 8- Reasons for choosing to practice in primary education**

Reasons given	Beginner teachers (%)	Senior teachers (%)
To stay in the region or <i>département</i>	29	17
To deal with young children	55	40
Higher chances to succeed at entrance exams at primary education level	18	4
Attractiveness of teaching a variety of disciplines	57	22
Held no sufficient degree to try the <i>concours</i> for secondary education	4	25
Failed the <i>concours</i> for secondary education	8	8
Other reasons	7	30

The survey also stressed that four out of ten young school professors enter the profession after hesitating between primary and secondary education; this is particularly the case for graduates in a foreign language or in science, and is less frequent among graduates in arts and humanities. The proportion of those for whom the choice of primary education was by default (i.e. they failed the *concours* for secondary education) was only 8%.

## Secondary education

78- The demographic situation already mentioned in the previous section points to a shortage of higher education graduates on the labour market. The public sector of education can certainly not compete on equal terms with commercial enterprises, in particular not concerning the essential aspect of salary, but this does not mean that it has no points it can make in the fierce competition lying ahead. For secondary education the best chance is probably related to the motivations of those who choose to become a teacher.

### *Rather constant reasons for choosing the profession*

79- All available studies on the motivations for choosing to become a secondary education teacher have shown for a number of years a remarkable convergence around three main and constant reasons<sup>41</sup>. The first one is a passion for a particular university discipline or a technical area of

<sup>39</sup> Survey by the SOFRES for the teacher union SNUIPP: *Le jugement des instituteurs sur leur métier*, 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Information Note 01.46, DPD-MEN, 2001

<sup>41</sup> CLERC, F. (2002), « Note de synthèse sur les motivations à devenir enseignant », in OBIN, J-P. op. cit.



specialisation upon which one would like to build a professional career. This kind of « vocation » should not be interpreted as a mere wish to routinely continue to do what one is already pleased to do. But this passion has its risks, in particular the disillusion expecting highly idealistic students once they are faced with the realities of school, pupils and the profession. The second main motivation is related to the taste of teaching and working with young people. This side of the profession emphasising the pedagogical link tends to attract mainly young graduates who already have a significant educational experience from previous activities (e.g. as supervisors at youth or summer camps, remedial teachers, invigilators or educational assistants, etc.). The third motivation is related to the social status and the freedom at work enjoyed by teachers. In particular, many young women are attracted to a profession where time spent on the job is not the majority and can be arranged in such a way that a real professional career, an enriching social life and a fulfilling family life can all be combined. Even the limited time that cannot be controlled and needs to be spent at school is seen as leaving more freedom than a job in an enterprise or an administration. The stability of these motivations may be used as a strong asset when envisaging the future, provided authorities capitalise on them (in particular on the second one) and let them play their role among selection criteria in recruitment procedures.

### ***Competing for staff: education has more assets than it seems***

80- Another key factor in choosing any profession is related to salary and working time. The salary of teachers has been significantly raised since 1989 (but not to the same extent in all categories). Overall, a study on this question estimated that the average increase in constant francs was 10.7% between 1986 and 1994<sup>42</sup>. But the most interesting and relevant surveys are those comparing education with other sectors of employment; they show an essential difference between the situation of men (who earn on average 20% less than private sector staff with the same level of qualification) and that of women (who are a strong 58% majority in secondary education) who earn about the same as women in private enterprises. The difference is in terms of working hours. While the average working time per week is about the same (from 41 to 45 hours depending on the survey) the annual working time is clearly lower for secondary education teachers than for senior managers of private enterprises or public administration (with an average of 1,340 hours compared to over 2,000).<sup>43</sup>

81- A last item that needs to be taken into account when assessing the situation is that in comparative terms French teachers are not placed at a disadvantage with respect to their colleagues in other European and other developed countries. They are amongst those with the highest level of initial training and the lowest number of pupils per class (12.8 pupils per professor compared to 14.6 on average for OECD countries). The salary index used by the OECD, which is based on purchasing power parity, shows that French salaries are average for beginners and higher than in most other developed countries at the end of career.<sup>44</sup>

### ***Many measures have been taken or are envisaged***

82- The enhancement of teaching careers launched in 1989 however still continues to entail significant budgetary expenditures, as some staff categories are gradually integrated into new and better paid ones. Other, non-salary measures that have either already been taken or are envisaged may also contribute to attracting to the profession of secondary education professor not only recent graduates but also more senior persons who already have a relevant professional experience.

### ***Improving communication and orientation***

83- An important communication effort has already been made to inform and raise the interest for the teaching profession of those finishing secondary education or already in higher education. It seems

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<sup>42</sup> ALLAIN, F. (1996) « Les rémunérations des enseignants entre 1986 et 1994 », *Education et formations* n° 46

<sup>43</sup> THELOT, C. (1994), « Salaire et durée annuelle de travail des enseignants, des cadres et des professions intermédiaires », *Education et formations* n° 37, and *Les chiffres clés de l'éducation en Europe*, Office of publications of the European Commission

<sup>44</sup> OECD (2001), *Education at a glance*

conceivable that these campaigns may in future be extended to also reach the various bodies in charge of employment policy, qualified staff associations and training organisations.

#### *Improving and broadening the scope of recruitment procedures*

84- Next to the various external *concours* for the recruitment of teachers, there are currently also three types of internal examinations and *concours*; their prime function is not so much to recruit genuinely new staff, but rather to provide for the integration of non-permanent teaching staff into civil service (cf. Section 5). The new scheme called « third *concours* » introduced in 2002 seems more promising with respect to hiring additional staff, since it is targeted at persons not already engaged in education; but in the first year of the new procedure (2002) the 800 posts open to applicants could not all be filled. Another scheme that exists in French public administration has never been used until now in national education: the qualification-based *concours* or « *concours sur titre* ». The new possibility of accreditation of experiential learning (*validation des acquis de l'expérience*, VAE) introduced by a law of 2002 may also open an interesting new opportunity for national education: to validate prior professional experience as equivalent to the whole or part of the university degree required from applicants, thus opening access to the *concours* to new categories of persons. The position of associate school professor seems not to be as attractive as in higher education (it currently concerns only about fifteen people): it is hardly known and it may indeed be less attractive for a manager from the private sector to become an associate professor at a *lycée* than at a university. In addition, next to the various above possibilities to enlarge the catching area, one should not dismiss the option of reforming the *concours* themselves: it has been various times envisaged to change the examination system to accommodate in a better way the diversity of experience, competencies and knowledge of potential candidates.

#### *A fairer system of assignment to the first post*

85- The likelihood to be assigned to a region, a district or a school known for being particularly difficult (i.e. currently some 60% of them) right upon finishing training is a powerful deterrent for students. This is the reason why in 2000 the ministerial directorate in charge of career management tried to take into account this serious difficulty in two ways: first by awarding to IUFM trainees a « bonus » of points in the scale used for assigning teachers to posts; and secondly, by creating in the suburban area around Paris a number of « posts requiring specific qualifications » linked with a series of derogatory benefits with regards to posting, training and career. The impact of these measures, albeit not negligible, remains nonetheless rather limited.

#### *Opening up to Europe*

86- The enlargement of the European Union to new countries will open new possibilities for teacher mobility between member states. France is not in a bad position and could attract teachers from other countries. The adaptation of rules in recent years has already made it possible to recruit a significant number of candidates (304 in 2002) to the *concours* in certain disciplines. It is interesting to stress that while the number of candidates has been on the decrease since 1997 they now come better prepared and the number of those who succeed has remained about the same.

#### *Introducing pre-recruitment procedures*

87- A system of pre-recruitment that used to function effectively during the Eighties was revived in 2002: that of the « preparatory cycle ». It consists in hiring technicians for a paid two-year preparation of the *licence*, thus upgrading them to the level required to apply for the *concours* in some areas of professional specialisation suffering from a deficit of teachers (200 such positions were created in the budget for fiscal year 2002). This scheme could be expanded in the coming years in view of growing needs in certain areas, provided it meets with more success than during its first year where only 85 posts could actually be filled. In the same way, the study allowance that used to be awarded in the

Nineties to students interested to become teachers in certain disciplines where there was a deficit of applicants could possibly be revived in future.<sup>45</sup>

#### *Adjusting teachers' starting salary to their level of experience*

88- The possibility to insert new teachers into a salary bracket taking into account the number of years of professional experience previously acquired outside education would be a very attractive new feature for experienced persons interested in transferring to teaching. A step in this direction has already been taken for technicians who pass the *concours* and become a professor at a professional *lycée*: one third of their years of prior professional experience are counted when determining their salary bracket. However, there are currently no plans to extend this scheme to other categories, for obvious budgetary reasons.

#### *Other possible measures to improve the practice and appeal of the profession*

89- The various proposals referred to in the previous paragraphs were mentioned in a 2002 study commissioned by Minister Jack Lang on how to make the teaching profession more « attractive », but also more « appealing », in particular in the eyes of young people<sup>46</sup>. There is no point in setting out these proposals here, since for the time being they are only up for discussion in a public debate. The appeal of the profession, i.e. its ability to respond to the profound expectations of young graduates of today, is more closely related to a change in attitude, mentality and practice and management style than to new administrative measures.

90- It is certainly not easy to respond to the aspiration of young people for more freedom and responsibility on the one hand, and for more support, help, recognition and protection on the other. What they fear (routine, professional sclerosis, loneliness, being outflanked by students) can certainly not be addressed merely by way of budgetary measures which would be anyway illusory under the currently prevailing economic circumstances. It is nonetheless worth quoting a short and not exhaustive list of possible avenues for future-oriented thinking that may in due time lead to concrete proposals to make the profession more appealing:

- to treat teachers as intellectual workers, designers and responsible managers;
- to link professional practice to a stable and motivating ethical framework for the profession;
- to open the professional practice in the direction of more relations with other professional adults and thus to circles reaching beyond the pupils in the class;
- to develop local support in particular through teamwork and cross-coaching between peers;
- to offer better perspectives for professional mobility, both within and outside the education system;
- to enhance the safety and legal protection of teachers.

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<sup>45</sup> Declaration of the Deputy-Minister in charge of school education, September 2002

<sup>46</sup> OBIN, J-P (2002), op. cit., pp. 67-72

## SECTION 4 – TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

### A dual line of divide

91- All along history school has been marked in France by a deep divide between the primary and secondary levels of education and, within the latter, between general and vocational education. For historical reasons these divisions have always existed with regard to curricular content as well as teacher recruitment and training of teachers (cf. Section 1).<sup>47</sup>

92- Before the creation of IUFM in 1990 and their generalisation one year later, three types of institutions were in charge of teacher training. Primary education « masters » used to be trained at the *école normale* of each *département*. This training was originally aimed at training school masters able to strengthen the ideological link of the nation. Charles Péguy referred to these lay, Republican masters as the « black hussars of the Republic ». Even today the mentality of many is still shaped according to this model. The development of school has been an important political issue and Minister after Minister increased the hiring of teachers. When the *écoles normales* were generalised in 1833 they used to recruit their trainees at the end of upper primary education (a level equivalent to that of the *Troisième* in today's system); some still continued recruiting at that level in the 1960' when others already required the *baccalauréat*. In the course of the Seventies the level required of applicants was pushed up to two years of higher education. The main purpose of this basic training of candidate teachers was to prepare them to impart the rules of citizenship and practical knowledge (like filling-in administrative forms, keeping the household budget or being able to watch before undertaking action); the Certificate of primary education (CEP) was awarded by the age of 14 to those who could demonstrate that they had acquired these skills (cf. Section 2).

93- After the creation of the *lycée* by Bonaparte in 1802, the training of secondary education teachers became mainly a responsibility of the university for the theoretical (mostly discipline-based) part. From the Sixties those who passed the *concours* were admitted to a one-year programme of practical professional training offered at the Regional Pedagogical Centre (CPR) of each *académie* and placed under the supervision of the inspectorate. For those who passed the *concours* to become a technical education professor, practical training was organised at six national training schools (ENNA) set up in 1947 in Paris (two schools), Toulouse, Lyons, Lille and Nantes. These training schools were very close to trade unionism, with teachers of general and professional education working hand in hand. The study programme extended over two years, of which one consisted in coached practice in a classroom.

### A new type of initial training

94- Nowadays the training of general, technical and professional secondary education professors takes place at the IUFM. All future teachers, wherever they will practice the profession later on, need to first pass a *licence* at university<sup>48</sup>. It is worth pointing out that those who want to become secondary education professors must have a *licence* in their discipline (or in a relevant area when the spread of disciplines is not exactly the same in secondary and higher education, e.g. a *licence* in either biology or geology for those who plan to teach the secondary education discipline called « earth and life science »). For primary education teachers, any *licence* is sufficient to register for the *concours*, which means that IUFM recruit a more heterogeneous group of candidates interested in becoming primary

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<sup>47</sup> PETITAT, A. (1982) *Production de l'école. Production de la société: analyse socio-historique de quelques moments décisifs de l'évolution scolaire en Occident*, Geneva: Editions Droz

<sup>48</sup> Three types of derogations are possible: registration is also open to those who have not yet passed all the credits for the *licence* but have good chances of completing the degree at the forthcoming October examination session; the requirement of a degree is completely waived for mothers of three children and for high level athletes. The latter two categories represent only a very small percentage of applicants.

school professors. Putting together the training programme for school professors is a complex exercise with regard to the balance that must be found between various areas of knowledge, the need to customise approaches and the search for a still ill-defined multi-functionalism ! The first year is dedicated to preparing the *concours*; its content is therefore strictly confined to what is required to succeed in this series of examinations.

