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**Laboratoire Montpellierain
d'Economie Théorique et Appliquée**

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enhance capabilities of the long-term
unemployed ?**

Evidence based on French Data»

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DR n°2008-07

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Do subsidized work contracts enhance capabilities of the long-term unemployed ? Evidence based on French Data[#]

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6 Mai 2008

Summary

In the 1990's, France introduced different subsidised contracts to create jobs targeted at long-term unemployment. These programs were supposed to help the beneficiaries to enhance their employability. It is then interesting to use the "capabilities" approach to assess their impact. From the panel of the Research and Statistical Department of the French Ministry of labour and social affairs (Dares) concerning employment policy beneficiaries, an initial analysis explored the beneficiaries' refined functionalities and a second how they subjectively perceive their standard of living. Comparing beneficiaries' perceptions to those of a control group provided the necessary data to evaluate the real impact of these employment schemes on beneficiaries. Globally, subsidised employment contracts provide beneficiaries' with an increased number of opportunities or choices that can be achieved and thus can be said to improve their quality of life. Furthermore, the private sector employment contract to the long-term unemployed (the so-called "CIE") is generally viewed more positively than the fixed-term contract in the public sector (the so-called "CES") although the latter is viewed as more successful in allowing beneficiaries to "feel useful" and "regain self-esteem".

Résumé

Dans les années 1990, différents contrats aides ont été créés en France pour favoriser la création d'emplois destinés aux chômeurs de longue durée. Ces programmes devaient aider les bénéficiaires à améliorer leur employabilité. Il est dès lors intéressant de recourir à l'approche par les "capabilities" pour évaluer leur impact. À partir du Panel des bénéficiaires de la politique de l'emploi de la Dares (Direction de l'animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques du ministère chargé de l'emploi), deux analyses ont été réalisées selon l'approche par les « capacités ». Une première analyse considère les marges de manœuvre des bénéficiaires et une seconde les perceptions de leurs conditions de vie. Comparer les perceptions des bénéficiaires à celles d'une population témoin permet de mieux évaluer l'impact des dispositifs. Globalement, les contrats aidés améliorent les marges de manœuvre des bénéficiaires en termes de conditions de vie. Par ailleurs, le contrat initiative emploi (CIE) est mieux perçu que le contrat emploi solidarité (CES), mais ce dernier permet cependant davantage que le CIE de « se sentir utile » et de « reprendre confiance en soi ».

Keywords

Capability – Active labour market policies – Unemployment – Opportunity – well-being

Mots clés

Capability – politiques actives de l'emploi – Chômage – Opportunités – bien-être

JEL : H53, I38, J28, J68

[#] This research benefited from a financial support from Dares, Ministry of labour.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Do labour market policy programmes and more particularly subsidised contracts really assist beneficiaries in terms of social and vocational integration beyond the immediate financial gains obtained through having a monthly wage?

Results obtained in recent studies in France (Berger, Klein, 2005; Even, Klein, 2008) demonstrate that the private sector employment contract to the long-term unemployed (the so-called “CIE”) has a greater impact on vocational integration and the improvement of living standards than the fixed-term contract in the public sector (the so-called “CES”). These results are close to meta-evaluation (Kluve, 2006). This research does not, however, permit an in-depth assessment of the role played by these programmes in a beneficiary’s career path since the subsidised contract operates like a “black box”. Furthermore, labour market policy programme evaluations must be effectuated in a multidimensional context given the plurality of the objectives pursued (Meager, 1998).

In order to assess the effectiveness of these programmes, we examine the way in which they increase an individual’s sphere of opportunities and, if necessary, allow them to better exploit the potential “refined” functioning he or she can achieve whilst taking into account the constraints an individual can be subject to.

The CIE and CES constitute two particularly well-adapted programmes to this type of analysis since they commonly address job seekers with vocational integration difficulties (long-term unemployed, seniors, income support beneficiaries and disabled workers). As such, they are representative of the programmes implemented in France in the 1990’s and aimed specifically at these populations.

In this perspective, the study attempts to evaluate CIE and CES beneficiaries’ standard of living in terms of “*refined functionings*” introduced by Sen (1985) and using the “capabilities” approach. A specific examination of the way these contracts influence beneficiaries’ perception of their acquired ‘refined functioning’ achievements in terms of standard of living, calls upon data obtained from the DARES employment policy beneficiaries Panel.

In a first phase, the study analyses the CES and CIE beneficiaries perceptions of their living standards on different levels; satisfaction in relation to revenue, perception of their state of health, and more particularly, the difficulties associated with access to employment. These subjective results are then correlated with objective variables characterising each beneficiary’s situation thereby weighting those factors that could be interpreted as a particularly well-developed ‘capability’ to adapt to a precarious situation.

In order to attribute the employment scheme a role in the formation of these opinions, a second phase compares beneficiaries’ subjective views with those of a control group.

2. FOR A MULTIDIMENSIONAL EVALUATION OF EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

In a capability perspective, it can be said that the various components that contribute to an individual’s well-being are also instrumental in creating his living conditions within which employment plays a significant role in developed economies. More precisely, the capability approach introduced by Sen (1985) permits to evaluate an objective standard of living beyond the subjective well being hold by people. As he explains the characteristics of goods or

resources used by people are converted in functionings, ie in beings and doings in several dimensions of the life which are crucial for the capacity of living a life according of the personal conception of a good life a person has : these functionings are realizations in the spheres of health, education, income, participation to the life of the community, subjective well being, life expectancy notably¹.

To attain some of this functionings, employment can be seen as a necessary step, especially in developed countries where the employment status explains the capacity to get money and to have adequate shelter and social activities. In such developed countries, the goal of employment policies is to make beneficiaries return to employment but another objective is (or could be) to enhance their living conditions. In fact the employment policies has different impacts on the living conditions of the beneficiaries as some authors show (Schokkaert, Van Ootegem, 1990 ; Burchardt Le Grand, 2002) and it depends crucially not only on the kind of the employment policy (targeting, etc.) but also on the characteristics of the potential beneficiaries. The capability framework is consistent to describe such impact insofar it insists on the capacity of the potential beneficiaries- jointly with the implemented measures- to convert the public resources into realizations or functionings. More precisely the notion of “refined functionings” make a further link between the capability and the functionings in paying attention to the pair “functionings-capabilities”².

In the context of the French employment policies, subsidised contracts are more or less differentiated and targeted according to an individual’s presumed characteristics. Alongside the employers’ and employment agencies’ decisions, individual choices (personal use of resources) equally have an impact on an employment policy’s effectiveness since it depends on their capacity to convert the provided assistance to their advantage. A beneficiary’s capacity to convert resources into advantages in terms of living standards is thus a crucial question.

