

Karin Bachmann Hunziker & Sylvie Leuenberger Zanetta  
Unité de recherche pour le pilotage des systèmes pédagogiques (URSP)

## INTRODUCTION

This contribution aims to shed some light on the **second transition**, i.e. the one that takes place after obtaining a diploma of the Upper secondary degree and which includes the processes of insertion into the labour market or into tertiary education level.

Preceding research has pointed out some characteristics specific to the second transition, namely the evolution of the flows towards labour or tertiary education level, the spreading out in time of the insertion into labour or else the strongly determining effects of the diploma itself on the choices of orientation (Davaud, Mouad, & Rastoldo, 2010 ; Keller, Hupka-Brunner, & Meyer, 2010 ; Scharenberg *et al.*, 2014).

More recently, transition has been viewed with the notion of path in mind ; this perspective takes the succession or the imbrication of education segments into account, as well as professional experience, periods of inactivity or unemployment. Post-obligatory paths are thus very varied and differ obviously from those prescribed by educational systems (Bachmann Hunziker, Leuenberger Zanetta, Mouad, & Rastoldo, 2013 ; Cattaneo, Donati, & Galeandro, 2009 ; Mouad & Rastoldo, 2016 ; Pollien & Bonoli, 2012).

Given the fact that the transition into active life rarely corresponds to a direct switch from education to labour (Bachmann Hunziker, Leuenberger Zanetta, Mouad, & Rastoldo, to be published), our objective is to examine more precisely the way the professional world gradually enters the life of young people. The analyzed data comes from a survey about Upper secondary orientation (EOS-study).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which forms can the reported professional experiences of young people take ?
- What is the extent of the professional experiences and their interweaving with other occupations ?
- How do young people who have entered the professional world perceive their situation and which difficulties did they have to face ?

## METHOD

The data of the EOS-study has been taken in the Canton de Vaud in January 2015 amongst 6258 secondary II certified young people (Federal Baccalaureate, Federal Specialised and Vocational Baccalaureates, General Culture Diploma, Federal VET Diploma and Certificate, University Aptitude Test).

An online survey provided precise information about the situation (mainly about the present state of either further education, work or unemployment) of these young people 18 months after they had obtained their diploma, the different modes of transition towards this situation (direct or indirect, and what kind of activities in case of indirect transition), its evaluation, the planned activities one year later, and their vocational perspectives.

The rate of answers amounts to 58.2%

Table 1: Description of the population

|                                   | Population (sample*) | Respondents | Females     | French native speakers | Swiss nationality | Age         |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
|                                   | N                    | N           | %           | %                      | %                 | Average     |
| Federal Baccalaureate             | 1345*                | 912         | 57.4        | 85.1                   | 85                | 18.9        |
| Federal Vocational Baccalaureate  | 1024                 | 622         | 51          | 90.4                   | 87.8              | 21.3        |
| Federal Specialised Baccalaureate | 290                  | 184         | 78.3        | 83.2                   | 85.9              | 20.5        |
| Federal VET Diploma               | 2400*                | 1177        | 47.3        | 85.6                   | 78.3              | 22.6        |
| General Culture Diploma           | 829                  | 483         | 62.7        | 77.1                   | 82.5              | 19.5        |
| Federal VET Certificate           | 294                  | 131         | 31.9        | 71                     | 58                | 23.1        |
| University Aptitude Test          | 76                   | 41          | 55.3        | 100                    | 90.2              | 23.2        |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>6258</b>          | <b>3550</b> | <b>52.9</b> | <b>84.3</b>            | <b>81.9</b>       | <b>20.9</b> |

## RESULTS

### First observation

#### Variety of professional experiences

Four types of professional experiences are mainly described by young people. Work is the most frequent; more than half of the young people say that they were employed at any given moment during the 3 years after they obtained their diploma.

| Professional experiences   |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Employment</b>  | 53.5% |
| Relatively stable professional experience in which the young is bound by contract with his employer or else he is himself the company director                         |       |
| <b>Job</b>   | 14.1% |
| More unstable professional experience, in time as well as in the bond between employee and employer  |       |
| <b>Training courses</b>  | 7.2%  |
| Time limited professional experience which has generally the function to introduce a candidate to a particular professional area and to assess his potential abilities |       |
| <b>Professional practice during vocational training</b>  | 8.5%  |
| Professional experience as an essential component of vocational training   |       |

The other activities mentioned by the young people are: other forms of training, military or civil service, learning a language abroad, search for employment or for a traineeship, trips and the fact to stay at home for different reasons.