95- One should add that the training of professors of physical education/sports (EPS) is very specific, since the professional perspectives of those with a *licence* in this area are essentially restricted to becoming a teacher. This is why students in their final year for the licence have to write a short thesis on pedagogical aspects of sports teaching. They are also trained for evaluation; hence, there is a marked difference in first-year IUFM classes between EPS and other disciplines.

### **Primary education**

96- As for secondary education teachers, since the creation of the IUFM in 1990 the responsibility of the initial training of primary education teachers lies with higher education. But their continuing training still lies with the school education system. As may be expected this split in responsibilities entails difficulties with the coherence of, and articulation between these two essential tasks.

### ***Initial training revisited***

97- Since the creation of the University Institutes for Teachers Training (IUFM) in each educational region in 1991, all initial teacher training is concentrated there. Most future primary education teachers enter the IUFM with a *licence* in any area of specialisation and spend two years there. During the first year they prepare the examinations required for the professional certificate for primary education teaching (CAP). Those who pass it are admitted into the second year and become officials in traineeship: their professional training includes mainly practical work with in-class responsibilities and some taught modules at the IUFM. They become fully-fledged teachers and State officials once their professional training is validated by an on-site inspection. This approach to initial teacher training is of the consecutive (or non-simultaneous) type<sup>49</sup>.

98- One should mention that it is also possible to pass the *concours* without being registered as a first-year IUFM student. This has in many respects been a source of questioning at IUFM when the success rate of these candidates happened to be higher than that of IUFM students. This issue fortunately now seems to be over, since during the last five years IUFM students have clearly been more successful. It is also worth mentioning that the largest purveyor of candidates to the *concours* is the National Centre for Distance Education (CNED) which offers courses similar to those of the IUFM. Such distance education allows students in working positions or living abroad to prepare for the examination in a suitable way.

99- It should be stressed that the training of pre-primary teachers is the same as for all primary education teachers. In other words, all teachers who complete an IUFM qualification are expected to be able to teach at either a primary or a pre-primary school. Some modules on teaching at pre-primary level are included in the IUFM curriculum for all students.

100- There are two different frameworks of reference (*référentiel*) for the competencies required from school professors: one refers to young teachers who just completed their initial training, and the other is for experienced teachers. The former serves as a frame for the second-year training at IUFM and hence as a basis for the agreements between students and trainers at IUFM as well as between IUFM and their trainers and IUFM and the State. The framework of competencies is thus adapted to the local circumstances and laid down in the four-year contract linking each IUFM to the State. The second framework is used for continuing teacher training in the perspective of the development of a « skills portfolio » for each teacher.

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<sup>49</sup> Eurydice, 2002, European Community, « Formation initiale et transition vers la vie professionnelle », vol.3.

101- In the beginning, four principles prevailed at IUFM with respect to primary education:

- to hire young people with a higher level of general education, which means also that they will come from better-off social backgrounds<sup>50</sup>;
- to give teacher training university status, with university teachers teaching at IUFM;
- to enhance the professional aspects of training, through the combination of theoretical and practical learning close to the field;
- to set up common training tools for primary and secondary education teachers (e.g. through common training modules on transversal aspects or on the learning process extending from pre-primary to higher education).

These objectives were more or less achieved, but in the meantime the profession of primary education teacher is no longer the same:

- teachers need to be multi-functional, but what exactly does it mean in practice (cf. Section 3);
- primary education teachers are now hired and paid on the same basis as secondary education professors; they are no longer called a « school master » (*instituteur*, a title created under the Revolution) but have become « school professors »;
- they are trained as professionals who are expected to respond to the needs of society and those of learners from very diverse origins and social backgrounds.

### ***Training in stages***

102- Since the beginning of the academic year 2003-2004 the *concours* for school professors includes a first series of written examinations (in French and mathematics) and for those who pass them a second series of oral examinations comprising: a pre-professional interview, a test in either science/technology or history/geography and another one in either a foreign language, plastic arts or music. In addition there is a grade for physical education/sports. The structure of this *concours* is currently under discussion and it may well be changed again. The first year at IUFM is currently entirely devoted to preparing these examinations. A balance is being sought between the learning of science and humanities by graduates holding a *licence* in diverse areas of specialisation. At IUFM these subjects are approached from the angle of didactics, i.e. through a reflection about how a given subject may be taught and learned.

103- The first year at IUFM includes a series of short stays in a classroom. Those who successfully pass the *concours* become State officials in traineeship. During the second IUFM year they follow a sandwich programme comprising in-class applications and course modules for all. Thus, all future primary education teachers have to go through the following practical training periods during their second year of training:

- a two-week period of supervised in-class practice;
- a total of nine weeks during which they are responsible for a class; this is organised in three sessions, one in each of the three learning cycles making up primary education;
- a short stay of a few days at a *collège*.

Most trainees actually do spend some time in pre-primary education. The length of the various practical sessions is currently also under discussion.

104- During their second year all trainee teachers return to the IUFM for two days a week to work on subject didactics, to enhance their knowledge of the teaching profession by means of conferences on transversal issues affecting all levels of school education and to work in groups analysing practical cases<sup>51</sup>. At the end of this second year an internal evaluation of trainees takes place; it consists of three

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<sup>50</sup> The report by Y. BOTTIN (op. cit.) makes a dual statement about the social background of school professors: « First, the social background of school professors is somewhat higher than the national average; and secondly the gap tends to become wider on the basis of the sociological comparison between young IUFM graduates (61% of them have parents in middle or upper management positions) and those recruited through internal procedures (only 34%) »

<sup>51</sup> The training programme for the second year proposes the following allocation of time: 96 hours for the didactics of French and mathematics; 105 hours for basic modules (arts, physical education/sports or languages); 60 hours for science; 60 hours for school acquaintance and 72 hours for internship preparation and follow-up.

equal parts: a professional thesis<sup>52</sup>, an assessment in transversal topics called « core training »<sup>53</sup> and an assessment of the main internship. This evaluation tends to be mainly an academic validation of the practical training, thus allowing the examination board to award the trainee the professional certificate of qualification for primary education teaching; this board represents the State as teachers' employer and draws up the list of trainees proposed to become full State officials. The percentage of those failing this examination is extremely small and the few who fail may benefit from an extension of their traineeship for an additional year<sup>54</sup>, in accordance with the basic rules applying for all civil servants.

### ***Mixed opinions about the quality of training***

105- The first IUFM year receives little criticism from future teachers. Criticism comes rather from some trainers who find this year insufficiently focussed on the training of professionals in teaching and regret that the final examinations are too theoretical, even if some steps have been taken to move them closer to real-life classroom situations – a trend opposed by some circles in the inspectorate general who believe that the acquisition of subject knowledge ought still to be checked.

106- In contrast, the second year is strongly criticised by future teachers as soon as they leave the IUFM<sup>55</sup>. Criticism tends to focus mainly on perceived shortfalls concerning the didactics of learning to read, communication techniques, social sciences and humanities; but the strongest criticism expressed concerns the limited acquisition of skills with respect to class management, the heterogeneity of pupils, keeping discipline, the conduct of single classes with various levels or teaching in priority education zones (ZEP); these questions are all the more problematic that new teachers tend to be assigned to schools particularly faced with these difficulties. The most positive opinions are for the main traineeship in the second year, but also for the professional thesis and for guidance/advice received from trainers with a personal experience as primary education teachers. With respect to the core training, opinions used to reflect mixed feelings in the first years of existence of the IUFM but have now turned more positive, since trainers have changed their approach and have learned how to deal with the variety of knowledge areas and levels amongst students.

107- Future school professors express diverse opinions about their trainers: while less than one half are satisfied with trainers in general, over two third are satisfied with their own lecturers and 90% are positive about their part-time trainers and with those who opened their classroom to them. What seems to be questioned is not the level of competency of trainers, but rather the style and content of their teaching which is seen as disconnected from the professional worries of future teachers. It would be demagogic to advocate an approach focussing on immediate professional questions, since the first steps in teaching practice are often a disruption, or even a disappointment in comparison to the training time, especially when the latter takes two years and is seen as qualifying applicants as teachers for the rest of their life. Hence, continuing training should be revisited and should be better connected to initial training. This raises also questions about the objectives of initial training and the platform of competencies upon which a professional approach can be built (in view of the complex notion of multi-functionalism) for a successful start in career. The introduction of some kind of coaching during the induction phase may well entail a change in these reactions (cf. Section 3).

108- The frame of reference for competencies expected from initial training seems to be of little help for setting up a training scheme, because of the rift that exists between its good intentions (such as « knowing how to manage the class ») and a complex, dynamic, ever-changing reality. Initial training

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<sup>52</sup> The professional thesis is a document of about 30 pages mid-way between research and a report on a practical experience. Its main thrust is to discuss an issue encountered in practice and to deal with it thanks to theoretical and practical inputs, with a view to making at the end some proposals for improvement. Cf. CROS, F. (1999) *Le mémoire professionnel en formation initiale des enseignants* Paris: L'Harmattan

<sup>53</sup> This core training not only meets with resistance because it tries to bring together the two levels of school education: it is also very difficult to evaluate; in many cases evaluation is limited to checking trainees' course attendance

<sup>54</sup> The difficulty with this system is that it consists of various items: should an average grade be used ? If so, should an excellent mark for the professional thesis be allowed to offset a bad one for the traineeship ? Or should the traineeship be favoured through a weighing system ? The question remains unsettled.

<sup>55</sup> « *Devenir professeur des écoles* », DPD-MEN, and SOFRES survey for the SNUIPP, already quoted

makes sense only in the light of the whole career of teachers and is but a stage in it. However, the frame of reference for competencies serves as « terms of reference » for the second year of training at IUFM; these terms of reference in turn are used for drawing up the contract between the IUFM and the State; they are also used by trainers and trainees.

109- Finally, let us add that a survey is in progress in order to explore the possibility of allocating ECTS credit points to the various items making up the second year, in order to facilitate European exchanges between teacher training centres.

### ***The articulation between initial and continuing training***

110- The year 2001 was the 30th anniversary of the law on continuing training of 1971 that introduced an obligation for employers to fund training activities for their employees. But the same obligation was not imposed upon the State as an employer.

111- While continuing training for primary education teachers was regulated from 1972, secondary education professors had to wait until 1982 before they could benefit from a continuing training scheme. Since 1972 the principles for continuing training have been clear for primary education:

- All active teachers are entitled to continuing training.
- Each teacher has a learning account equivalent to one year for the whole duration of the career.
- Training takes place during the working time; substitutes stand in for teachers while they are on training.
- The purpose is teacher development.
- There is a strong link between the continuing training centre and the inspectorate, in order to organise the articulation between workplace and training place.

112- Since the rationale is teacher development (a new notion replacing that of « recycling ») teachers due to retire within the next five years are excluded from this scheme. These measures have made continuing training a constituent part of the professional life of teachers in primary education. Activities include: training seminars of varying duration involving IUFM professors or other trainers, in the wake of initial training, and « pedagogical days » conducted by national education inspectors in their district, close to the field<sup>56</sup>.

113- At a colloquium held in Paris in January 2001 and known as the *Entretiens de La Villette*, the workshop dealing with the articulation between initial and continuing training concluded to the importance of lifelong learning for teachers all along their professional career. It would be unrealistic to expect that some ideal type of initial training would allow young teachers to learn all facets of their job. This is the reason why the notion of continuing training is gradually imposing its rationale. In view of short duration of initial training since the creation of IUFM, the various actors involved as well as the ministry of national education have become aware that recently appointed teachers should benefit from at least five weeks of training at an IUFM during their first two years in service, in order to underpin their first steps in the career<sup>57</sup>.

114- For teachers in activity since a number of years, the need to work in teams dealing with specific projects has been acknowledged. Coaching pedagogical projects carried out at school level by existing teams requires that coaches act as facilitators rather than as knowledge disseminators. At a time when massive retirements and the ensuing renewal of teaching staff are about to deeply transform primary education, it has become important that teachers nearing the age of retirement transmit to the next generation the lessons learnt from past pedagogical initiatives. The capacity of the new generation of teachers to analyse with lucidity their own experience with teaching is largely related to the

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<sup>56</sup> A survey by the Directorate of school education, DESCO A10, N°6.1/4, concerning school year 2000-2001, stated that 34% of the volume of continuing training in primary education was delivered by IUFM professors and 50% by other national education staff

<sup>57</sup> Declaration of the Minister of National Education on 28 February 2001 and ministerial instruction of 27 July 2002 on the coaching of young teachers (« *Accompagnement à l'entrée dans le métier des nouveaux enseignants* »)



professional thesis required at the end of the second year at IUFM. It sends a positive signal about the readiness of the new generation to use continuing training as a means to develop their professional competencies.