Traditionally, employment policies are evaluated by measuring their effectiveness through the rate of vocational reintegration following employment through a subsidized contract. One can equally expect an analysis of beneficiaries’ living conditions. In this context, it seems important to qualify the effect of these employment schemes the various ‘functionings’ an individual can achieve in terms of living conditions: what impact, for example, do the schemes have on the financial and material constraints weighing on individuals, on their capacity to best use their acquired skills at work? The question of refined functioning is a delicate one in that negative perceptions can be further reinforced by an individual’s personal problems. On the contrary, positive perceptions can occasionally reflect cases of adaptation to living conditions that nevertheless appear precarious³.

¹ The combination of these functionings form the capability a person has. For an alternative approach proposing an exhaustive list of capabilities, see Nussbaum (1999). An empirical investigation based on such a list has been driven by Anand et al (2005).

² The refinement consists to take into account the alternatives available or to focus on the process of choice itself. Therefore, the use of refined functionings should permit to better understand the constraints the people face when making choice. See Fleurbaey (2006) for the interest to focus on a refined functionings perspective rather than on a pure capability one.

³ Psychologists consider that an individual’s capacity for adaptation is a significant factor permitting an individual to live or survive when immediate constraints cannot be altered (for example: the victim of a car accident that has become paraplegic must, for example accept his or her “new” life and make the most of the remaining possibilities, such as being able to adapt to being confined to a wheelchair). The over-adaptation to constraints that can be altered, however, is a phenomenon that public policy should be capable of reducing. It is the question of “adaptive preferences” that is being questioned; a phenomenon well examined by Elster (1983) and Sen (1987).

It nevertheless remains to be proved that the results obtained concerning beneficiaries refined functionings are the direct result of their participation in the employment scheme. The Dares employment policy beneficiaries Panel, which includes a control group sub-sample of unemployed individuals who are not beneficiaries of the scheme, allows us to identify this type of effect.

A way of rendering the “capability” approach operational is to use questionnaires combining subjective questions on living conditions and objective data concerning revenue, employment, housing, health, social relationships and participation to community life⁴.

Resorting to subjective questions is considered pertinent by numerous authors in that one disposes of several questions for each dimension explored. To be effective, this approach requires responses to be collected in an ordered manner so as to build-up scales of perception or satisfaction. To this effect the Dares Panel data is to some extent limited. Firstly, the Panel data was not originally conceived to render the “capability” approach operational and therefore, amongst the dimensions relating to living conditions, certain questions relating to social relationships and the participation in community life are missing. Other dimensions are poorly documented such as housing and health. Furthermore, in the way it was conceived, some questions were only submitted to the sub-populations.

This obliges us to work on the fraction of beneficiaries having found a job two years after having terminated a subsidised work contract. In fact, these individuals are the only ones to have been asked the greater majority of the subjective perception questions, notably those concerning entry into a subsidised work contract or the individual’s employment status in 2003. Individuals eliminated by this analysis are those in the control group on the one hand and on the other, individuals who were unemployed between 2002 and 2003.

Three of the individuals’ subjective perception dimensions are presented in the survey: a general dimension that reflects the individual’s degree of optimism concerning his or her present or future situation; another relating to mental state or the level of satisfaction procured from being in work for those in employment between 2002 and 2003, and a third that deals with the role of the subsidised contract in different spheres relating to living conditions; notably the fact of having work and an income that only concerned the beneficiaries.

3. THE EMPLOYMENT POLICY IN FRANCE

The extensive development of employment policy in France dates from the end of the 1970’s, with the rapid expansion of what was known as active policies. The initiating social context was the steadily increasing unemployment rates which affected 12% of the working population in the mid 1990’s of which one out of three unemployed individuals were long-term unemployed. This is why government set-up a series of measures designed to boost job creation and fight against labour market segmentation. In addition to social security contribution exemptions introduced in 1993 for low paid jobs, different schemes emerged targeting population categories with employment access difficulties such as the young unqualified population, the long-term unemployed, the unemployed over 50’s, disabled workers and income support beneficiaries... Subsidized contracts were one of the tools

⁴ Several studies are now available using this kind of method (see for example Schokkaert, Van Ootegem, 1990).

implemented to encourage the vocational integration of these population categories (Dares, 2003).

In 1999, two million individuals were concerned by these targeted employment programmes, or in other terms, 10% of the salaried population for a total cost of 11 billion euros (0.8 % of the GDP), and in 2005 they still counted 1.3 million.

The government subsidized contracts can be divided into two categories: private sector contracts on the one hand, and public sector contracts on the other. The CIE and CES are, respectively, the two major contract types in both the aforementioned categories. The CIE, created in 1995, proposes private sector employment. The employer, more often than not a small company with less than 10 employees, receives government aid (exoneration from social security contributions and possibly a monthly subsidy amounting to between 150 and 300 euros) for the duration of the contract (in general two years and less frequently one year). If the government aid has a fixed duration, the contract, in two thirds of cases, is a permanent contract. The CES introduced in 1989 and abolished in 2005, is a fixed-term contract of three to eighteen months in the public sector. Operating on the basis of a 20 hour week, it is essentially used by associations, local authorities and public institutions (schools, hospitals...).

At their apogee in 1997, these contracts benefited 670 000 individuals at a cost of 4.3 billion euros. The numbers involved then declined progressively and the contracts were subsequently reserved for specific target populations suffering from social marginalisation. This development followed the Law of July 29th 1998 reorienting employment policies to fight against social exclusion. In 2003, these two schemes only concern 280 000 individuals and cost 1.5 billion euros. Finally, in 2005, the CES was divided into two new public sector contracts, the CAE and the 'contrat d'avenir' whereas the CIE was refocused exclusively on the registered unemployed.

4. THE DATA

This study uses specific data build-up for evaluation purpose. The Dares employment policy Panel is a periodic survey carried out by the Dares, the Research and Statistical Department of the French Ministry of labour and social affairs. Former beneficiaries of a dozen or so employment schemes were interviewed in the spring of 2002 and 2003. They entered into the programmes at the end of 1997, 1998 and mid 1999 and left in the last quarter of 1999 (Even, 2002; Even, Klein, 2008).

The Dares Panel bases its research on beneficiaries' benefiting from subsidised work contracts administrative files. The control group population is made up of individuals registered for unemployment at the ANPE (National Employment Agency). Like the employment scheme beneficiaries, the control population was registered unemployed at the time the beneficiaries were employed on one of the subsidized contracts. The control sample was selected on the basis of four variables: the period of unemployment, age, gender and educational level.

Both the employment scheme beneficiaries and the unemployed control group were interviewed using the same procedure: same date, same interviewers and the same administrative protocol constituting a wide base of common questions in the respective questionnaires. This specificity ensures that homogeneous data is obtained.

All participating individuals were systematically asked certain subjective questions on their future career paths or their revenue in 2003. The total number of individuals interviewed, including CES, CIE beneficiaries and the control group, amounted to 5556 individuals representative of 96 000 persons benefiting from subsidised work contracts that answered both waves of the survey in 2002 and 2003 and which allowed data to be collected for the period 1997 to 2003. Only the beneficiaries of CES and CIE contracts, however, were questioned on their entry into the schemes (2347 individuals). Finally, questions relating to work content in 2003 only concerned individuals, whether beneficiaries or controls, who had been in work during this period (3469 individuals).