### Second observation

#### Complexity of professional experiences in post secondary II paths

The analysis of the imbrications of the different professional experiences with the other occupations in the three years after obtaining the diploma show 4 types of paths:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>N=2277</b><br>26.9%  | <b>Constant professional experiences in the course of the path</b><br>Succession or intertwining of different professional activities but, in 15.5% of the cases, there is a stabilized insertion in employment   |
| <b>N=1091</b><br>12.90% | <b>Consequent professional experiences in the course of the path</b><br>Succession or intertwining of different professional experiences during 2 years in the three which followed the obtaining of the diploma, albeit the presence of other activities |
| <b>N=1032</b><br>12.20% | <b>Limited professional experiences in the course of the path</b><br>Succession or intertwining of different professional experiences during 1 year in the three which followed the obtaining of the diploma, albeit the presence of other activities     |
| <b>N=1579</b><br>18.6%  | <b>Absence of professional experience in the course of the path</b><br>No professional activity was mentioned   |

Around 30% of the young people are not taken into consideration in these paths either because of lacking data or because of expressed uncertainties about their professional future.

#### Rate of people concerned with stabilized employment

| Less than 3%  | Between 6 – 12.5%   | More than 15.1%     |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Federal Baccalaureate<br>Federal Specialised Baccalaureate<br>University Aptitude Test<br>General Culture Diploma | Federal Vocational Baccalaureate<br>Federal VET Certificate | Federal VET Diploma |

### Professional situations are generally good and perceived as satisfactory. But difficulties of professional insertion still possible!

| Objective characteristics of employment   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| Full time employment (or almost)  | 83.9% | 😊 |
| Desired employment rate   | 91.6% | 😊 |
| Unlimited duration of contract  | 91.4% | 😊 |
| Qualified employment, with responsibilities or being his own boss                                 | 91.4% | 😊 |
| Qualifications acquired during the vocational training or studies are in line with the employment | 83.2% | 😊 |
| Matching employment - vocational training or studies  | 71.9% | 😐 |

| Subjective perception of employment            |       |   |
|--|-------|---|
| Positive evaluation of salary                  | 58.7% | 😐 |
| Positive evaluation of the nature of the tasks | 88.7% | 😊 |
| Positive evaluation of career perspectives     | 73.8% | 😐 |
| Positive evaluation of work schedule           | 77.9% | 😐 |
| Trust in professional future                   | 90.6% | 😊 |

