

## **The paths of recognition of acquired professional experience for people with disabilities : the device Différent et Compétent vector of social participation?**

The recognition of prior learning experience (RAE : Reconnaissance des acquis de l'expérience) for people with disabilities is an innovative practice that is at the crossroads of developments in lifelong learning and protected work at the international level. In France, the association Différent et Compétent Réseau has developed an RAE system with training engineering focused on the accessibility of common law job standards and methods for recognising the professional skills of workers in care and work assistance establishments (ESAT) and young people in training in medical and educational institutes (IME). To date, 19,000 people with disabilities have been awarded a certificate of competence thanks to this system.

This collaborative research between a university team from the *Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche normand en éducation et formation* (CIRNEF EA 7454) and the association Différent et Compétent Réseau aims to shed light on the effects of RAE in terms of workers' social participation.

The methodology consists of several components : a documentary study, an analysis of training completion reports, an online questionnaire with carers, individual interviews with award-winning workers, a focus group with professionals accompanying RAE. In addition to the statistical analysis of the questionnaire responses, we mainly used the continuous thematic analysis of the interviews (Blanchet and Gotman, 1992) based on the quantitative processing of textual data using « Iramuteq » software for the corpus of reflexive notes.

Our results highlight the characteristics of the system, which is based on inclusive values and its engineering, which promotes joint commitment : of the candidate worker, of his support person and of the establishment through his management. It thus allows each worker to integrate RAE into a professionalization process and, beyond that, to create a sense of competence that extends into the daily family and social life of workers with disabilities. This professionalization movement also affects carers and leads to a collective re-evaluation of the place of protected work in its articulation with ordinary employment in companies.