

SOCIAL INNOVATION EMPOWERING THE YOUNG FOR THE COMMON GOOD



## **FRANCE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REPORT**

CEREQ BORDEAUX

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**WORK PACKAGE 4:  
ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORKS**

**TASK 4.1:  
ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORKS AND POLICIES AND STRATEGIES  
OF LOCAL ACTORS**

**DEL. 4.1:  
REPORT: LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS IN YOUTH POLICIES IN EUROPE**

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### 1. ABSTRACT

The first section of this report is dedicated to the presentation of our research topic – early school leaving in average cities – and its relevancy. Also discussed, the choice to investigate a semi-rural urban area in southwest France, namely the city of Agen. In methodological terms, this report relies on three articulated methodologies: documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews (meso and micro level) and an online questionnaire to stakeholders. These methodological tools are primarily used to analyze three traditional dimensions of policy analysis: the range of involved actors and their systemic organization, the policy tools and their nature (participatory, innovative) and finally the cognitive dimension of these policies through a targeted questioning on the Information Basis of Judgment in Justice supporting the programs and actors' functionings. Also, this methodological frame expects to grasp, beyond the official texts and closer to the daily practices of the actors, what frames the actor's interactions and intervention.

We also provide evidence that the relations between local stakeholders are effective and top-down institutionalized. Enshrined in legal provision, the local platforms for monitoring and supporting dropouts (PSAD) provide a new if not innovative basis for this network organization. If local initiatives exist such as the CAI (Commission for integration assistance), the bottom-up strategies are complementary and not competitive with centrally driven initiatives. Local policies show little emancipation from the national level, which itself refers to the EU directives.

The common normative framework turns out to be the development of fair institutions before ensuring the capabilities of individuals. Justice here is understood as resulting from the convergence of economic development and social cohesion through an appropriate institutional support. From a normative point of view, and on the basis of the analysis performed here, the capability approach in our opinion deserves further dissemination into the sphere of ESL (Early School Leaving) French public policies. Our results reinforce the normative belief that a better account of the living conditions of people and what they may value would lead to greater use of programs that too often face considerable non take-up.

### 2. INTRODUCTION

As presented earlier in our WP3 report, early school leaving (ESL) constitutes in France as elsewhere one of the highest factors leading to social vulnerability. The data analyzed here largely confirms this assumption. If the definition of ESL by the EU refers to young people aged 18 to 24 who are no longer studying and have not successfully completed secondary education, the phenomenon is also defined as *"a process leading a young person in initial education to leave the education system before completing a degree"*<sup>1</sup>.

We will primarily focus on the population of 'already dropped-out' but also on youngsters still at school but identified (on the basis of a specified IBJJ) as at risk of dropping out.

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<sup>1</sup> French ministry of Education, <http://www.education.gouv.fr>.

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Similarly, we will also expand our definition in accordance with the EU definition since the French public authorities are legally bound to *“suivre les jeunes de 16 à 18 ans, sans diplôme et sans emploi, de façon à ce qu'aucun d'entre eux ne soit laissé hors de tout système de formation, d'insertion ou d'accompagnement vers l'emploi”*<sup>2</sup>. In France, projections of school-leaving and recruitment needs revealed an increased demand for L, M and D levels by 2015. By the same time, early school leavers with only a first professional degree (French CAP-BEP) or with no degree at all will continue to face a very difficult situation. Released data for Level VI (equivalent to CITE 2 but including entries in apprenticeship) by the French ministry of education (DEPP) emphasizes *“le fort risque de disparition de ce niveau de recrutement en dehors du recrutement d'apprentis”*<sup>3</sup>. A prospective insight from the French 'Commissariat à la Prospective' predicts an unemployment rate of 56% by 2015 for these youngsters.

A significant part of this report is devoted to the analysis of support network for dropouts. By network we will intend here the way collective action is organized for the management of a phenomenon (ESL) and organization of support action to prevent at risk people from falling<sup>4</sup>.

Support networks constitute our targeted system of actors for ESL and youth at risk of dropping out in particular in the Agen area. In this urban area of an average French city, we will focus especially on two zones: Montanou neighborhoods and the city center, both identified as a priority areas for urban policy (politique de la ville)<sup>5</sup>. Considered alone as the synthesis of different forms of social problems, the unique indicator used for the definition of these areas is the concentration of low-income population. This represents a drastic change with regards to the previous design of this policy where these districts were defined by multiple criterias: proportion of youth, unemployment rate, share of social housing, etc. Highlighting this point is important for the analysis and forthcoming research.

Following this new definition, inhabitants with scores below 60% of the national median income (18,750 euros per year) or 11,250 euros are identified as belonging to a urban policy eligible programs aiming at preventing school dropout (PRE, program of school success). If the specificity of each territory should be taken into account, it is important to notice here that an external threshold legally defines urban poverty zones without taking into account the diversity of inhabitants. All individual situations are here managed through a very narrowed IJJ. At this legal starting point of our research on the local support networks, no adaptation to the individual's characteristics and situation is at stake and from the viewpoint of capabilities, it is already a restriction, an institutional constraint.

The choice not to focus on one single program or measure here intends to take, as a starting

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<sup>2</sup> “Follow youngsters aged 16 to 18 without diploma or job so that none of them be left out of the existing systems of training, social and professional integration” <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid55632/la-lutte-contre-le-decrochage-scolaire.html>

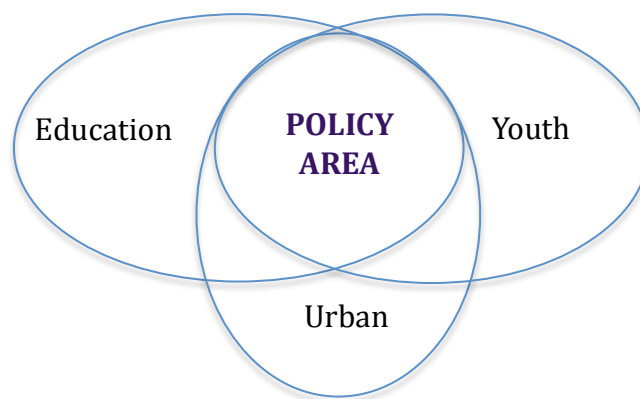
<sup>3</sup> “the high risk of loss of this level of recruitment apart from the recruitment of apprentices”.

<sup>4</sup> Significantly in French language, dropping out has several meanings. Indeed, “décrocher” means both unhook (from a stand), fall down (in aviation) and drop out (from school). So in France to begin with the etymological sense, network whose aim is to support kids from dropping out means at first prevent them from falling (into poverty and social desaffiliation).

<sup>5</sup> The “politique de la ville” is a policy of “urban cohesion and solidarity, national and local, to disadvantaged neighborhoods and their residents”. Initiated by the government during the 70s, this policy has been recently reformed by the City and Urban Cohesion Planning Act (cf. French WP3 report of the SocIEty Project).

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point, the public offer proposed to a category of vulnerable youth: the dropouts. Therefore, we investigated the relationships between the various actors of **educational policy**: micro high school, the Local Platforms (PSAD) network including the CIO (Center for Information and Guidance) and MLDS (Mission to fight against ESL); and of **urban policy**: the Program for success in education (PRE), and the structure that supports young people between 16 and 25 years facing a risk social exclusion: the Mission Locale (Local mission for youth).



Working on a policy area implies working on a bouquet of rights and services instead than a single program. In a CA perspective, it seems more compliant to start from what the beneficiaries are offered. Its raises some interesting policy analysis questions: how far is an intersectorial policy possible in the same policy area? What kind of networking is at stake between a large set of stakeholders? How dense and accurate? It also allows a more precise idea of the non take-up issues by comparing its importance in several programs of the same policy area (here ESL).

### 3. METHODS

From a methodological point of view, we aim at departing from the traditional scheme opposing quantitative and qualitative approaches. Hence, our analysis does not freeze into a rigid explanatory model but is enriched by interacting methods. Indeed, data from semi-structured interviews conducted with regional decision-makers, local practitioners and case-managers is confronted to the results of a questionnaire sent to the staff of these structures.

This crosscutting technique is particularly appropriate here because our aim in this network analysis is to understand public policy as resulting from the interaction of a large range of actors. The questionnaire will help us identify what relationships exist (at time T) while semi-structured interviews allow us to analyze their content, and grasp the structure of interactions and transformations (in the diachronic dimension).

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Indeed, the semi-structured interview allows political science and specifically here public policy analysis to “decode the institutional history in order to grasp the structuring logics<sup>6</sup> “. By this technique we understand the "relation developed by the actor and his perceptions with the institution he belongs to and of which he handles the discourse"<sup>7</sup> or "between this actor and the profession from which he is a ‘typical’ representative"<sup>8</sup>. Thus, as Raymond Quivy and Luc Van Campenhoudt point out, the tool is suitable for analyzing the meaning given by the actors to their practices and the events, as well as the analysis of postures and issues related to a particular problem. It is finally a powerful mean to capture the normative dimension of an actor’s discourse and by this grasp the components of their IBJJ. For each program/organization studied (Local Mission for youth, Micro High School, MLDS, CIO, PRE), we conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with regional and territorial stakeholders and the different institutions involved in their implementation. The interviews are structured by the structure of this report and are organized with the following sequence: making a point on the action under study, its governance and its impact on their practice, present their definition of the target audience (including the presence or absence of voice and treatment of non-use) and investigate the social innovation, participation and IBJJ issues. A total of 18 interviews were conducted:

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<sup>6</sup> Bongrand and Laborier, 2005 (our translation).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

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### Conducted interviews by programs and territorial levels

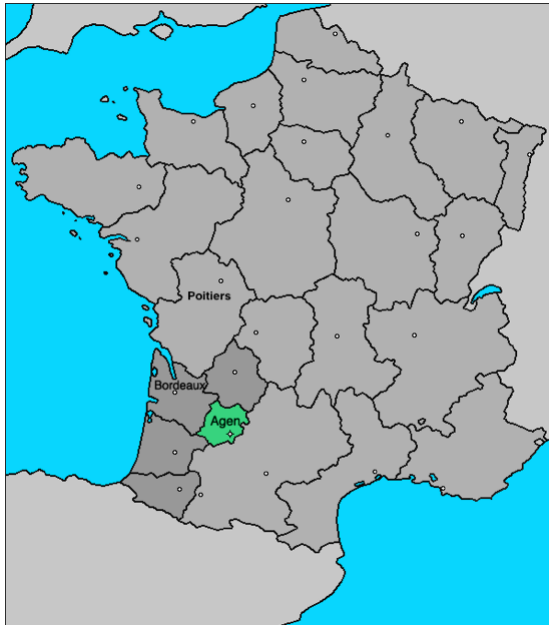
Elements of the bouquet	REGIONAL/ACADEMIQUE (Aquitaine)		DEPARTEMENTAL (Lot et Garonne)		LOCAL* (Agen)	
	Local mission for youth	Regional association of local missions for youth	1 regional manager 1 assistant manager	-		Local mission
Micro high school	Ministry of Education, Rectorat of Bordeaux (SAIO MLDS)  Regional Council	2 regional managers	Ministry of Education "Inspection académique"	1 inspector "académique"	Micro lycée	1 principal 1 head of works 1 teacher managing the program 1 teaching assistant
MLDS		1 manager for ESL - Education direction			MLDS	1 coordinator
CIO					CIO	1 director
Micro lycée	-	-	-	-	Institut national du développement locale (INDL)	1 project officer
PRE	Pays et Quartiers d'Aquitaine	1 regional coordinator	-	-	PRE Agen	1 manager 1 assistant

In addition, a questionnaire was sent to the staff of these various local structures of the policy bouquet. The targeted actors were those in direct or indirect contact with dropouts. Of the 38 people contacted, 22 responded (58%, but the size of the parent population is too low to calculate a significant confidence interval). The main objective was to determine the existence and nature of interactions between the local actors institutionally involved in fight against early school leaving with the other actors they might designate (in order not to impose a preset definition of the network). It also aimed to a lesser extent, to unpack their professional practices and some elements of their cognitive background in order to feed the IBJJ section.

This questionnaire is divided into four parts:

- The first part identifies the structure to which the actor belongs, his employment and his statutory position (seniority in the structure).
- The second part focuses on the relationships within the structures of the same institutional area.
- The third section entitled "Relationship with other structures" seeks to capture the relation of the actor with different local structures and programs involved in the fight against school dropout on the Agen territory. It also seeks to know and understand the design and delivery of local intervention. The tracking of dropouts among the various structures is questioned.
- The last section "Programs and implementation" focuses on the judgment of these professional on the ways the issue of ESL is addressed on the Agen territory but also on their own practices. A set of final questions also relates to the voice (nature of youth participation beneficiaries for these programs) and what they think should be done to make the fight against ESL more efficient at their local level.

#### 4. DESCRIPTION OF AREA IN RELATION TO INEQUALITY/DISADVANTAGED YOUTH



***Agen, capital city of the 16<sup>th</sup> poorest among the 101 French “département”***

Agen, the Lot et Garonne Prefecture (French administrative division), has more than 33,600 inhabitants, 5,219 (15.5%) of them living in a Deprived Urban Zone (ZUS Montanou and South-East Zone) and 4722 in New Priority Area (QSP) located in the city centre.