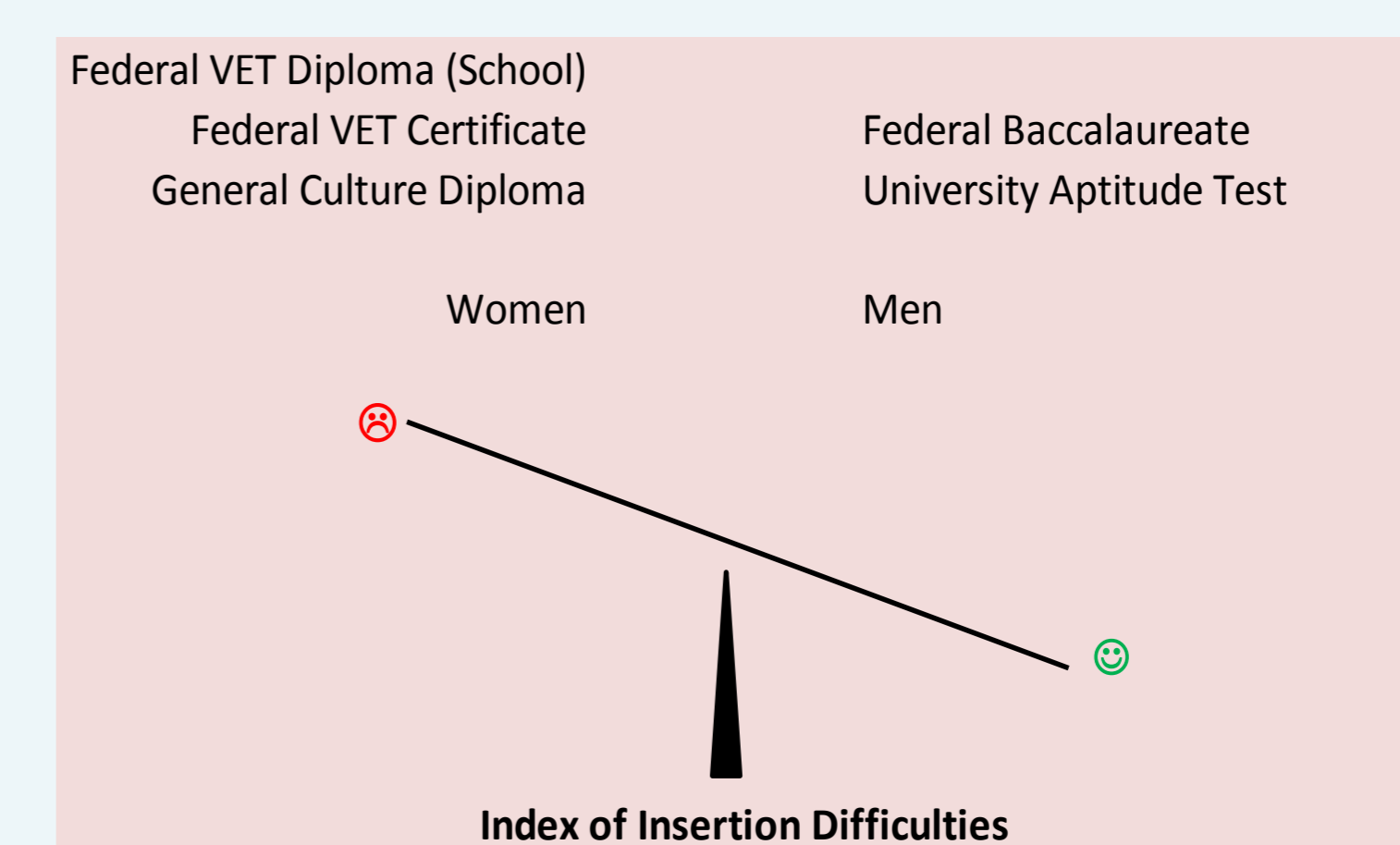
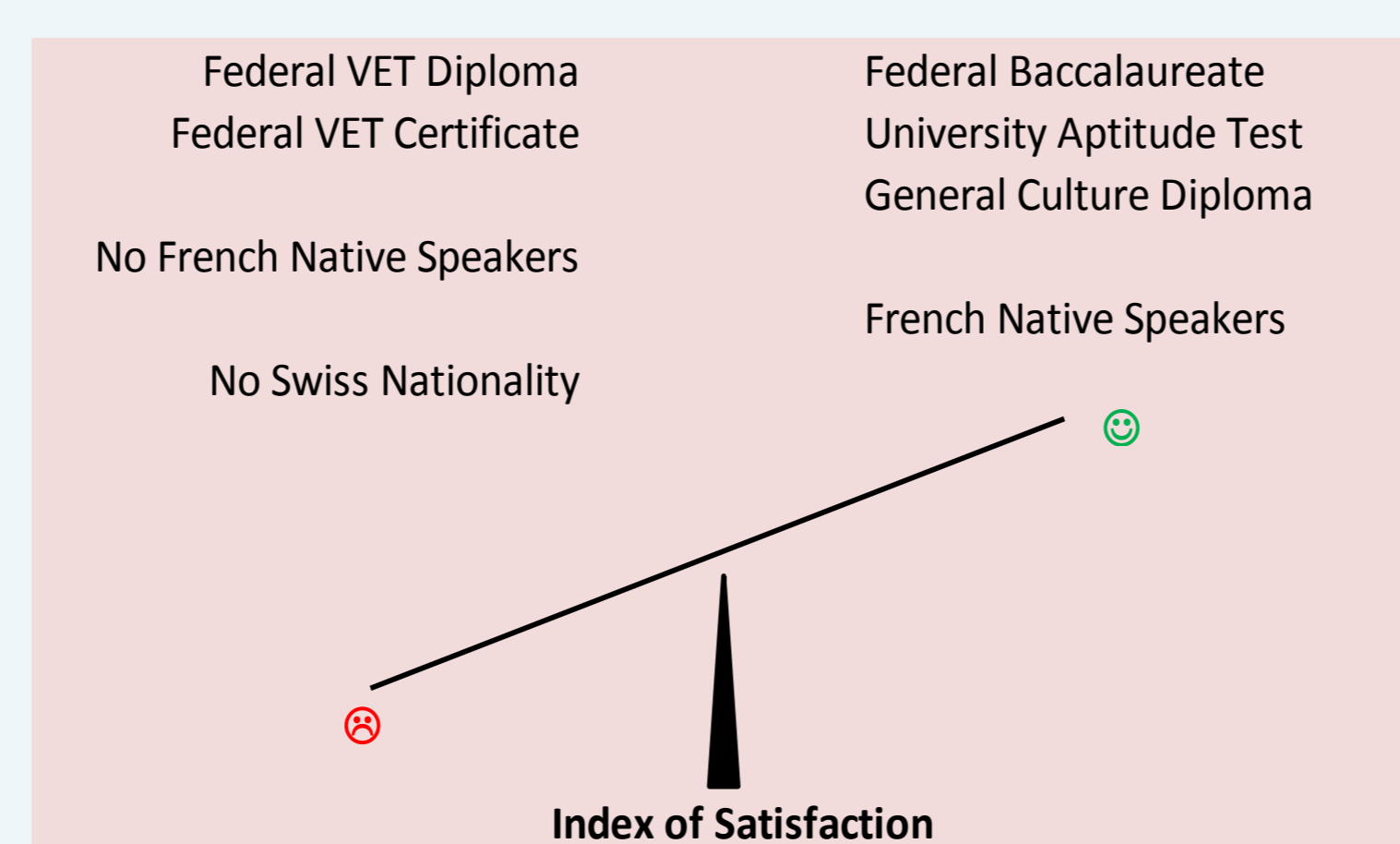
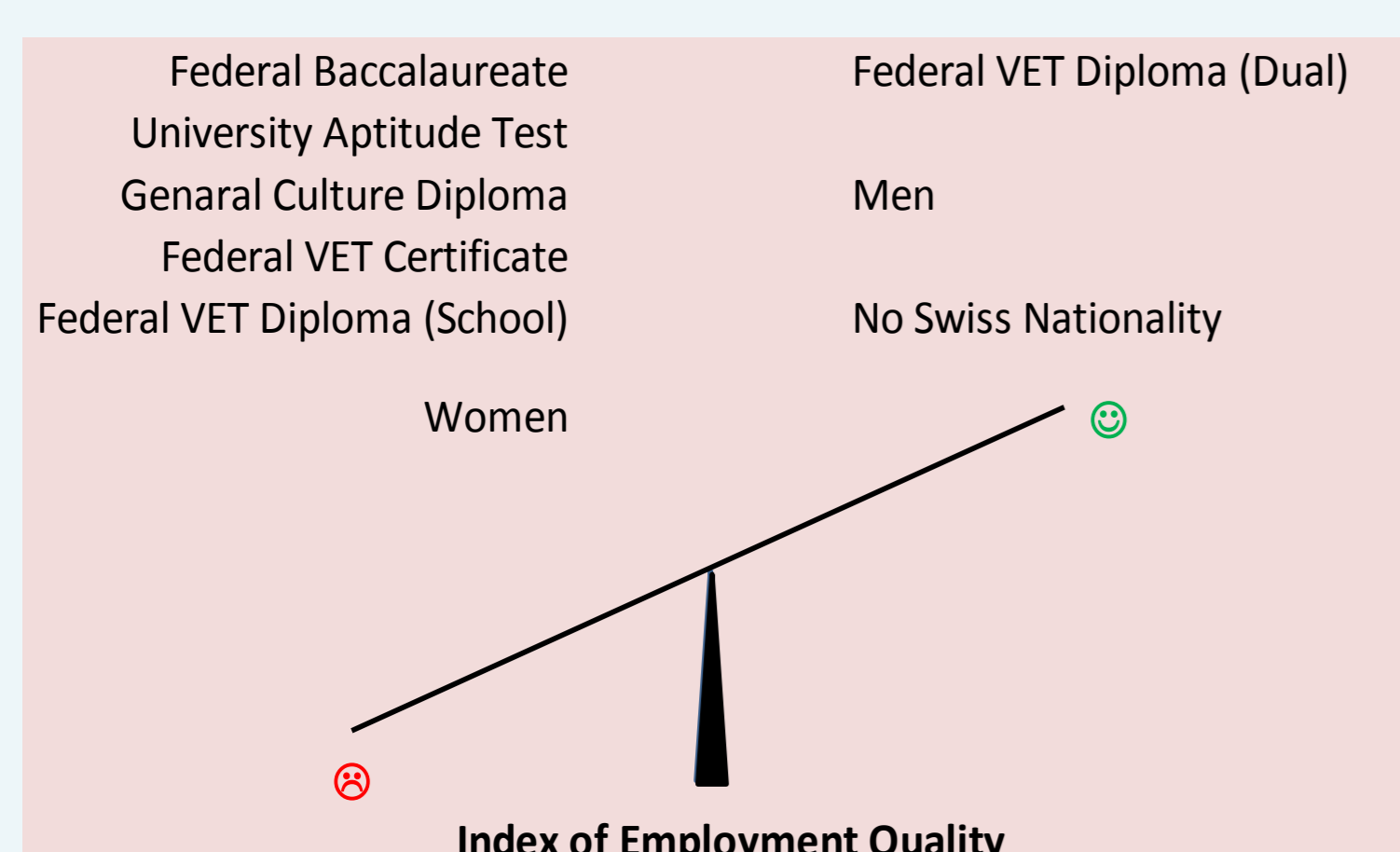
| Difficulties in getting an employment                                 |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| More than 3 months needed to find an employment                       | 33%   | 😐 |
| Presence of periods of unemployment or of searching for an employment | 27.9% | 😐 |
| Total length of unemployment higher than 6 months                     | 17.5% | 😐 |