115- When the former « masters » became school professors, many used the opportunities offered by continuing training to improve their professional practice (60% of them followed a training course in this area over the last five years<sup>58</sup>). The demand is mainly for pedagogical training (48%) and for training in particular disciplines (34%). But the highest motivation of primary education teachers is for training in educational technologies.

116- Since continuing training is an individual right, it is not compulsory. It depends on the awareness of individual teachers about the benefits resulting from training time invested in their professional development. The institutional recognition of these training efforts – whether or not they lead to a formal certificate or diploma – is usually not in the form of an increase in salary, but in some kind of symbolic acknowledgement of the high intellectual investment required. If lifelong learning is becoming an imperative for all teachers, continuing training activities need to be evaluated and taken into account. This would allow lifelong training to become a part of teachers' professional responsibility, on a par with their original missions of teaching and educating.

117- Thus, primary education has benefited, already from 1972, from an effective mechanism for continuing training, with an individual right to 36 weeks of training over the whole career, under the supervision of the academic inspector. In the beginning it was subjected to a multi-annual national framework, but since 1968 it has been the academic inspector's responsibility to draw up the terms of reference for the continuing training of staff and to organise its implementation through a variety of actors amongst whom the IUFM play a prominent role. Training plans are in most cases drawn up at the level of each *académie* and include strands for each *département*. The academic inspector always has authority over the budget and the implementation of the training policy of the *départements*, in consultation with bodies representing staff. In this way, continuing training is based on an agreement about objectives to be achieved. However, the IUFM seem to remain mainly focussed on initial training and tend to respond incompletely to continuing training needs. Yet, primary education can also draw on pedagogical advisors and on teacher trainers who are able to deliver training in cooperation with national education inspectors in their district. Currently about one third of teachers participate in continuing training each year; this proportion has remained stable for over ten years.

118- Continuing training plans for school professors reflect national priorities for education as laid down in the National Steering Programme for training; it also draws on a dedicated pool of substitutes (staff assigned to a squad of substitute teachers, IUFM trainees on internship) who stand in for teachers on training. This rather complex mechanism takes advantage of the time when IUFM trainees are responsible of a class, thus freeing the teacher of that class who becomes available for a period of training. In other words, while IUFM professors send out their students on in-class internships, they provide continuing training courses at the IUFM to the teachers of these classes. However, adjustment difficulties have emerged since the IUFM were asked in 1998 to take over the implementation of continuing training; they were exacerbated by a shortage of trainers and by the fact that trainers work half time in a school and half-time in training. In addition, it is foreseen that teachers spend each year four half days in out-of-class training activities provided by local teams (national education inspectors and pedagogical advisors). In contrast to secondary education, continuing training for primary education teachers hinges in part on the availability of substitute resources. But in recent years a high number of posts earmarked for substitute teachers have been cancelled. Nonetheless, in 2000-2001<sup>59</sup>, 94% of continuing training hours took place during the working time of teachers and a substitute was made available for 88% of them.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Information Note 01.46, DPD-MEN, 2001

<sup>59</sup> Between 1989-1990 and 1999-2000, 1,151 posts earmarked for substitute teachers stepping in for teachers on training were cancelled, which entails a reduction of the continuing training capacity of over 40 000 trainee-weeks over ten years. Report of the IGEN, « *Utilisation des emplois et élaboration de la carte scolaire dans l'enseignement primaire* », July 2000

<sup>60</sup> Survey by MEN-DESCO A10, 2000/2001, *Données pour la formation continue des enseignants du premier degré*

### ***Improvement measures***

119- Three types of improvement measures were taken in 2001: first the content of initial training was revisited; secondly, new training activities were planned during teachers' first years in career; and thirdly, the format of continuing training was revised.

120- In the last two years, an attempt has been made to « professionalise » the initial training of future school professors by leaving trainees more freedom in the choice of their studies. It takes the form of a contract between the IUFM and future teachers, under the supervision of a group of trainers. Henceforward, the main responsibility of the IUFM is to prepare future teachers to setting up and carrying out pedagogy focussing on basic skills such as *reading, writing, speaking* and *arithmetic*. According to Yves Bottin, « henceforward, initial training benefits from having one main discipline and must sensitise all trainee teachers to the problems of those facing learning difficulties, to the methods of school adaptation and integration and to the heterogeneity of classes, with a view to better adjust future teachers' pedagogy to these realities. The renovation plan also provides for common training schemes for primary and secondary education, on transversal themes relevant to both, such as evaluation, reading, experimenting in science or time awareness. Training teams tend to diversify, as was mentioned before, with an essential core group of permanent trainers and others who share their time between teaching and training. These novelties entail new tasks for the IUFM and in 2002 each of them prepared an institutional project in view of their contract to be signed with the State »<sup>61</sup>.

121- A recent ministerial instruction (n°2001-150) already mentioned above introduces a coaching system during the initial phase of the teaching career and draws up a list of training needs of new teachers. The corresponding measures were introduced in stages and will be generalised in 2005. This support scheme includes additional training aimed at developing the professional knowledge and competencies of future teachers: adaptation of knowledge to field realities, class management, diversification of pedagogical responses, teamwork, contribution to an institutional project, etc. This coaching period lasts three weeks in the first year of the career and two weeks in the second.

122- The question of how to link continuing training to higher education degrees seems to have disappeared from the agenda. Instead, the ministry's intention seems to be to increase the role of the academic *recteur* in continuing training.

### ***Training content not in line with primary school's priorities***

123- According to a survey by the ministry's directorate for planning and development, 60% of teachers declare that they benefited from a period of continuing training over the last five years. The focus was mainly on general pedagogical techniques, followed by subject-related didactics and new technologies. Among other training areas, main topics were the learning of foreign languages and the preparation to become a headmaster. The main motivation for taking the training mentioned by teachers was their wish to exchange professional practice with peers, followed by their intention to improve their own practice, to broaden their pedagogical culture and to learn about innovative methods. It is worth mentioning that for two third of teachers the quality of teaching is not dependent on the quality of the training provided to the teacher<sup>62</sup>. These observations have paved the way towards a new system.

124- Thus, the new contracts signed between *recteurs* and IUFM for the implementation of continuing training have the potential to clarify the objectives of training and to shift it closer to field realities. The National Steering Programme (PNP) provides for a better dissemination of information to the *académies* and makes national priorities easier to understand, thanks to training seminars organised at national level or in common between various *académies* for staff responsible for the shaping, delivery

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. BOTTIN, Y. (2002) op. cit.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. BOTTIN, Y. (2002) op.cit., page 40

and management of training activities. The wide dissemination of the proceedings of these seminars within the *académies*, both on paper and on-line, also contributes to these goals.

125- Two issues remain: one related to the articulation of the respective priorities of *départments*, *académies* and the country as a whole; the other concerns training provided by inspectors who are, at the same time, responsible for the evaluation of teachers – which may be a source of difficulties in some cases.

## **Secondary education**

### ***Initial training dominated by disciplines***

126- The three-year curriculum leading to the degree (the *licence*) required of future teachers focuses mainly on one discipline, all the more so since first-degree studies have tended to become more specialised over the last thirty years. Nonetheless, some universities offer students interested in a teaching career some specific modules focussing on aspects of the profession and usually including a period of traineeship in a class.

127- During their first year of training at the IUFM, students prepare a *concours* comprising examinations focussing nearly exclusively on scientific aspects and on the didactics of a particular discipline. Only after passing the *concours* will trainee teachers start discovering the questions related to the professional practice of teaching, i.e. to those concerning the organisation of teaching, the pedagogical link to learners, general education, teamwork and the role of parents. This second year of the IUFM curriculum is according to a sandwich formula: periods of practical teaching in one or several classes under the supervision of a pedagogical advisor (currently four to six hours of teaching per week, seven to nine hours from 2004) and some 12 weekly hours of practical and theoretical training at the IUFM. Those who pass the *agrégation*, who used to be partly excluded from the training of the second IUFM year, now have also access to it.

128- This system has positive aspects that were underlined in Section 2, but it is also subject to recurrent criticism, for reasons including in particular the following ones. The key criticism is that the curriculum is too strongly focussed on discipline-related aspects. Those who support this view have proposed to open the university curriculum to other cultural or instrumental aspects useful to future teachers (law, humanities, French, ICT, etc.). Another suggestion would be to start the professional training before the *concours* and to include an evaluation of professional capacities among the series of examinations. But these proposals seem to have been abandoned.

129- The second criticism is about the lack of coherence of the training provided during the second IUFM year. It is underpinned by the rift perceived by trainees between the practical and theoretical aspects, or rather between the content of courses at the IUFM and the reality of in-class practice. In reality, this criticism is mainly voiced by young professors more interested in ready-to-use « recipes » than in « talk shops » and should be moderated, since some IUFM have indeed endeavoured to better articulate the two components of the sandwich formula.

130- The third criticism is precisely about the huge disparity in IUFM activities. Success rates at the various *concours* at the end of the first year may vary widely, both within each IUFM and between them<sup>63</sup>. The quantity and quality of training provided during the second year may also be very different, not the least because IUFM hinge directly on locally available resources. Overall, the training system today seems indeed to be marked by large inequalities.

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<sup>63</sup> Information Note MEN-DPD O2.56, 2002, Les Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres 2001-2002

### ***Continuing training: under revision***

131- The Nineties were not good years for the continuing training of secondary education teachers. The total number of trainee-days has decreased by 100,000 per year, at least during the period 1993-2000; the average number of days spent on training each year has decreased from 3.5 to 2.1 per teacher in service between 1995 and 2000; the percentage of total salary cost spent on training has decreased from 3.50 to 3.12% between 1997 and 2000. All these indicators show a slowdown in training which has affected the duration of courses more than the actual number of trainees. The figures available for 2001 show a dramatic recovery of these indicators which can be traced directly to a renewed political will coming from the ministry.

132- This tends to mean that the weak point is the organisation of training rather than its content or a weak demand from teachers. This hypothesis is confirmed by the regional disparity in this slowdown, which has been more marked in the Paris region than in the provinces. This disorganisation has both structural reasons and other causes related to current circumstances. Among structural factors, one that was already mentioned earlier on is related to the sharing of tasks within the ministry between the departments of school and higher education; another such factor is the administration's tendency (sometimes under pressure coming from teachers' unions and parents' organisations) to always focus on immediate challenges (the preparation of the beginning of the next school year) rather than on longer-term priorities of staff management and employment policies (like training). A relevant observation in this respect is that during the years of budget reduction in continuing training mentioned above (1993-2000), the overall budget for school education has actually increased by FF 40 billion and the number of teachers in secondary education has increased by 15,000 while enrolments decreased by 70,000 !

133- Another structural factor explaining the slowdown in training is the lack of recognition of training efforts in career management. More generally, at decision-making level, the positive vision of training as an engine of change that prevailed in the Eighties has gradually been replaced by more negative views: training as a means to escape daily class realities, as the main reason for professors to be absent from their class, etc. Finally, a specific immediate reason (that may be a product of this change of mind) is that a ministerial decision in 1999 suddenly cancelled the « academic missions for the training of national education staff » (MAPFEN) that since 1982 was responsible for the organisation and implementation of training activities at the level of each *académie*. This decision was neither prepared nor explained and entailed sometimes disastrous consequences in the field, including in particular the dissolution of teams of managers and trainers. The IUFM who should in principle have benefited from this dismantling operation did not ask for it, and the majority of them were not in a position to step in immediately, at a time when their tasks in initial training also became heavier.

### ***Already productive recent initiatives***

134- Year 2000 marked the beginning of a more organised handling of the IUFM and continuing training. Three initiatives are worth mentioning. The first concerns initial training: a ministerial instruction of 2002 set out in a more detailed way the national requirements for the second year of training at the IUFM, on the basis of a report produced by Professor Meirieu, the director of the IUFM of Lyons<sup>64</sup>. Rather than a « straitjacket » these requirements provide a « framework » of what the State expects of the IUFM, in particular with a view to reducing the disparities between *académies*. The four-year plans for initial training which serve as a basis for the contract with the State setting out the objectives and resources of each IUFM, were therefore revised for the beginning of the school year 2002-2003.

135- The second initiative concerns the link between initial and continuing training: a period of coached training was introduced for young teachers during their first years in career. The plan published by the ministry in 2001 provides (as in primary education) for three weeks of training during

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<sup>64</sup> MEIRIEU, P. (2001), « Cahier des charges pour la seconde année d'IUFM », *Rapport au ministre de l'éducation nationale*

the first year and two weeks during the second year in career. Contrary to the general rule, this training is compulsory and professors are normally substituted in their classed. As part of this new effort, some *académies* took special measures to support teachers who asked to be assigned to a post requiring specific qualifications in difficult schools. But this coaching is expensive and its generalisation will therefore require a few more years.