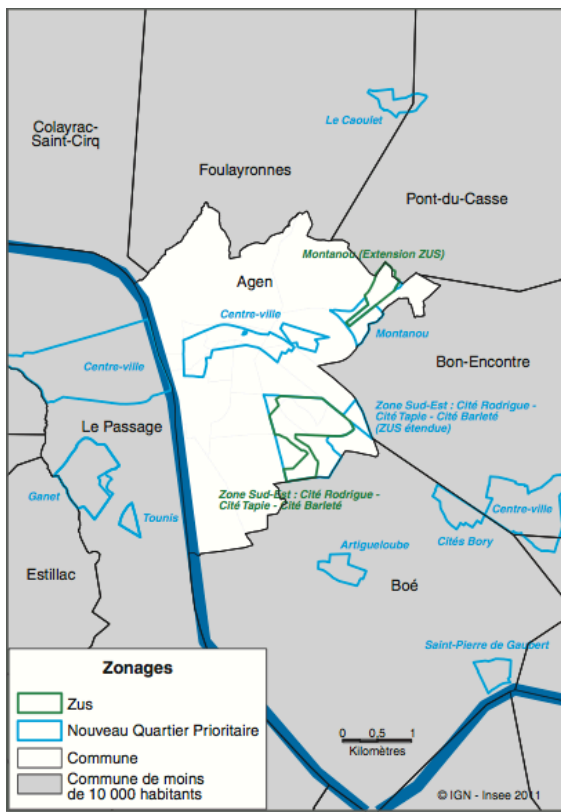
These data highlight the relative deprivation of this territory. It is the 16th poorest region in France.

In educational terms, although considered as an “average” zone by the Ministry of Education, two indicators are questioning:

- The enrollment rate for 15-17 year olds is well below the national average (-3.3 points) and regional (-3.4 point).
- The share of low skilled youngsters or with no qualification aged 15 and older is slightly above the national average (0.7 points) but significantly higher than the regional average (2.6 points).

	France	Aquitaine	Agen
Enrollment rates for 15-17 year olds in 2007 (en %)	96	95,9	92,7
The share of low skilled youngsters or with no qualification aged 15 and older	34,8	32,7	35,3

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### ▪ *Montanou et city center: two deprived neighborhoods*

Disparities are also to be considered inside the urban area. Agen, with its deprived priority zones (ZUS and QSP) invites to focus our case study on two distinct areas: the Montanou Area and the New Priority Area of the city centre.

The recent reform of the urban policy (June 2014) has restricted the number of priority zones. However, this new territorial design keeps these two areas in priority neighborhoods, yet corroborating our initial choice. These areas, in different ways, are actually experiencing serious difficulties justifying that hitherto Montanou was ranked in sensitive urban zones (ZUS), a subset of the larger set of priority neighborhoods (QP) in which was also part the city center, with the same benefit from enhanced support.

Name of the area	Household population (2009)	Household's median income (2009)	Ratio of low income population (2009)	Youth indicator (2009)	Proportion of youth adults without any qualification (2007)	Single parents with children (2009)	Proportion of tenancy (2009)	Proportion of households concerned by unemployment benefit (2009)
<b>Agen's urban unit</b>	76 434	17 825	9,8	1,03	45,4	4,2	48,2	16
<b>Montanou</b>	1 488	5 529	51,6	3,86	78	7,2	94,3	30,9
<b>Centre-ville</b>	4 722	13 369	21,5	1	46,7	5,7	77,3	18,5

In these two areas, there is an overrepresentation of long term unemployed, recipients of social security benefits, of the single parents and family support allowance. On the ZUS of Montanou, 65% of lone parent families are composed of at least three children. These indicators highlight the cumulative economic weaknesses; they also point the risk of school



failure and dropout in these areas since socio-economic factors are likely to be associated with this major risk.

### ▪ The dropouts an uncertain public action category

From our interviews with regional, departmental and local actors, it appears difficult to identify on the one hand young people that are truly dropouts,

*"on nous a annoncé à titre départemental six cents décrocheurs et en « enquêtant » sur six cents jeunes on voit que quatre-vingt pourcents d'entre eux sont soit en situation de formation à nouveau et que c'est juste un problème de logiciel qui n'a pas fonctionné"<sup>9</sup> (Inspection d'Académie - IA 47), and on the other hand to identify them precisely "on a à côté de ça des jeunes gens décrocheurs à côté desquels on passe"<sup>10</sup> (IA 47).*

This identification difficulty also highlights an unstable definition of the term "dropout" inside the educational system as noticed by a manager:

*"on a aussi des jeunes qui sont toujours à l'effectif des établissements et qui sont absentéistes, ceux-là même sont décrocheurs"<sup>11</sup> (MLDS), but still "ils ne sont pas repérés en termes de statistiques"<sup>12</sup> (ibid.).*

Thus, depending on the actors, young dropouts may be:

- Undetected
- Detected
- Pupils still at school

Even though there is an official definition given by the Ministry of Education<sup>13</sup> (MEN) there is still some definition uncertainties. Whatever the definition, for this first circle of actors, the means of intervention to address the dropout remain underestimated:

*"chaque année on manque cruellement de places, cependant on offre le nombre de places en fonction du budget qui nous est alloué "<sup>14</sup>(IA 47).*

Hence, our first task is to stabilize the definition of the population under study for WP5. Presumably, we will investigate youth falling under the official definition of the ministry (see above) and enjoying the common bouquet of rights and services.

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<sup>9</sup> "We were told that in our 'département' there were six hundred dropouts and after investigating on this supposed six hundred one shows that eighty percent of them are either in training again and it's just a software problem that did not work "(IA 47); secondly, to identify them all, "was beside that young people dropouts beside which we pass

<sup>10</sup> "Besides we have young dropouts that we are missing to get in touch with" (IA 47)

<sup>11</sup> "We also have young people who are always on the number of establishments and are absentee, even those are dropouts" (MLDS)

<sup>12</sup> « They are not identified as dropouts in statistical terms » (MLDS).

<sup>13</sup> Articles L. 313-7 and L. 313-8 of the Code of Education, gives a definition of "youth over sixteen years who left without educational level corresponding to obtain either the general degree or a professional degree recorded in the national directory of professional certifications and classified as Level IV or V of the Interministerial nomenclature levels of training

<sup>14</sup> "Every year we desperately lack places in schools, however we provide the number of places depending on the budget that is allocated to us"

### **What bouquet of rights and services? 3 public action sectors at stake**

Through the idea of a bouquet of public offer, we have chosen to analyze the public action starting from the beneficiaries' point of view and the actors involved in the various sequences of its implementation. By so doing, our aim is to escape from a program-driven analysis. This bouquet has to be studied under its multiple dimensions. The offer under study is made to young people at school or dropped out either before or after 16 years (age of compulsory education) and involves at least three areas of public policy:

- The Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research
- The Ministry of Women's Rights, the City, Youth and Sports
- The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Dialogue

In this particular field of public action, and in relation to uncertainty in its definition, it is difficult to provide an exhaustive list of actions aiming at reducing ESL. The public offer may be analyzed according to

- Age/process: youngsters under compulsory school still at school are placed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, outside of the school, they "belong" to the urban policies. The objective is dropout prevention.
- Age/outcomes of the process: Addressing the dropouts after the age of compulsory school (over 16 years). The aim is to remedy this situation; therefore they are called in France remedial actions. The offer considered may belong to one or the other pole (prevention - remediation), or both of them.

The following actions were chosen also because they imply an horizontal partnership among stakeholders.

- PRE: State / City
- Micro high school, MLDS: State / Regional council
- Local mission for youth: State/Regional council/City

Around the PREVENTION – REMEDIATION dimensions, the bouquet of public offer surveyed is structured as follows:

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### The public offer under study

Program and welcoming capacity	PREVENTION: Actions on the process of ESL					REMEDATION: Actions on the result of ESL				
	Prevention for youngsters under compulsory school	Ministry and legal provision	Access limitation	Actors	Partners	Remediation for youngsters after compulsory school	Ministry and legal provision	Access limitation	Actors	Partners
<p><b>Programme de réussite éducative (PRE) Agen</b></p> <p><u>Capacity: approx.. 100 youngsters/year</u></p>	<p>Accompanying pupils in the first and second degree and their families in the educational, extracurricular, cultural, social or health.</p>	<p>Ministry of Women's Rights, the City, Youth and Sports</p> <p>January 18<sup>th</sup> 2005 Act on social cohesion (article 128).</p> <p>Oriented towards psychological help in Agen</p>	<p>For children 2-16 years old located in sensitive urban areas, or attending a school within the educational priority: Network Educational Success (RRS)</p>	<p><u>PRE team:</u></p> <p>1 referee for families (part-time)</p> <p>1 referee for following (part time)</p> <p>1 coordinator (full time)</p>	<p><u>Administrative support:</u> City (CCAS)</p> <p><u>Financial support:</u> State – Ministry of education – City (CCAS)</p> <p><u>Interdisciplinary supporting team:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PRE team (3 persons)</li> <li>- Socio-medical center manager (2)</li> <li>- psychologists (2) and psychiatrists of the pedagogical-medical center</li> <li>- RRS teacher)</li> <li>- Counselor in social and familial economy (2)</li> <li>- Secondary school social worker</li> <li>- Educator</li> </ul> <p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local social workers</li> <li>- teachers</li> <li>- school psychologists</li> </ul>					

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					scolaires - RASÉD <sup>1</sup>					
<b>MICRO LYCEE</b> (1 <sup>er</sup> micro high school in vocational education in France) <u>10 à 15 pupils/year</u>						2 class sizes One mentor per youth welcomed  Education adapted to the profiles of "students"	Ministry of education	Formally: none but in fact income and housing related	Head teacher Head of works MLDS 10 teachers 1 assistant teacher	Regional council INDL (Local development national institute - informal partnership)
<b>Mission de lutte contre le décrochage scolaire (MLDS – Mission against ESL)<sup>2</sup></b> <u>Approx.. 500 youngsters on 4500 to 7000 identified dropouts (region Aquitaine)</u>	Preventing the early school leaving. This objective is carried out locally by the Groupe de Prévention du Décrochage Scolaire (GPDS – Early school leaving prevention group).	NOR : MENE1306159C circulaire n°2013-035 du 29-3-2013 MEN - DGESCO A1-4	Secondary education schooling	ECPIF (trained teacher in pedagogical coordination and training expertise)	- Secondary school head teachers - Information and guidance center director (CIO) - Teaching inspectors.	To support students dropouts over 16 years for a hook and / or recognized for a sustainable social and professional qualification.... Since 2011, a special attention has been paid to the support of dropouts by setting up platforms for monitoring and supporting dropouts (PSAD) and interdepartmental information exchange system (SIEI).	NOR : MENE1306159C circulaire n°2013-035 du 29-3-2013 MEN - DGESCO A1-4	Secondary schools.	The head teachers have the responsibility to direct these at risk pupils towards the MLDS in the year following their leaving or during the schooling.	The secondary schools are in charge of implementing these actions (various names and kinds) with regards to the local needs.
<b>CIO (Information and Guidance Center)</b>  <b>Agen</b>  <u>Approx. 65</u>	Director and guidance advisors: - Provide a specific individual counselling and information for the pupils and their parents		None	1 Director  6 Guidance advisors		The reception and support system falls within the jurisdiction of the CIO (Information and Guidance Center) where interviews are been	Individual diagnosis Interviews	None	In support of referents "dropout" are appointed in schools secondary schools with high absenteeism and dropout.	Must work in coordination with the FOQUALE <sup>3</sup> network.

<sup>1</sup> The RASÉD consists of specialized teachers and school psychologists. It supports (when actual permitting) learning difficulties and adapt to academic requirements, and

<sup>2</sup> The latest annual report shows that just over a third of dropouts are actually supported.

<sup>3</sup> These Qualification, Training and Employment Networks are specific to Ministry of Education. Established in each Education Zone (Bassin d'éducation ou Zone d'Animation Pédagogique), they identify, coordinate, and develop structures aiming at bringing dropouts back to school. They develop a special partnership with the Civic Service Agency (CSA), which offers young people the opportunity to fulfill a mission of general interest, deepen, consolidate or develop their personal and professional goals (NOR : MENE1306159C circulaire n°2013-035 du 29-3-2013 MEN - DGESCO A1-4).

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<p><u>identified dropouts and among them approx.. 10 “without solution” (in terms of training or work)</u></p>	<p>- Act as technical adviser to the teaching staff of secondary schools</p>					<p>made on the situation of young people and their families</p>				
<p><b>MISION LOCALE D’AGEN (Agen’s Local mission for youth)</b></p> <p><u>Approx: 369 youngsters covered by a CIVIS<sup>4</sup></u></p>						<p>Accompaniment aiming at a return to training or entry onto the labour market</p>	<p>Ministry of labour, employment and social dialogue</p>	<p>Being aged of more than 16 and less than 26</p>	<p>15 case-managers</p>	<p>In the frame of PSAD (Local platforms against ESL), The Local mission of youth is deemed to work with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- all teaching institutions (including training and apprenticeship centers)</li> <li>- MLDS</li> <li>- CIO</li> <li>- Second chance schools</li> <li>- Agricultural and military teaching institutions</li> <li>- Youth information centers (BIJ)</li> <li>- Local elected bodies</li> </ul>

<p><b>Commission d’aide à l’insertion (CAI - Commission for integration assistance)</b></p>	<p>The CAI is a local initiative imported from another zone, the Gers, where the current Director of the CIO d’Agen comes from). It is a specific local structure “for young people for whom we have not found a solution, we’ll see them again in small committee while in the regular platform (PSAD) the youngster is not present. We meet the young dropout with five other structures: the CIO, the MLDS, the Local Mission, the Pôle Emploi job center and a training/apprenticeship center. He will present his project and we will try to reposition him. it concerns only the most difficult cases we try to deal with this way "(Director, CIO).</p> <p>N.B. In light of the data collected, we will focus especially on the young people followed through this innovative device which we discovered during the fieldwork for this WP: the Commission for Integration Assistance (CAI) is a strictly local program where the voice is present conversely to national schemes like the platforms for monitoring and supporting dropouts (PSAD). This choice needs to be validated with particular reference to feasibility conditions.</p>
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<sup>4</sup> The Contrat d’insertion dans la vie sociale (CIVIS) proposes a reinforced accompaniment.