5. THE EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

5.1 Revealing the refined functionings: methodological aspects

The analysis seeks to reveal beneficiaries' 'refined functionings' on the basis of subjective questions selected beforehand. Correlating this information with the objective data concerning beneficiaries' situations can thus suggest what factors in the beneficiaries' objective situation really explain their perceived choices (an individual's more personal characteristics, the employment scheme, family situation, the financial or material situation...).

The results obtained can be examined in the light of the phenomenon of adaptation. One can expect that individuals subject to the most constraints (respectively, the less constraints) in terms of objective standard of living are equally those that have the most unfavourable (respectively, favourable) perceptions regarding the alternative choices available to them. If the results are not those expected it could stem from the fact that certain individuals adapt themselves particularly well to their constraints or that the employment policy schemes have certain specific effects that should be investigated.

The refined functionings studied here are revealed by an analysis of factors brought to light through a series of subjective questions. The answer to these questions is obtained by a binary or multiple scale classification in order of their positive perception or importance. Here, the analysis excludes the control group in that their perception of the way these employment schemes can be used to their advantage constitutes a 'functioning' indicator available to CES and CIE contract beneficiaries only. Furthermore, it only concerns individuals that were in work between 2002 and 2003.

The specific application of this technique to Sen's "capability" approach implies evaluating the empirical validity of the following model and to interpret the different factors in terms of "functionings": $a_{ij} = \lambda_{1j}f_{i1} + \lambda_{2j}f_{i2} + \dots + \lambda_{pj}f_{ip} + \mu_{ij}$

a_{ij} indicates individuals' (i) responses to items (j); f_{i1} represents the scores of factors giving each respondent's position on "functionings" (p). The weight or coefficients of factors describing the association between responses on the items and the position of respondents on the "functionings" and μ_{ij} are the remainders.

This applied factors analysis method combines an analysis of data of the type "main components" with estimation techniques (for further details, cf. Schokkaert van Ootegem, 1990 ; Lelli, 2001 ; Kuklys, 2005).

The challenge here is to evaluate the impact of participating in a CIE or CES contract on the beneficiaries' perception of their degree of freedom relative to their standard of living. It involves bringing together the way they perceive their situations according to whether or not they participate in an employment scheme ("causal effect"). In order to achieve this, we compare individual beneficiaries' responses with those of non-beneficiaries, the control group.

Employment accessed via a subsidised contract is not a random process since the candidate is subject to a complex selection procedure involving the individual's characteristics, personal choices and those of the recruiters (Heckman, Smith, 2004; Even, Klein, 2008). Without taking this selection process into account, the simple comparison between beneficiaries' responses and those of the control group can be biased (selection bias). We have thus applied a selection bias correction using an econometric method to identify the similarities between non-beneficiaries and beneficiaries in terms of the probability of being accepted on a subsidised work contract and taking into account the observed characteristics (Heckman, Lalonde and Smith, 1999).

Measuring the impact of employment policy schemes ($T=1$) on former beneficiaries possessing the observable characteristics X requires resorting to a model as it is impossible to compare their situation (Y_1) at a given moment in time $E(Y_1|X, T=1)$ with what it would have been had they not participated in the scheme $E(Y_0|X, T=1)$. If the first scenario is observable, the second is not. We bypass this impossibility by estimating it from the situation (Y_0) of non-beneficiary individuals $E(Y_0|X, T=0)$, thereafter referred to as *controls*. We cannot, however, content ourselves with measuring the difference between situations $E(Y_1|X, T=1) - E(Y_0|X, T=0)$ since both the beneficiaries and controls are susceptible of differentiating themselves on other factors than the simple fact of having benefited or not from a subsidized contract. Acceptation onto the scheme is the result of a non-random selection process on the part of both the public employment service and employers that can, depending on the scheme, result in retaining the most employable or on the contrary, the least employable individuals. In addition, a form of self-selection can operate (Heckman, Smith, 2004).

The selection bias introduced (if one is not careful) equals $E(Y_1|X, T=1) - E(Y_0|X, T=0)$. So as to measure the real impact of the scheme on its beneficiaries, one needs to neutralise the influence of these selection biases by retaining amongst the control group, those individuals that most resemble the former beneficiaries and by estimating what they would have become if they had not been processed $E(Y_0|X, T=1)$. This estimation is possible subject to the hypothesis according to which, conditionally to the observation of a pertinent set of characteristics X , entrance onto the scheme (T) and the interest variable (Y) can be perceived as independent. In other words, one supposes that we have access to all the data that determined whether an individual participated in the subsidized contract employment scheme or not. The obtention of a quality match, and in consequence a refined selection bias correction, necessitates having an enormous quantity of data at ones disposal. The beneficiaries and the control group whose characteristics are close are thus matched, their professional situation can then be compared and the impact of the employment scheme measured.

The measure of the individuals' resemblance is carried out in two phases. The first consists in explaining the entry into a scheme by a set of observable characteristics obtained via the survey. The eligibility criteria for the three schemes are relatively close. We consider that each individual had the choice of participating in one or other of the two schemes (given the survey protocol it was impossible to extend this comparison further). We thus focus on a multi-process evaluation where each scheme is in competition with the others. So $T = \{0,1,2,\dots,K\}$ and $E(Y_k - Y_m | X, T = k, T \in \{0, K\})$. Here two treatment groups are available, one for the CIE and the second for the CES. To accomplish this, we carry out a non-ordered polynomial sequence type logistic regression.

The characteristics taken into account in this research are based on:

- demographic variables (gender, age);
- factors pertaining to the former situation at the date of entry onto the scheme (former goal, career path, employment category, length of time unemployed, steps taken to find a job, educational level, family situation, standard of living, home owner);
- information relating to specific difficulties (physical disability, discrimination related to origins, transport problems).

For each individual, we determine the probability (estimated) of entering onto a scheme $P(T = k | X)$ conditionally to the chosen observable characteristics. This probability, also known as the propensity or canonical score is a one-dimensional summary of the total set of explicating variables. Amongst the individuals having the probability of entering close to 1 we find numerous individuals who effectively entered a scheme and few individuals who did not (and inversely for a probability factor close to 0). These individuals do not have a real "counterfactual". To ensure the quality of the matching and thus the precision of the estimations, this is carried out by truncating the first and last distribution centiles.

Note that by construction, the model providing the canonical scores should not be too effective to avoid obtaining a probability of entry estimated at 0 for the non-processed and equal to 1 for the others. The result would be disconnected supports rendering impossible any comparison (Heckman, Lalonde and Smith, 1999). In the case of employment policies, and despite the inclusion of numerous hitherto unused variables, this scenario did not present itself and no restrictions explaining the entry onto the scheme was applied : our common bases keep enough individuals.

