Net.Doc

.130

Les enjeux d'une approche intégrée des politiques de l'emploi

Volet français du projet LOCALISE

Thierry Berthet

Clara Bourgeois
Centre Emile Durkheim, CNRS, université de Bordeaux
Centre associé régional du Céreq de Bordeaux

mars 2015

PRÉSENTATION

Localise est un projet de recherche européen (PCRD-FP7) qui a débuté en juillet 2011 et s'est achevé en juillet 2014. L'objectif principal de cette recherche est de comparer la gouvernance locale des politiques de l'emploi et de cohésion sociale dans six pays européens : l'Allemagne, la Suède, l'Italie, la Pologne, le Royaume-Uni, et la France. Face à d'importants changements dans la gouvernance locale des politiques de l'emploi et de cohésion sociale dans de nombreux pays membres de l'Union Européenne, le projet s'intéresse aux défis organisationnels d'une approche intégrée des politiques de l'emploi et de cohésion sociale. Il interroge les contextes institutionnels et leur influence sur les politiques de cohésion sociale et de l'emploi et les enjeux d'une approche intégrée. Ce programme de recherche est séquencé en *work packages* (WP) qui abordent ses différentes dimensions. Ce sont les différents rapports relatifs à ces *work packages* qui sont présentés dans cette publication.

WP2 : The National Governance of Integrated Social Cohesion Policy

Les rapports nationaux réalisés dans le cadre du WP2 ont pour objectif de présenter la gouvernance nationale des politiques d'activation. Ces politiques ont introduit un changement de paradigme dans le secteur de l'emploi en promouvant notamment une action publique à la croisée de différents secteurs et une territorialisation plus forte, afin de proposer une approche individualisée et globale.

Dans ce rapport, il s'agit de donner une image globale du système politico-administratif français qui soutient ces politiques d'activation, en montrant leur évolution dans leur rapport au territoire et aux processus de décentralisation, ainsi qu'au regard de leurs relations avec d'autres secteurs d'action publique, comme celui des politiques sociales ou de la santé. Il vise ainsi à répondre à la question suivante : comment les changements induits par l'activation se sont-ils traduits en France ?

En s'appuyant sur une approche diachronique, ce rapport présente donc le paysage institutionnel et organisationnel des politiques de l'emploi en France.

WP4 : The local governance of social cohesion

Le WP4 est une étude comparée de trois entités locales, réalisée par chaque partenaire du projet. Le rapport issu de ce work package vise à présenter les mondes locaux de la gouvernance des politiques de l'emploi et de cohésion sociale dans trois territoires aux caractéristiques socio-économiques distinctes. Le rapport français s'est intéressé à trois agglomérations : Bordeaux, Tours et Montpellier. L'étude montre des systèmes de gouvernance locaux relativement similaires au sein desquels les acteurs locaux ont toutefois une certaine marge de manœuvre, leur permettant d'adapter les politiques publiques sur leur territoire.

Ce rapport s'intéresse à la mise en œuvre d'une approche intégrée : quel contexte institutionnel et/ou organisationnel freine ou facilite une telle approche ? Il montre que le développement sur le territoire des politiques d'emploi intégrées est confronté à différents obstacles : la rencontre de différentes cultures institutionnelles et/ou professionnelles, une dynamique principalement descendante, ou encore une répartition des compétences encore vague. Cependant, diverses variables peuvent jouer un rôle de facilitateur : la proximité, ou la forte tradition d'un travail en réseau.

En somme, ce rapport présente la (ou les) gouvernance(s) locale(s) des politiques de l'emploi et de cohésion sociale au prisme des changements induits par la tendance à l'activation.

WP5 : The local usages of Europe

Le WP5 cherche à comprendre l'impact de l'Europe sur les politiques locales de l'emploi et de cohésion sociale. Le rapport s'intéresse plus spécifiquement aux différents usages faits de l'Europe à l'échelle locale, qu'il s'agisse d'un usage cognitif, stratégique ou de légitimation. Il s'agit donc de comprendre le poids des financements européens, mais aussi celui des prérogatives et recommandations européennes sur les pratiques locales dans le secteur de l'emploi. Enfin, ce rapport présente les raisons qui sous-tendent tel ou tel usage de l'Europe : par exemple, s'agit-il d'une manière d'obtenir des financements, ou bien d'une adhésion aux discours ? Dans le cas français, on constate une méconnaissance du discours européen et un usage principalement stratégique de l'Europe, pouvant parfois avoir un impact cognitif (notamment à travers le développement de l'évolution systématique).

WP6 : The individualisation of interventions

L'individualisation des services d'insertion professionnelle est au cœur des discours de nombreux acteurs européens, nationaux et locaux depuis plusieurs années. En France, le récent leitmotiv de Pôle emploi : « faire plus pour ceux qui en ont le plus besoin » en représente l'apogée. Dans ce rapport, il s'agit de comprendre cette tendance: dans quelle mesure peut-on parler d'individualisation ? Comment s'opérationnalise-t-elle ? En questionnant la marge de manœuvre des conseillers dans leur relation avec l'usager, ainsi que la catégorisation des demandeurs d'emploi et la standardisation des services, ce rapport vise à mesurer le degré et la nature de l'individualisation à la française. L'analyse porte sur les services pour les demandeurs d'emploi de longue durée dans une agglomération.

WP7 : The impact of an integrated approach on social cohesion

Le WP concluant le projet de recherche Localise s'intéresse à l'impact des politiques d'emploi et de cohésion sociale étudiées tout au long de ce projet, au travers différents niveaux d'analyse (macro, meso et micro) et dans différents contextes. Ce rapport repose sur les mêmes données empiriques que le WP6, et cherche à comprendre, en interrogeant les conseillers et les demandeurs d'emplois de longue durée, de quelle manière les services traitent les différentes problématiques freinant l'insertion professionnelle et comment s'articulent les acteurs de l'insertion entre eux. Ainsi, cette analyse permet de mieux saisir le contrat social établi entre l'usager, le conseiller et plus globalement, l'Etat.

SOMMAIRE

WP2 - The National Governance of Integrated Social Cohesion Policy

After the Second World War, employment policies in France were aimed at securing full employment. Facing major restructuring, the government tried to implement policies enabling people to deal with these changes. It is in this context that the unemployment insurance was created in 1958. At that time, the main concern of the State was to have an adequate workforce and thus, was not linked to potential economical crisis and its consequences in terms of employment.

However, unemployment increased at the end of the 70's and introduced a new kind of poverty. This poverty did not only reach people who were legitimately out of work, such as older or disabled people, but it also reached an increasing part of the potentially active population: the unemployed and those facing exclusion. To deal with this increasing unemployment, the government set up an intervention policy on the labour market and on the population. What kind of measures was implemented and how were they governed? What was the dynamic established at the end of the XXth century?