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Beyond the comparative presentation above and before entering the nature of relationships between actors of the 'bouquet', we offer a brief description of the structures and their role below:

- PRE

The program for success in education (PRE) belongs to the field of urban policy:

*"C'est une commande du CUCS"<sup>1</sup>, (coordinatrice PRE)*

The CUCS relates to the planning law for social cohesion while the PRE is aimed to support children who do not have social, cultural and a family environment favorable to their success and who meet significant difficulties (ACSE 2010).

- Micro High School

The first micro high school was established in 2010. The Ministry of education's goal is to create one micro high school by region where pupils are able to return to school after a downtime of their schooling and for those wishing to achieve a bachelor's degree. These structures are designed for experimentation:

*"Le recteur nous a dit, allez y, foncez, innovez, on verra après"<sup>2</sup>, (Head teacher, micro high school).*

Its flexible organization allows offering tailor-made solutions to suit the project of teachers and profiles of young welcomed (aged 17-25 years). The Agen's Micro high school is the first offering vocational education. Innovation is here about teaching:

*"On prend les élèves autrement, on n'exclut pas"<sup>3</sup>, (teacher).*

The idea is to test some techniques, such as co-teaching and project-led pedagogy; if it proves working then it might be implemented within the traditional vocational high school to help improve a sector that suffers from a high dropout rate.

- MLDS (Mission de Lutte contre le Décrochage Scolaire – Mission against School Dropout)

The MLDS is a structure ruled by the Ministry of education. It proposes actions for the prevention of school dropouts and remedial actions. In the Aquitaine region, the Pôle Relais Insertion (PRI - insertion relay poles) is in charge of these actions. There is one PRI for each of the local zones of education (Zone d'animation pédagogique). Our respondents present it this way:

*"Des modules de remobilisation pour des jeunes décrocheurs sortis de l'école depuis 6 mois à un ans sans diplôme pour les aider à travailler sur un projet"<sup>4</sup> (project manager MLDS, Rectorat).*

- CIO (Centre d'Information et d'orientation – Information and Guidance Center)

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<sup>1</sup> "It was commissioned by the CUCS (Urban Contract for Social Cohesion)" (Coordinator PRE)

<sup>2</sup> "The Recteur told us, go ahead, go ahead, innovate, we'll see".

<sup>3</sup> "We treat pupils a different way, no one is excluded".

<sup>4</sup> "Remobilization modules for dropouts having left school for 6 months to a year without a degree designed to help them work on a project".

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The Information and Guidance Centre is a public organization where everyone, regardless of age, level of education or skills, can meet a psychologist guidance counselor (COP) for career and schooling advice. Regarding ESL, beyond their technical support within schools with the teaching staff in prevention, the counselors of CIO phone each youth identified as dropouts and offer him/her a positioning interview if his/her status is confirmed.

- Local Mission for Youth

In May 1981, the Schwartz's report for the social and professional integration of young people highlights that "*les principales victimes de la crise économique (sont) les jeunes (qui) ont un taux de chômage trois fois plus élevé que celui des adultes. La sélection opérée par l'école se double d'une sélection impitoyable par le marché du travail*"<sup>5</sup>. In May 1982 local missions for youth were created. They are in charge of a public mission for social and professional integration of young people aged 16 to 25 facing a risk of social exclusion. Advisers accompany them in their related social integration (housing, health, etc.) and professional approaches (job search, training, etc.). It is designed as a one-stop shop structure for youngsters.

## 5. FOCUS ON PARTICULAR PROBLEMS AND RELATED POLICY AND PRACTICE

As noticed by the French observatory of inequalities, over the last decade some inequalities are increasing. Regarding the ESL, the ruptures take place in the early years of socialization. Children belonging to less educated households are less successful in school than others. Insofar unemployment is increasingly concerning low skilled people<sup>6</sup>, the dropouts leaving school without any qualification are the most vulnerable and therefore they constitute the public on which we have chosen to investigate also for the next WP (WP5).

Hence, WP4 focuses on the local actors in charge of this "population" as well as those in charge of at risk pupils before they drop out. We are trying here to analyze the nature of relations between the actors of the first category and between the two categories of actors and to confront these concrete interactions in terms of their adequacy to legal provision. The existing platforms for monitoring and supporting young dropouts (PSADs) are supposed to coordinate local actors in charge of training, guidance and social integration of young people. The secondary schools, the mission against school dropout (MLDS), The Information and Guidance centers (CIO), the Local missions for youth, the second chance schools, the agricultural secondary schools, the Army's public institutions of integration (EPIDE), the training and apprenticeship centers, the youth information centers (CIJ) and local government offices are particularly associated. Specific national education organizations also exist such as the FOQUALE (Employment Training Qualification) networks. Established in

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<sup>5</sup> "The brunt of the economic crisis (are) young people (who) have a three times higher than the adult unemployment rate. The move by the school doubles as a ruthless selection by the labor market".

<sup>6</sup> Between 2001 and 2010, the unemployment rate of low skilled passed from 11,8% to 16% and remained stable for the qualified persons (Observatoire des inégalités scolaires, 2013).

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each zone drawn by the Ministry of education (Bassin d'éducation ou Zone d'Animation Pédagogique), these networks identify, coordinate, and develop solutions to bring the early school leavers back to school. They develop a specific partnership with the agency of civic service that offers young people the opportunity to fulfill a mission of general interest, deepen, consolidate or develop their personal and professional goals. Finally, the PRE (Program for success in education) that intervenes complementary to common prevention action also plays a role in the coordination of local actors. Coordination is a main principle of action for PRE as it is in fact based on a comprehensive approach to problems encountered by vulnerable pupils from kindergarten to upper secondary school. In that program, they are offered specific monitoring by a team of case-managers coming from various institutions and public action domains (animation, culture, social sector, education). Coordination is also present in the overall program management that brings together municipal and departemental elected, but also representatives of the state and the Ministry of education.

Our analysis will focus in this section on the actors for which the data are the most numerous. Indeed, if the number of interviews is balanced, the questionnaire's answers essentially relate to the actors of two structures: local mission and micro high school. Since we have decided to articulate quantitative and qualitative data (see section "Methodology"), our analysis will focus on these two categories of actors. However, to the extent possible, their interaction with other actors of the bouquet will be studied on the basis of the qualitative material.

### **Local system of actors: what kind of partnership?**

#### **From the point of view of the Local mission for youth**

For the Agen's Local mission for youth, 69% of respondents answered the questionnaire (Director, advisors and project host). In addition, four interviews were conducted with the director and three of his advisers. During these interviews, the feeling of positive work is obvious. A very invested director drives it. For him:

*"La Mission Locale est la structure qui va accueillir les jeunes les plus en difficultés et les plus vulnérables, c'est le lieu où les jeunes disposent du plus d'outils concernant leur insertion"<sup>7</sup> (local mission for youth's director).*

In the view of the answers to the questionnaire by him and the case managers of the Local mission, a first result glaring lack of resources emerges:

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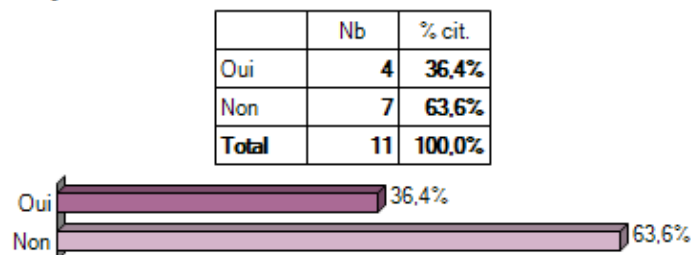
<sup>7</sup> "The Mission Locale is a structure that will accommodate the most troubled and vulnerable young people, it is the place where young people find the most helpful tools for their integration"



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### Q. Do you estimate having the ability to redirect early school leavers towards another structure if necessary?

Estimez-vous avoir les moyens d'orienter un décrocheur vers une autre structure en fonction de ses besoins ?



The partnership is said to be at first internal without being intense: 73% of the respondents say they work occasionally with other Local missions. The most frequent relations with the actors interviewed are 1) 55% with the CIO and 2) and 36% with micro high school. Thus, the external partnership of the local mission with these partners follows the chain of the duties promoted by law as part of PSAD. It can be summed up as follows:

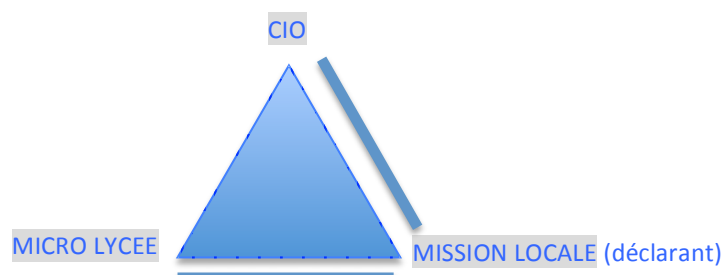
<b>CIO</b> Conduct an interview with all young people identified as dropouts. If the project aims to cater to the professional integration.	↔	<b>Local Missions</b> Receive all young people aged 16 to 25 encountering integration problems. If the project is to return to basic training and if he/she has the right profile, local missions may require a referral to the micro high school or the CIO	↔	<b>Micro High School</b> Offers a return to study to dropouts (in France this is called the "2nd Chance")
If the youngster' project suppose to return to school, they can address him/her directly to the Micro high school	↔		If the youngster does not fit in the micro high school requirements, he/she can be sent back to CIO or directed to the Local mission for youth	

In 2013, the Agen's CIO received about 65 dropouts, the local mission for youth about 1259 young for their first appointment, including about 300 youngsters without any diploma. The micro school is able to accommodate 10 students. Thus we see that the number of youth directed towards the micro high school is small in relation to the number of young people involved. For the local population of dropouts, the opportunities of a return to initial training via the micro high school are extremely limited; it is difficult to say that they have a real actual possibility. From this point of view, the micro high school cannot be considered as offering a real alternative for dropouts to graduate and thus completely avoid the risk of vulnerability. Moreover, the micro high school is not an isolated case, the Local mission faces also a restricted range of solutions: 7 interviewees out of 11 feel they do not have the means to direct a dropout to another structure according to their needs (see above). In this context, the real capability to choose is put into questions.

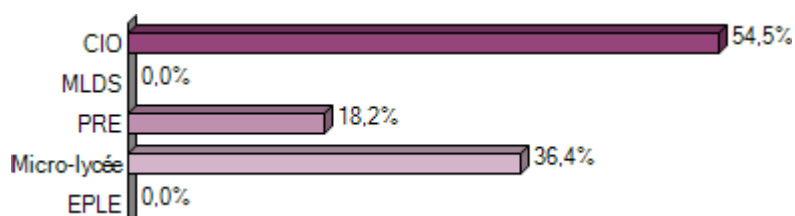
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In terms of partnership, the public action aiming at lowering ESL offers a good example of the existing interdependency between three types of actors (CIO, Local Mission for Youth and Micro high school). It can be analyzed in terms of an *iron triangle* as described by Lowi (1969, in Hassenteufel, p. 135):

Fig. Interdependency relations reported by respondents of the Agen's Local mission for youth



Asked about whom they are working with, the respondents of the local mission declared the following:



For the Agen's Local mission, just over half of respondents say they work with the CIO, none with the MLDS, 18% with PRE, barely more than a third with the micro high school (36%) and none with other teaching institutions (EPLÉ).

Here, the intensity of interactions is questioned. In line with what is expected from the Local platforms (PSAD), they fall short of a partnership established by law which aims at bringing together actors within a large number of organizations: Ministry of Education (schools, CIO, MLDS); agricultural education; centers for apprenticeship and training; local missions; Public Employment Service (PES); the youth information network; as well as relevant local authorities.

While it is understood that PSAD is a concept rather than a legal organizational structure, the fact remains that these platform is a mode of coordination of local actors. In the Agen zone, if its implementation is effective, its weak operational evidence emerges from our interviews. Coordination required by law in that territory here seems in need to be consolidated.

### A collective action in Agen?

The analysis of our empirical material suggests, on the one hand limited resources to act; and on the other hand, differences in each actor's objective and their weak interconnections. Cross-sectoriality is lacking and the decision-makers are many. While it is understood that all declare aiming at social and professional integration of vulnerable young

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people, the way to achieve it is different. Some propose to intervene in educational terms (CIO, MLDS, PRE, MICRO LYCÉE) without having quite to afford, while others have to propose an immediate return onto the labour market (Local mission for youth) even in the short term.

Thus, if we accept the definition given by Patrick Le Gales of a policy network, i.e. "*The result of more or less stable, non-hierarchical cooperation between organizations that know and recognize each other, negotiate with each other, share resources and can share standards and interests*"<sup>8</sup>, these conditions are only partially filled here. The Local mission for youth's counselors know very little of the existing programs for ESL from other structures (8 out of 10 respondents advisers say they do not know those of the CIO, 10 out of 11 for the PRE, 5 out of 6 of the micro high school). In addition, although there may share some common projects (3 of 8 respondents share projects with the CIO, also 3 out of 8 with micro high school and 2 with PRE) and meeting times (formal and informal), few counselors of local mission declare knowing what happens to the dropout he had in charge.