The second phase constitutes the estimation itself. If the interest variable used to give a verdict on the impact of the scheme is the professional situation at a given moment in time t , the difference between the mean situation of a beneficiary and that of the control group individual is estimated at that time. The estimation of the mean situation is based on the propensity score calculated in the previous step.

Two types of estimators are carried out here:

- The **weighted estimator** proposed in Dehejia and Wahba (2002) where one is weighting the situation of each individual from the control group according to the score calculated in the preceding phase:

$$\hat{\alpha} = \frac{1}{n_1} \left[\sum_{i \in I_1} Y_{1i} - \sum_{j \in I_0} \frac{P_j}{1 - P_j} Y_{0j} \right]$$

I_1 : the totality of individuals who benefited from the scheme; amounting to n_1

I_0 : the totality of controls mirroring the scheme beneficiaries;

Y_{1i} : the situation known by the individual i , at the time of benefiting from the scheme.

Y_{0j} : the situation known by the individual j , this control not having benefited from the scheme.

P_i is the probability that the control benefits from the scheme; the control's weighting increases with P_j . It reaches 9 when probability becomes established at 0.9, is close to 1 when this probability is close to 0,5, and tends to 0 when probability tends to 0.

- The **kernel estimator** developed by Heckman, Ichimura and Todd (1997) where each individual within the control group participates in the construction of a beneficiary's counterfactual where the importance varies according to the distance between the control's score and that of the individual in question:

$$\hat{\alpha} = \frac{1}{n_1} \sum_{i \in I_1} \left[Y_{1i} - \frac{\sum_{j \in I_0} G\left(\frac{P_j - P_i}{h_j}\right) Y_{0j}}{\sum_{j \in I_0} G\left(\frac{P_j - P_i}{h_j}\right)} \right]$$

where G is a kernel function integrating a bandwidth parameter h_j . Amongst the different possible forms, the G function used here is that of Epanechnikov:

$$G(u) = \frac{3}{4} (1 - |u|^2) \text{ if } |u| \leq 1,$$

$$G(u) = 0 \text{ otherwise,}$$

With a Silverman window h defines in the following manner:

$$h_j = 1,364 \sigma_{s_j} \eta_j^{-0,2} 15^{0,2}$$

where σ_{s_j} is the standard deviation of the canonical score within the control group,

and n_j the number of individuals constituting the control group.

The estimator's standard deviation is obtained by applying the *bootstrap* methods, by duplicating the whole estimation procedure 100 times on 100 randomly selected samples with replacement.

The confrontation with the **naive** estimator, defined as the simple deviation between the situations of individuals having been selected and the others $E(Y_1|X, T=1) - E(Y_0|X, T=0)$, allows us to appreciate the existence of a selection bias by comparing that result with those of the other estimators. It is expressed by

$$\hat{\alpha} = \frac{1}{n_1} \sum y_{1i} - \frac{1}{n_0} \sum y_{0j}$$

For each estimator, naive, weighted or kernel, the calculated estimator measures the impact α of participating in an employment scheme by the difference in the interest variable between beneficiaries and controls.

According to the literature, it would have been better to construct a differentiating estimator that measures the impact of the programme by the difference, between beneficiaries and controls, of the variation in time of the interest variable (beneficiary-control deviation in

terms of respective improvements in the rate of employment for example). By construction, this estimator eliminates the potential sources of bias that remain through time such as the geographical differences between beneficiaries and controls. It seems sounder than the simple estimator (Heckman, Ichimura and Todd, 1997). In the survey used for this research, the variables pertaining to the subjective perceptions prior to an individual's entry onto the scheme are not available.

In terms of determining the various constraints individuals are subject to, the questions dealing with subjective perceptions were not all put to the entire sample. We are also obliged to split the analysis according to the responses available for each topic. In an initial phase, and for the sample as a whole, we examine the impact of the subsidised contract on the general perceptions of standard of living, topic we find again in factor 4. We then examine and analyse the effect of the subsidised contract on perceptions relating to its content; an analysis effectuated on all CES and CIE beneficiaries but excluding the control group. Finally, the impact of subsidised contracts on the satisfaction with the job held in 2003 constitutes the third phase and is limited to beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries having been in employment between March 2002 and March 2003, the two waves of the survey.

5.2 The results

5.2.1. *Age and disability are discriminating factors*

The first factor reflects the level of **satisfaction with the role played by the CIE or CES scheme in an individual's career path**, notably the feeling of being useful, acquiring experience, the job itself and the salary. It can be interpreted as the possibilities offered by the employment scheme or how the beneficiary uses the opportunities presented by employment and income.

The second factor relates to the **state of mind or the level of satisfaction associated with the employment held** at the time of the survey: "being valued and feeling useful", "not feeling one is being exploited", "having enough time to accomplish one's tasks", "having the possibility to cooperate" and "not being subject to discrimination". This is an important factor for persons distanced from the labour market. Checcaglini (2000) thus notes that the training schemes produced a "motivating effect" on the French minimum income scheme for social integration beneficiaries (the so-called RMIs) and enabled beneficiaries to regain self-esteem.

The third factor relates to the **content of the subsidised contract (CIE or CES)**: the acquisition of skills, the nature and content of the work, the atmosphere at work and the possibility of being trained throughout the duration of the subsidised contract. This factor can thus reflect the possibilities offered in the sphere of work by the employment scheme or the way they are used by beneficiaries in the CIE or CES context.

The fourth factor deals with **refined functionings in general and concerns standard of living outside work** at the date of the survey. It translates beneficiaries' level of optimism regarding career prospects and their perception of their housing conditions and household income. It should be noted that although an individual's state of health can limit his or her ability to work, is not in itself a determining factor.

Table 1
Combined factors making up refined functioning

n = 1549	Role of the subsidised contract in the career path (factor 1)	State of mind or satisfaction associated with the job held (factor 2)	Subsidized contract content (factor 3)	General perceptions of living conditions (factor 4)
The employment scheme permitted:				
... finding a job afterwards (2002)	0,4011	-0,0621	0,28812	0,23526
... finding a job afterwards	0,48926	0,00148	0,11483	0,20553
... the acquisition of experience (2002)	0,46295	0,02468	0,23565	0,11140
... the acquisition of experience	0,54249	0,10002	0,06022	0,07708
... feeling useful, regaining self-confidence (2002)	0,46730	0,00290	0,25436	-0,09762
... feeling useful, regaining self-confidence	0,57162	0,07468	0,13469	-0,14120
... an improvement in one's financial situation (2002)	0,42782	0,09022	0,13909	0,10298
... an improvement in one's financial situation	0,54000	0,10619	0,03020	0,08912
Satisfaction with the content of the subsidised contract...				
... Atmosphere at work	0,18705	0,09030	0,47199	-0,01500
... Nature of the work	0,14304	0,09059	0,56746	0,00806
... Possibility of using one's skills	0,13783	0,09278	0,59631	-0,04309
... Possibility of training	0,17734	0,08254	0,44727	0,02305
... salary level	0,18598	0,20934	0,27517	0,02325
Perceptions :				
Of one's current professional situation (2002)	0,11051	0,07310	0,07574	0,47589
Of one's current professional situation	0,15348	0,29525	-0,08213	0,46657
Of being victim of discrimination	0,12454	0,27488	0,15252	0,05986
Of the household's financial situation in 2003	0,00090	0,22000	0,06712	0,26321
Improved housing conditions	0,03959	-0,02829	-0,04991	0,26255
Health problems or a disability	0,03108	0,11743	-0,03282	0,18234
Of one's career prospects with that employer	0,10256	0,11735	-0,08465	0,31328
Feeling that one is using one's skills to their full potential	0,09716	0,39151	0,08335	0,13253
To have enough time to accomplish tasks at work	0,02874	0,33948	0,01449	-0,00798
possibility of cooperating at work	0,05480	0,31148	0,06844	0,18778
personal contribution in one's job	0,03471	0,10154	0,03611	0,15671
pride in a work well done	0,02775	0,25663	0,02589	0,05015
impression of being recognized at one's true value	0,02244	0,62783	0,06844	0,08427
impression of doing something useful	-0,00803	0,25312	0,05499	0,07422
Feeling of being exploited	-0,00901	0,52989	0,04111	0,16229
Fear of finding oneself unemployed again	-0,14562	0,08244	0,06885	0,32870
Feeling bored at work	0,01920	0,08472	0,19787	0,24496
Variance explained (in %)	34	24	24	18