136- Finally, the third initiative was the introduction of the National Steering Programme for training (PNP). It provides for a better dissemination of information to the *académies* and makes national priorities easier to understand, thanks to training seminars organised at national level or in common between various *académies* for staff responsible for the shaping, delivery and management of training activities.

### ***More proposals for improvement***

137- Recent proposals submitted to the Minister to enhance the attractiveness of the teaching profession are based on two objectives: initial training must better meet the needs of young professors and resources available for continuing training must be increased<sup>65</sup>. It is worth mentioning here the most important of these proposals. First, concerning the organisation of training, it was suggested that the system would gain in effectiveness if schools were responsible for the continuing training of their staff. In this case, the responsibility of each *académie* would be limited to regulating training and managing resources – in line with what already exists in the area of training in the health and territorial public administrations<sup>66</sup>.

138- Concerning career management, consideration should be given to the possibilities that individual efforts invested in continuing training and competencies acquired be taken into account when evaluating staff and managing careers: promotion, access to management posts and to intermediate positions such as pedagogical advisor or training advisor.

139- Concerning methods, the diversification of the modes of delivery of continuing training should be continued and should extend beyond the still predominant format of the « training course »: development of « on-line campuses » offering a wide choice of modules, coaching, self-training, joint activities involving other administrations (e.g. those in charge of youth, police, justice) or enterprises, exchange of knowledge and good practices, etc.

### **Private education: integrated initial training and specific continuing training**

140- The integration of the recruitment and initial training of professors of the private sector into the State system has already been analysed (Section 2). Continuing training, however, is part of a specific system that reflects in particular the very uneven distribution of private schools and professors across the country. Its fundamental principle is that schools are directly responsible for the continuing training of their staff. On this basis, nearly all catholic schools who signed a contract with the State pool the funds which by law they must earmark for continuing training: these funds are collected at regional level by the ARPEC (Regional associations for the promotion of catholic education) and at national level by the UNAPEC (National union of associations for the promotion of catholic education). Both organisations count the same number of representatives of schools (as employers) and of teacher unions. Since 1993, they are responsible for the overall shaping of training programmes but farm out their implementation to training organisations approved at the level of each district of catholic education (diocese).

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<sup>65</sup> OBIN, J-P, 2002, pp. 91-97

<sup>66</sup> OBIN, J-P, 2002, annex 7

## SECTION 5 - RECRUITMENT AND ASSIGNMENT TO A SCHOOL

141- The next decade will see a higher number of retirements from the teaching professions in both the public and the private sector. Analyses forecast that there will be an average of 17,200 teachers (of which 15,000 in public education) retiring each year during the period 2002-2006<sup>67</sup>. Recruitment needs are as follows:

**Table 9: Projected number of retirements, 2001-2010**

Segment of education system	Number of teachers in service in year of reference (2000)	Number of retirements 2001-2010	% retirements 2001-2010
Primary ed., public	327,050	142,200	43
Primary ed., private under State contract	47,900	23,000	48
Secondary ed., public	390,900	163,300	42
Secondary ed., private under State contract	92,600	36,300	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>858,450</b>	<b>364,800</b>	<b>43</b>

Source: « Projection du système éducatif à dix ans », *Education et formations n°63*, DPD-MEN, 2002

142- The gradual massification of education has allowed all children to enter primary school already under the Third Republic. Not very long ago, rural children would attend school only during winter months, but this is now past history. All French and foreign children aged 6 to 11 attend a primary school. This means that the number of pupils varies with birth rates and immigration flows. Domestic demographic projections are not sufficient for the quantitative planning of teacher recruitment. Over the past three years, total enrolments in primary and secondary education have remained stable.

### Common principles with different procedures in primary and secondary education

143- The recruitment of teachers and their assignment to a post are governed by the same basic principles in primary and secondary education. Applicants need to have completed a *licence* or equivalent degree; prepare a selective entrance examination (a *concours*) either as first-year students of an IUFM or independently; if they pass the *concours*, spend a second year of training at the IUFM as paid trainee teachers; pass successfully a professional qualification examination after which they become full teachers and State officials. They are then assigned to a particular school and class within the framework of a vast « movement » for the assignment/reassignment of all teachers who want to change posts, on the basis of a point scale which depends mainly on seniority.

144- Yet, the procedures applied in primary and secondary education are significantly different. For primary education professors, the *concours* is organised at the level of each educational region (*académie*) and the assignment to a school/post is decided at the level of each *département*. For secondary education professors, whether certified or *agrégés*, the various *concours* as well as the assignment to a school are organised at national level, in a two stage process: first between *académies* and then within each one. The contents of the examinations comprising the *concours* also differ

<sup>67</sup> The age pyramid of teachers is not the same everywhere in France. They are younger in the North and Centre, with *académies* like those of Amiens or Créteil four to eight percentage points younger than average. In the South teachers are generally older and in two *académies* (those of Marseilles and Montpellier) the average age of teachers is 14v percentage points above the national mean: Information note 02.24, DPD-MEN, 2002

substantially: they seek to evaluate multi-functional competencies in primary education and excellence in a subject area in secondary education.

## Primary education

### *Profile of successful candidates*

145- Among those who pass successfully the external recruitment *concours* 70% have completed a *licence*; 18.8% have completed a *maîtrise* and 2.9% an advanced degree called DEA or DESS; 38% of them did not prepare the *concours* as IUFM students. Internal *concours* are for staff already working in the education system<sup>68</sup>.

### *Recruitment disparities between regions*

146- The recruitment *concours* is organised at the level of each educational region (*académie*). For a long time the examination questions used to be different between regions, which entailed two types of problems: questions were seen as more or less difficult according to regions, and grading by local teacher trainers did not ensure fully objective marks awarded on anonymous examination papers. Therefore, clusters of *académies* were formed in order to share common examination questions, e.g. the three *académies* of the Ile-de-France (i.e. those of Paris, Créteil and Versailles). Until 2000 the dates of the *concours* were the same everywhere. From 2002 it was organised at two different dates, one for the Ile-de-France and another one for other *académies*. This makes it possible for candidates to apply twice and hence to increase their chances of being admitted. In 2003, two different dates will apply to two clusters of *académies*.

**Table 10- Recruitment *concours* for school professors, year 2000**

<b>Recruitment <i>concours</i></b>	<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>Registered</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Admitted</b>	<b>Put on reserve list</b>	<b>Admitted/post</b>	<b>Success rate</b>
External <i>concours</i>	10,075	59,220	47,024	10,075	6,488	100	21.4%
First internal <i>concours</i>	3,110	9,239	7,172	3,102	334	99.7	43.3%
2nd internal <i>concours</i>	250	1,645	1,261	250	91	100	19.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,435</b>	<b>70,104</b>	<b>55,457</b>	<b>13,427</b>	<b>6,913</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>24.2%</b>

Information note 02-19, DPD-MEN, 2002

### *A local recruitment process*

147- The recruitment of primary education teachers takes place at the level of each *académie* and the number of posts offered depends on forecasted vacancies in each *département*. However, the forecasted needs based on figures provided by the *recteur* of each educational region are often out of line with actual on-the-field needs and the number of posts offered tends to be less than what regions really need. Therefore each *concours* concludes with a list of admitted candidates and a reserve list which the inspectorate may use to cover short-term needs. For several years this system has created difficulties, since those on the reserve list may be picked and assigned directly to a class without any training. Most of these tend to be assigned to difficult schools, thus adding to the problem. There are also two specific internal *concours*: one is open in each *département* to school masters with at least 3 years of practice; the other is for permanent and non-permanent staff of a public administration with a *licence* (or equivalent three-year post-secondary degree) who have served for at least three years as well as to trainee teachers of a « preparatory cycle for future teachers » selected from among public administration staff with a DEUG (or equivalent two-year university degree) who have served a

<sup>68</sup> DPD, Information note 02.19 avril

minimum of three years. These internal *concours* account for less than 30% of all successful candidates.

### ***Assigning teachers to their first post: a complex issue***

148- At the end of their professional training at an IUFM, trainee teachers are assigned to a school or to a unit of substitute teachers covering a given geographical area, on the basis of a complex point system that takes into account their family situation, their grades at the *concours* and some other aspects of their educational and professional path before entering the IUFM. The first assignment of school professors may be to any school in the *académie*, while after the first post the annual movement of teachers seeking a different school is at the level of each *département*. In practice, young school professors are first assigned to a *département* and then to a particular school where there are unfilled positions once more senior teachers are served. No distinction is made between primary and pre-primary schools. After their first assignment to a school, primary education teachers are attached to the *département* to which they were assigned. They can only change *départements* if they get a dual authorisation: one called « *exeat* » to leave their current *département* and simultaneously another one, called « *ineat* », to enter any particular other *département*. These authorisations are examined by consultative administrative commissions in which the unions play a very substantial role. Many factors are taken into account. Usually, *départements* and *académies* with diminishing enrolments recruit fewer young professors, in spite of planned retirements. *Académies* in high need of teachers (Versailles, Créteil, Lille, Aix-Marseilles) recruit young teachers coming from all other regions. But these professors then often try to return to their own region of origin and achieve to do so over time. Thus, some regions have become places of training and transition, with recurrent new needs every year.

149- Being a primary education teacher may in practice mean very different realities. Many trainee teachers start practicing at single-class schools (it should be recalled that 47% of all schools have only three classes or less) or in priority education zones (ZEP). Newcomers are mostly (80%) assigned to temporary positions. The proportion of young professors in pre-primary education is lower than that of more senior teachers, although there are twice as many young (15%) than experienced male teachers (6%) at that level. It would however be hazardous to read in these figures a signal of age differences or of a change of generation.

150- Three quarters of IUFM graduates are satisfied with their first job (46% of them are even very satisfied). The remaining 25% are mainly those assigned to a ZEP, a rural area or a city of more than 50,000 inhabitants<sup>69</sup>. It can be said that primary education teachers are a rather mobile group. After being hired at the local level, they may later on decide to stay or not in the *département* of their first post, but this also depends on the number of vacancies in each region. Thus, the high number of posts open each year in the *académie* of Créteil (1,129 in the year 2000) attracts candidates from the whole of France. In 2001, 52% of primary education teachers were not practicing in the *département* where they were born.

### ***Out-of-class jobs***

151- A report by the inspectorate general<sup>70</sup> mentions a survey carried out in 18 *départements* in order to better understand the use of out-of-class posts and its impact on the actual functioning of primary education. In the decade from 1989 to 1999 a clear effort was made to increase the teacher/student ration, including through an increase of the number of posts not linked to any particular class (from 38,668 to 43,391 - i.e. an increase of over 12%), not counting the 36,250 jobs created for young educational assistants. These jobs are in response to three priorities: to step in to ensure the continuity of school (when teachers are ill or on training), to free school directors from at least part of their teaching workload and to promote the priorities of national education. In 1999-2000, 56% of out-of-

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<sup>69</sup> DPD, Information Note 01.46 octobre.

<sup>70</sup> BOTTIN, Y. and NACABAL, J. *L'utilisation des postes hors classes à l'école primaire*, Report of the IGEN, 2001