**Q: Is he followed by another structure afterwards? 6 out of 10 say they do not know:**

**Si un décrocheur est ensuite suivi par l'une de ces structures (Mission locale, CIO, MLDS, micro-lycée, EPLE, PRE), en avez-vous connaissance ?**

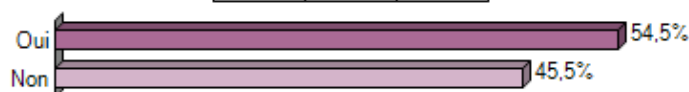
	Nb	% cit.
Oui	4	40,0%
Non	6	60,0%
Total	10	100,0%



Conversely, improved information flow upstream. They are more likely to report whether the youth was followed by another structure before coming to their own structure:

**Inversement, recevez-vous des décrocheurs ayant été suivi précédemment ou étant suivi par ces structures ?**

	Nb	% cit.
Oui	6	54,5%
Non	5	45,5%
Total	11	100,0%

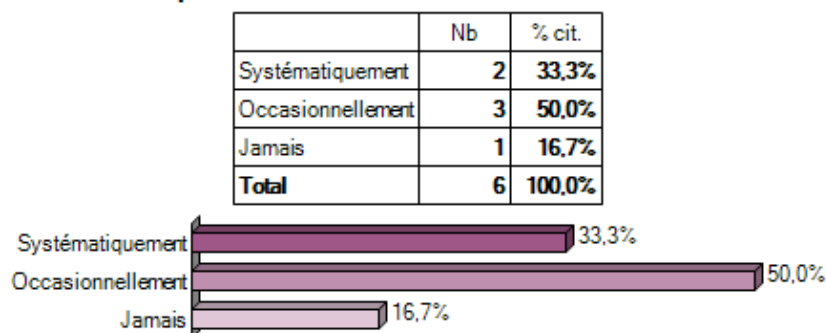


Occasionally, half of them and one third systematically inform the previous structure:

<sup>8</sup> "*Le résultat de la coopération plus ou moins stable, non hiérarchique, entre des organisations qui se connaissent et se reconnaissent, négocient, échangent des ressources et peuvent partager des normes et des intérêts*" (Le Gales and Thatcher, 1995 in Hassenteufel, 2008, p. 134)

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### En informez-vous la structure en question ?



### From the point of view of the micro high school

90% of micro high school respondents have answered the questionnaire (Head teacher, head of works, teachers, MLDS advisor working within the micro high school and education assistant). Also there, we conducted 5 interviews (Head teacher, head of works, teachers, MLDS member within the micro high school) and we were also able to have an informal meeting with a pupil. The building, funded by the regional council, is brand new and spacious. It does not look like an ordinary high school with its traditional succession of corridors and closed classrooms. The space here is open, bright and friendly. Spaces for more intimate dialogue are formed by partitions; a private office allows confidential exchanges. The Agen's micro high school is the first vocational micro high school in France. It was created following the initiative of a local vocational high school teacher. After a 20-years career, three reasons are supporting this initiative. The first is that the early school leaving is an extremely pregnant phenomenon in this type of school:

*"On le vit au quotidien, ça nous embête vraiment"<sup>9</sup>.*

The second reason is that it leads to the loss of pupils causing the closure of teaching classes and therefore the loss of teaching positions that are transferred out. The last reason is the possibility to develop a pedagogy that can be transferred in the traditional vocational high school and there too can help reducing ESL. Pedagogical concern and corporatist interests combine here.

Indeed, among the difficulties of getting back to school after ESL, the most prominent one is the lack of financial resources. However, the way to remedy the situation by changing the status of teachers in order to enable the pupils to benefit from the status of vocational training followers, and therefore get the compensation awarded by the regional council, was not chosen. Isolationism and corporatist membership to the "epistemic community"<sup>10</sup> of Education prevailed:

*" Nous au départ on ne l'a pas voulu pour plusieurs raisons : parce qu'on voulait rester dans l'Education Nationale traditionnelle, c'était un souhait que l'Education Nationale s'occupe de l'Education Nationale et de ses problèmes, c'était un vœu collectif de l'équipe. Ensuite, ça pouvait éventuellement agir sur notre statut d'enseignant, ce n'est pas forcément le cas pour Villeurbanne*

<sup>9</sup> "We are confronted to it every day, it really bothers us" (micro high school teacher)

<sup>10</sup> Defined by Haas (1992) as the sharing of normative & causal beliefs, evaluation criteria of expert knowledge in their field, and of common practices

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*mais en général l'enseignant n'est plus intervenant sur son temps de service mais en heures supplémentaires, et nous souhaitons intervenir sur notre temps de service"<sup>11</sup>.*

In the official texts, a micro high school is attached to a normal high school and enjoys financial means given by the Ministry of Education and other partners such as local authorities, in particular the regional council. Asked about this choice, our interviewee at the Regional Council confirms:

*" Au vu de la première année d'expérimentation du Micro Lycée de Agen, il apparait que le statut individuel de lycéen des jeunes durant leur année de scolarité peut être restrictif dans l'éligibilité à certaines aides sociales » et interroge « un autre statut est-il envisageable dans le cadre légal, formation professionnelle par exemple"<sup>12</sup>.*

Nevertheless, under the terms of the agreement with the rector (Ministry of Education), the Regional Council does not want to raise the question:

*"C'est un choix, étant donné qu'on a une convention avec les MLDS donc le rectorat, les jeunes sont affectés comme n'importe quels lycéens et traités comme tels, c'est le choix qu'on a fait en Aquitaine "<sup>13</sup>.*

Here again, another interest prevails about the purpose given to the program: maintaining a fragile partnership. Let us remember that the primacy of corporatist or political interests has a cost: for the first year 4 out of 12 pupils resigned for financial reasons.

As we discussed earlier in the context of PSAD, the micro high school as an EPLE and the other structures in the bouquet are bound by obligations of reciprocity and as such are interdependent. The questionnaire responses by the team of micro school confirms:

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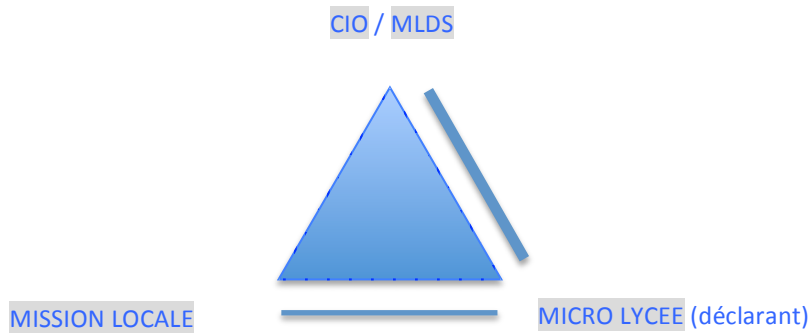
<sup>11</sup> We initially did not want for several reasons: because we wanted to stay in the traditional National Education it was a wish that National Education is responsible for National Education and its problems, it was a collective desire of the team. Then it could possibly affect our status as a teacher, it's not necessarily the case for Villeurbanne (High School of 2nd chance in the Rhone Alps region where pupils have the status of trainees in vocational training to enable them to benefit from the compensation awarded by the Regional Council) but usually the teacher is no longer working on his service but in overtime, and we wanted to work on our service time "(micro high school teacher)

<sup>12</sup> "In view of the first year of experimentation of the Agen Micro High School, it appears that the individual status of pupils during their years of schooling may be restrictive in eligibility for certain social assistance benefits" and asks "is another status possible within the legal framework, training for example?" (Regional Council, direction of education, memorandum to the Vice President on the first year of experimentation)

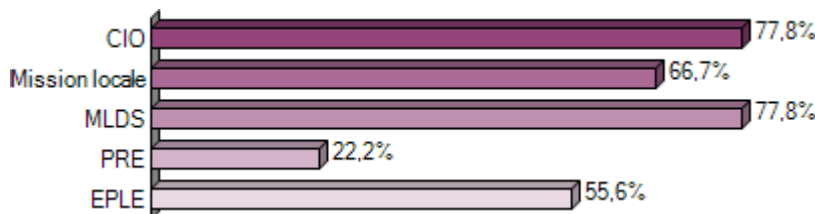
<sup>13</sup> "It is a choice, since it has an agreement with the MLDS and accordingly the 'Rectorat', pupils are assigned as in any high school and treated as such, it is the choice we made in Aquitaine. "

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Fig. Interdependency relations reported by respondents of the Agen's micro high school



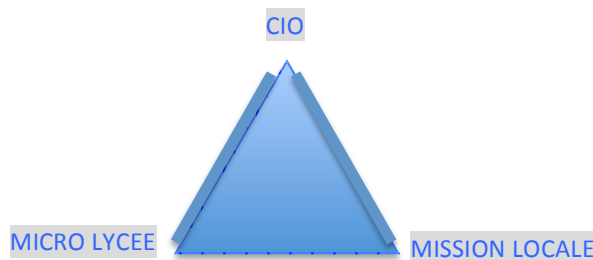
In terms of intensity of interactions, the results are closer to the legal expectancies. Thus, the respondents of the micro high school declare working with the following:



It should be reminded that the Ministry of education rules the micro high school and that, in Agen, the CIO, who belongs to the same ministry (as well as the MLDS), animates the PSAD. Therefore it is not surprising that compared to the Local mission for youth's results (ruled by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and Social Dialogue) the relationships are further supported here.

Combined, the two triangles of Lowi show that while there are relations between the micro high school and the local mission for youth, the relations of these two structures are more intense with the CIO

Fig. Interdependency relations reported by respondents of the Local mission and the Agen's micro high school



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This triangle also shows the marginal aspect of several actors including those in charge of at risk youngsters still at school (PRE) to this type of network. So having in mind this second circle of actors, can we talk of a true policy network? And if so, how can we define this type of network?

### **Is there a policy network and if yes of what kind?**

While understanding public action as the result of multiple interactions generating a coordinate bouquet of offers, it is of paramount importance to qualify the type of networking at stake. According to Marsh & Rhodes (1995, p 53 quoted by Hassenteufel, 2008, p 137) different kinds of policy networks can be distinguished on the basis of three main criteria:

1. Composition of the network
2. Level of integration and cohesion
3. Internal power relations.

A network where

1. The number of participants is important, the actors are of various types (not exclusively state or economic and/or professional interest groups), with variable forms of organization (non-hierarchical, weak cohesion) and inside whom relations can be conflicting
2. The frequency and intensity of interactions may vary, its continuity and institutionalization can be limited; and where there is no consensus on the general aim but instead where conflicts and cleavages can be found
3. The distribution of resources is uneven and variable, the interdependency limited and the structure of interactions can be unequal (zero sum game)

may be defined as an "issue network " that Marsh and Rhodes oppose to a "policy community" when the criteria are reversed

The analysis of the collected material confirms the existence of inter-organizational interactions between actors involved in the "remediation" dimension of ESL<sup>14</sup> following the chain of duties assigned by the French legislator to these local platforms (see figure above). It is understood here that the term 'actor' refers to agency and the correlated autonomy and capacity for action of an individual in a given context. This autonomy influences the intensity of the network relationships. As we have seen in Agen, the CIO provides the local coordination for the platform (PSAD). However, the PRE - which is not legally involved in PSAD - does not appear in the "iron triangle." This constitutes an additional argument to support our hypothesis according to which the PSAD is the core of the existing relationships for local support networks.

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<sup>14</sup> If the CIO is up to the prevention and remediation's poles, the local mission for youth and and micro high school are part of the second only.

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In terms of its nature, we can define this network as closer to the issue network than to the policy community. Indeed:

### The number of participants is large and varied

Beyond the first circle of partnership consisting of the bouquet structures, other structures, which respondents say they work with, are numerous.

Fig. Partnership of the Local mission for youth

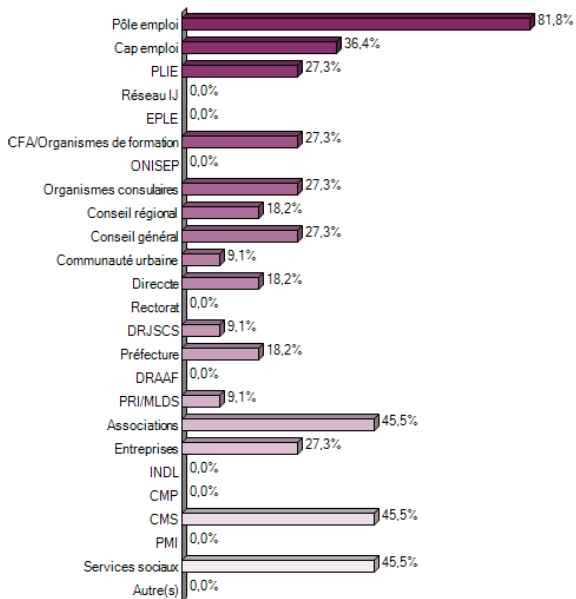
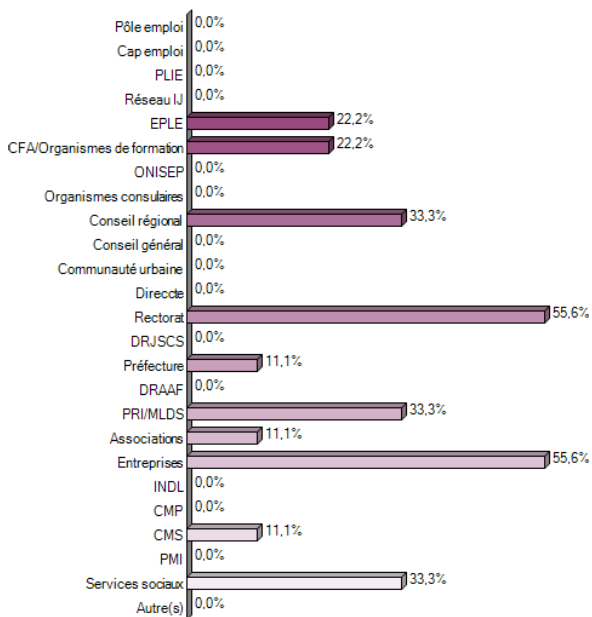