(2002): question asked in 2002, question asked in 2003 otherwise; varimax procedure.

Reading note: to interpret a variable's contribution in the explanation of a factor, the variable's coefficients must be high for one factor and low for the others. The variables retained to explain the factor are those to which the associated coefficients are above or equal to 0.2. The scheme allowed the individual to find a job afterwards (coefficient 0.40) contributes in the elaboration of the refined functioning "role of the subsidised contract" (factor 1).

Field: CIE (employment initiative contract) and CES (solidarity employment contract) beneficiaries having held a job between March 2002 and March 2003

Source: Dares, employment policy beneficiaries Panel, 2003

So as to contextualise the results obtained on the subjective perceptions of living standards, a regression analysis was effectuated on the different objective variables enabling an appreciation of CIE and CES beneficiaries' socio-economic situation (**table 2**).

Beneficiaries' satisfaction with **the role played by the employment scheme in their career path (factor 1)** is all the more significant when the employer has maintained the individual concerned in employment at the term of the subsidised contract, when the individual concerned has benefited from a high number of months in employment since January 2000,

has a driving licence and the accommodation, owned by the individual, is shared by a high number of individuals. Men aged 50 or over and couples with or without children, on the contrary, appear less satisfied. The same applies to individuals whose career path was largely dominated by full employment before entering the subsidised contract scheme. The CIE coefficient is significantly negative: CIE beneficiaries appear less satisfied with the role played by the scheme in their career paths than CES beneficiaries.

A more positive perception of **the individual's state of mind or the level of satisfaction associated with the employment held at the time of the survey (factor 2)** is positively correlated with being young and having a monthly income of over 1 200 euros⁵. At the opposite end, workers with a recognized disability (recognised by an administrative commission) are the least satisfied with their work.

Concerning the level of satisfaction with the **content of the subsidised contract (factor 3)**, few variables appear significant here. The fact of being kept on by the employer after expiration of the subsidised contract together with a high number of months in employment since January 2000, have a positive impact on satisfaction levels. This decreases for those having already benefited from a subsidised contract or training scheme before entering into this particular scheme.

Finally, the **refined functionings in general operated by beneficiaries' in terms of standard of living (factor 4)** complete the analysis. Beneficiaries are thus more optimistic regarding opportunities when they have moved home during the given period, that they have an educational level equivalent to the general upper secondary or over, that they have a higher standard of living, that they have accumulated an increasing number of jobs since January 2000 and that they are young. On the other hand, having a standard of living considered below the poverty threshold, being a recognized disabled worker, being aged over 50, having been in regular employment before holding a subsidised employment contract or living as a couple with one or more children contribute in increasing individuals' level of pessimism regarding their perceived opportunities and the freedom to choose one lifestyle as opposed to another.

Certain results can thus be surprising. Concerning beneficiaries' satisfaction with the role played by the scheme in their career paths (factor 1), it is paradoxical to note that the CIE beneficiaries are less satisfied than CES beneficiaries given that the former have a better salary and employment status than the latter. The differences in activity and type of employer between the private sector (CIE) and public sector (CES) must play a significant role; beneficiaries considering the social utility of public sector (non-commercial) jobs as being more worthwhile than jobs in the private sector.

⁵ The median income in France in 2003.

Table 2

Refined functionings and individuals' objective characteristics

N = 1549	Role of the subsidised contract in the career path (factor 1)	State of mind or satisfaction associated with the job held (factor 2)	Subsidized contract content (factor 3)	General perceptions of living conditions (factor 4)
Constant	-0.86	~	-0.86	-0.75
Employment in 2003	~	~	~	~
CIE (ref.: CES)	-0.15	~	~	~
Maintained in employment at the term of the subsidized contract	0.27	~	0.29	~
Driving licence in 2003	0.19	~	~	~
Number of rooms in the home	~	~	~	~
Number of individuals in the household	0.08	~	~	~
Number of rooms per person	~	~	~	~
Owens a means of transport in 2003	0.16	~	~	~
Has moved home during the given period	~	~	~	0.29
Home owner in 2003	~	~	~	~
Rise in standard of living * between entering scheme and 2003	~	~	~	~
Standard of living in 2003				
Under the poverty threshold in 2003	~	~	~	-0.22
From 610 to 1199 euros	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
1200 euros and over	~	0.13	~	0.20
Social category in 2003				
Freelance worker	~	~	~	~
Manager, technician, intermediary profession	~	~	~	~
Employee	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
Skilled worker	~	~	~	~
Unemployment period since 2000	0.01	~	0.01	0.01
Unemployment since January 2000	~	~	~	~
Career path before entering the scheme				
Regular employment then continuous unemployment	-0.16	~	~	-0.09
Only intermittent employment followed by unemployment	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
Only unemployment (no work)	~	~	~	~
Family situation in 2003				
Single without children	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
Single with children	~	~	~	~
Couple without children	-0.16	~	~	~
Couple with children	-0.18	~	~	-0.13
Held a subsidised contract (training scheme) before entering the employment scheme	~	~	-0.13	~
Disabled worker before entering the scheme	~	-0.22	~	-0.26
Male (ref: Female)	-0.16	~	~	~
Age on entering scheme				
under 26 years old	~	0.15	~	0.09
from 26 to 49 years old	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
50 or over	-0.29	~	~	-0.24
Educational level on entering scheme				
General upper secondary level or over	~	~	~	0.12
Vocational upper secondary level	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
No diplomas	~	~	~	~
R ²	0,137	0,0384	0,1011	0,2418

~ : not significant at 5% ; the value of R2 is hardly discriminatory in this type of analysis

* : calculated in consumer units, that is to say taking into account household income and composition

Reading note: the significant variables explain the factor in relation to reference variables. The fact of being male rather than female has a negative contribution to factor 1 reflecting beneficiaries' satisfaction as to the role played by the scheme in their career path; in other words, men are less satisfied with the scheme than women.