First of all, it is important to point out that, during the 70's and the 80's, most of the implemented reforms in this field were managed by the State (even though some exceptions should be noticed, such as the implementation of *Missions Locales* in 1982 (local employment offices targeting young people)). However, in 1982-1983 the first threshold of French decentralisation was crossed. It enabled territorial authorities to administrate themselves. These laws also made regions the local authority. The transfer of competences to communes, departments and regions was planned through the creation of competences blocks. These blocks were supposed to be managed by the most relevant authority. However, their distribution was not easy, as some competences are relevant to multiple authorities. This difficulty to divide them up resulted in the establishment of some common competences. These laws were implemented at the time when social issues faced many changes, notably in terms of the rise of a so-called "social exclusion". This required partnerships between local authorities regarding some of these competences blocks (Lafore, 2003). Finally, these laws created a *fonction publique territoriale* (local public service). Thus, it reveals that in a context of territorialisation, employment issues are mainly still under the competence of the State.

An analysis of the measures which were put into effect at that time reveals two main kinds of policies: policies aimed at promoting employment as well as policies targeting the employment of specific groups (affirmative actions). Indeed, in the beginning, the need to foster employment for those who were the furthest away from work was the priority. This took the shape of specific support for young people, occupational trainings, redeployment etc. Then, long-term unemployment increased and the government realised that not only did it matter to support the unemployed, but also was it important to foster job opportunities (Berthet, Guilleton, 2005: 52). For example, pre-retirement was largely used in order to remove some groups from the active population.

Hence, to deal with the new challenges in the field of employment and social cohesion, the focus was put on the rise of vulnerable categories within the active population, the concept of 'insertion'[1], and on job creation.

Until 1988, social benefits were targeting people with special needs or inadequate resources. The benefit they received was aimed to compensate for their situation, and for the specificity that made them unable to work (age, health, etc.). The existing social benefits included: the lone parents allowance (*allocation de parent isolé API*), the disabled adult allowance (*allocation aux adultes handicaps AAH*), the specific solidarity allowance (*allocation de solidarité spécifique ASS*), the inclusion allowance (*allocation d'insertion*), the widowhood allowance (*allocation veuvage*), the minimum income for older people (*minimum vieillesse*) and finally the additional invalidity allowance (*allocation supplémentaire d'invalidité*). In 1988, the Prime Minister Michel Rocard presented the law establishing the minimum income scheme (*revenu minimum d'insertion RMI*), which promoted a universal benefit scheme over a principle of specialty (Barbier, 2006). Indeed, it aimed to abolish the gap between people able to work and those unable to work. The RMI also

---

[1] Barbier explains that the concept of *insertion* is hard and complex to translate. He defines it as a "separate sector of public intervention, which gradually emerged as an 'intermediate' area between traditional social policy and traditional labour market programmes" (Barbier, 2000). According to him, programmes based on *insertion* can be seen as the beginning of a french activation (Barbier, 2006).

introduced an '*insertion contract*' which established an inclusion plan dealing notably with health and housing issues as well as employment and training. In the context of rising unemployment in the country in the 1990's, the RMI quickly became one the main measures of the French welfare system.

During the 90's, measures aimed at fostering job creation were launched. These measures included a decrease of social contributions, which used to finance most of the social protection system, policies promoting part time jobs etc. The focus was thus put more on promoting job creation and less on activating the unemployed. In order to widen the financing of social protection, the government created a generalised social contribution in 1990 (*CSG – contribution sociale généralisée*).

Until 2000, the French government has not really tried to set up a punitive approach for the unemployed who were not actively seeking a job (even though unemployed were expected to). France acted as a last-resort employer in order to avoid even higher unemployment. However, even if subsidised jobs established during these years managed to enable a transition towards standard jobs, most beneficiaries stayed in the subsidised jobs or precarious ones. Nevertheless, activation seemed to be slowly implemented in employment and social cohesion policies. The overall analysis brings to light a hybrid system caught between a universal and a liberal system (Barbier, 2006), also presented as a "Bimarckian / Beveridgean welfare mix" (Barbier, 2000). Even though most of the academics seem to agree that at this stage, the liberal system was more likely to take over the universal one.

The previous brief introduction on employment and social cohesion national policies before the XIXth century has already set up the context. It will help to understand the last decade and the current situation. This will be presented and analysed throughout this paper with a focus on the national multi level, multi stakeholder and multi dimensional approach.

This period - from 2000 to present – was shaped by political changes, a fluctuating unemployment that has strongly increased over the last years (see below), several new employment policies and the current economic crisis.

Unemployment rates in France and in Europe
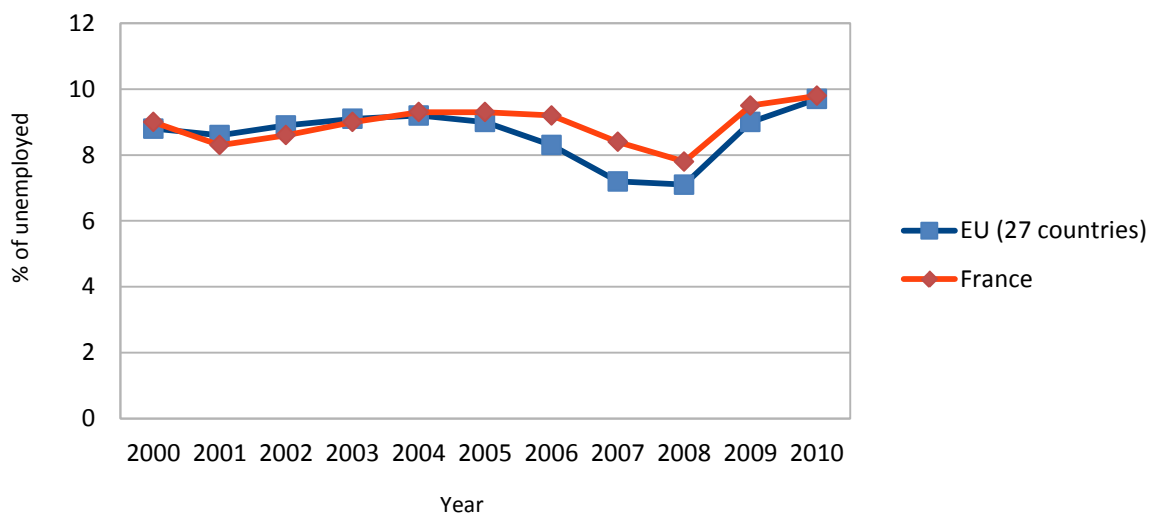
Source: Eurostat

Unemployment Rate
gender based

Unemployment rate
young people
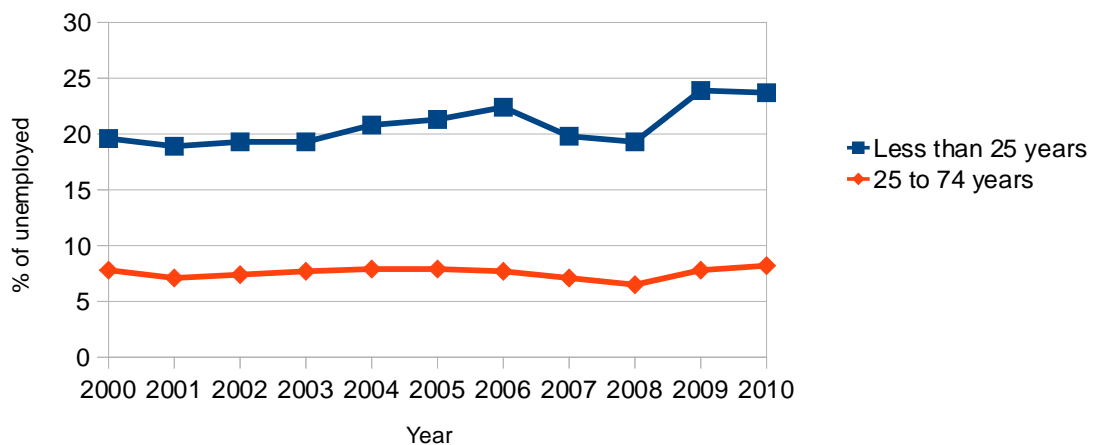
We noticed that activation was introduced - although still weak - before the XXIst century. However, measures established at the end of the 90's reveal a clear will to foster it. What were the social cohesion and employment policies that were implemented during the last decade? How did France managed the new challenges and what kind of governance was and is promoted? These are the questions that will be addressed in the paper.

1. INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND POLICY FIELDS: CURRENT MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF EMPLOYMENT IN FRANCE

The last decade has been notably shaped by the reinforcement of activation policies. However, even though incentives were promoted and the importance of actively seeking a job have been promoted, the way France deals with the need for a multi level, multi dimensional and multi stakeholder approach seem to be unsure. That is the main point that will be detailed in the following part. What are the levels, the policy fields and the actors at stake in terms of employment and social cohesion policies?

At first, it should be remembered that the unemployment rate in France has reached 9,9% in September 2011, but remains close to the 27 EU's countries average (9,7%). In France, youngsters clearly appear as a vulnerable category, as their unemployment rate has constantly remained above the European average during the last decade (see above figure). However, the adult unemployment situation shows no difference with France's European neighbours.

According to OECD statistics, the long-term unemployment rate remained stable (around 40%) during the last decade. The employment rate of 64% is also close to the OECD and EU's average. The average age of retirement (60) is clearly inferior to the EU's average (61,4 years). Finally, the part time workers' rate in France is under the European average rate whereas the short-term contract employee's rate is one point above the European rate.

1.1. Employment policies: main organizational characteristics

Since WWII, the field of employment policy fall within the competence of the national state; but it relies on the contribution of a large number of organisations regarding its implementation. A recent parliamentary report[2] has identified no less than 85 different kinds of institutions dedicated to labour, employment and training policies. In sum, the governance of the employment policy is a complex and multi-stakeholders task.

The public authority in charge of employment policy is the labour, employment and health Ministry (actual minister Xavier Bertrand) and its public agencies. The main administrative units concerned are (NUTS1):

- The *Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle* (DGEFP),
- The *Direction de l'animation, de la recherche, des études et de la statistique* (DARES)
- The *Direction de l'administration générale et de la modernisation des services* (DAGEMO).

The local administrative units in charge of implementing the employment policy are:

- At the regional level (NUTS2): the *Directions Régionales des Entreprises, de la Concurrence, de la Consommation, du Travail et de l'Emploi* (DIRRECTE)
- At the local level (NUTS3): the ministry's territorial.

Two main public agencies are contributing to the implementation of specific tasks: *Pôle emploi* and *Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes* (AFPA public agency for professional training). *Pôle emploi* is in charge of career guidance, placement and payment of the job seekers, while the AFPA provides training courses and Prior Learning Assessment. Created by merging the former Agence nationale pour l'emploi (ANPE) and the unemployment insurance (UNEDIC), *Pôle Emploi* deals with adults (above 25). It outsources youngsters - aged between 16 and 25 - to the *mission locale* network, and the disabled to the *Cap emploi* network.

---

[2] Assemblée nationale, *Rapport d'information déposé par la Commission des affaires sociales en conclusion des travaux de la mission sur la flexicurité à la française* (rapporteur Pierre Morange), 28 avril 2010.

Concerning ALMP, the public expertise is provided by a series of public bodies such as:

- the *DARES*, the *Institut national des statistiques et des études économiques* (INSEE),
- the *Conseil d'Orientation pour l'Emploi* (COE), t
- the *Conseil d'analyse stratégique* (CAS),
- the *Centre d'études de l'emploi* (CEE),
- the *Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications* (CEREQ)
- and the *Conseil de l'emploi, des revenus et de la cohésion sociale* (CERC).

The role of social partners regarding employment policies has increased during the last few years. The French government has fostered a stronger involvement of social partners in labour market reforms. This approach can be explained by the promotion of a new decision-making process based on the negotiation of national intersectoral agreement (ANI) prior to any legislative action. It has led to the signature of 5 ANI during the years 2008-2009, which have been immediately translated into French law. However, this negotiation process was strongly supervised by the French government who was eager to control the agenda. It regularly puts pressure on social partners to come to an end. The government even threatened them to use the legislative way if the agenda was delayed.

In terms of territorialisation, a slow but constant process has been initiated during the last three decades after a period of strong centralism that characterizes the French planning era. The French employment policy relies on three major fields, each of them having its own relationship with territorialisation. The first one appeared during the 80's and has been revitalized by the 2008 crisis. Its main objective is to support industrial restructuring and intervenes on declining industrial districts. It does not support local development strategies, but aims at giving immediate answers to industrial zones facing massive firing-out plans. The second field - labour market intervention - is from far the most important in the French employment policy. It is mainly targeted on exposed individuals (youngsters, female workers, disabled workers, seniors), rather than on territories. The last branch of the national policy – employment promotion – has always been relatively weak and underfinanced, but is clearly territorialised, and operates in a bottom-up way by financing local development projects.

Giving more autonomy to local administrative officers also supports territorialisation. This policy (called '*déconcentration*' in France) is implemented by giving global funding to local officers, or by promoting project management methods (local diagnosis, local action plan, local governance).

The employment public policy's budget represents 18% of the national spending, and at least 1% of the GDP. The global employment policy reaches 51 billion Euros, including fiscal expenses and tax exoneration.

Employment policy's budget
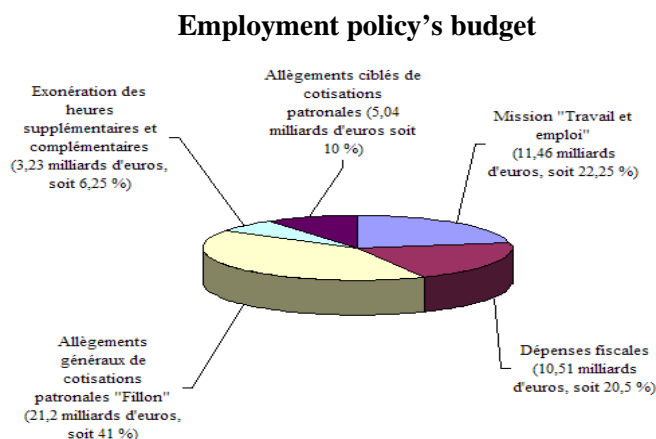
Source: Senate, PLF 2011, labour & employment mission

Unemployment benefits represent about 62% of the former income while the duration of these benefits is of 382 days in 2008, which represents a decreasing average, compared to 2005. In order to get paid, job seekers are deemed to prove that they have been working at least 6 month during the last 22 months preceding their job loss.