Fig. Partnership dedicated to ESL of the Micro high school

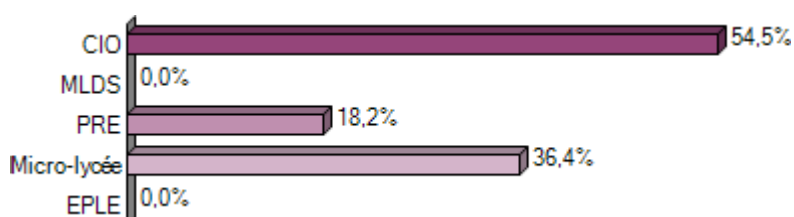


The frequency and density of the interactions are variable

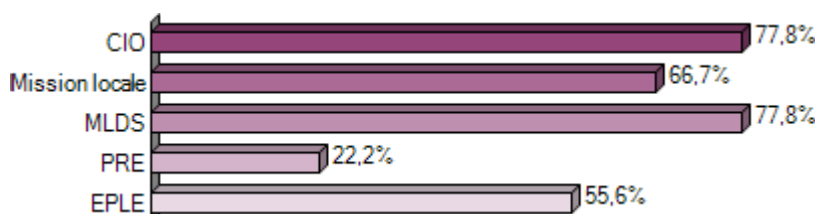


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Respondents of Local mission reported working with:



While respondents of the micro high school reported working with:



### The share of resources is more ways than one uneven

- **Position resources:** The CIO is in a central position in the local platform (PSAD) while the other organizations seem more peripheral.
- **Time resources:** strategic leadership over the studied policy relies on two historical actors – the CIO and the Local mission – while the micro high school is a new player that is still in a learning process since this structure has existed for less than one year.
- **Process resources:** Finally, if by resources we mean the capacity to process flows of dropouts; they are disproportionate between the local mission for youth and the micro high school. When over a year the local mission for youth processes more than 300 youth with intensive support, the micro high school barely accommodate 10 per year.

## 6. PARTICIPATION

For Amartya Sen, democracy is assessed in terms of public deliberation. Following this yardstick, we could ask if there is space within the bouquet for informed discussion? What does the analysis of the collected material reveal on the three dimensions of the voice, exit and loyalty?

### Formal Voice

The actual opportunity for young people to get involved in a decision-making process has been rarely observed in the studied programs. At best, young people can make their voices heard spontaneously, i.e. without the existence of formal discussion spaces. Thus, in PRI (the MLDS program for dropouts) both exit and voice are present in the discourse of our interviewees:

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*"c'est aussi le positionnement pour nos jeunes qui me semble essentiel, c'est-à-dire qu'ils sont sortis d'un système de formation où souvent il y avait le positionnement enseignant-élève, là il s'agit d'un cheminement commun que l'on va faire, et ils peuvent aussi nous dire si à tout moment s'ils pensent que le PRI ne correspond pas à leurs attentes et on en discute et ils peuvent quitter le dispositif"<sup>15</sup> (MLDS, coordinatrice).*

Voice can also be a kind of ownership of the program ensuring loyalty as described at the micro high school:

*"une anecdote, les élèves de micro lycée sont venus voir les professeurs qui faisaient l'entretien des jeunes et leur ont demandé qui ils allaient recruter, pour savoir qui ils allaient avoir à côté d'eux. Il y a une appropriation du micro lycée"<sup>16</sup> (Micro Lycée, enseignant).*

In contrast, there seems to be a total lack of voice in PRE where decisions about the pupils' families are made without any possibility of expression for them:

*"il n'y a aucune famille dans les équipes pluridisciplinaires de soutien"<sup>17</sup> (PRE, coordinatrice).*

For the Local mission for youth, it's not a major concern: (Regarding the creation of the program<sup>18</sup>, our interviewees were asked if young people have been consulted on this point, if they were part of the decision-making process or if some have been interviewed):

*"C'est possible, mais je n'en ai pas connaissance"<sup>19</sup> (Mission locale, conseiller).*

When the young people's voice is sought, it is to avoid non take-up to the existing programs, more than for designing them. Indeed, the non take-up of rights, benefits and services by people at risk of exclusion may have reached a worrying level for public order:

*"Les jeunes des quartiers venaient de moins en moins vers les structures d'accompagnement, que ce soit Pôle Emploi ou la Mission Locale, et ça faisait des vagues dans les quartiers puisqu'il y a eu quelques mouvements de mécontentement qui sont remontés politiquement"<sup>20</sup> (Mission locale, conseiller).*

Not surprisingly, the existence of formal opportunities for voice does not necessarily mean that they will be taken up by the most vulnerable:

*"C'est une question qu'il va falloir qu'on traite : comment les accrocher, sur quel sujet et comment les déscotcher des murs"*

**Q: Est-ce qu'ils sont invités à faire entendre leur voix et de quelle façon ?**

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<sup>15</sup> "It is also the question of the status of pupil that seems essential to me. It is to say they are out of a training system where often there was the teacher-student position. Then it is a common path that we have to do, and they can also tell us if at any time they think that the PRI did not match their expectations and they can leave the program "(MLDS, coordinator)

<sup>16</sup> "Let me tell you a story, pupils of the micro high school came to teachers who were interviewing candidates and asked them who they were going to recruit in order to see who was going to be their roommate. There is an appropriation of the micro high school "(Micro High School, teacher).

<sup>17</sup> "There is no room for family in our multidisciplinary support teams "(PRE, coordinator)

<sup>18</sup> Program initiated six years ago by the Agen local mission for youth and which has no specific name but whose purpose is to promote the use of local mission by youngsters.

<sup>19</sup> "It's possible, but I have no information about it"

<sup>20</sup> "City youth were coming less and less to support structures, whether Job Centre or the Local Mission, and it was making waves in the neighborhoods because there has been some movement of discontent that has risen politically "(Local mission for youth, advisor)

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*Là les centres sociaux sont en train de retravailler leur projet tri annuel, donc ils recueillent la parole des partenaires, des habitants et des jeunes. Mais même si on organise des séances pour leur demander leur avis, on ne les voit pas arriver bien souvent. Donc ils essaient de les interviewer dans la rue de manière à récolter une parole vraie qui arrive mieux”<sup>21</sup> (Mission locale, conseillère)*

### **EXIT a harmful effect**

Standards of behavior (activation) are expected from youngsters (coming regularly, showing interest, building a project, etc.). Generally this is done without questioning the obstacles to comply related to individual's distinctiveness and own situation (What about if the young do not agree?)

*“Il ne revient pas, il n’a aucune obligation. C’est en ça que la Mission Locale diffère de Pôle Emploi : le jeune est obligé de s’inscrire à Pôle Emploi, il a des obligations, des comptes à rendre etc., ça n’est pas le cas de la Mission Locale. Quand le jeune vient on lui propose un accompagnement, s’il accepte il rentre dans l’accompagnement, s’il refuse tant pis”<sup>22</sup> (Mission locale, Directeur).*

In other words, the exit possibility exists but at great risks in access to resources (here the right to get another support). Therefore it is difficult to speak of truly egalitarian provisions. The final aim here is the inclusion in the common order. The fact that this order leads to strong inequalities is not discussed.

The emphasis put on individual responsibility is a good example of these behavioral expectations:

*“Certains jeunes ou leur famille manquent de réalisme”<sup>23</sup> (CIO, Director).*

The material and symbolic conditions leading to this situation are not discussed. As an example, our interviewee (The director of the CIO) at the Commission for integration assistance (CAI) presents this program in the following terms:

*“On reçoit le jeune à cinq : le CIO, la MLDS, la Mission Locale, Pôle Emploi et un CFA, il va présenter son projet et on va essayer de le repositionner, ça concerne les cas les plus difficiles qu’on essaie de traiter de cette façon. (...) On va essayer de le rendre plus réaliste en lui indiquant une autre voie”<sup>24</sup> (CAI, Director of the CIO)*

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<sup>21</sup> "It's an issue that we'll have to deal with: how to hang them on any topic and how to unpin them from the walls

#### **Q: Are they are invited to make their voices heard and how?**

Here the social centers are currently working on their triennial project, so they collect the voice of stakeholders, residents and youth. But even if we organize meetings to ask their opinion, they do not see them show up very often. So they try to interview them on the street in order to grasp a true speech that comes better this way"(Local mission for youth, Advisor).

<sup>22</sup> "He does not show off? Well he has no obligation. This is why the Local mission differs from the Pôle Emploi job center: the youth is forced to enroll in a job center, he has duties, he is accountable, etc. That is not the case with the Local mission. When a youngster comes, he is offered an accompaniment, if he accepts he enters the accompaniment, if he declines... too bad"(Local mission for youth, Director)

<sup>23</sup> "Some young people or their families are unrealistic." (CIO, Director).

<sup>24</sup> "We are five to meet the youngster: the CIO, the MLDS, The Local mission for youth, the job center and a training/apprenticeship center. He is going to present his project and we will try to reposition it. We try to treat in this way the most difficult cases. (...) We are trying to make it more realistic in showing him another way. "

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Thus, is it possible to speak of endogenous aspirations or capability to aspire? Or are we facing a way to generate adaptive preferences? According to the capability approach, justice in society is related to the respect of the possibility for an individual to pursue and achieve the goals he has reason to value. It will be important in the next WP to see if within the programs under study and the processing of beneficiaries, the transformations of choices are operated by reasoned discussion, or by conviction of the project.

### **Loyalty: whatever the price?**

Accession to a program can also be obtained by the back door. For example, to obtain the consent of the family to the accompaniment of their child by the team of PRE, the deal can be to ease the relationships with social services or even to provide access to benefits that they might have difficulties to gather. The keypoint is to gain confidence and overcome resistance. Indeed, the support provided by this program can be at first lived on the intrusive mode. The child is facing PRE on the basis of a report delivered by a social worker. In Agen, precariousness often rhymes with mental health problems. The interviews come together on this. The problems of violence are numerous and welfare can sometimes be coercive (removal of the child from the family).

But the most difficult accession to obtain may be that of other stakeholders implied in the support of pupils with learning difficulties:

*"Il est plus difficile de travailler avec les partenaires qu'avec les familles, surtout l'EN. Travailler en partenariat inter institutions n'a rien de « naturel ». Cela se construit au fil du temps. Il faut du temps, beaucoup de volonté et savoir se « prendre des claques ». Dans les écoles élémentaires en fonction des chefs d'établissements ça marche, ou pas (partenariat régulier avec 5 écoles). Dans les collèges c'est plus compliqué, l'information (sur le PRE) reste cloisonnée elle ne circule pas entre les membres de l'établissement"<sup>25</sup> (Coordonnatrice PRE)*

This difficulty confirms that dropout prevention or the management of drop-in (to put it in the words of one interviewee speaking of dropping out from the inside, i.e. without leaving formally school) confronts to a national institution (The Ministry of education) that hardly shares its monopoly. Moreover this program located at the cross-section of schooling and social work blurs the boundaries and also disturbs political institutions:

*"En Gironde pendant un temps, le conseil général a refusé d'envoyer des travailleuses sociales pour participer aux équipes pluridisciplinaires de soutien"<sup>26</sup> (PRE, coordinatrice régionale).*

The non-participation of all stakeholders reinforces the difficulties of networking identified in the previous section. The lack of legitimacy and confidence towards a new actor, an off-field or cross-field actor is sometimes happening. It should be remembered also that the urban policy is partly devolved but remains under the responsibility of the Prefect (the state representative in region). It confronts with the intervention of the Regional council in terms

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<sup>25</sup> "It is more difficult to work with partners than with families, especially with the Ministry of education's services. Interinstitutional partnership is nothing "natural." It is built over time. It takes time; a lot of will and know how to take "slaps". In elementary schools it works or not on the basis of the relations with the principal (regular partnership with five schools). In lower secondary school (collège) it's more complicated, information (on PRE) remains compartmentalized and does not circulate among the members of the institution "(PRE coordinator).

<sup>26</sup> "In Gironde (one of the 5 départements of Aquitaine) for a time, the general council refused to send social workers to participate in multidisciplinary support teams" (PRE, regional coordinator).

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of decentralized policies. There are also some conflicts of legitimacy. PRE is a disturbing program. Conversely, in order to rely on the PRE, the place of residence or the school where pupils with learning difficulties are located have to be classified as a priority area of the urban policy. This restrictive criterion may explain the lack of knowledge of this program by teachers or social workers.

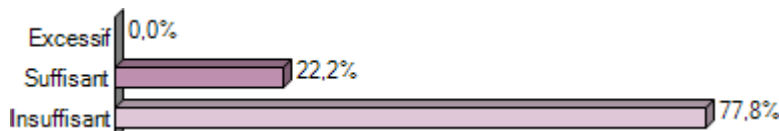
In terms of participation, a few other dimensions are to be assessed.

The first one deals with the density of the programs offered to youngsters. From the point of view of the respondents to our survey (local mission school and micro high school), this offer is inadequate in terms of number of programs on the Agen's territory.