Field: CIE and CES beneficiaries in employment between March 2002 and March 2003

Source: Dares, employment policy beneficiaries Panel 2003

Research associating satisfaction with life in general and income level nevertheless fails to reveal a clear correlation between these two factors (Easterlin, 1995; Kahneman, Krueger, 2006). This result could equally reflect the fact that CES beneficiaries have over-adaptive preferences with regards to their employment situation. In fact, these individuals have more frequently experienced periods of unemployment after leaving the employment scheme than those having been employed in a CIE contract. The fact of having a job, even one that is low-paid and precarious can be considered as preferable to being unemployed and thus generate the feeling that one has a greater freedom of choice and that one is useful to society. This fact should not be neglected even if employment policies cannot be expected to give rise to over-adaptation phenomena. On the contrary, employment policies that create these subsidised contracts should equally take measures to fight against these over-adaptive preferences that are not always consciously resorted to by the individuals concerned.

It is, in fact, difficult to know here whether CES beneficiaries' preferences or perceptions are "adaptive" or not. It is equally difficult to identify the part played by employers and public employment agencies in the opinions expressed by the beneficiaries and increasingly so since, in this case, the analysis only deals with beneficiaries having been employed between 2002 and 2003, who are less numerous in the CES than the CIE category. Finally, this result could be biased by certain specific characteristics proper to CES beneficiaries compared with those recruited for CIE contracts or through the role played by public employment agencies in orienting individuals towards these contracts.

Determining factors in this eventual adaptation are probably partly related to beneficiaries' prior life events and career paths and partly to the impact of the scheme. In the prospect of evaluating the contracts, the specific role played by the subsidised contract in the difference of perceptions between CIE and CES beneficiaries also deserves examination.

5.2.2. Going through a CIE renders one more optimistic regarding the future

To begin with, CIE and CES beneficiaries are compared to non-beneficiaries as well as against each other (**table 3**) in terms of general subjective perception variables relating to standard of living (optimism regarding career, income, housing, transport), and that are representative of the refined functionings in general (factor 4).

CIE beneficiaries are more optimistic regarding their future prospects both in comparison with non-beneficiaries and CES beneficiaries and more frequently perceive an improvement in their housing situation than the non-beneficiaries. In comparison with the non-beneficiaries, the CES beneficiaries' do not perceive their standard of living prospects any differently in 2003.

These results are coherent with the objective situations in 2003, notably in the sense that CIE contracts appear to improve beneficiaries' career prospects (Berger, Klein, 2005). Nonetheless, given that these perceptions relate to their financial situation in 2003, there is no significant gap between CIE and CES beneficiaries even though CIE beneficiaries have a higher standard of living and that it has increased more significantly (Even, Klein, 2008). This could be an example of CES beneficiaries' "adaptive preference"; individuals able to adapt to major constraints, or that CIE beneficiaries may not be conscious of their relatively favourable situation. It could also result from the fact that other individuals interviewed imagine themselves to be in a better position without it necessarily being true.

Table 3
Effect of the employment scheme on the way standard of living is perceived in general

En %

	Gap in perception CIE / Control			Gap in perception CES / Control			Gap in perception CES / CIE		
	estimator			estimator			estimator		
	naive	kernel	weighted	naive	kernel	weighted	naive	kernel	weighted
Optimistic regarding career prospects	5,6*** (-1,6)	12*** (-1,6)	11*** (-1,9)	-8,3*** (-1,7)	-0,2 (-1,8)	-2,3 (-2,2)	-17*** (-2,1)	-11*** (-2,6)	-10*** (-2,9)
Household's real financial situation 2003	2 (-1,7)	2,8 (-1,8)	3,3 (-1,9)	-4,0** (-1,7)	1,1 (-1,9)	0,8 (-1,9)	-6,3*** (-2,1)	-1,6 (-2,6)	-0,4 (-2,5)
Housing conditions have improved	2,6* (-1,3)	4,0*** (-1,5)	4,0*** (-1,5)	-5,4*** (-1,3)	-1,2 (-1,4)	-1,2 (-1,3)	-6,7*** (-1,7)	-2,6 (-2,1)	-2 (-2,1)
Transport problems in 2003	-1,5 (-1)	0,3 (-1)	0,3 (-1)	3,2** (-1,3)	0,1 (-1,5)	-0,6 (-1,6)	4,6*** (-1,5)	0,9 (-1,9)	1,5 (-1,9)
Common base	3549 (87,1 %)			3509 (77,8 %)			1903 (69,7 %)		

*** : significant at 1% ; ** : significant at 5% ; * : significant at the 10% threshold (standard deviation)

Reading note: In 2003, CIE beneficiaries are more numerous than the controls (+11 points according to the weighted estimator, +12 according to the kernel estimator) to be optimistic regarding their professional future.

Source: Dares, employment policy beneficiaries Panel, 2003

5.2.3. The CES is more favourable to regaining self-esteem

Here, we compare the respective perceptions of CIE and CES beneficiaries having participated in a subsidized contract (**table 4**), the non-beneficiaries not being concerned by this dimension are therefore excluded.

The CES beneficiaries are less likely to consider that the subsidized contract helped them find work afterwards than the CIE beneficiaries. This is coherent with the difference in unemployment rates between the two groups in 2003 with a 30 point advantage in favour of the CIE. CES beneficiaries nevertheless more frequently declare that the contract played an important role in the acquisition of experience, feeling useful and regaining their self-esteem than the CIE beneficiaries who are nevertheless numerous in sharing this opinion. The CES thus appears more favourable to the creation of refined functionings.

These results clarify the factor analyses by valorising the “regaining self-esteem” dimension in the way the CES works, notably for beneficiaries in employment between 2002 and 2003⁶. All the more since the content of the CES is perceived in a more favourable light in terms of atmosphere at work and the nature and content of the work proposed. Beyond its role in the construction of refined functionings, the differences in satisfaction level can also be interpreted by differences in the nature of the work proposed and the type of employer between the private sector (CIE) and the non-profit making sector (CES). In fact, CES beneficiaries often hold social or cultural posts, work in associations for the protection of the environment or for local authorities whereas CIE beneficiaries work for a small private building or commercial companies.

We can nonetheless exclude the fact that the CES encourages the over-adaptive preferences evoked earlier in the individuals benefiting from the scheme. In this respect, the lack of difference in the level of satisfaction between CES and CIE beneficiaries concerning

⁶ When applied to this sub-population of beneficiaries in employment between 2002 and 2003, the model gives the same results excepting for the acquisition of experience which is not significant.

remuneration goes against the objective situations, the monthly wage in CES being over two times lower on average than the CIE. CES beneficiaries in employment between 2002 and 2003, that is to say after the end of the contract, are nonetheless significantly less satisfied with the salary received during the subsidised contract than those in a CIE, sign that the professional situation at the time of the survey had an impact on individual responses.