Index of employment quality

Index of satisfaction

Index of insertion difficulties

X  
Diploma  
Gender  
Nationality  
Language



## DISCUSSION

Professional experiences play an important part in post secondary II paths, which indicates that young people tend to get closer to the professional world; however, at this stage, employment is not the central element in their life. They are indeed still closely concerned with training since 56% claim to have got more education at one time during the three years after they obtained their diploma.

The variety of the professional experiences and their multiple imbrications with other activities shed light on the complexity of post secondary II paths, but also on the diversity assumed by these experiences: obligation in order to gain access to a higher school, saving money for future studies, support to the orientation process, conservation of a contact with the professional world or necessity to support oneself financially during one's studies, acquiring experience for a future professional insertion, etc.

Stabilized professional situations are objectively better, but they are also less satisfactory and they generate more insertion difficulties for young people who went through a professional path rather than a general one. Thus, although professional diplomas seem to be recognized on the labour market, the existence of a certain level of dissatisfaction questions us about the expectations of young people in relation with the professional world.

Thus, being aged on average between 21 to 24 years old, the majority of the holders of an Upper secondary II diploma in the Canton de Vaud can still be considered in transition.

## REFERENCES

- Bachmann Hunziker, K., Leuenberger Zanetta, S., Mouad, R., & Rastoldo, F. (2014). *Que font les jeunes 18 mois après l'obtention de leur diplôme de niveau secondaire II ? Etat des lieux dans les cantons de Vaud et de Genève*. Genève, Lausanne : SRED, URSP.
- Cattaneo, A., Donati, M., & Galeandro Bocchino, C. (2009). *Quinze ans en 1992, trente ans aujourd'hui. A propos d'un suivi longitudinal sur 15 ans des transitions formatives et professionnelles des jeunes en fin de scolarité obligatoire. Revue Suisse des Sciences de l'Education, 31(2), 229-248.*
- Davaud, C., Mouad, R., & Rastoldo, F. (2010). *Situation des diplômés de l'enseignement public genevois, 18 mois après l'obtention de leur titre. Volée 2007*. Genève : Service de la recherche en éducation.
- Keller, A., Hupka-Brunner, S., & Meyer, T. (2010). *Parcours de formation postobligatoires en Suisse : les sept premières années. Survol des résultats de l'étude longitudinale TREE, mise à jour 2010*. Retrieved (July 5, 2017) from [https://europa.unibas.ch/fileadmin/tree/redaktion/docs/Keller\\_Hupka\\_Meyer\\_2010\\_Results\\_Update\\_francais.pdf](https://europa.unibas.ch/fileadmin/tree/redaktion/docs/Keller_Hupka_Meyer_2010_Results_Update_francais.pdf)
- Rastoldo, F. & Mouad, R. (2016). *Quand la transition post-diplôme préfigure les mobilités professionnelles : Quatre certifications dans les cantons de Vaud et de Genève. Formation Emploi, 133(1), 77-100.*
- Scharenberg, K., Rudin, M., Müller, B., Meyer, T., & Hupka-Brunner, S. (2014). *Parcours de formation de l'école obligatoire à l'âge adulte : Les dix premières années. Survol des résultats de l'étude longitudinale suisse TREE, partie I*. Bâle : TREE.
- Pollien, A. & Bonoli, L. (2012). *Parcours de formation : analyse des trajectoires de formation des personnes résidant en Suisse* (FORS Working Paper Series, paper 2012-2). Lausanne : FORS.

## MORE ABOUT US

Unité de recherche pour le pilotage des systèmes pédagogiques  
<http://www.vd.ch/autorites/departements/dfjc/ursp/>

karin.bachmann@vd.ch  
sylvie.leuenberger-zanetta@vd.ch