- Local mission for youth (**Q: In your opinion the number of programs devoted to ESL is: insufficient, sufficient, excessive**)



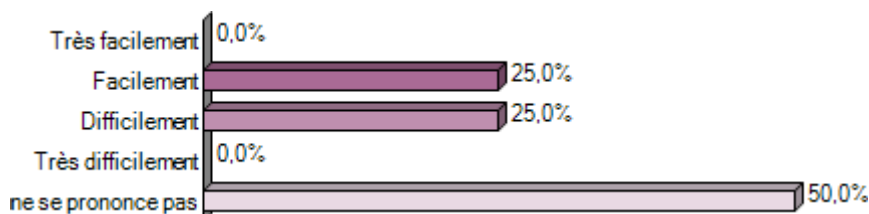
Micro high school (**Q: In your opinion the number of programs devoted to ESL is: insufficient, sufficient, excessive**)



The second one concerns accessibility to the offer of services. It is another key aspect of participation that relates to environmental conversion factors

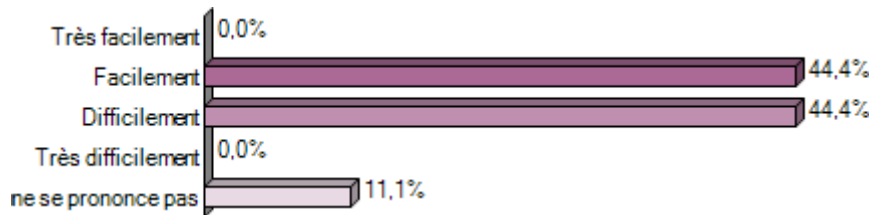
**Q: According to you, do dropouts from the Agen have the possibility the access this public offer is: very easy, easy, difficult, very difficult, do not answer)**

- Local mission for youth



- Micro high school

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Thirdly, the possibility for youngsters to give its opinion on the programs he/she is proposed:

**Q: According to you, do dropouts have the possibility to give their opinion on the program offered to them? (yes, no, does not know)**

**- Local mission for youth:**

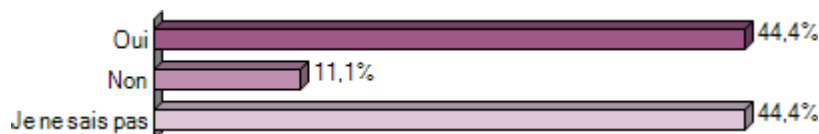


**- Micro high school:**

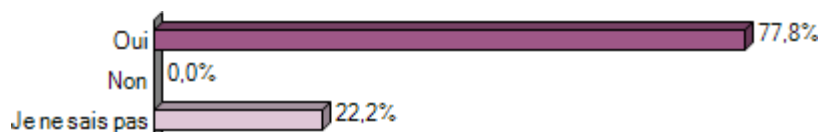


Related to the previous, respondents were asked about **the possibility for a dropout to refuse to participate in their programs (yes, no, does not know):**

**- Local mission for youth**



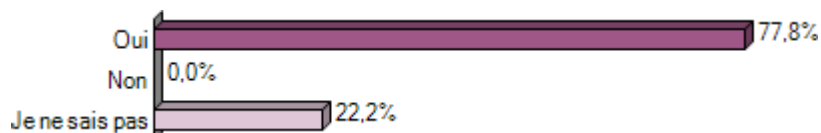
**- Micro high school**



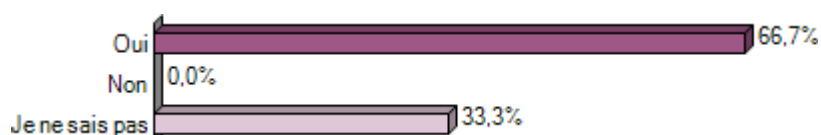
But all them agree in considering that active participation of youngsters the program is considered as a key element to its success (**Q: Do you think that active participation of**

youngsters to the programs they are proposed is a key element for their success? Yes, no, does not know):

### - Local mission for youth



### - Micro high school



## 7. SOCIAL INNOVATION

« La véritable innovation sociale est celle qui contribue efficacement à l'amélioration des capacités des jeunes défavorisés » (Bonvin, 2013, p.9).

### A Europe Driven Change

As we'll see in the next section, in the management of school dropout, France has adopted EU policy recommendations fostering change and innovation in education. School dropout is perceived as an obstacle to the achievement of the Europe 2020 strategy, therefore, the EU encourages "Enhancing innovation and creativity, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training" (obj. 4) while the Strategic objective number 3 proposes to "Strengthen preventive approaches, build closer cooperation between general and vocational education sectors and remove barriers for drop-outs to return to education and training"<sup>27</sup>. The programs investigated locally stick more or less to those objectives. If they innovate, it is by their means more than by their objectives. This innovation can be drawn in educational/pedagogical terms for Micro high school and MLDS through the PRI, for example. But it can also be fostered in terms of governance by promoting new forms of networking for PSAD/Local mission/CIO and cross-sectorial work for PRE. While some may allow disadvantaged youth to express their needs, it's only to give them a treatment within the limits of their responsibilities without questioning the conditions leading to ESL.

**The PRE (Program for success in education): Welcoming otherwise learn about and better understand the families' needs**

<sup>27</sup> Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') (2009/C 119/02)

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If innovation and participation are intertwined as reminded by the WP2 conceptual report, then the PRE is clearly innovating since it appears to be the most participatory among the bouquet. As presented by its coordinator in interview, case managers in PRE may:

*"prendre le temps d'avancer avec (l'enfant et sa famille), pouvoir imaginer, se tromper, faire marche arrière"<sup>28</sup> (PRE, coordonnatrice).*

The pupil (2-16 years) is never borne alone. Instead he is taken in charge with his brothers and sisters in a place (an apartment located in the middle of a city in an deprived area) where the whole family can be granted a coffee. By this it is intended to escape the traditional user/provider desk relation and ease the expression of needs. Nevertheless, the service delivery is still predominantly supply oriented. If the case manager can "*collect what the family thinks*" it is only to consider "*what the PRE can offer them*" in terms of support. The objective is to "*make the contact and keep it*" (ibid.).

### **Micro high school: a local innovation deriving from a top down objective to experience new solutions.**

In order to foster the national and European priority to fight against school dropout, A 2010 circular from the Ministry of Education<sup>29</sup> planned the creation of at least one Micro high school by region. The Aquitaine manager of MLDS (stakeholder in the implementation of Micro high schools) shows a commitment to support innovation from local players:

*"les équipes pédagogiques déploient un certain nombre de dispositifs, de parcours, pour répondre à cette question du décrochage et les maintenir en formation jusqu'au diplôme. Il y a des choses qui sont mises en place dans les établissements même de manière très pointue, ciblée"<sup>30</sup>.*

This possibility of top down experimentation has been used by the team of Agen's Micro high school with the support of regional stakeholders (Rectorat and Regional council). The national framework is flexible enough to allow local innovation to develop. In Aquitaine it was developed through the creation of the first vocational micro high school in France. Let us remember also that from this experimental device are promoted new teaching methods to be transferred in the traditional high school (which hosts the micro high school) to prevent ESL. As explained by the head of work (working on the 2 establishments):

*"le micro lycée donne aussi la possibilité aux enseignants de pouvoir travailler en amont sur nos élèves de formation initiale pour éviter ce décrochage"<sup>31</sup> (Micro lycée, chef de travaux).*

Especially the pedagogy developed in the micro high school is above all based on recognition and capacity-building as reminded by the principal:

*"il faut qu'ils (les élèves) aient l'impression d'exister. Il faut qu'ils soient reconsidérés"<sup>32</sup> (Micro lycée, Proviseur).*

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<sup>28</sup> "take the time to move forward with (the child and family), to imagine, to err, to back" (PRE Coordinator)

<sup>29</sup> NOR : MENE1006812C. RLR : 520-0. Circulaire n° 2010-38 du 16-3-2010. MEN – DGESCO.

<sup>30</sup> "The teaching teams are implementing a number of programs and paths to answer this question of ESL and keep training until graduation. There are things that are implemented in the secondary schools even in a very sharp and focused way".

<sup>31</sup> "The micro school also provides the opportunity for teachers to work upstream on initial training with our pupils in order to avoid dropout" (Micro high school head of works).

<sup>32</sup> "They must (the pupils) feel they exist. They need to be reconsidered" (micro high school principal)



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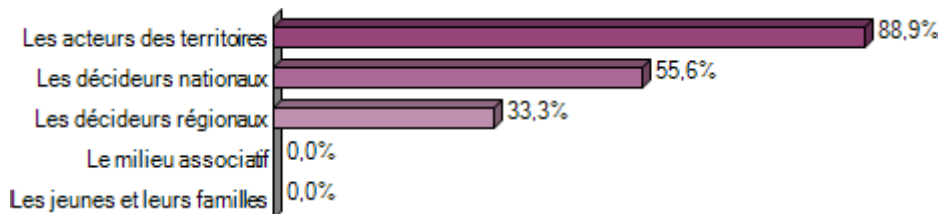
Thus, for the MLDS, the conditions to experiment and succeed in reducing ESL are brought together:

*"Les acteurs existent, les dispositifs aussi, la communication entre les acteurs principaux également"*<sup>33</sup>(MLDS, Rectorat).

Finally, and on the basis of the answers given by respondents of the micro high school to our questionnaire, it should be highlighted that from their point of view innovation can legitimately emerge from three levels of political work (Local, regional, national) and not from the third sector or the users themselves.

**Q: According to you, innovation to reduce ESL should emerge from: local actors, regional decision-makers, national decision-makers, third sector, youngsters and their families**

**- Micro high school**



**Livelihood of dropouts: a blind spot and a limit to innovation according to the MLDS**

*"Pour un jeune en situation de vulnérabilité, la première préoccupation n'est pas la formation, c'est de subsister, et je pense que la question est là"*<sup>34</sup> (MLDS, rectorat).

Concerning the specific problem of livelihood, some solutions are being tested, such as the "Garantie Jeunes"<sup>35</sup> (Youth Guarantee). This innovative program relies on a benefit whose amount is equivalent to the French minimum income scheme for adults (RSA, active solidarity income). This benefit introduced on an experimental basis until December 31, 2015 is devoted to 18-25 youngsters in a precarious situation, without a job or training (NEETs). So a young dropout who returns to study cannot activate it.

Another solution could be to ask the regional center of the university and school (CROUS<sup>36</sup>). CROUS has indeed intended to help improve the lives and work of students. The problem is

<sup>33</sup> "The actors are brought together, the programs are existing and the communication between key actors also" (MLDS, Rectorat)

<sup>34</sup> "For a young vulnerable person in a vulnerable situation, the primary concern is not the training, it is to survive ; and I think that is the question" (MLDS, Rectorat)

<sup>35</sup> Decree n° 2013-880 du 1er octobre on the experimentation of the « garantie jeunes ».

<sup>36</sup> Created by the Act of April 16th 1955, its social mission (grants based on social criteria, financial aid) covers all services close to everyday life.

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that micro high school's youth have received the status of pupils and therefore are not eligible to it.

A final example is offered by a local initiative carried out by the INDL (research institute on local development) on the field of youth's housing. Although it has not been officially developed due to the veto opposed by one stakeholder, it is still implemented piecemeal by interpersonal and informal ways. The idea is to connect young people with a local social NGO managing a real estate in Agen city centre. According to our contact within the organization: the resources exist in the area all is needed is connection between actors. He thus points to the need to work closer with field actors in addition to more substantial interventions especially those based on European funding.

To conclude on this aspect, which deserves to be developed with users within the next WP, it remains that interpersonal initiatives are by definition based on the will of a few people and thus remain fragile in case of change of actors. This is a crucial point when dealing with innovation. It is generally fragile and dependent on actors' commitment if policymakers do not provide the conditions for its institutionalization. Beyond that, we can highlight the lack of consistency between the various actions aimed at vulnerable young people. Despite interministeriality advocated by the government's plan "priority to youth" (see WP3), social policies and educational policies do not meet. The effect is deleterious at the Micro high school considering the fact that during its first year of implementation, a third of its students have left for financial reasons.

### **How to complete top down initiatives by bottom up innovation: the case of CAI**

The Ministry of Education encourages its operators to innovate. Since 2005 and the right to educational experimentation, innovation can be supported and assisted locally by the CARDIE (academic research cell for innovation and experimentation) and at the national level by the Ministry (DRDIE Department research and development innovation and experimentation). More recently, the social network for education professionals devoted to innovation (RESPIRE) was launched in January 2012. Working groups are formed around various themes at the national, regional or local scale or even at the level of a teaching institution. Without referring to one or more of these measures, the Director of the Agen CIO (Information and Guidance Center) presented us a local initiative: the Commission for integration assistance (CAI). Complement to the nationally driven programs, the CAI supports youth identified by the PSAD and whose cases are unresolved. It is original by its participatory dimension: the young is received, his own project is at the center of the debates whereas it is not the case with the regular PSAD (local platforms for dropouts).

### **The local mission for youth: Fostering innovation and participation despite management constraints**

In 2012, the Bertrand Schwartz Institute (named after the founder of local missions for youth) sat the foundation principles of action of local missions with the assumption that, to contribute to these changes,

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*"il fallait partir des ressources des jeunes, créer les conditions pour qu'ils puissent porter des projets collectifs, et que donner la possibilité aux jeunes d'agir permettait de changer le regard de la société sur les jeunes et inversement"<sup>37</sup> (B. Schwartz Institute, Director).*

Numerous projects have emerged from the Local missions' action. Some have changed the governance of local missions and their programs. But we did not encounter anything like this in Agen. Outside the Youth Guarantee that was discussed above, the last experimentation conducted by Agen's local mission for youth was the "European service" initiative. Supported by ESF, this program provides internships of three months abroad to vulnerable youngsters in Ireland, UK and Spain. What is important for us to note here is the ability for local missions to develop their own initiatives but also the administrative constraints they might be confronted to due to their mode of governance. The introduction of new services, new actions are provided by the head of the structure (Director and his team). However, it must obtain the approval of its Administrative Board. Therefore, the role of local elected officials involved *de jure* in the local mission's board is not neutral and can sometimes hinder internal initiatives.