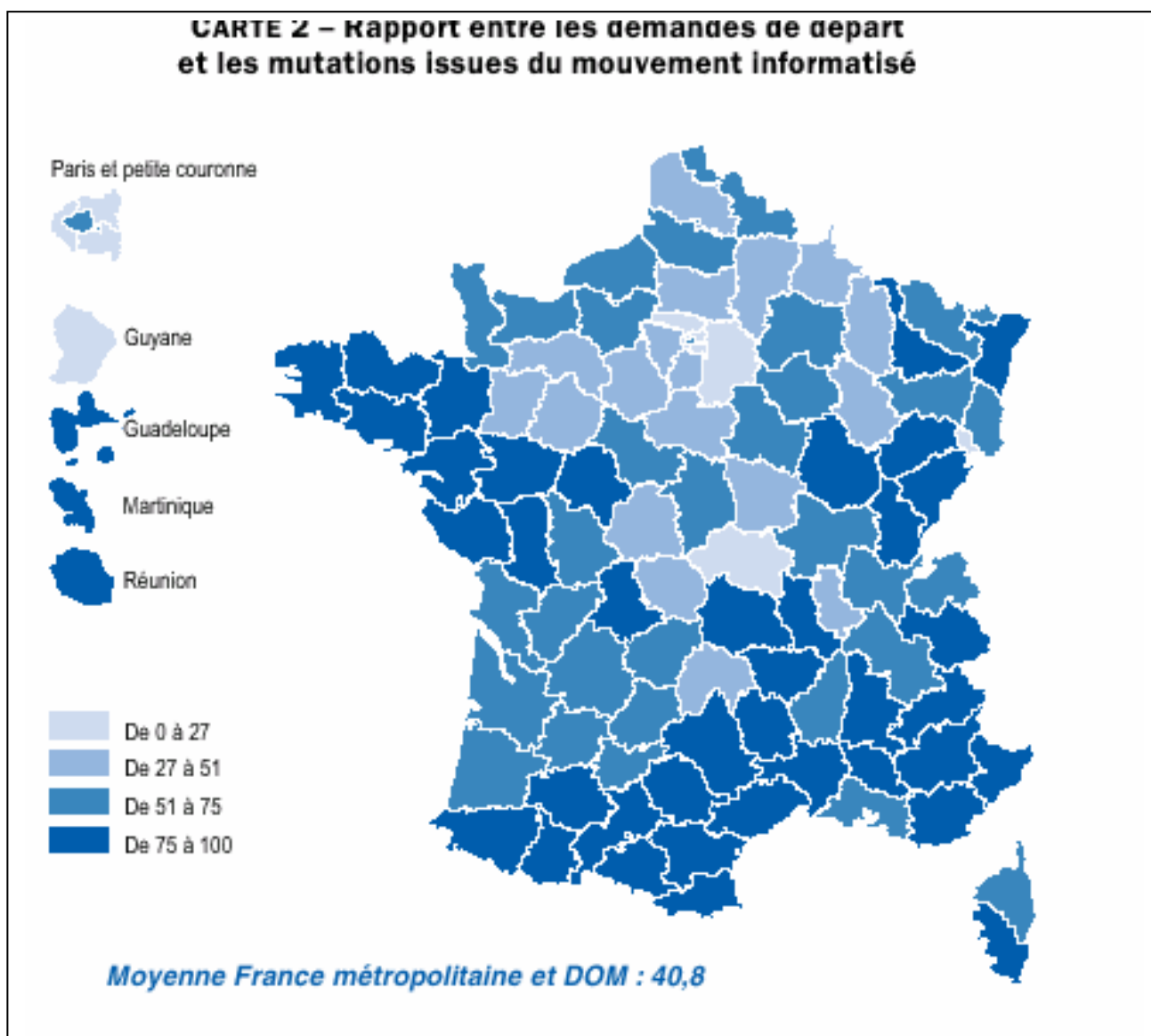


class positions were used for step-in teachers. Counting also teachers who step in for school directors with a reduced teaching workload, the figure would reach nearly 75% of all out-of-class positions. The remainder serve as the preferred resource used by inspectors to promote the goals of education policy. Surveys show an inequality between *départements* with respect to such positions and underline that only a limited proportion of out-of-class positions are used to serve local pedagogical and educational policies: only 8% on average, compared to the 92% put at the service of national priorities.

***Transfer patterns differ between regions***

152- The pattern of transfers between *départements* is not the same everywhere and varies (in terms of numbers, age and eagerness to move) between areas located North and South of a line running from Brittany to Savoy (Cf. Table 11). Some 4.5% of all teachers changed *départements* in 2000: for three quarters of them, this resulted directly from the two-stage, computer-assisted « movement », while for the remaining quarter an additional, « manual » round was necessary<sup>71</sup>. At the end of these various stages, one half of the requests for change could be satisfied. During the period from September 2000 to September 2001, some 3.5% of primary school professors and 1.4% of primary school masters changed *département*. In 2000, 13,400 teachers requested a change of *département*, of which 55% could be satisfied. Thus, there were in that year some 7,400 transfers.

**Table 11- Ratio of requested transfers to actual mobility in primary education, per *département***



DPD, Information Note 02-29 June

A survey carried out among young primary school professors at the end of their first year in career provides some insight into the difficulties they encounter when trying to adapt to local conditions (Table 12).

**Table 12- Main difficulties encountered by primary education teachers at beginning of career**

<b>Difficulties met</b>	<b>% of responses</b>
To adapt to children's and the class' level	68
To adapt to the school	7
Distance from family or home region	7
Accommodation problems	1
Difficulties with preparing lectures	45
Problems to keep discipline	30
Communication problems with pupils	5
Communication problems with colleagues	11
Problems with the integration into a new region	2
Financial problems	2
Travel between home and school	12
Difficulties with time management	53
Working conditions	26
Problems with organisation of private life	8
No difficulty	1
Other difficulties	9

Source: Les Dossiers DPD-MEN, n°123, *Devenir professeur des écoles*, 2001

In conclusion, it seems that the major difficulties encountered by young professors are to adapt to their pupils, to manage their time and to prepare their lectures.

## **Secondary education**

153- There are three categories of secondary education professors: some 46,000 *agrégés* that need to have completed a four-year university degree (the *maîtrise*) plus 232,000 « certified professors » and 60,000 professional education professors that need to have completed a 3-year *licence*<sup>72</sup>. These categories have a nation-wide identity and organisation building on the national dimension of the *concours* that control admission into them. Those passing the *concours* become civil servants in traineeship and spend a year of professional training at an IUFM; after passing a professional qualification examination they become permanent and are assigned as full professors to a secondary education school or to the « squad » of step-in teachers of a particular geographical district. Assigning them to a particular post is part of the broader process called the « movement » which allows interested teachers to request, once a year, a transfer or rather a re-assignment to a different post.

### ***Discipline-based national entrance examinations used for a variety of purposes***

#### *A complex system*

154- The French system governing admission to the various categories of secondary education professors is a particularly complex one. It has become even more complicated in recent year, under the pressure of civil servant unions mobilising to reduce the proportion of non-permanent teaching staff; several new specific schemes were added to the existing system. In addition to existing « external » *concours* open to all candidates (in fact, mainly to students) with the required university

<sup>72</sup> In addition to these main categories there are also some 30,000 permanent professors who belong to categories that will be extinguished and some 15,000 non-permanent teachers

degree (the *maîtrise* for the *agrégation*, the *licence* for all other *concours*) and a series of « internal » *concours* open to permanent and non-permanent staff who have served for at least five years, special possibilities were added for the period 2001-2005. They consist in less demanding, lower level « reserved *concours* » or « professional examinations » designed specifically to allow auxiliary and contract staff who have been in service for many years to become permanent. Even more, in 2002 a new admission procedure called « third *concours* » was introduced for persons with a significant professional experience acquired outside of teaching and civil service. They are meant in particular for the « educational assistants » hired by schools in recent years on the basis of private contracts and are open for four years even to those not holding a *licence* (a two-year university degree will be sufficient). Similar schemes are planned in the private sector.

155- In reality, the French system of selective entrance examinations leads in the longer term to a dual recruitment process: either via « external » *concours* requiring a high level of disciplinary knowledge and up to eight examinations (all of them subject-based !), or via a variety of procedures designed for non-permanent staff and for candidates with significant professional experience in an area other than teaching; in these latter procedures, the level of knowledge required tends to be lower (for « internal » *concours*) or even much lower (« reserved » *concours* and « professional examinations »). No accurate figures are available on this issue, but according to a reasonable estimate some 20 to 25% of permanent professors are currently not coming through an « external » *concours* - a proportion that varies enormously between regions, probably reaching or even exceeding 80% in the académies overseas !

**Table 13- Overview of entrance examinations and *concours*, secondary education, 2002**

<b>Concours or examination</b>	<b>Posts offered*</b>	<b>Registered candidates*</b>
External, public sector	17,400	127,087
Internal, public sector	2,560	29,067
Reserved, public sector	2,540	10,235
Third <i>concours</i> , public sector	800	1,560
Professional examinations	---	2,655
<b>TOTAL, PUBLIC SECTOR</b>	<b>23,300</b>	<b>170,604</b>
External, private sector	2,020	9,379
Internal, private sector	2,925	9,635
Third <i>concours</i> , private sector	200	204
<b>TOTAL, PRIVATE SECTOR</b>	<b>5,145</b>	<b>19,218</b>
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC + PRIVATE</b>	<b>28,445</b>	<b>189,822</b>

\* These figures concern the *concours* and professional examinations for the recruitment of teachers, educational advisors and guidance/counselling staff and for the pre-recruitment to the « preparatory cycle » in secondary education, public and private.

#### *An extremely heavy system*

156- Altogether, the Ministry of National Education (Directorate of Teaching Staff) organised 293 different national *concours* in 2002; these *concours* were broken down into 869 different « sections » according to the disciplines taught (633 for the public and 236 for the private sector). In addition, the *académies* organise « professional examinations » which were passed successfully by 1,500 candidates in 2002. The quite heavy workload required by all this examining and testing is still further increasing, e.g. the total number of sections was « only » 559 in 1999. In 2002 the number of posts to be filled by means of a *concours* was 23,300 in public education and 5,145 in private education. Some figures may help to illustrate the heavy burden resulting from this centralised system: 11,000 persons sat in examination boards; 43,000 written examinations were organised and 329,000 examination papers (i.e. next to ten tons of paper) were graded ! Adding to this 2,400 days of oral examinations, the total cost of the system amounts to over Euro 28 millions.

### *Recruitment difficulties ahead*

157- External *concours* are the only procedure providing an actual inflow of new teachers - except for the posts now offered to candidates of the « third *concours* » (800 in 2002, which could not all be filled). But it is difficult to evaluate their real contribution to recruitment, because their role is actually threefold: recruitment, of course, but also promotion (e.g. in the case of the external *agrégation*) and admission to the status of permanent State official (in particular for teaching staff not fulfilling the seniority requirement of other *concours* or examinations). It is therefore not really possible to say how many of the 16,000 successful candidates who passed these *concours* in 2002 were actually « fresh blood ».

158- Yet, available data on external *concours* provide a reasonably good picture of the varying difficulty to recruit. The table below shows statistical series of the number of posts and that of registered, present and successful candidates at external *concours* from 1990 to 2002. The most meaningful ratio is that of present candidates per post; a (rather subjective) rule of thumb is that if this ratio is higher than 4 it guarantees the quantity and quality of recruitment. This has been the case only from 1995, with optimal conditions prevailing between 1998 and 2000 (with over 7 applicants per post) and a less favourable trend (though not an alarming one) since 2001.

**Table 14- Evolution of external *concours* in secondary education**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Posts*</b>	<b>Present*</b>	<b>Admitted*</b>	<b>Present / Post</b>	<b>Admitted / Post</b>
1990	17,793	44,375	12,628	2.5	0.71
1991	16,300	46,601	12,872	2.9	0.79
1992	21,050	46,424	14,888	2.2	0.71
1993	21,200	57,526	15,369	2.7	0.72
1994	21,200	78,384	16,393	3.7	0.77
1995	21,100	89,996	16,145	4.3	0.77
1996	19,580	10,965	15,384	5.2	0.79
1997	16,215	108,669	14,400	6.7	0.89
1998	14,620	104 879	13,534	7.2	0.93
1999	13,704	98,781	13,364	7.2	0.98
2000	12,965	92,279	12,748	7.1	0.98
2001	14,335	89,125	14,169	6.2	0.99
2002	16,410	82,926	16,102	5.1	0.98

\* These figures are for external *concours* for the recruitment of secondary education teachers, public sector only

159- Finally, it should be mentioned that recruitment difficulties are not the same across the spectrum of disciplines. The least favourable ratios are found in professional education, in particular in some areas of specialisation (e.g. civil, industrial and chemical engineering) where there are already less than two candidates per post. In 2002 there was also a significant drop in the number of applicants in scientific disciplines (physics -13%; mathematics -12%; earth and life science -10%) and in some areas of humanities (history and geography -11%, literature -10%).

### ***Assignment: a point system favouring seniority and teachers' preferences***

*Assignment to the first post: by default, once senior teachers are served*

160- The assignment of new teachers to their first post is part of the broader annual round of geographical mobility of teachers called teachers' « movement ». Its basic principle is that each year teachers may express « wishes » to change posts. They may actually express not one, but up to sixteen such wishes: some may be very specific (e.g. a particular school) and others may be more broadly defined (a type of school, a city, a *département*, a region, ...). In spite of the hostility of some unions the movement was reformed in 1999 and is now no longer centralised but organised in two stages: first

between *académies* and then within each of them. In 2001 the first phase concerned 45,000 persons, 65% of whom could be satisfied on one of their wishes, and the second phase concerned 76,600 persons of which 78% actually changed posts. In practice, a teacher who wants to change *académies* needs first to ask for one (or several) other *académies*, be accepted to move there and then submit more accurate wishes as part of the second, intra-regional phase of the process. For each vacant post candidates are ranked according to a « point scale » which applies to all. The point system is so complicated that only a small number of specialists in unions and administration could claim that they know all its complexities<sup>73</sup>. The computer-assisted ranking is then submitted to the consultative administrative commissions set up at national and regional level (CAPN et CAPA) which comprise an equal number of members designated by the administration and by the unions. Although the factors influencing the point system are numerous and complicated, it is clear that seniority in the post, as well as time spent in a difficult school play an important role; family-related factors and the difficulty of the post to be filled also play a role, but only to a lesser extent.

161- As a result of the mechanical application of this point scale, new teachers tend to be served after more senior ones and to get the least popular posts. Some try various strategies to avoid these less attractive posts; their effectiveness depends on their level of information about the complexities of the point system, on some tactical choices that may pay or even on fraud in a few cases. Altogether, nearly 60% of trainees start their career upon leaving the IUFM in a post classified as « difficult » (as a substitute, in a priority education zone or in a « sensitive » school or posts) and in 2001 over two third of new teachers were assigned to just two of the 30 *académies*, i.e. those covering the suburban area around Paris.