During their period of unemployment, job seekers are offered different levels of service by *Pôle emploi* according to their situation and their estimated risk in terms of long-term unemployment. Four levels of service are proposed: free access, individualised coaching, reinforced placement and social backing. The level of service is defined by *Pôle emploi* in a two steps procedure: a statistical profiling test conducted by the job payment services and an interview with a guidance counsellor who corroborates - or not - the initial profiling.

To keep its unemployment benefits, the job seeker must show an active behaviour, which is verified every four months by *Pôle emploi* agents. He must prove the effectiveness of "positive and repeated acts" to find a job, sign on at his local job office, follow whatever training or coaching program is proposed to him, answer every *Pôle emploi*'s summoning, and finally accept every job globally compatible with his competencies and his geographical mobility. To enforce these procedures, a system of gradual disciplinary measures has been established. The number of disciplinary measures has tripled between 2005 and 2006.

A study conducted on the non-recourse to unemployment benefits shows that more than one third of the eligible beneficiaries do not get registered and paid.

2. EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL COHESION REFORMS SINCE 2000 IN FRANCE

Before presenting the current French system, it is of paramount importance to understand how we got here. Hence, the objective is now to identify the measures that were implemented during the last decade and to highlight the French governance of employment and social policies. First of all, what measures were established to foster activation? What were the reforms that affected employment and social cohesion issues since 2000? What are the policy fields that have been linked to employment policies? Who is in charge of these policies? These questions will enable us to draw a picture of the dynamic of the national governance of an integrated approach.

2.1. Towards a stronger activation?

During the last decade, several changes have occurred regarding employment and social cohesion issues. Indeed, France has gone through several reforms aimed at establishing new dynamics towards greater activation. What kind of reforms was implemented and what kind of activation was therefore established?

2.1.1. A major step towards activation: individualisation and contractualisation

In 2000, in the context of growth and of job creation, a negotiation between social partners regarding the *UNEDIC* Agreement (in charge of the unemployment insurance) was organised. As a result, the unemployment insurance became more active and the unemployment benefit turned to a back-to-work benefit. Indeed, this benefit was paid provided that the unemployed signed the *PARE – plan d'aide au retour à l'emploi* (back-to-work support plan). Based on a mutual commitment, the main components of that plan were the non-digressive benefit, as well as the individualised action plan *(plan d'action personnalisé pour un nouveau départ - PAP ND)* defined and implemented by the national employment agency (*ANPE*).

Although back-to-work principles had already started to increase within the previous years, they were clearly strengthened by this reform. So far, even though the will to implement back-to-work measures was obvious,

the implemented measures did not much rely on sanctions. The *PARE* reinforced these sanctions, which resulted in an increase of people losing their unemployment benefits.

This new plan brings to light an individualisation and a contractualisation of employment services. It promotes a new way of understanding unemployment through a change of its causes: if the unemployed doesn't find a job, it is not because of economical issues; the unemployed becomes responsible for his situation as he is given all the resources he or she needs to find a job. This perspective reveals a change regarding who is responsible for employment issues: from the State to the individual.

Even though the *UNEDIC* reinforced its role through this measure, the government put the support of the unemployed under the competence of the French national employment agency. The *UNEDIC* financed the measure by financing staff for the national employment agency and financing support services and trainings. In sum, its role in terms of management – and, to some extent, regarding the definition of guidelines, increased. Regarding the *ANPE,* this reform reinforced its objectives and means (Conseil de l'emploi, des revenus et de la cohésion sociale, 2005: 9).

The *Revenu minimum d'activité RMA* (activity minimum income), created in 2003, reinforced activation policies at the beginning of the decade. Indeed, the RMA offered new minimum income to people who had been unemployed for at least two years, in the setting of the insertion contract established by the *RMI*. It enables an employer, who hires someone who fulfils these requirements for more than twenty hours at the minimum salary, to get the money the employee would have gotten with their traditional minimum income.

2.1.2. Attempts to implement a stronger activation

France, at the beginning of this decade, was thereby trying to foster activation. However, this attempt also resulted in the creation of measures, which might not follow this trend.

In 2001, the *prime pour l'emploi - PPE* (Employment bonus) was established. This incentive measure aims at encouraging the unemployed to seek a job. The State gives a bonus to people with a low salary. If the amount of the tax credit is higher than the paid tax, it becomes a negative tax. Throughout the last decade, the amount of the *PPE* has increased. Even though this measure follows activation principles - as it aims to encourage the unemployed to seek a job - it is still debated whether it motivates unemployed or whether it is only seen as a bonus. A national report (Dares, 2008) reveals that the beneficiaries of the *PPE* do not take this measure as an incentive but as support measure. Therefore, the unemployed do not take it into account when seeking a job.

Before the XXIst century, the trend was to foster job creation by taking people out of work (through pre-retirement or at the end of the XXth century, thanks to working-time reduction). Thus, it was supposed to promote the integration of some vulnerable employment groups (young people, women, etc.). At the beginning of the XXIst century, this trend was reversed and people were kept at work as long as possible. Pre-retirement was stopped and the number of years of contribution required to gain a full pension kept going up (Caune, Jacquot and Palier, 2011). Even if these measures do not reflect activation policies, they do point out a will to keep - or to get - all the working-age population at work. It also shows how the beginning of this new decade was shaped by important changes to the French employment policies.

2.1.3. Social Cohesion Law and Plan

A social action plan was presented in 2004. This plan was scheduled for the period from 2005 to 2009. It tackles several issues: employment, housing and chance equality. The Social Cohesion Plan and the Social Cohesion Law - voted in 2005 - aimed to fight against unemployment and social exclusion.

The latter defined the Public Employment Service and tried to bring all the actors working on employment and social cohesion issues together. The definition distinguishes three levels of stakeholders: the first one – responsible for this public service - being the State services*,* the national employment agency *(ANPE),* the organisation in charge of professional training (*Afpa*) and the unemployment insurance fund (*UNEDIC*); the

second – taking part in the public service - being local and regional authorities ; and the third being all the organisations (public or private) which can take part to this service (non-governmental organisations, temporary work agencies, etc.).

The Social Cohesion Plan implemented the *Maisons de l'emploi* in order to reinforce the coordination between different services at the local level and to host job seekers.

It also introduced the *dossier unique du demandeur d'emploi* (the single file of the unemployed) to make the communication easier between unemployment benefits and the institution in charge of supporting the unemployed in his or her job search.

These reforms changed both the sanctions for the unemployed who do not fulfil their contract and the way these sanctions are managed. Indeed, since 2005, different levels of sanctions appeared. Moreover, the authority in charge of sanctioning the unemployed changed. It was originally the local representatives of the Ministry of Employment (*DDTEFP*). The Social Cohesion Law enabled the national agency of employment and the *ASSEDIC* to take this decision even though the *DDTEFP* had to confirm it. Thereby, both the *ANPE* and the *ASSEDIC* became more involved in controlling the unemployed. "In sum, through successive adds, the current engineering would lead to having two placement and support organisations, the *ANPE* and the *UNEDIC,* as well as two paths to control the job search" (Conseil de l'emploi, des revenus et de la cohésion sociale, 2005: 30, author's translation).

2.1.4. Towards a wider Public Employment Service?

In 2008, the government decided to merge the *ANPE* with the unemployment insurance network "in order to provide job seekers with a single correspondent for registration, placement, benefits and support services" (French National Reform Programme 2008-2010, 40). This merge was initiated in order to facilitate procedures based on a national multi-purpose network, which aimed at "broadening the range of services provided to all users of the Public Employment Service" (cf. infra).