Finally and with regards to the answers given by the Agen Local mission's staff to our questionnaire, it should be noticed that if the users are not yet part of the governance, the legitimacy of their point of view is more acknowledged than by teachers of the Micro high school:

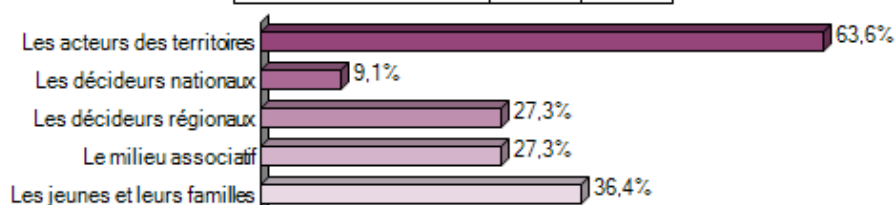
**Q: According to you, innovation to reduce ESL should emerge from: local actors, regional decision-makers, national decision-makers, third sector, youngsters and their families**

**En matière de dispositifs de lutte contre le décrochage scolaire, l'innovation devrait selon vous être développée par :**

**(Vous pouvez cocher plusieurs cases)**

Somme des pourcentages différente de 100 du fait des réponses multiples et des suppressions.

	Nb	% obs.
Les acteurs des territoires	7	63,6%
Les décideurs nationaux	1	9,1%
Les décideurs régionaux	3	27,3%
Le milieu associatif	3	27,3%
Les jeunes et leurs familles	4	36,4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	



<sup>37</sup> "It was necessary to start from the resources of youngsters, to create the conditions for them to endorse collective projects, and provide opportunities for young people to be allowed to change the way society looks on youth and vice versa" (Bertrand Schwartz Institute, Director)

### The example of PRI: Promoting and financing innovation may not be enough

Since 2012, in a call for proposals, the PRI have the opportunity to use a regional call for proposal to fund innovative projects in the cultural, artistic, and mobility support. Until now, the total budget of this call has not been spent. Indeed, for the first, as for the 2nd year, the projects collected by the regional council do not exceed half the budgeted amount. This underutilization of appropriation questions the innovation stimulus. On the one hand, the proposed method is not a normal way for actors of the educational system in charge of a matter (ESL) that does not have its own funding until now. Moreover, the PRI may be located within a high school or college. But the regional council's jurisdiction does not reach the lower secondary schools. This explains partly why the actual PRI of Agen (implanted in lower secondary school – college) will be moved to a high school. The PRI currently welcomes 30 youngsters<sup>38</sup>. The experiment is in its third year of activity. An evaluation of this mode of support for innovation is expected.

## 8. IBJJ

Is dropping out from school or being abandoned by it an inevitable calamity or a repairable injustice? Leaving school without a diploma is not a recent phenomenon, but as soon as possessing a diploma becomes a necessity to enter the labour market, the individual and collective costs of ESL have been turned into a public problem. " *Les coûts sociaux et financiers à long terme de l'échec scolaire sont conséquents. Ceux qui n'ont pas les compétences pour prendre leur place dans la société et dans l'économie engendrent des coûts plus élevés en matière de santé, d'aides sociales, de protection de l'enfance et de sécurité* » (OCDE, 2014)<sup>39</sup>. Policy makers therefore consider the ESL as a loss in the state's investment in pupils, but also by pupils in their own future (Doray, 2014). As shown by the academic work of Pierre Doray, while the concept had little support until the late 1990s, it has continued to develop since. His hypothesis is that this development is based on " *le travail de construction de l'action publique mené par certaines organisations internationales comme l'Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (OCDE) ou le Conseil européen, qui ont tous deux intégré la mesure du décrochage scolaire dans leurs systèmes de données éducatives à partir du début des années 2000* " (Moulin, Doray, Prévost, Delavictoire, 2014)<sup>40</sup>. The assumption tends to be validated, "the fight against early school leaving is a top national priority and an issue in the framework of the "Europe 2020 Strategy" can be read on the website of the French Ministry of National Education<sup>41</sup>. EU policies

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<sup>38</sup>According to the interview conducted with our regional contact: about 800 out of the 7,500 dropouts would be welcomed by PRI.

<sup>39</sup> "The long term social and financial costs of academic failure are substantial. Those who do not have the skills to take their place in society and in the economy generate higher costs in terms of health, welfare, child protection and safety "(OECD, 2014, our translation)

<sup>40</sup> "The construction of public action led by international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Council, both of which have built so far dropout in their systems of education data from the early 2000s" (Moulin, Doray, Prévost, Delavictoire, 2014)

<sup>41</sup> MEN, Eduscol, portail des professionnels de l'éducation. <http://eduscol.education.fr/pid23269/prevention-du-decrochage-scolaire.html>, consulté le 23/08/14.

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therefore are driving transnational dynamics change by setting targets in this area. The European Union aims to reduce the proportion of early school leavers, by reducing it to 10% by 2020. With 12-17% - depending on the method of calculation-, France is particularly targeted. At least, 140,000 young people each year come out of the French school system without a diploma<sup>42</sup>.

Therefore, fighting against ESL appears now among the top normative references of public action in education. Built in as a public problem, the school dropout is set as repairable. All the actors we interviewed are belonging to the institutional field and all of them share this concern. Hence, can they abstract their judgments from this normative orientation? However, what is the basis of the positive implication we have been confronted to? In order to produce mobilization, the ESL cause requires a moral dimension. To what kind of grammar of justification belongs the stakeholders' discourse? On what basis is ESL a relevant inequality to be tackled? In other words, on what informational basis of judgment do the actors involved support their action? That's what this section aims at grounding on the empirical data we gathered from our fieldwork.

Our analysis is based on a definition of principles of justice in terms of institutions versus those defined in terms of life and personal freedom. By doing so, we try to follow the conception of justice<sup>43</sup> highlighted by Amartya Sen and especially the distinction between principles of justice based on the fairness of programs and rules: *niti*; or based on secured social achievements and the human's life and freedom: *nyaya* (Sen, 2012, p.20 and p.488). According to this reflection, this distinction relies on the distinction made in political philosophy between the theory of "social contract" and the "social choice" perspective. To ensure a better life, is it important to rely on legal or moral rules defining what is lawful and what is not, what is legitimate or illegitimate, to seek social arrangements perfectly fair, as induced the theory of "social contract"? Or rather to consider privations, oppressions that people suffer from, compare the various lifestyles that people might have, in a word examine life to judge the justice from the perspective of "social choice"? We will try to understand if a principle dominates or both revolve in a way to ensure that institutions help "directly people to live the way they chose to value" (Sen, 2012, p. 17), allowing in that in the development of capabilities.

### Regional framing (meso-level)

To fulfill the objective of reducing ESL in Aquitaine, the Regional council refers its policy to the Quebec experience and the notion of "perseverance"; which sounds more positive than dropout. Following this policy grammar, ESL is tackled "*en raison de ses impacts socioéconomiques majeurs*" and cannot be considered "*comme étant uniquement une affaire d'école*"<sup>44</sup>. ESL is also a matter of answer to the "*exigences de la demande économique*" (Regional Council, Education direction, Manager). Concretely, the Aquitaine's

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<sup>42</sup> Of which 40,000 unskilled in the sense that their school could not go beyond the college or a first year vocational training (OCDE, 2012),

<sup>43</sup> In the Indian high period jurisprudence.

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.perseverancescolaire.com/portrait-perseverances/>, consulté le 23/07/14

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Regional council has supported the experimentation of “networks for perseverance” during 3 years (2009-2011). This experience consisted in supporting local networks (Berthet & Simon, 2013) and as such forecasting the implementation of the PSAD (local platforms for ESL see above). Since 2011, the Regional Council has reached an agreement with the Rectorat (regional representative of the Ministry of Education) to support local innovations and this partnership is more widely institutionalized as a part of the regional planning contract for the development professional training (CPRDFP). The principle of action of the regional council is to *“prendre appui sur des structures existantes, reconnues et légitimes, pour permettre le développement d’actions nouvelles”*<sup>45</sup> (CRA, 2012). This point is important in terms of policy framing in the context of the French decentralization. Thus, Decentralization has often been implemented (and criticized for redundancy) through the development of their own structures and organizations by the regional councils. In the ESL field, after a period of strong conflicts and competition between the regional council and the regional representative of the Ministry of Education (Rectorat), this principle of cooperation to develop and support the existing structures especially at the local level is quite innovative. Thus, structured around the MLDS, this partnership reinforces local networks through financial support given to innovative actions fostered by the PRIs.

### **IBJJ in tension? what principles of justice at the local level?**

#### **Principles of justice defined in terms of relations to the institutions**

##### *Obligations on both sides*

The actions undertaken by MLDS by the program PRI are foreseen in a contractualist, egalitarian perspective. The core belief is that dropouts are reasonable people and MLDS a fair institution and that both are equally tied by the terms of the contract:

*“En PRI un contrat est signé avec le jeune, cela permet (...) de pouvoir lui rappeler lorsqu’il ne respecte pas un terme du contrat, mais surtout ce qui me paraît important c’est que nous, structure, prenons également des engagements dans notre formule d’accompagnement. de la même façon s’ils ne jouent pas le jeu on arrête le suivi”*<sup>46</sup>.

At the Local mission for youth, the contractual conception also prevails, and as reminded by one of its counselor, for this institution to contract with youngsters:

*“Il faut que les jeunes soient fiables”*<sup>47</sup>.

##### *Causing vulnerability: the failing institution*

Within a single structure, the conceptions of justice are not uniform. Thus, the responsibility can be placed on the family and the school:

*“Souvent qui dit jeune décrocheur dit problématique familiale derrière, on va avoir beaucoup de jeunes qui viennent nous voir qui ont quitté l’école en quatrième, troisième, voire seconde ou*

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<sup>45</sup> “build on existing structures, recognized and legitimate them in order to enable the development of new actions” (CRA, 2012)

<sup>46</sup> “In PRI, a contract with the young, it allows (...) to be able to recall him if he failed to comply with a term of the contract, but what seems also important to me is that we, structure, also make commitments in our accompanying formula. By the same way if they do not play the game the following is stopped”

<sup>47</sup> “It is imperative that they are reliable” (local mission, counselor B)

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*première, en pro etc. et qui ont laissé passer un ou deux ans avant de taper à la porte de la Mission Locale parce qu'il n'y avait pas de relais ni d'information au niveau de l'Education Nationale* <sup>48</sup>.

Sometimes the institution, or at least some of its actors, is questioned. This is the case for the Micro high school developed within the walls of a vocational high school that lost a lot of students. The political will to open a Micro high school in this upper secondary establishment stems from a negative observation: the growth of school leavers. Therefore, one of the challenges is to test a different type of relationship with pupils, a way which would give them a voice, which is not often the case in traditional high schools:

*"C'est pour ça que certains d'emblée d'adhèrent pas à l'aide parce qu'ils n'ont pas l'habitude de ça (parler et être écouté) donc c'est aussi un travail, petit à petit on y arrive. C'est aussi de l'observation, on voit bien en classe celui qui va bien, celui qui ne va pas bien, donc ça peut être l'interpeller et lui parler "* (MLDS, intervenante en Micro Lycée)<sup>49</sup>.

The weakness of participation could be explanatory of certain modes of non take-up.

### *Being held responsible of its own vulnerability: the unreasonable individual*

The unreasonable individual is the motionless, the one that is "taped to the wall" (local mission advisor D) or who have "spent 3 years on a couch" (micro high school teacher 1). The institution is here to save the individual from himself:

*"C'est difficile parce qu'ils ne sont pas prêts du tout à l'emploi, parce qu'il y a des problèmes d'addiction, d'influence liée au phénomène de groupe, et qu'ils n'arrivent pas du tout à avancer sur l'insertion professionnelle"*<sup>50</sup> (mission locale, conseiller D).

The youngster or his failed primary socialization is considered responsible for the difficulties he is confronted to on the labor market or at school. In this perspective school failure is a disorder and has to be treated. The tools are remedies even through mobilizing those of psychological health care (PRE). The person is not suitable a work has to be conducted with the child and his family before he could "enter in teaching" (PRE, regional coordinator).

Managing the ESL is also sometimes considered a struggle for social order. Marginalization is regularly held responsible for insecurity (Glassman, 1991). Under this principle of justice, the first work of practitioners is not to act on the individual conversion factors, but to convert the individual in order to make them suitable to institutional expectations.

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<sup>48</sup> "It is often said that behind young dropouts lies family problems, we have many young people coming to us after having left school (...) and who have left a year or two before tapping on the door of the Mission Local because there has not been any not relay or information given by the educational system"(local mission, Councillor A)

<sup>49</sup> "That's why some of them do not spontaneously consent because they are not used to that (speaking and being heard) so it is also a step by step work, gradually done when you get there. It is also the observation in class. It is obvious that this one is going well, the one who is not doing so well, so I can stop and have a talk with him" (MLDS, working at the micro high school).

<sup>50</sup> "It's difficult because they are not ready at all for employment (but 'à l'emploi' can also mean for use), because they have addiction problems, pair group's influence and they can not move at all on employability "(local mission, Councillor D).

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*"On a sollicité les centres sociaux pour essayer de monter des action de dynamisation, afin de leur redonner envie de faire quelque chose pour eux et qu'ensuite on puisse travailler la question l'insertion professionnelle"<sup>51</sup> (PRE, Coordonateur régional)*

According to our interviewees, an unreasonable youngster is also a young man who lacks maturity, commitment and motivation. A young person who has no project or projects judged unrealistic with regards to his academic abilities, expectations of labor market. A young unreasonable is also a young man who does not have enough "struggled" in the labor market to understand that a diploma is essential and that he/she must perhaps give up the choices he/she has reason to value. But these reasons do not belong to him or her, if they differ from the institutional expectations, they are judged unacceptable.