Table 4
Effect of the work contract on the relative perceptions regarding salary

Deviation in Perception CES / CIE	In %		
	naive	Estimator kernel	weighted
The contract enabled ...			
... to find a job	-17*** (-2,3)	-13*** (-2,8)	-12*** (-3,2)
... to acquire experience or skills	8,8*** (-3,1)	7,9*** (-2,5)	8,5*** (-3,1)
... to feel useful, to regain self-esteem	10*** (-2)	7,6*** (-2,2)	8,9*** (-2,8)
... to improve one's financial situation	0,3 (-2,6)	-2 (-2,8)	-1,1 (-3,6)
The professional situation is better in 2003 than before the contract	-4,4 (-2,4)	0,7 (-2,8)	1,4 (-2,9)
During the course of the subsidised contract, satisfied...			
... with the atmosphere at work	8,6*** (-2,1)	10,4*** (-2,7)	12,8*** (-3,1)
... the nature or content of the work	4,4** (-1,7)	6,8*** (-2)	9,4*** (-3,1)
... the possibility of using one's skills	-0,5 (-2)	0,6 (-2,2)	2,8 (-3)
... the possibility of obtaining training	2,3 (-2,3)	4,1 (-2,9)	5,7 (-3,1)
... the salary gained	-5,9** (-2,8)	-5,1 (-3,4)	-3,4 (-3,8)
Common base	1910 (69,9 %)		

***: statistically significant at 1% ; ** : statistically significant at 5% ; (standard deviation).

Reading: The CES beneficiaries are fewer than the CIE beneficiaries to claim that the employment scheme helped them find a job, by 13 points according to the kernel estimator and by 12 points according to the weighted estimator.

Field: CIE and CES beneficiaries

Source: Dares Panel of employment policy beneficiaries, 2003

5.2.4. CIE beneficiaries have a positive opinion concerning the content of the employment held in 2003

Finally, the third comparison deals with perceptions relative to the job held between March 2002 and March 2003 (**table 5**). Two aggregated indicators were created to detect on the one hand those individuals who consider the job held negatively on at least one of the items taken into account in the survey, and on the other, individuals who only retained the positive aspects.

In this context, CIE beneficiaries have a more positive opinion regarding job content than the non-beneficiaries in the same situation: they are considerably fewer to express at least one negative aspect and more frequently consider the job in an entirely positive manner. More particularly, CIE beneficiaries are significantly fewer to consider the jobs held between 2002 and 2003 as being either boring or downgrading.

Table 5
Effect of the scheme on perceptions relating to the job held in 2003

En %

	Difference in perception CIE / Controls			Difference in perception CES / Controls			Difference in perception CES / CIE		
	estimator			estimator			estimator		
	naive	kernel	weighted	naive	kernel	weighted	naive	kernel	weighted
The job contains at least one negative aspect	-17***	-11*	-15**	0	10**	-1,7	17**	21***	20**
	-4,9	-5,9	-6,5	-4,7	-4,7	-6,2	-7,1	-8,1	-8,6
Including:									
<i>Feeling bored at work</i>	-5,4***	-4,8**	-5,1**	-0,9	0,3	-0,3	3,6	2,4	4,2
	-2	-2,4	-2,5	-2,2	-2,5	-2,8	-2,1	-3,2	-3,1
<i>Fear of being unemployed</i>	-5,3**	-3,8	-3,6	5,9**	2,8	2,4	13***	8,5**	11***
	-1,6	-2,3	-2,3	-2,4	-2,7	-2,9	-2,8	-3,4	-3,6
<i>Feeling of being exploited</i>	-2,3	-1,7	-2,2	1,7	3,3	0,6	3,1	3,8	3,9
	-2,2	-2,6	-2,7	-2,1	-2,2	-2,6	-3	-3,4	-3,4
<i>Feeling of being used below one's skills level</i>	-5,6***	-5,7***	-5,7***	-4,4**	-2,4	-3,3	0,7	2	2,7
	-2	-2,2	-2,3	-2,1	-2,2	-2,5	-2,3	-2,8	-2,8
The job contains at least one positive aspect and no negative points	7,1***	6,1***	6,1***	-1,8	-0,1	0	-7,8***	-5,1	-4,2
	-1,6	-2	-2,1	-1,8	-1,9	-2	-2,4	-2,8	-2,8
Including:									
<i>Being proud of one's work</i>	0	0	0,3	1,9***	1,5*	0,3	-17***	-11***	-10***
	-0,8	-0,9	-1,8	-0,7	-0,8	-2,3	-2,1	-2,6	-2,9
<i>Impression of being recognized at one's full value</i>	3,5	3,7	3,8	8,2***	6,8***	5,8**	5,7**	7,4**	10***
	-1,9	-2,2	-2,4	-2,3	-2,3	-2,7	-2,6	-3,6	-4
<i>Impression of being useful</i>	-0,2	-0,1	0,1	3,8**	4,1**	3,1	2,5	3,6	8,0**
	-1,3	-1,4	-2,1	-1,5	-1,8	-2,8	-1,7	-2,3	-3,8
<i>Having enough time to accomplish tasks assigned at work</i>	-1,1	0	0,3	1,6	1,9	0,9	3	3,4	7,4**
	-1,4	-1,8	-2,2	-1,8	-1,9	-2,6	-2,1	-2,7	-3,6
<i>Possibility of cooperating at work</i>	0,9	2,1	2,3	-1,9	0,2	-0,7	-1,6	-0,8	3,4
	-1,5	-1,7	-2,1	-2,2	-2,3	-3,3	-2,2	-2,4	-3,6
<i>Is totally invested in one's work</i>	0,3	0	0,2	2,3	3	2,1	0,6	1,4	4,4
	-1,9	-2,1	-2,4	-2,6	-2,7	-3,2	-2,9	-3,2	-3,8
Common base	2426 (90,1 %)			2167 (82,8 %)			1309 (78,8 %)		

*** : statistically significant at 1% ; ** : statistically significant at 5% ; * : statistically significant at the 10% threshold (standard deviation)

Reading: The CIE beneficiaries are fewer than the control group (by 15 points for the weighted estimator and 11 points for the kernel estimator) to express negative opinions relative to the job held in 2003.

Field: beneficiaries and control in employment between March 2002 and March 2003

Source: Dares, Panel of employment policy beneficiaries 2003

These results are coherent with the difference in the objective characteristics of the jobs held between 2002 and 2003 (Even, Klein, 2008); the CIE beneficiaries are better paid and more often benefit from a CDI (permanent contract) than the non-beneficiaries.

Concerning the CES beneficiaries having held a job between 2002 and 2003, perceptions are mitigated. They are closer to those of the non-beneficiaries in the same situation. They are more frequently dissatisfied with the job content than the CIE beneficiaries through the fact that they are more fearful of finding themselves, once again, unemployed. In addition, they more rarely declare being proud of their work. These results are coherent with their less frequent access to permanent contracts and skilled work.