Established in 2008, the *Revenu de solidarité active RSA* (the active solidarity income) replaced the *RMI* and the single parent allowance. The *RSA* was set up to fight against possible inactivity traps. It aims to complete the income of the beneficiary, to "guarantee its recipients sufficient means for living, in order to combat poverty, encourage the exercise of or return to professional activity and assist in the social integration of recipients" (Law n°2008-1249 of December 1st 2008). It supplies an income provided an active search for a job or a vocational project (training) is being carried out. It clearly shows a major step towards activation and became an exemplary measure.

Subsidies contracts are of paramount importance in terms of employment policies in France. However, they consequently decreased since the beginning of the XXIst century and then increased slightly when the economic crisis emerged in 2008 (it went from 800 000 beneficiaries in 2000 to 265 000 in 2008 and to 338 000 at the end of 2010).

In 2008, the "unique insertion contract" was implemented to simplify the large range of subsidies contracts that used to exist. This contract can work on the - "*secteur marchand*" and the - "*secteur non marchand*". The latter sector usually uses these contracts in the context of important unemployment to compensate for the large number of unemployed. The role of the State as employer of last resort is thereby still of paramount importance nowadays.

A recent study (Cour des Comptes, 2011) shows that short subsidies contracts are not as successful as vocational training or support in terms of "back-to-work" measure. They conclude that it is more of a social cohesion policy than an employment policy. This is because they keep people active for a certain time and thus may have a major impact on social integration.

2.2. Central state versus a dynamic of decentralisation

France as a central State is an idea that remained for a long time. It is not until 1982 – 1983 that a decentralisation dynamic was initiated by means of the Laws Deferre, previously presented.

The secondary steps toward a more decentralised state were the laws passed in 2003 and 2004, along with the Constitutional changes in 2003. Indeed, until 2003, the Constitution declared: "France is an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic". In 2003, the concept of decentralised management was added to this quotation. Along with this change, the new Constitution acknowledged regions as local authorities.

The three laws passed simultaneously were dealing with three issues: the first one dealt with local authority experiments, the second one with local responsibilities, and the last one with financial autonomy.

Regarding the transfer of competences, it distributed responsibilities in the following way: it gave regions the responsibility of management of planning and policy, it transferred the responsibility of solidarity policies and management of infrastructures to departments, and finally, it gave communes responsibility for proximity policies.

Moreover, the minimum income (*RMI*) was decentralised in 2003 to departments[3]. Departments, thereby reinforced, are seen as the main actor regarding social issues. However, the social welfare system dealing with employment is still under the responsibility of the State. Indeed, the central authority still controls the overall employment strategy: "unlike social policies which have been broadly decentralised in France since 1982-83, the French central state remains fully responsible for active labour market policies (except for vocational training, mainly in hands of the regions), for labour relations and working conditions (labour inspectorate), for social and vocational integration of migrants and for equal opportunities policies" (European Centre for social welfare policy and research, 2006 : 19).

A new reform on local authorities was passed in 2010. It notably aims to simplify the way the country is divided. Indeed, regions and departments are supposed to become more closely aligned and major cities will have more responsibilities. Hence, in a way, this reform tends to avoid the multiplication of stakeholders. However, has not yet been implemented and is too current to be analysed.

2.3. Towards an integrated approach?

The social cohesion plan presented earlier, set for the period of 2005-2009 by the French government, aimed to implement an integrated approach "seeking simultaneously to combat problems in employment, housing and society more widely" (European Industrial Relations Observatory, 2004). It addresses several issues, which used to be treated in a segmented way, it was supposed to deploy "all the political 'levers' capable of breaking the current vicious circle and establishing a 'virtuous' one of success and cohesion" (cf. infra). The main measures of this plan were to do the following: "fight against unemployment", promote "youth employment", "combat exclusion, increase "housing", and promote "equal opportunities at school and between regions" (cf. infra). This plan shows that the French government intends to promote a more integrated approach.

But to what extent is such an approach implemented? And how it is put into practise? Which fields are concerned?

In regards to this question, analysing the history of the Labour Ministry highlights some of the relations established between the field of employment and other fields. Indeed, since the 80's, the name of the ministry in charge of employment issues has often changed and included several other social issues. In 1981, its name changed to the Ministry of National Solidarity. Two years later, Social Affairs was added to that name. The name was then changed several times during the following years to the Employment Ministry, Labour Ministry and Social Affairs Ministry. In sum, social issues were often brought together with employment

---

[3] In 2010, the new minimum income - the RSA - was extended to people under the age of 25. This extension is financed by the central State for two years.

issues.

Through the Social Cohesion Plan, the link between social and employment issues is strongly reinforced and widened as it takes into account housing issues.

In 2007, the management of employment issues was transferred to the Ministry of Finances. Thus, even though social and employment had been brought together lasting previous years, these fields were now separated. However, this organisation did not last very long, and a Ministry of Labour, Employment and Health became responsible for these fields soon after. Thus, the Ministry in charge of employment and social issues went through several reorganisations, especially within recent years (two reorganisations in 2009). This explains why it is complicated to talk about a clear integrated approach. Indeed, even though social issues have clearly been brought together with employment issues, housing and local planning are sometimes included and are some other times assigned to another ministry. Hence, it appears that the government has not implemented a stable integrated approach but has tried to divide the responsibilities among the ever-changing ministries as they see fit.

Activation was thus reinforced throughout the last decade. However, even though an integrated approach has been implemented around social and employment issues, its key lines keep changing. This brings to light a difficulty to integrate different fields with one another. In terms of governance, decentralisation was also reinforced during this period. However, although territorialisation was important regarding many social issues, employment issues are still mainly under the competence of the central state. Current reforms will probably change some of the transfer of competences; but it is doubtful that it will have a major impact on the field of employment.

After analysing employment and social cohesion policies in the last decade regarding its multi stakeholders, multi levels and multi dimensional approach, the current situation will now be detailed with a focus on its governance scheme.

3. FRENCH INTEGRATED APPROACH AND OTHER FIELDS' CONTRIBUTION

In the perspective of an integrated approach to activation, several public action domains have to be intertwined into common programs or organizations. One must keep in mind that the political and administrative framework of the French central state has been characterized by a strong compartmentalization. The heritage of the French nation-building process has led to a great centralization, and a strong autonomy of political sectors. The evolution towards an integrated approach, which aimed at transgressing these political and administrative boundaries, represents two critical challenges for France. The first one is to build horizontal coordination between ministries and administration at the national level. The second one consists in developing vertical coordination between central and local state services on the one hand, and between state administration and subnational political bodies (region, department, municipalities) on the other hand.