*"Certains jeunes ou leur famille manquent de réalisme : il y a des jeunes avec des niveaux scolaires très bas qui ont un projet qui n'est pas réalisable, donc ils vont nous demander quelque chose d'impossible à mettre en œuvre et on va essayer de le rendre plus réaliste en lui indiquant une autre voie"<sup>52</sup> (CIO, directeur)*

Regarding the expected level of "maturity", some organizations are choosing not to accept dropouts before a certain deadline. This is why at the Micro high school youngsters under 18 are scarce:

*"C'est aussi une histoire de maturité. On en a fait l'expérience avec un jeune qui est rentré cette année à dix-sept ans et demi (...) il n'avait pas mûri son projet (...). Tous les autres (...) ont testé des petits boulots, se sont cherchés professionnellement et sont arrivés ici tous avec la ferme intention de reprendre des études en ayant la certitude qu'il fallait une qualification aujourd'hui pour faciliter l'accès à l'emploi"<sup>53</sup> (micro lycée, intervenante MLDS).*

### Principles of justice highlighting the persons' lives and freedoms and final judgment

Ideally, a capacitating institution is an institution that can facilitate: *"our ability to scrutinize the values and priorities that we can consider, specially through opportunities for public discussion (this will include considerations of freedom of speech and right to information as well as actual facilities for informed discussion)"* (Sen, 2013, p. xii).

Among the programs under study in the Agen's bouquet, can we find some we could define as actually capacitating in Sen's sense or some we can draw lessons from or define what should be done to have these programs meet some minimal capability requirements? These basic conditions are: ease of access to information and the possibility of an interactive discussion (an opportunity for different voices to be heard).

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<sup>51</sup> "So we asked social centers try to organize some dynamic action to restore their desire to do something for them and then we can work the issue employability " (PRE, regional coordinator).

<sup>52</sup> "Some young people or their families are unrealistic: there are some low skilled youngsters who have a project that is not feasible, so they'll ask something impossible to implement and we will try to make it more realistic in stating it another way "(CIO, director).

<sup>53</sup> "Is also a matter of maturity. We have made the experience with a young man who entered this year at 17 and a half (...) he had not matured his project (...). All other (...) have experienced odd jobs and arrived here with a strong motivation to return to school and were convicted that a qualification is necessary to access employment" (MLDS working at the micro high school).



### *Access to information and interactive discussion*

*“Souvent ils ont des idées, des projets. Mais après le projet il peut être modifié en fonction des capacités des jeunes. Nous on va l’aider à réussir son projet. Imaginez qu’une gamine vous dise « moi je veux un bac pro esthétique », et qu’elle n’a pas le niveau en mathématique ou en physique, parce qu’il y a quand même de la chimie etc. Peut-être qu’on l’arrêtera au CAP plutôt qu’au bac pro”<sup>54</sup> (micro lycée, proviseur)*

Here things can be considered as two opposite perspectives: either the program is capacitating because it allows young people experiencing difficulties to achieve a transformed project – if we consider that without this change, the project will not have survived – it is not precisely insofar as it has been modified. So this begs the question: what is the value of a project? Do the actors interviewed feel concerned by this question and most importantly; do they discuss this with the youngsters they “process”? For the young girl mentioned in the quotation above and who has been prescribed to stop at a lower degree, do this lowered project have the same value than before? If the value is given by degree level, no; if the value is given the acquisition of a certain professional expertise then yes.

**At least, we may say that a capacitating program is designed in a way by which the nature of the value assigned to the project is a question submitted to all and every single stakeholders.**

In terms of access to information, one of the recent progress made in France is the fact that, all young people reported as dropouts should be contacted by the local platform monitoring and supporting dropouts (PSAD) to offer them appropriate care. Indeed, given the difficulties faced by all stakeholders to identify early school leavers, the Inter-ministerial decree of May 22th 2009 requires each secondary education institution to disclose information about youth who have dropped the initial training system without the minimum level of qualification. This Système interministériel d’échange d’information (SIEI – Interministerial information exchange system) generates a list diffused to the managers of PSAD, and Local missions for youth, so that identified young people are contacted. This year, in Agen, 65 youngsters were contacted by telephone. Following this contact, *“we ended up with 10 remaining dropouts”* says the director of the CIO and to conclude *“there happens to be a few that slipped through the net”*.

The interactive discussion is not really present in the programs under study. As mentioned earlier, the CAI allows young people to share their project without any guarantee that the team of case managers will support it. A program that would help young people achieve their goals, i.e. what they value, is a program allowing them more freedom according to Sen. But then what is the yardstick for measuring? If we stick to the choice-making process, not the final result, we could say that the result is obtained by external diktat and not by individual choice, in that the CAI would not be capacitating. This is point must be further investigated in the next WP.

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<sup>54</sup> "Often they have ideas, projects. But after the project can be changed depending on the capabilities of young people. We will help him make his project successful. Imagine a young girl telling you "I want to pass a professional degree in cosmetics" and does not have the mathematics or physics skills, because there is still chemistry etc. Maybe we will stop her at the CAP (lower qualification) rather than BAC pro "(micro high school principal).

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In the Micro high school, pupils are sometimes consulted about pedagogical and organizational matters and their voice taken into account:

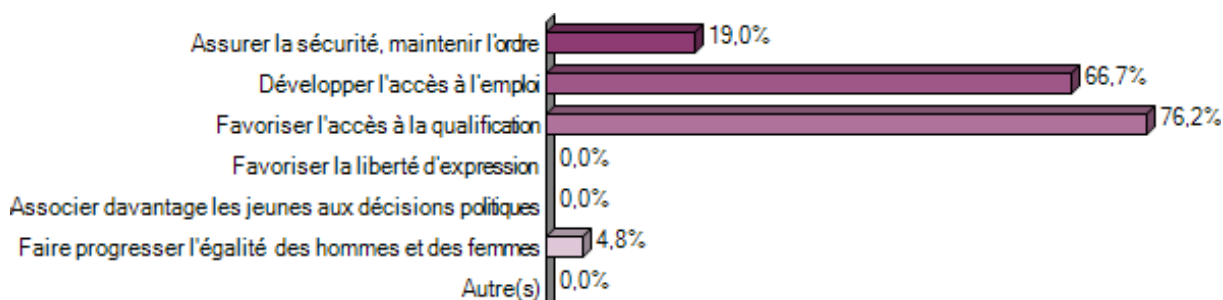
*“On a fait une assemblée de progrès à laquelle tout le monde a participé, les jeunes et l'équipe et on a posé les choses ensemble. On avait préparé cette intervention avec les jeunes, je leur ai dit « on va parler de ce qui vous semble bien sur l'alternance, c'est un dispositif qui ouvre, on a besoin de votre regard aussi (...) On a modifié des choses, on est passé à un système de tuteurs”<sup>55</sup> (micro lycée intervenante MLDS).*

### How do local actors judge the national policy's IBJJ?

Finally, it was interesting to analyze how far local stakeholders know and share the governmental policy for youth's IBJJ, defined in terms of policy priorities. To achieve this, a question was introduced in our questionnaire asking respondents about their level of information on these priorities. The answer to the closed question (**Q: In your opinion, what are the main governmental priorities in terms of youth policy?** (2 max answers by order of importance) includes the following 7 items (deriving from the results of WP3):

- 1) Ensure safety, maintain order;
- 2) Increase access to employment;
- 3) Promote access to qualification;
- 4) Promote freedom of expression;
- 5) Involve young people in policy decisions;
- 6) Progress in gender equality;
- 7) Other (s).

Fig. Local stakeholders' knowledge of governmental priorities

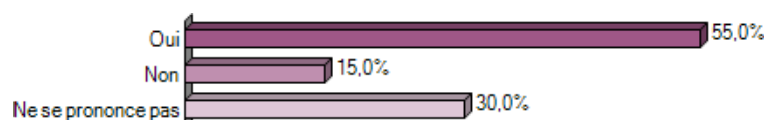


For the micro high school team and for that of the Local mission for youth, as well as for the Director of the CIO (referent of CAI), promoting the expression and participation of youth in political decisions are not part of the government's priorities. Except for the CIO's director who gives an equal status to all, the government's priority is to promote access to qualifications prior to access to employment. The public order and safety matter appears important for one-third of respondents from the Ministry of Education and to a lesser extent for respondents to the local mission (9%).

<sup>55</sup> "We had a progress meeting in which everyone participated, young and team and was asked things together. We had prepared this intervention with young people, I told them 'we will talk about what you appreciate about apprenticeship, it is a new program and we need your advice too. (...) We have modified things, we moved to a tutoring system'(MLDS working in the micro high school).

In terms of adherence, respondents were asked whether they share these priorities. The overall result is a majority of positive share (55%).

Fig. Level of adherence to government's priorities



But it should also be noted that 15% do not share these priorities. Asked separately, the Director of CIO adheres fully to these priorities, while the employees of the Local mission for youth show a massive share (70%). Concerning the micro high school, about one third of the team agrees with these objectives but more of them have chosen not to answer (44%).

Finally, the only link between the two principles of justice (Niti and Nyaya) outlined above can be found in the micro high school. It was expressed by with the MLDS' operator working in this school during her interview:

*"Question: pour conclure qu'est ce qui est le plus important pour vous dans cette prise en charge ?  
Qu'est ce qui est à retenir si on voulait reproduire l'expérience ailleurs ?*

*Partir du jeune en premier, essayer de faire une synthèse de ce qu'il est, de ce qu'il a vécu et de ce qu'il veut faire (...). Très souvent ils ont connu l'échec et ce n'est pas des parcours très faciles. J'aimerais qu'il y ait une permanence d'un psychologue, peut être commencer par un groupe de parole sur divers thèmes, que les jeunes puissent avoir accès à cet accompagnement et s'y diriger d'eux meme"<sup>56</sup>*

Except for this quotation, we have found very few evidence of an IBBJ related to individuals' need fulfillment. Instead, what appears predominant, even at the local level, is an IBBJ deeply rooted in institutional logics where dropouts are mainly considered as recipients of public action rather than actors of their self.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

On the local territory under study here, the Agen metropolitan area and especially the two deprived neighborhoods of Montanou and city centre, it is difficult to find evidences of a real development of individual capabilities of dropouts. Hence, the empirical material collected through interviews and questionnaire shows little space for the material and symbolic

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<sup>56</sup> "Question: to conclude what is most important for you in supporting dropouts? What is to be remembered to replicate the experience elsewhere?

*Answer: Leaving the young first, try to summarize what he/she is, what he/she lived and what he/she wants to do. (...) Very often they have experienced failure and it is not very easy paths. I wish there was a permanent psychologist, or may be start with a discussion group on various topics, and that young people can have access to this support and progress in it by and for themselves "*

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conditions of youngsters' access to voice. At risk pupils, a vulnerable population if any, remain dominated, placed under the influence of policies (when they exist) and have no direct impact on their design and implementation. On the ESL field, a capability friendly social innovation remains largely unobserved at least in Agen.

Local support networks for dropouts exist and have been reinforced by the latest national (PSAD), regional policies (PRI) and local policies (CAI). But our fieldwork suggests that if local network exist, they rely primarily on the implementation of a central initiative eventually through the mediation of regional policymaking (except for CAI). The interactions observed, even with a weak density, are in line with networking mainly institutionalized by ESL national policies through the creation of the PSAD (platforms to monitor and support dropouts).

On the participatory dimension and to put it in a nutshell, our observations suggest that beneficiaries are rarely offered a reflexive space; the assumptions guiding the action of youth policy implementers are built outside of the users' voice. In that sense, these programs can hardly be defined as participative. Another important dimension of participation is the non take-up of institutional resources by youngsters. This point will be further investigated in the next WP5. But little recourse to the programs also says something in terms of freedom and self-identification: that of each to decide how he perceives himself. Is granting the individual identity through the belonging to a target group a kind of denial? Following this effect of individual's processing through institutionalized intervention, we may say that a young dropout may be only a pupil taken in charge by the educational system; or the child of a socially disadvantaged family legitimating the intervention of social services; but also a child with behavioral problems falling under the authority of the medical system, etc. This whole process of institutionalized identification boils down to labeled self by classifying in one category and thereby denying the multiple affiliations generated by complex societies.

In a normative view, the conclusions of this study also suggest a few policy perspectives. Hence, if the analysis of the local support for dropouts in both dimensions of prevention and remediation, using quantitative and qualitative empirical data about the policy bouquet under study, does not show paths for the development of capabilities; some lessons can still be drawn. Analyzing these hollows could reveal some areas of improvement.

Conducting a capability friendly support network policy should minimally:

- Improve mutual knowledge of each other (stakeholders) and check the consistency of aims and expectations.
- Ensure that the workload weighing on case managers allow an adequate time to work with its partners.
- Build policy transfer mechanisms so that difficulties encountered in bottom-up program's implementation are assessed at a policymaking level. Moreover, this assessment should be conducted with the participation of implementers and beneficiaries and should be conducted to improve local innovation.
- Systematically ask the beneficiaries in order to assess and revise it eventually to develop new ones if necessary with regards to the diversity of individual's difficulties and values. Especially this assessment should question the quality of networking and the experience they have from the service delivered.
- Build and share a common regulatory framework between the different sectors and

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stakeholders involved in the upstream and downstream of the dropout treatment (prevention - remediation).

- Involve firms and industries – who for the most will / could / should ultimately be vectors of the professional integration of dropouts – in the design of ESL policies.
- Require as a pre-condition for the sustainability of local initiatives their assessment on the basis of implementers and users' evaluation.

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