162- This situation is linked to the very uneven attractiveness of vacant posts: in addition to the well known preference of French teachers from all regions for a post in the Southern half of the country and in urban rather than rural areas, there is now a third dimension related to the fear inspired by difficult suburban areas. Whether justified or not, the (bad) reputation of certain *académies* or municipalities plays an increasingly decisive role in teachers' behaviour.

#### *Mixed results*

163- The consequences of this whole process are many. A positive one is that teachers are satisfied with a system that leaves much room to their individual preferences. After a number of difficult years at the beginning, they tend to get the region of their wishes or even the post of their dreams and then settle down. This is part of the appeal of the profession, in particular in view of the importance attached by many male and above all female teachers to combining a harmonious professional life with a fulfilling family life. But other consequences are more negative, such as the destabilisation of some schools as a result of an excessive turnover of teachers or the lack of personal investment into the first post, which tends to be seen as a mere transition towards something better. Geographical mobility is in practice limited to the first few years in career: on average those who wish to change posts are only 33 years old and have spent about 4 years in their current post; at the other end of the age spectrum, one quarter of professors have occupied their post for at least twenty years ! But the worst consequence of this system is that it can be demonstrated that it exacerbates social inequalities with respect to school: whatever its other merits, it tends to assign the least-experienced teachers to those classes where students are in greatest difficulty and would need the strongest push and support if they are to succeed at school.

164- A recent survey shows that young teachers have actually mixed feelings about these realities: on the one hand they feel rather relieved (89% of them are overall rather satisfied, even though 54% admit that they had to go through a rather difficult time) but on the other hand they are very cautious when assessing their professional impact (only 19% feel that they were able to help all pupils to make progress and nearly one half admit that they often had problems with keeping discipline)<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> In 2003 the main teachers union published a 32-page booklet to explain the functioning of the « movement » !

<sup>74</sup> ESQUIEU, N. (2001), « De l'IUFM à la classe », *Information note 01-56*, DPD-MEN

### ***Recent initiatives and their impact***

165- The « de-concentration » of the movement, i.e. splitting it into two phases as explained above, had some limited positive effects. The ultimate goal of customising the management of posts and staff has by far not become a reality. The main unions remain much attached to an egalitarian point system and this leaves little room to seek a real fit between a particular post and a particular person. It is nonetheless true that managing the system at regional rather than national level leaves less room to « blind » decisions and opens some possibilities to look more deeply into some difficult individual cases.

166- To mention some other initiatives: the central administration of national education introduced in 2000 a bonus of 50 points for IUFM trainees and in 2001 opened in the *académies* of the Ile-de-France a number of posts (called PEP4) requiring specific skills and offering specific benefits to those who take them. These innovations aim to favour the mobility of young teachers and a better balance between generations in the inter-academic movement and have had a positive impact on prevailing trends. The impact of the 50 bonus points may be seen from different angles: the proportion of newcomers assigned to the two *académies* covering the suburban area around Paris has not diminished between 1999 and 2001 (it stayed at 34%), but their distribution over the national territory has improved; thus, the eight least attractive *académies*<sup>75</sup> that used to concentrate 67% of all newcomers only accounted for 58% in 2000; at the other end of the spectrum the most popular six *académies*<sup>76</sup> received 15% of newcomers in 2000 and only 10% in 1999. The « PEP4 » introduced in 2001 attracted over 2,000 candidates for 700 vacancies, which made it possible to assign full teachers (rather than trainees) to 90% of them, but only two out of five were experienced teachers. One should also add to these initiatives the recent plan for the introduction of coaching of young teachers in their first two years (cf. Section 4), which has precisely as its objective to adapt the training of young teachers to the difficulties expecting them in their first class.

### ***Other possible proposals to improve the first years in career***

167- Among the proposals that were recently submitted to the Minister, two would make it possible to combat the adverse consequences of the current system used for the assignment of teachers to their first post<sup>77</sup>.

168- The first would consist in dealing in a more flexible way with the issue of attractive and less attractive posts. Currently, only professors assigned to a school in a ZEP get a salary bonus. Hence, the map of less attractive posts that need to be filled across the country does not coincide with the map of posts coming with a « bonus » meant to attract teachers. The proposal would thus be to adjust the bonus system to the reality, i.e. making certain that posts with a bonus are indeed the otherwise least attractive ones. It is easy to understand that such a decision would be expensive and therefore difficult to implement.

169- The second proposal would be to keep the national dimension of the various *concours* but to « regionalise » the process of assignment to the first post, at least in disciplines with a high number of candidates. Only a small number of *académies* (no more than eight) actually cannot fill some vacant posts, and only two or three really deter trainee professors. In fact, the (very real) risk of being assigned to one of these two or three *académies* inhibits recruitment in general: it dissuades students from all over the country to apply for the *concours* and pushes those who pass them to take to all kinds of strategies to avoid these regions, run away from them or wait for better times. Primary education, which also recruits its teachers through a national *concours*, is not faced with the same difficulties. An additional advantage would be that by making the assignment of teachers to their first post a regional

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<sup>75</sup> Amiens, Créteil, Lille, Nancy-Metz, Orléans-Tours, Reims, Rouen and Versailles,

<sup>76</sup> Aix-Marseille, Bordeaux, Montpellier, Nice, Paris and Toulouse

<sup>77</sup> OBIN, J-P. (2002), op. cit., pp. 83-84

responsibility difficulties would be focussed on a small number of *académies* that could then receive additional means in order to become more attractive and thus be able to recruit the teachers they need. But this option is not favoured by the unions who remain in their majority opposed to any kind of de-concentration of the recruitment process.

### **The special case of the private sector of education: local recruitment with a national certificate**

170- Although private education is well integrated with the public sector with respect to career management procedures (cf. Sections 2 and 4) it uses a fundamentally different rationale to recruit teachers and assign them to a post. In the private sector those who pass the national *concours* are not automatically hired: they are put on a national list of qualified persons (*liste d'aptitude*) which schools (i.e. employers) use locally to hire from it the teachers they need. This leaves schools a choice: they may hire a full professor transferring from the public sector (in a small minority of cases) or any person from the list of those who are « certified » because they pass a national *concours* of the private sector; they may also hire a not-certified person who may at a later stage pass an external or internal *concours* of the private sector. The private sector is therefore the only part of the French education system where there could be « unemployed teachers »; but in reality there are very few: because of the generally lower level of qualification of their teachers, private schools are indeed interested in hiring certified professors from the list. Candidates to the internal *concours* of the private sector for secondary education teachers are predominantly (over 75%) non-permanent teachers; for them the internal *concours* is a means to become permanent and is as important as the external *concours* for those who want to get the CAFEP (Certificate of aptitude to teach at a private school). Recruitment is not only directly by schools: there is a recruitment service at regional level for secondary education teachers and in each *département* (or rather diocese) for primary education teachers.

## SECTION 6 - BETTER CAREER MANAGEMENT

### Making careers more flexible and diverse

171- Unlike other countries, France needs not to « retain » teachers in their profession because a significant number of them would leave for better paid, more secure or nervously less exhausting other jobs. French teachers are stable in their profession - even extremely stable in the case of primary education teachers. The reasons for this peculiar situation are simple: the benefits of being a State official, salaries comparable to those of the private sector (at least for women), more « free » time and a large degree of autonomy at work. To these reasons one should add some other good ones: a strong motivation in most cases, a clear satisfaction with the job throughout primary education and in a good part of secondary education, and the pride of doing a « noble » job. There may also be some less positive reasons: in particular among senior teachers, the impression that they are no longer able to do anything else than teaching and are sometimes « blocked » in a job requiring very (or too ?) specific skills.

172- Altogether, primary education teachers, whose career is managed at the level of each *département*, are particularly stable in their profession and are less mobile geographically. Secondary education teachers are more mobile, especially at the beginning of their career (cf. Section 5), but they are also extremely stable in their profession, as shown by the figures below: there were only 1,922 voluntary resignations (i.e. a rate of about 0.5%.) and only 284 of these were actual resignations (i.e. 0.07%):

- retirement: 7,451
- early retirement (at CFA): 4,230
- Death: 508
- Resignation and dismissal<sup>78</sup>: 284
- Promotion to inspectorate/management: 966
- Appointment/assignment to higher education: 672

### Primary education

#### *Regular monitoring of careers*

173- In primary education the career of teachers is monitored by the inspectors and pedagogical advisers who support and evaluate them. Evaluation has no significant impact on careers: of the three processes governing the pace of promotion (on the basis of seniority, by « half choice » and « by choice »<sup>79</sup>, the same as in secondary education), seniority is the most important factor. Evaluation is carried out quite regularly and more frequently than in secondary education. The ministry is faced with the difficult task of identifying the best performing teachers and commissioned a report on this issue<sup>80</sup>. This report notes that « current evaluation practices are sometimes more of a secularised pedagogical

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<sup>78</sup> Resignations and dismissals are counted together because most « dismissals » happen when a teacher was on leave and does not ask to be re-inserted - which is actually equivalent to a resignation

<sup>79</sup> The report by Y. Bottin states that « One may say that primary education teachers are treated in the same way in all *départements*. The score of each teacher on the promotion scale always depends on two factors: a grade reflecting professional performance and a figure determined by seniority. The only difference between *départements* may result from the weighing system applied by each to the two factors: the professional grade may weigh the same as seniority or 1.5 or even 2 or 3 times more; this grade may also be adjusted if it is not recent enough and in a few cases it may even be reduced in view of former promotions ! »

<sup>80</sup> MONTEIL, J-M. (1998), *Propositions pour une nouvelle approche de l'évaluation des enseignants*, Report to the Minister of National Education.



rite than a process aimed at identifying and assessing performance ». On this basis, the author makes a series of proposals to overcome the current shortfalls, both in primary and secondary education:

- The evaluation of teachers should be based on a report of activities produced by them every three years; it should mainly cover teaching, with other educational and management tasks as possible additions.
- Actual pedagogical inspection should consist in watching ten pedagogical units and assigning a pedagogical grade on this basis; it should be carried out by two inspectors; beginners should not be graded before the end of their second year as a full teacher.
- The inspectorate should prepare and disseminate a document of reference for inspectors, with a view to providing both inspectors and teachers with a short shared list of « objective » pedagogical indicators.
- Finally, evaluation should be taken into account when drawing up continuing training priorities.

### ***Limited professional mobility***

174- School professors have the possibility to change jobs if they pass a *concours*:

- to become an inspector of national education;
- to work with handicapped children by passing the CAPSAIS, the certificate for special education and school integration, with seven different areas of specialisation according to different types of handicap (26,644 posts);
- to become a teacher trainer by passing the CAFIPEMF, the certificate of qualification for teacher training required to become an in-class teacher tutor or coach (4,606 posts) or a pedagogical advisor (3,252 posts);
- to become a school psychologist.

175- In addition, teachers may apply for an out-of-class position and carry out various tasks of coordination, innovation, support or specialised help in priority educational zones (ZEP), for ICT, in rural areas or for regional languages (in total 11,575 posts). They may also become a headmaster (or rather a school director) with reduced teaching obligations, if they apply to be put on a list of qualified candidates and are assigned to such a position; of the 19,062 that exist, only 1,043 require no teaching at all and 3,934 require half-time teaching or less. The profile of these posts and the conditions required for them would however need to be better defined.

### **Secondary education**

#### ***Serious problems: from demotivation by mid-career to discouragement at the end***

176- A quite common feature of the profession seems to be that teachers go through a « crisis » when they are in their forties<sup>81</sup>. In France, this crisis is related to the quite common feeling of deterioration of professional conditions blamed mainly on the change in student behaviour: there are now many more young people engaged in secondary education than fifteen years ago, their social background does not prepare them as well as before for long studies that are anyway not necessarily their preferred option, and many are affected by the impact of the economic crisis and the deconstruction of families. These changes are all the more discouraging for teachers that they are the outcome of the democratic aspirations they themselves have been advocating for a long time.

177- On top of this, there is a widely shared feeling that professional tasks keep growing: in addition to teaching, they henceforward also encompass administrative tasks, educational responsibilities including dealing with unexpected behaviour, student counselling, supervising « individual project » at *lycées* or « professional pedagogical project » at professional *lycées*) as well as customised support to students in difficulty.

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<sup>81</sup> HUBERMAN, M. et al. (1989) *La vie des enseignants*, Geneva, Delachaux and Niestlé

178- Lastly, these teachers feel uneasy because they have the impression that the image of school and teachers in society has deteriorated, especially with pupils and families. This feeling has been nourished by the recurrent push for change coming from some authorities, which tends to be interpreted as a series of trials for archaic behaviour (the call to modernise school because of ICT has been interpreted in this way, but it was not an isolated case)<sup>82</sup>.

179- Thus, after fifteen years in service, when retirement is still a remote perspective, secondary education teachers faced with this feeling of discouragement have to choose between three options: a professional « revival » thanks to an upgrading of their teaching practice; a change of jobs, in particular by moving into higher education, to the inspectorate, becoming a headmaster (school director) or moving to a school located abroad; or the bitter vicious circle of discouragement until retirement (sometimes at an early age).