CES beneficiaries nevertheless more readily have the impression they are recognised for their true worth than both the non-beneficiaries and the CIE beneficiaries. They are equally more numerous to declare feeling useful in their work than those having effectuated a CIE. This is an additional sign that subsidised contracts contribute in consolidating beneficiaries' refined

functionings. It could possibly be an indication of the fact that the jobs held between 2002 and 2003 following the CES are more often than not in the non-profit making sector and related to social concerns or inversely, could it not signify the confinement in certain types of employment through the modification of adaptive preferences or a stigmatising effect created by private sector employers?

6. CONCLUSION

An analysis of the refined functionings demonstrated by CIE and CES beneficiaries falls within the framework of a multidimensional evaluation of employment policies that includes vocational integration, interest in the job offered and equally standard of living. The results indicate that the said beneficiaries consider the job held to have increased their well-being and that they are far from considering themselves as “victims”. The employment schemes have thus contributed to beneficiaries’ welfare with the exception of the over 50 age group and disabled workers.

The CIE/CES comparison, taking into account the initially observed characteristics, reveals that in terms of standard of living, beneficiaries perceive the CIE more positively than the CES. On the other hand, in terms of enabling the beneficiary to feel useful and regain self-esteem, the CES is viewed more positively than the CIE. The possibility that some CES beneficiaries reveal “adaptive preferences” should nevertheless not be excluded. In this case, certain aspects of the subsidized contract are subjectively considered satisfying despite the less favourable objective conditions; that is to say, having a job is preferable to not having one whatever the associated conditions.

Finally, analysing employment policies using the “capabilities” approach is interesting in that it takes into account the beneficiaries’ subjective view of their ‘refined functioning’ in terms of standard of living. The conversion of this approach into “capabilities” on the basis of empirical data is nevertheless far from established given that the surveys are not constituted with this aim in mind. Yet, the “capabilities” approach defined by Sen can nevertheless contribute in supplying objectives for public action. By emphasizing the differentiated possibilities that individuals dispose of in using collective resources; to convert them into advantages for example, it provides concrete orientations for future reforms. In this respect, the fact that employment policies are increasingly tailored to individual needs is a move in the right direction, notably in the sense that their aim is to accompany beneficiaries throughout the duration of the subsidized contract and to develop the various means designed to assist them (personal appraisal, training...). Subject to complementary evaluations concerning the new contracts, the initiative for social cohesion should be oriented in this direction more and more.

In this research, the analysis of CIE and CES beneficiaries’ refined functioning and that comparing subjective perceptions of individuals’ standard of living against the answers collected from a control group were effectuated separately whereas they would merit being carried out simultaneously. This implies survey questionnaires with an extended field of dimensions enabling a more in-depth study of individuals’ subjective perceptions of their standard of living. It would also necessitate interrogating the control group on the totality of these dimensions.

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Annex1

Questions relative to subjective perceptions retained in the analysis

Several questions used in the DARES beneficiaries' Panel are exploited. Certain were asked to all individuals interviewed, most are specific to certain dimensions; either the job held between 2002 and 2003, or the participation in a subsidized work contract and are only available for the individuals concerned.

□ General subjective perceptions

- "In your opinion, what career prospects will your current job offer over the next two years?" 1. You will improve your position within this same company (promotion/more stable contract) / 2. You will have the same job or an equivalent job within the same company / 3. You hope to find a job elsewhere / 4. You will probably return to being unemployed / 5. Other / 6. DK. For individuals without a job at the time of the survey, the question is: "Do you think this period of unemployment will end fairly quickly?" which determines the individual's degree of optimism concerning future career prospects.

- "During the course of your professional career, whether during an interview, in a job or training scheme, do you consider yourself as having been the victim of discrimination at least once?" 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK.

- "In terms of your household, do you consider that financially": 1. You are well-off / 2. You can manage / 3. It's a bit tight; one has to be careful / 4. You find it difficult to manage / 5. You are unable to manage without creating debts / 6. DK.

- "Does your health problem or disability limit the type of job/or quality of the work you can furnish?" 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK. Question asked to individuals having replied positively to the question "Do you have a health problem or a disability?".

- "In terms of your accommodation, do you consider that your current living conditions...: 1. have improved / 2. have remained the same / 3. have deteriorated / 4. DK. Question asked to individuals having moved during the period 1997 - 2003.

- "Do you have any problems with transport or travelling that makes it difficult for you to get to work?" 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK. For individuals looking for work or on a training scheme at the date of the survey, the question is oriented towards the search for a job or difficulties travelling to the training site.

□ Subjective perceptions related to the subsidized contract

- "In your opinion, did the CIE (CES) contract enable you...
to find a job afterwards: 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK
to acquire skills or work experience: 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK
to feel useful, regain self-esteem: 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK
to improve your financial situation: 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

- "Finally, in comparison with your professional situation on entering the CIE (CES), do you consider your current professional situation to be..." 1. better / 2. identical / 3. worse / 4. DK

Previous questions were asked in both waves of the survey; in March 2002 as well as March 2003.

- "Concerning your CIE (CES) contract, would you say you were satisfied with...
... The atmosphere at work": 1. satisfied / 2. Dissatisfied / 3. DK
... The nature and content of the work proposed": 1. satisfied / 2. Dissatisfied / 3. DK
... The possibility of using your skills": 1. satisfied / 2. Dissatisfied / 3. DK
... The opportunities for training or improvement": 1. satisfied / 2. Dissatisfied / 3. DK
... Your salary: 1. satisfied / 2. Dissatisfied / 3. DK

□ Subjective perceptions relating to the job held between March 2002 and March 2003

- Concerning your current job, do you consider being employed... 1. at your skills level / 2. below your skills level / 3. above your skills level / 4. DK.

- "In your current job, to carry out your work correctly, do you generally have...

... Enough time": 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

... The possibility of cooperation (information exchanges, mutual assistance) » : 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

- "In the exercise of your current job, do you consider that you invest yourself... 1. a great deal / 2. sufficiently / 3. little / 4. DK

- "In your current job, would you say you occasionally...

... Feel pride in a job well done: 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

... Have the impression that you are recognized for your true worth" 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

... Have the impression of doing something useful for others..." 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

... Feel you are being exploited" 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

... Feel afraid you will find yourself unemployed once again" 1. Yes / 2. No / 3. DK

- "And do you find yourself feeling bored at work? 1. Yes, all the time / 2. Yes, often / 3. Yes, sometimes / 4. No, rarely / 5. No, never / 6. DK

These questions were put in the past tense for individuals having left their job at the time of the survey.

Certain questions that were not included in the survey questionnaire would have enabled a more exhaustive standard of living analysis notably by integrating the social relations dimension.

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¹ La liste intégrale des Documents de Travail du LAMETA parus depuis 1997 est disponible sur le site internet : <http://www.lameta.univ-montp1.fr>

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