The following scheme represents the link between separate ministries:
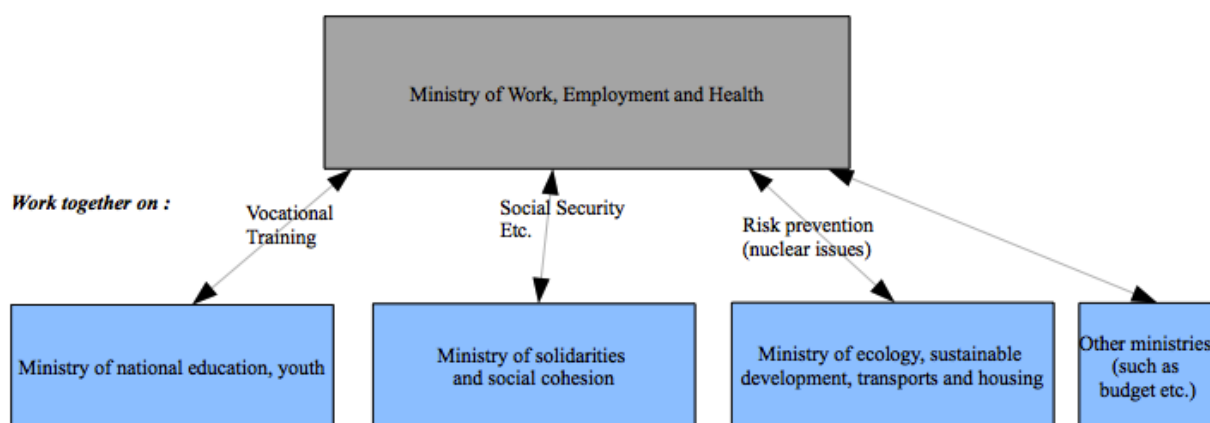
We can thus notice that some policy fields are connected, as an integrated approach requires. However, the link established between the ministry in charge of housing issues and the ministry in charge of employment issues appears to bring together health and ecology. Therefore, housing and employment have been spared any linkage regarding inter ministries' work, even though the importance of this link was brought to light by the Social Cohesion Plan in 2005.

The ministry of Work, Employment and Health is responsible for:

- Work
- Employment
- Vocational Training
- Retirement
- Health

All the policy fields that have just been listed represent the components of a French integrated approach at the national institutional level (it might indeed defer at the local level where other actors are involved and work differently). However, it is important to precise that all these fields also include several other fields. For example, social security - which results from the link between the ministry in charge of social issues and the ministry in charge of employment issues – works on family issues, addiction etc.

For the last three decades, the field of social policies has been confronted to a major trend of territorialisation, which can be read at three levels:

- Transferring political competencies to subnational public authorities (decentralization)

- Strengthening the autonomy of local state administration representatives ('*déconcentration*')

- Creating new territorial organizations offering integrated services in the field of the employment and training.

These three logics of action are at stake in social policies generating competition and redundancy between organisations and programs. To fully understand this, it must be reminded that the French decentralizing legislation has left large areas of uncertainty in the distribution of competencies between state and local bodies. Yet, it is precisely these areas that are at stake in the challenge of an integrated approach (guidance, training, social assistance, re-schooling).

This situation has to be kept in mind while shortly looking at the structuring and at the contribution of other policy fields to employment policy.

3.1. Professional training and continuing education

Professional training is one of the few policy fields, which have been fully decentralised to regional councils. They are in charge of defining the main orientations and of coordinating public and private actors on their regional space. This trend has been impacted by the latest reform (November 24th 2009's Act) weakening the former unstable equilibrium. Indeed, it turned the main policy tool of the regional councils – the regional plan for the development of training created by the December 20th 1993 Act – into a contract submitted to both the signature of the president of the regional council, the *Préfet* (main state officer in the region) and the *Recteur* (Regional representative of the ministry of education). This new legislation is the transcription of an intersectoral agreement negotiated among the social partners in January 2009.

The regional councils are in charge of planning and coordinating the professional training policies towards youngsters (less than 25) and job seekers. The training of workers falls under the competency of social partners and industries.

3.2. Social assistance

It has already been shown that, from 1982, general councils[4] are in charge of many aspects of the social assistance policy. This competency represents, together with the regional competency over the professional training policy, one the two fields fully devolved to a local community in France. Among the flagship programs, integrating employment and social assistance policies, the RMI/RSA appears to be of paramount importance (see above).

In relation to employment policy, social assistance programs have a role of social fishnet. For example, job seekers non-eligible to benefits or at the end of the benefit period can be allowed a specific allocation under the national solidarity regime. In 2009, this population was estimated at 460 000 per-

---

[4] The general councils are together with the municipalities one of the oldest local public elected body. Created under Napoleon's regime, their territorial base is the French department (NUTS 3).

sons. Among them, 84% received the 'specific solidarity allocation' (460 €) and 13% received the 'pre-retirement allocation'[5].

3.3. Health

Health care, including substance abuse, is a national state policy. It constitutes a fairly structured public action sector, and supports one of the three civil service administration (state administration, territorial administration and public hospitals administration). The territorialisation of health care policy is based on a growing autonomy which is given to local agents of the health ministry. The creation of the regional health agencies in 2009 represents a key moment in this process. These agencies are in charge of regulating the provision of care in all health policies' fields including hospitals, general medicine, and public health actions (substance abuse and health education for example). Its relation to an integrated activation policy is double-sided. On one side, the provision of care and health services is more and more individualised in relation with 'individualised social conditions', including elements such as professional status or income. Bringing these dimensions into health policy allows the association of local public authorities. On the other side, health is an important aspect of labour legislation and employment policies at three levels. Firstly, industrial medicine is connected to health, labour and social security in order to prevent and treat professional risks. Secondly, professional integration of disabled workers is an important, highly externalised and territorialised part of employment policies. Finally, the segment of health policies dedicated to substance abuse represents an important dimension of the placement activity of job seekers when talking about a vulnerable and disaffiliated public. This last dimension largely relies on NGO's activities in France.

3.4. Housing

In France, housing policy remains centralised in terms of its macroeconomic regulation. However, social housing has been territorialised. Even if the decision-making process and incentives (national urban restructuring agency, *'politique de la ville'*, opposable right to lodging, suburbs action plan) often come from the central state, most of its implementation relies on local agents' actions - such as social landlords or local elected authorities -. The latter are in charge of the urban planning and of the local programs aiming at providing social housing construction. The local actors are in charge of giving a fair access to housing for vulnerable persons, while promoting social interaction and diversity.

3.5. Childhood/family

Childhood policies are a central issue notably dealing with the personal/professional life conciliation topic. They also directly refer to the characteristics of each national welfare state. For a long period, France has shown a tradition of a generous family policy articulated with a logic of optional familialisation (a soften model of the male breadwinner cf. Jacquot, Ledoux, Palier, 2011).

The schooling of under compulsory school kids in the French '*maternelles*' is optional, but very largely followed by nearly 100% of the families. Children are taken in charge by this French institution when they reach 3 years old, and even under if possible (2 years and a half was quite usual before the ministry of education's budget was cut down, now only 11% of the children of 2 are schooled). Kindergarden structures are offered either by municipalities or NGO's often ruled by parents.

---

[5] It must be noticed that this passive measure consisting of compensating early retirements has been abolished in January.

Parental leave going further than the legal maternity leave is provided by the labour code. It lasts for an initial length of 1 year, and can be extended up to 3 years. It is unpaid, but the worker keeps his job and should be able to get it back at its return. The parental leave remains mainly used by women: only 1% of fathers take benefit of it. This also has to be understood with regards to wages inequality between men and women. They also can be used as a form of temporary part time work, for which the number of hours per week (between 16 and 32 hours) is fixed by the employee although the timetable remains fixed by the employer.