180- The latter scenario is unfortunately more common than what one would hope, at least according to a survey by the main teachers' union on late career and retirement<sup>83</sup>. It shows in particular that teachers in their fifties feel worn out: only 2.3% of them expect to stay in service until the maximum authorised age, and the main motivation of these is to earn a right to a full pension ! The same survey shows that this very common attitude of waiting for retirement seems to be related mainly to « working conditions » and the (lack of) « interest of the job ».

### ***Performance evaluation and its impact: an open issue***

181- The need for institutions to evaluate teachers is not being challenged as such by teachers or their unions. But there are serious difficulties about how to proceed. The evaluation system for secondary education teachers is somewhat complex in France, since each teacher is actually awarded two grades: an « administrative » one awarded annually by the principal on the basis of the assessment of some general professional skills, attitudes and competencies; and a « pedagogical » grade awarded by an inspector following a class inspection and a discussion with the teacher. But inspections are seldom (25% of teachers have not been inspected for eight or more years !) and their impact on the pedagogical grade is unclear: grading is affected by severe bureaucratic limitations applied in the name of harmonisation. There is no point in going into details in this report, but the grading system has often been criticised for being excessively formal, expensive and above all unable to achieve either purpose of meaningful evaluation, i.e. to enhance teaching and to help promote the best teachers. The issue remains unanswered, as unions stick to the grading system which has come to be under their control, even though it may be formal and sometimes unfair since the main two factors dictating the grade remain seniority and the ranking achieved at the entrance examination<sup>84</sup>.

### ***Proposals to improve evaluation and boost careers***

182- The last three reports on teacher evaluation commissioned by the ministry criticise roughly the same deficiencies and recommend the same solutions: the current system cannot really be improved and should be discontinued altogether to make room for a genuinely new one<sup>85</sup>. In view of the (legitimate) sensitiveness of unions about this issue, a cautious approach should be recommended. It should be based on dialogue, starting from a few agreed principles rather than from ready-to-use answers.

183- Two principles may be useful in this regard. The first could be to diminish the excessive weight of seniority thanks to some other « objective » criteria, for example through the accreditation of continuing training and studies, accumulated teaching experience or other experiential learning at

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<sup>82</sup> OBIN, J-P, (2002) op.cit., pp. 33-36

<sup>83</sup> SNES-FSU, (2001), « Fin de carrière et retraite », *l'Université syndicaliste* n° 558

<sup>84</sup> -MONTEIL, J-M (1998), op. cit.

-PAIR, C. (2001), *Forces et faiblesses de l'évaluation du système éducatif en France*, Report to the High Committee for School Evaluation

<sup>85</sup> MONTEIL, J-M (1998), op. cit.; PAIR, C. (2001), op. cit. and OBIN, J-P. (2002), op. cit.

school or in society. The second principle would be to adjust the pace of possible « career boosts » to that of the evaluation process (e.g. four or five times in a career), always evaluating only the most recent years in order to avoid the effect of accumulated previous evaluation that is one of the main sources of the drift experienced in the current system. At the same time, it would be important to avoid two pitfalls. One is the utopia of being able to assess the « value added » in each pupil, in an attempt to measure « objectively » the efficiency of each teacher. The other pitfall is the utopia that full consistency could result from basing assessments on broad « professional standards of reference » setting out teachers' tasks and required skills, in an attempt to apply purely neutral instruments. These would be pitfalls since what might possibly be gained in terms of objectivity and rigour would nearly certainly be lost because it would reduce the diversity and the degree of liberty, initiative and imagination that make teaching a meaningful profession.

### ***Possible proposals to enhance mobility and diversity***

184- Instead of focussing on « mobility », which is an ambiguous notion to French civil servants because it may be forced upon them, the response should rather deal with the necessary diversification of the teaching profession and the various professional areas to which they belong: this would be more in line with the current practice of many of the more dynamic teachers. Recent recommendations to the Minister of Education point rather in this direction<sup>86</sup>. It is probably enough for this report to provide just a short list of these recommendations.

- To encourage the development of teamwork at school by setting aside enough time, office space and organisational support for teams of teachers working together.
- To put certain teachers in charge of functional responsibilities such as leading a project, coordinating a discipline or dealing with in-service training.
- To make it possible for interested teachers to add a second subject, to teach their own subject in a foreign language, to acquire a recognised competency in ICT, etc., by providing them with adequate training opportunities.
- To develop in each *académie* more part-time support posts, e.g. pedagogical advisors, counsellor for in-service teacher training, etc.
- To extend the possibility for teachers to be seconded, which already exists with respect to management and inspectorate positions, to new types of activities, e.g. educational advisor.
- To revise the current regulations in order to allow teachers to combine teaching with another, part-time professional activity.
- To arrange support schemes for those who wish to withdraw from teaching and help them find another job in the public or private sector, either temporarily or permanently.
- Lastly, to expand the possibilities to teach in another country, in particular within the EU context.

### **Private education**<sup>87</sup>

185- The private sector is very unevenly developed: it is strongest in *départements* in the West and East of the country with a long tradition of religious education. There are various federations of private education in France, whether protestant, Jewish, lay or catholic – with the latter representing over 95% of all private schools who have entered a contractual agreement with the State.

### ***Initial training modelled on the public sector***

186- At private schools with a State contract, teachers sign a work contract when they are selected from the list of those who passed the *concours*. These *concours* are identical to those organised in the public sector. In primary education, initial professional training has for a long time taken place at Pedagogical Training Centres (CFP) on the basis of a contractual arrangement with the State. Since 1993 initial training of secondary education teachers is based on partnerships between an IUFM and

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<sup>86</sup> OBIN, J-P (2002), op. cit., pp. 54-58

<sup>87</sup> We wish to thank M. Gérard Tonneau, responsible for the training of headmasters and for research at UNAPEC, for his help with this chapter

one of the catholic sector's Institutes for pedagogical training of secondary education teachers, either at the level of an *académie* or in broader geographical region. The catholic sector's contribution to training is minor during the first year of training and predominant during the second. Arrangements concerning initial training of secondary education teachers are laid down in a national framework agreement between the State and the UNAPEC and in implementation agreements linking the *recteur*, the IUFM and the ARPEC in each *académie*. Both UNAPEC and ARPEC are associations in which the social partners (i.e. the unions of school headmasters and those of teachers) hold a majority. Their role is to counsel, prescribe and manage the training process: they themselves do not carry out training. They work in partnership with institutes, centres and other training organisations of the catholic education system who contribute in particular to the development of the professional dimension in training schemes (e.g. to the supervision of the professional thesis in the second year, coaching of trainee teachers, etc.)

### ***Recruiting from lists of qualified persons***

187- In the catholic sector the recruitment of teachers after their initial training is organised at the level of each *département* (or rather diocese) in primary education and at the level of each *académie* in secondary education. Candidate teachers who successfully passed a *concours* are not automatically hired but rather put on a list of persons qualified for teaching; headmasters then use this list to recruit teachers for their school. Another important route is the internal *concours*, which allows numerous young auxiliary staff to become permanent. Hence, the internal *concours* in the private sector currently has a dual function:

- it serves as a recruitment procedure for young auxiliary teachers (75% of those who apply to the internal *concours*);
- it is also a promotion procedure for older auxiliary and contract teachers who are not qualified to become full (certified) professors (25% of applicants to the internal *concours*).

### ***Regular participation in continuing training***

188- Continuing training for both primary and secondary education is planned and managed by UNAPEC at national level and the network of ARPEC at regional level. Training itself takes place mainly at the institutes, centres and training organisations of catholic education. The national plan steered and managed by UNAPEC represents approximately one half of the total continuing training budget. Its role is much more important than that of the national training programme in the public sector, where the majority of training is organised within regional plans at the level of the *académies*.

### ***Continuing training organised at national and regional level***

189- ARPEC and UNAPEC share the responsibility of meeting training needs, as follows:

At regional level (ARPEC):

- training for professional development and professional training for future and young teachers;
- training for professional mobility and for changing jobs (within catholic education or not);
- initial training of headmasters of primary schools.

At national level (UNAPEC):

- preparation to internal *concours* and to the CAPSAIS;
- training of trainers;
- initial training of headmasters of secondary schools.

The private sector also conducts activities of fundamental and applied research carried out by school teams, trainers and researchers from universities. These activities are mostly led and managed by UNAPEC.

### ***Various types of coaching and pedagogical support***

190- Teachers going through the final stage of a *concours* (whether internal or external, in primary or secondary education) or the CAPSAIS benefit from support from other professors acting as

supervisors of the practical internship, pedagogical advisors or coaches. In secondary education the support provided to teachers is organised locally, but compensated from State money. The stimulation of the pedagogical process is a shared responsibility of various actors: trainers employed by the catholic education district (diocese), trainers from catholic teacher training institutes, centres or organisations, heads of the UNAPEC and the various ARPEC, resource persons within schools or clusters of schools. The training of professors as pedagogical advisors, coaches and supervisors of practical internships, headmasters and other managing staff, pedagogical trainers and teacher trainers is always based on standards of reference for each of these professional activities and for the corresponding training scheme.

### ***Evaluation and career management***

191- According to the contracts linking school, teachers and the State, teacher evaluation is mainly the responsibility of the Inspectorate of national education. There is no formal authority for « human resource management » at national level or at the level of the *académies*, except for recruitment and employment questions. The training needs for teachers' career development (in terms of mobility, higher responsibilities, conversion to new internal or external jobs) are usually taken into account when the district authority of catholic education (the diocese), UNAPEC and the ARPEC draw up their training plans.

### ***Denominational education ?***

192- In the light of the contracts linking its schools to the State, catholic education in France could not be labelled « denominational education ». It is committed to respecting the principle of secularity upon which contracts are based and to being open to all pupils upon the request of their families. Catholic education has however three types of specific activities:

- organised teaching activities about the role of religion and related cultural aspects, within the framework of the disciplines in the official curriculum;
- teaching of the catholic faith to children of voluntary families, outside the time frame covered by the contract with the State and without State money (i.e. with a contribution from families);
- implicit promotion of human and Christian values through their application in daily life at school.

193- For most families choosing catholic education, their main motivation is not religious. Families tend to explain their choice by referring to the perceived attractiveness of the school's educational project or see it simply as an alternative to public education. Many families choose for their children a route in education alternating stays at public and private schools.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> LANGOUET, G. and LEGER, A. (1997), *Le choix des familles: école publique ou école privée ?*. Paris: A. Colin

## CONCLUSION

194- The same as many other developed countries, France is faced with serious difficulties - though not with a real shortage - in the recruitment of its teachers. For the foreseeable future, of which there are already some early signals, the difficulties might well start first in secondary education from 2004, and within it in the private sector, professional schools and scientific disciplines. This raises two main issues, which reach well beyond the framework of education alone and question the country's political and social choices at the deepest level: one is about educational investments and the other is about the attractiveness of the profession.

195- In spite of all efforts indicators on the level of achievement of pupils, which hitherto had shown a parallel positive trend, have remained flat since the middle of the Nineties. Under these conditions it seems indeed less reasonable to expect from the State a further increase of educational investments, all the more so when the demands for European harmonisation and convergence push for a tighter control, or even a reduction of public spending. Decentralisation may be a source of savings for the State budget, but not necessarily for total public spending. The option of privatisation, which tends to be discussed more actively abroad, remains a very virtual one in France, as a result of a very conflict-intensive past; furthermore, privatisation would not bring in significantly higher resources, since the public budget nowadays also covers most of the costs of private schools/institutions. Hence genuinely new solutions need to be envisaged. Some of these are of a qualitative nature, with a focus on improving the efficiency of learning in primary school (combating illiteracy), lower secondary education (diversifying students' paths) and vocational educational (transforming it into the *lycée des métiers*, the « *lycée* of the professions »). Another category of possible solutions could be of a more quantitative nature and use the option of not filling all positions left vacant by retiring teachers, playing with scenarios based on e.g. a reduction of the total number of class hours, a diminution of small-group teaching or an increase in the size of classes - not to mention the impact of a possible postponement of the age of retirement. All these possible avenues into the future go straight against established trends of previous decades and would certainly not be very popular in public opinion - and even less popular among teachers.

196- In view of these rather pervasive budgetary constraints the second main issue is about how to massively attract young graduates to the teaching profession, especially in view of the foreseeable high tension on the labour market for higher education graduates. Since it would probably be an illusion to hope that education could compete with industry on salaries, especially for male graduates, the remaining option would be to capitalise on what makes the teaching professions uniquely attractive. All surveys carried out among teachers come to the same conclusion, i.e. the appeal of the profession as such is not in crisis: in the most recent such survey two third of teachers still declare that teaching is the profession they had been dreaming of, 82% find it a source of self-accomplishment and over three quarters hope to stay in the profession until they retire<sup>89</sup>. Now this appeal of the teaching profession has been for decades based on the same motivations: the taste of the discipline taught, the taste for working with children and young people, the appeal of a profession allowing much intellectual freedom and autonomy in the workplace. There is ground to the assertion that today, maybe even more than before, the teaching profession is one marked by an ethical dimension; especially in the eyes of the young, it is viewed as an aspect of social resistance against a society increasingly marked by diminishing moral references, less commitment to the community, more eager profit-seeking and a deeper rift between personal and professional investment.

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<sup>89</sup> Survey by SOFRES for the magazine *L'Etudiant*, September 2002

197- Should public authorities share the above analyses, several ways into the future would open up. One would be to enhance the attractiveness of the profession in its actual practice, in particular for young teachers; this would mean more pedagogical freedom, more direct responsibility of teachers for their own work in class and towards students, more support and less control from the hierarchy (inspectors, headmasters), more flexibility in career paths, enhanced possibilities to teach part-time or in combination with some other external activity, increased opportunities and help for those who may want to move out of the teaching career, closer involvement of teachers into the process of structural reforms and curricular change, etc. Another way could be to build up a genuinely supportive climate for staff, i.e. an attitude that until now has been nearly foreign to the culture of French public administration: a real induction time into the profession, a less unjust system for the assignment to the first post, fairer promotion practices, the accreditation and recognition of prior experience acquired within or outside school, a better quality and accessibility of support services such as legal advice, healthcare and the search for accommodation for young teachers, better training opportunities, etc. A third (and final) possibility would be to enhance the social meaning of the profession, placing it deliberately on the ground of ethical values and overtly proposing to young graduates a highly attractive alternative to profit-seeking, market laws and competitive professional behaviour: e.g. through a professional charter defining the social meaning of a future-oriented profession building up Peace and educating children to Truth, Good and Beauty.

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## **OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN MEASURES ENVISAGED TO OVERCOME THE SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS OVER THE NEXT DECADE**

The various measures envisaged may be grouped in categories according to four main themes:

### **1- To attract motivated teachers**

- to organise targeted promotion campaigns on the attractiveness of the teaching professions
- to offer pre-professional modules already during the first years in higher education, with a view to allow students to discover the teaching professions
- to organise meetings, forums and recruitment fairs on education-related professions
- to capitalise on the motivations of teachers currently in service: their taste for their discipline, the fun of teaching and maintaining an educational relationship with young people, individual freedom and autonomy in the practice of the profession
- to provide better guidance to university students thanks to regular meetings with professional counsellors
- to introduce pre-recruitment contracts offering e.g. study allowances varying according to regions and disciplines

### **2- To train and develop teachers**

- to increase the autonomy and responsibility of teachers in the practice of their profession
- to design local educational agreements
- to develop lifelong training through formal, informal and non-formal learning
- to develop distance-learning/e-learning networks for all teachers in service
- to acknowledge continuing training in career management

### **3- To improve recruitment and assignment methods**

- to create more fairness in the assignment to the first post by awarding a bonus to those who are required to teach at particularly difficult schools
- to organise the assignment to the first post in secondary education at regional level

### **4- To improve career management**

- to allow more mobility of teachers both within school and from/towards other professional circles (thanks to conversion contracts)
- to accredit prior experiential learning in teaching or in another profession
- to make it possible for persons interested to become teachers to enter the profession at any time thanks to the accreditation of their credentials

## LIST OF SPECIAL TERMS AND ACRONYMS

- Académie* : regional educational district (comprising several *départements*) headed by a *recteur*
- Agrégation* : higher certificate of qualification for secondary education professors (requires a *Maîtrise* degree)
- Agrégé* : secondary education professor holding the *agrégation*
- ARPEC*: *Association régionale pour la promotion de l'enseignement catholique*  
Regional Association for the Promotion of Catholic Education
- Baccalauréat* : comprehensive examination at the end of (general, technological and vocational) secondary education, opening access to higher education
- BEP*: *Brevet d'enseignement professionnel*  
Certificate of Professional Education (lower secondary education level)
- BOEN*: *Bulletin officiel de l'éducation nationale*  
Official Bulletin of (the Ministry of) National Education
- CAFEP*: *Certificat d'aptitude aux fonctions d'enseignement dans le privé*  
Certificate of Qualification to teach in the Private Education Sector
- CAFPEMF*: *Certificat d'aptitude aux fonctions d'instituteur ou professeur des écoles maître Formateur*, Certificate of Qualification as a Teacher Trainer in primary education
- CAP*: *Certificat d'aptitude professionnel*  
Certificate of Professional Qualification (lower secondary education level)
- CAP*: *Commission administrative paritaire*  
Joint (employers-employees) Administrative Commission
- CAPA*: *Commission administrative paritaire académique*  
Joint Administrative Commission (at the level of each *Académie*)
- CAPN*: *Commission administrative paritaire nationale*  
Joint administrative Commission (at national level)
- CAPSAIS*: *Certificat d'aptitude professionnel spécialisé pour l'adaptation et l'intégration scolaire*  
Certificate of Professional Qualification as a Specialised Teacher for Children in Difficulty
- CDI*: *Centre de documentation et d'information*  
Information and Documentation Centre (Library)
- CERPE*: *Certificat d'enseignement pour les professeurs des écoles*  
Certificate of Qualification for Primary Education Professor
- Certifié* : secondary education professor holding a Certificate of Qualification (called CAPES in general education and CAPET in vocational education) which requires a *Licence* degree
- CFA*: *Congé de fin d'activité (pré-retraite)*  
End-of-career leave (early retirement)

*CFP: Centre de formation pédagogique*  
Centre for Pedagogical Training

*CGT: Confédération générale du travail*  
General Confederation of Workers

*Cinquième* : the second year in lower secondary education (normal age 13)

*Circonscription* : local educational district (normally smaller than a *département*)

*CLIS: classe d'intégration scolaire*  
Class for Integration into School

*CNED: Centre national d'enseignement à distance*  
National Centre for Distance Education)

*Collège* : a school of lower secondary education

*Concours* : any selective administrative procedure for the recruitment or promotion of staff in public administration, including in education

*Contrat Emploi-Solidarité* : temporary work contract for unemployed young people, many of whom were admitted as auxiliary staff in schools

*CPC: Commission professionnelle consultative*  
Consultative Professional Commission (in each area of specialisation in VET)

*CSE: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation*  
High Council of Education

*CTP: Comité technique paritaire*  
Joint Technical Committee (in each area of VET specialisation)

*DEA: Diplôme d'études approfondies*  
Degree of Advanced Studies (after 5 years at university ; research oriented)

*Département* : a sub-regional administrative district (96 in Europe plus 5 overseas)

*DESS: Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées*  
Degree of Advanced Specialised Studies (after 5 years at university ; professionally oriented)

*DEUG: Diplôme d'enseignement universitaire général*  
Degree of General (=fundamental) University Education (after 2 years at university)

*DPD: Direction de la programmation et de la prospective au ministère de l'éducation nationale*  
Directorate for Planning and Prospective (of the Ministry of National Education)

*Ecole maternelle* : pre-primary school (3 years), attended by nearly all children ages 3 to 6

ECTS: European Credit (Transfer) System

*ENI: Ecole normale d'instituteurs*  
Teacher Training School (formerly in each *département*)

*ENS : Ecole Normale Supérieure*  
the highest institution for teacher training in France, preparing to the *agrégation* and high level careers in education

*ENNA: Ecole normale nationale d'apprentissage*  
National Training School for Vocational Education Professors

*EPLÉ: Etablissement public local d'enseignement*  
Local Institution for Public Education

*EPPLE: Etablissement primaire public local d'enseignement*  
Local Institution for Public Primary Education

*EPS: Education physique et sportive*  
Physical Education/Sports

*EREA: Ecole régionale d'enseignement adapté*  
Regional School for Special Education

*Grande Ecole* : a non-university higher education institution selecting students through a highly competitive admission procedure (universities may normally not select their students)

*IA-IPR: Inspecteur d'académie, inspecteur pédagogique régional*  
regional inspector, secondary education inspector in charge of a discipline at regional level

*IEN: Inspecteur de l'Education nationale*  
National Education Inspector (at local level)

*IGEN: Inspecteur général de l'Education nationale, Inspection générale de l'Education nationale*  
General Inspector/Inspectorate of National Education (at national level)

*IMF: Instituteur maître formateur*  
Teacher Trainer (in primary education)

*INRP: Institut national de recherche pédagogique*  
National Institute for Pedagogical Research

*IUFM: Institut universitaire de formation des maîtres*  
University Institute for Teacher Training (since 1990, in each *Académie*)

*Licence* : university degree requiring 3 years of study

*Liste d'aptitude* : list of persons qualified for a specific job (i.e. who successfully passed a *concours*) from which actual appointments are made when positions need to be filled

*Lycée* : now a school of upper secondary general and technological education ; there are separate Professional *Lycées* for upper secondary vocational education

*Maîtrise* : university degree requiring 4 years of study

*MAFPEN: Mission académique à la formation des personnels de l'éducation nationale*  
Regional Mission for the Training of National Education Staff

*MEN: Ministère de l'éducation nationale*  
Ministry of National Education

*PEP: Poste à exigence particulière*  
Teaching position requiring specific qualifications

*PIB: Produit intérieur brut*  
Gross National Product (GDP)

*PNP: Plan national de pilotage*  
National Steering Plan (for teacher training)

*Première* : the second year in upper secondary education (normal age 17)

*Quatrième* : the third year in lower secondary education (normal age 14)

*RASED: Réseau d'aide spécialisée aux élèves en difficultés*  
Network of teachers for the provision of special support to pupils in difficulty

*Recteur* : representative of the Ministry of National Education heading an *académie*; supervises all educational levels

*REP: réseau d'éducation prioritaire*  
Network for Priority Education (a regional cluster of ZEPs)

*Seconde* : the first year in upper secondary education (normal age 16)

*SEGPA: Section d'enseignement général et professionnel adapté*  
Classes for Special General and Vocational Education

*Sixième* : the first year in lower secondary education (normal age 12)

*SMIC: Salaire minimum inter catégoriel de croissance*  
Minimum wage (common to all economic sectors)

*SVT: Sciences de la vie et de la terre*  
Life and Earth Science

*TICE: Technologies de l'information et de la communication pour l'enseignement*  
Information and Communication Technologies for Education

*Terminale* : the last (third) year in secondary education (normal age 18)

*Troisième* : the last (fourth) year in lower secondary education (normal age 15)

*UNAPEC: Union nationale des associations régionales pour la promotion de l'enseignement Catholique*  
National Union of Regional Associations for the Promotion of Catholic Education

*VAE: Validation des acquis de l'expérience*  
Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)

*ZEP: Zone d'éducation prioritaire*  
Priority Education Zone (at local level)

## MAIN OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS DEALING WITH TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

- BOEN n°32 of 6 September 2001, ministerial instruction N°2001-150 of 27 September 2001: coaching at the beginning of career and continuing training of primary and secondary education teachers and educational and counselling specialists.
- BOEN n°43 of 24 November 1994, information note n°94-271 of 16 November 1994: Skills and competencies required from school professors (at the end of initial training); this document serves also as a basis for the « terms of reference » used by IUFM to define the objectives, the content and the methods of the training.
- For primary education:
  - BOEN n°43 of 21 November 2002, information *note* n°2002-256 of 18 November 2002: organisation of examination boards, organisation and grading of the various examinations.
  - BOEN n°34 of 19 September 2002: recruitment of school professors, *concours* for primary education teachers of the private sector. Modification of the note published in the special BOEN n°14 of 18 July 2002.
  - BOEN n°32 of 5 September 2002, administrative decision of 5 September 2002 concerning the organisation of the various *concours* (external, special, internal) for the recruitment of school professors.
  - Special BOEN n°14 of 18 July 2002 (calendar, registration and organisation of the various *concours*)
  - BOEN n°29 of 18 July 2002, administrative decision of 29 April 2002 concerning the content and examinations of the external *concours* for the recruitment of school professors.
  - BOEN n°17 of 25 April 2002, administrative decision of 29 March 2002 concerning the organisation of the third-type *concours* for recruitment of school professors.
- For secondary education:
  - BOEN n°7 of 13 February 2003, information note n° 2003-013 of 5 February 2003: instructions concerning the *concours* for the recruitment of teachers and education and counselling specialists of *lycées* and *collèges* (reminder of the list of examinations; dates, places and organisation of examinations and thesis).
  - BOEN n°5 of 30 January 2003: assignment of the trainees who passed the *concours* and professional examinations for the school year 2003-2004.
  - BOEN n°4 of 2 January 2003, modification of the information *note* n°2002-148 of 10 July 2002 published in the special BOEN n°14 of 18 July 2002, concerning the duration of the various written examinations of the *concours*.
  - BOEN n°37 of 10 October 2002, administrative decisions of 3 October 2002 appointing the chairs of the examination boards of the various *concours* for the recruitment of secondary education staff.

- BOEN n°36 of 3 October 2002, administrative decision of 20 September 2002 authorising the organisation of *concours* and professional examinations for the various categories of staff in 2003.
- BOEN n°34 of 19 September 2002, recruitment of teachers and educational and counselling staff of the private sector of education.
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