Lots of actors, several levels of decision, and several fields brought together and then separated and then brought together again: this seems to reflect the current situation. The number of actors may question the efficiency of the implemented policies. Do all of them communicate together? Regarding the levels of decision, even though several levels are involved, the central state remains the main stakeholder in terms of decision-making. The two main fields that have been linked over the years are social and employment issues. However, it appears that if the state has the authority on employment issues, social issues have been territorialized to local authorities. Hence, can both these fields really be linked? What kind of link can be established in such context? Those are some of the questions that will be deepened all through the LOCALISE project. To give a clear analysis of the multi-stakeholder, multi-level and multi-dimensional French integration approach, a dynamic analysis will be elaborated in the following part and will try to understand the nature of change regarding these aspects over the last decade.

4. DYNAMIC ANALYSIS OF INTEGRATION POLICIES AND GOVERNANCE

Changes regarding the integration and governance of employment and social cohesion policies have clearly been revealed all through this paper. These changes have been identified and analysed. However, the intensity of these changes should also be questioned. The focus will be put on three main components of public policies: actors, goals and instruments. These ones will be analysed regarding activation, territorialisation and coordination. During the last decade, what were the most important changes within employment and social cohesion policies? How did they to activation, territorialisation and coordination dynamics?

National Dimensions of Integrated Policies (2000 – 2010)

POLICY GOALS

COUNTRY	Activation		Vertical (territorialization)		Horizontal (coordination/ integration)	
France	Of Individuals	Of Expenses	Multilevel coordination	Decentralization	Public / public Coordination	Public / private Coordination
Policy goals **What for?**	Over this decade, the perceptions of employment policy's aims over individuals have followed a major shift towards activation. The main dimension of this evolution is the development of an individualized responsibility vis-à-vis the labour market. In semantic terms, it can be identified by the growing use of the concept of employability in public space, and by debates over unemployment.	Here also, social perceptions of the goal of employment policy are to consider that social benefits should be used to get people back to work (workfare). Moreover, it is now considered that unemployment benefits should no longer be a right but a reward for an active behaviour on labour market.	Regarding employment matters, the main issue seems to regionalize employment policies in order to cope with training policies. Many attempts have been made including a possible devolution to regions. However, this question remains on the administrative agenda.	The main goal in terms of decentralisation is to clarify once and for all the share of competencies between state and local authorities. This need of clarification is even more necessary as two important dimensions of integrated policies (social assistance and training policies) have been devolved over the 80's, but left undecided fields of public action. These latter have become battlefields among the state and local elected authorities.	At the beginning of the year 2000, it seems that the main issue was to ease communications between ministries in order to overwhelm the structural compartmentalization of public administrations. During the decade, this idea has evolved towards a more neo-liberal approach, which consisted on rationalizing the number of public administrations. The idea is now to sort out public agencies in order to reduce public debt. One of the most illustrative measure is the decision to only replace one on two retiring public servant	In order to increase efficiency in public management and reduce the costs of public action, the development of public/private partnerships has become an important objective. The spreading of governance's practices - as promoted by the European commission - is considered a progress of paramount importance in public management. The other issue is to harmonize management methods in order to break with bureaucratic practices and foster a better service.

POLICY INSTRUMENTS

COUNTRY	Activation		Vertical (territorialization)		Horizontal (coordination/ integration)	
France	**Of Individuals**	**Of Expenses**	**Multilevel coordination**	**Decentralization**	**Public / public Coordination**	**Public / private Coordination**
Policy Instruments **With what?** *Nota bene : only significative tools are exposed here.*	• **PARE-PAP (2001)** *initiated in 2001, the PARE-PAP allows job seekers to have a placement service as counterpart of an ending of a tapering benefit* • **VAE (2002)** : *In order to secure transitions on the labour market and reduce segmentation, it creates an access to « diplomation » based on the assessment of professionnal experience* • **DIF (2004)** : *Initiates a right to training for every worker 20 hours/year for a maximum cumulated of 120 hours* • **DUDE (2005)** : *creates a single electronic file for each job seeker in order to ease information's circulation among employment services* • **Personnalized action plan and Disciplinary action against unemployed (2008)** : *The PPAE has been created as an contractual relation between job seekers and the job centers' services. It is controlled by the setting of progressive disciplinary measures (around 24.000 exclusion each month)* • RMI → RSA (2009) *See above*	The main measure in terms of activation of expenses is to postpone the retirement legal age. The **retirement's reform** started in **2003** by the Fillon Reform introduces a progressive transition from 37,5 years to 40 years of legal working time. In **2007**, another reform has merged a number of special regimes with the general conditions of access to retirement. In **2010**, the Woerth reform has introduced a progressive extent (over 6 years) of the legal age of retirement from 60 to 62 when the number of working years is complete (41,5 years), and of 65 to 67.	We find very few instruments dedicated to multilevel coordination. As a heritage of a deeply centralized state, the question of multilevel administration coordination has been conceived as a matter of hierarchical relations between center and periphery. When looking at these hierarchical relations inside employment public service, it is easy to show some gaps between stakeholders. *Pôle emploi* and the *AFPA* have a strong and direct hierarchical relation between national and local administrations. It is quite different for labour and employment ministry that demonstrates a crossed-hierarchy between sectoral and general administration.	Decentralizing legislation mainly concerns training policies. They have been devolved as general competency in **1982** and more specifically for youngsters in **1993**. But in **2004**, the competency of regional councils upon the coordination of training policies has been extended to jobseekers. In **2009**, this decentralizing trend has been turned down by the decision to reintroduce state regulation within regional councils competences. Another major experience on territorialization has been launched in **2008** by the Youth experiment fund. This fund has been financing local experiments aimed at securing professional path for youngsters. Designed for 3 years, these innovative actions will be ending by the end of this year. The use of systematic evaluation procedures will allow to seize the structuring effects of these new and unstable instruments	To implement coordination inside public authorities and improve the diffusion of public management practices, the French government has introduced 2 major reforms: • Introduced in **2001**, the LOLF is an Act of parliament reorganizing the public budget aimed at producing a better control of public spending. It reorganizes national budget by functions. • In **2008**, the general review of public policies is an attempt to rationalize public policies, avoid redundancies and eliminate useless public organizations. The overall aim is to reduce the public spending in all services including several institutions in employment policy. Also to be mentioned (see above), the use of subsidized contracts (emplois jeunes for example in 1997) in public administrations.	To organize public/private partnership and especially the call for tenders, a new Public market code was introduced in **2005**. Answering EU pressure promoted by DG competition, the public market code rules training and employment policies' implementation. It has produced structuring effects on NGO's practices. NGOs submitted to this code in their relations to public authorities (state and local administrations), have been weakened by the strict rules of this new financial instrument. As for the public sector, subsidized contracts in NGOs and firms have been used to enhance private/public coordination.

ACTORS

COUNTRY	Activation		Vertical (territorialization)		Horizontal (coordination/ integration)	
France	Of Individuals	Of Expenses	Multilevel coordination	Decentralization	Public / public Coordination	Public / private Coordination
Actors Who?	**2009**: Merging of unemployment benefits and placement services (creation of *Pôle Emploi*) Labour ministry reorganization at the local level (employment and training merging: **1993** (NUTS3) - **1995** (NUTS 2) - **1997** (NUTS 1) Regional councils (training) General councils (social assistance) NGOs	Ministry of budget Ministry of social affairs Ministry of employment	2004: transformation of the National committee on professional training into the National council for life-long learning. This council is in charge of training and employment policies' evaluation. 2007: Reform of territorial organization of state administration. This reform has transformed public offices at the departmental and regional levels. It was implemented through reducing the number of administrations and transferring more power to the regional level.	*Ministère de l'intérieur* (in charge of the decentralization policy) Local authorities (NUTS 2: *Conseils régionaux*, NUTS 3: *Conseils régionaux*) Regional delegate of social partners Reform of territorial representatives: in 2010 a major reform was adopted. It changes local elections for public authorities as well as the organization of local communities. It should be implemented within the upcoming years but encounters a strong resistance from local elected and national representatives (multiple office holding)	CCREFP (local coordination committees on employment and training) Public employment service Interministerial committees	COPIRE (private and public representatives coordination committee at the regional level) CBE (local Committees bringing together employment administration, firms representatives and local elected)

4.1. Actors: the evolution of the French public employment service (PES)

The evolution of the employment public service went through several important changes during the last decade. It is therefore highly relevant to analyse it when questioning change's intensity. Indeed, the way it is managed, the actors at stake, along with its content, went through several changes. It questions both the main issues of this paper: the integrated approach and employment and social cohesion policies' governance.

The French public employment service was set up in 1984. At that time, it was made of the Ministry of Work's administration, the *AFPA* and the *ANPE* (former *Pôle Emploi*). In 1998, the Law against exclusion widened this service and included women's rights and social action to the PES. In 2005, the Social Cohesion Law defined and reinforced the widening of this public service (cf. above). Indeed, the government tried to integrate all the actors involved in the employment service, into the PES. These actors can be associated to three different levels, according to their role in terms of employment policies. In sum, the PES kept on being widened by the integration of several new actors.

In 2008, the government created *Pôle Emploi*, which merged the *ASSEDIC* and the employment national agency. The responsibility of orientation was transferred from the *AFPA* to this new authority. Thereby, *Pôle Emploi* reinforced its key role within a dispersed public employment service (Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental, 2011).

The French PES has been partly territorialised during the last decade. Indeed, in 2004, regions became responsible for adults job seekers vocational training. Except from this field, employment issues are still under the responsibility of the State - even though several tasks have been territorialised -. The decentralisation process that has occurred during the last decades in France does not directly concern employment policies. It reached fields at the margins of employment policies such as social issues. Regarding the core of employment policies, the process at stake is rather the *"déconcentration"* one. A regionalisation can be noticed, along with the programed disappearance of the infra departmental level.

The evolution of the French PES brings to light a clear reinforcement of activation policies since 2000. It increased incentives, and the number of sanctions increased.

4.2. Goals

Change's intensity regarding the goals of employment and social cohesion policies can be analysed through two main prisms. This dual analysis aims at distinguishing what the government declares to the French population, as well as the way France presents its public policies to European authorities.

The analysis of intersectoral national agreements and the way they are transposed in the grounds' laws will help us identifying social perceptions of employment and social cohesion issues in France.

The role of social partners in designing employment policies increased since the amendment of the 31st January 2007's law. "Bargaining at the intersectoral level has become the norm of producing legislation on employment and vocational education. However, this evolution did not happen to the detriment of the regulating capacity of the state. Negotiations that have preceded the different intersectoral agreements have been very strongly supervised by the government (…) From January 2008 to July 2009, 5 intersectoral national agreements[6] were signed and developed into legislative texts." (Berthet, 2011).

---

[6] Intersectoral national agreement on January 11, 2008 on labour market's modernization, intersectoral national agreement on November 14, 2008 on forward-looking management of jobs an skills, intersectoral national agreement on December 23 on unemployment benefit, intersectoral national agreement on January 7, 2009 on the development of life-long professional training, making more professional and more secure career paths, and intersectoral national agreement on July 8, 2009 on social management of economical crisis' consequences on employment

The analysis of these documents highlights the main national trends. The intersectoral agreement on labour market's modernization put the emphasis on the permanent contract as being the norm. It also initiates a new way of ending a contract in order to facilitate this procedure. Several other measures appear in the law, which resulted from the agreement. However, the use of the concept of "making contracts secure" is interesting. Indeed, it is used several times regarding different kinds of contracts and is set as a clear objective. The law that followed the intersectoral national agreement on development of life-long professional training, making more professional and more secure career paths, insists on the economic context and intends to secure career paths in order for the population to be able to face future challenges. Maintaining that we will all have to change jobs during our career path, this law focuses on moving situations and the need to be adaptable.

The other intersectoral agreements also reveal an emphasis put on a changing economic context, on the need to be flexible and on the will to secure career paths through different instruments.

National Reform Program (NRP) shows the way the country presents its new reforms and, more generally, its trends to European authorities. They often use a specific vocabulary. Indeed, concepts of flexicurity, activation, etc. are broadly used. However, in the national context, these concepts are not usually used. It reinforces the idea that NRP represents a way to show how the country tries to adapt its public policies according to European recommendations.

The concept of activation was brought to light in the 2005-2008 NRP: "the main direction which has been set consists of putting activity back in social policy's core" (French NRP 2005-2008, translated by the author, 25). Back-to work policies are emphasized and several measures were presented (merging of placement bodies and of the authority in charge of the benefit system).

The following French national reform programme (2008-2010) put the focus on three main directions: "the first deals with sustainable growth, innovation and the development of competitive businesses"; "the second (...) focuses on labour market reforms in order to offer citizens of all ages the widest range of opportunities"; and "the third line of this programme - the sustainability of public finances - will be achieved by raising potential growth, by carrying through an in-depth reform of the organisation of public administrations and by a strict control of expenditure, which will lead to a cut of the spending growth rate in half" (French NRP 2008-2010, 3). Economic growth through businesses and innovation development appear to be of the main topics of this NRP, even though the emphasis is also put on chance equality in terms of opportunity to find employment for everyone. Flexicurity is also highlighted. The French government even presented a French approach of flexicurity, which is based on the intersectoral national agreement that resulted on the modernisation of labour Act. However, the concept of flexicurity is never used in the intersectoral agreement and the Act itself. It shows how sensible is this concept in the national setting (Berthet, 2011).

4.3. Instruments

In this section, we have a qualitative insight on three policy instruments, which may characterize the dynamics at stake in French employment policies.

4.3.1. "Unintegrated" subsidised contracts

The main policy instrument used in the French employment policy is, with no doubt, what is called *contrat aidé* or subsidised contract. Subsidised contracts are derogatory to common labour law. Addressed to selected public and beneficiaries, they rely on a public funding, which can take various shapes, such as direct subsidies for hiring, tax exemptions or training grants. The overall principle is to decrease hiring or training costs supported by the employers using direct or indirect funding. These subsidised contracts are usually targeted upon specific disadvantaged categories (senior, disabled, youngsters, immigrants, etc.). They concern both the competitive sector and the non-for profit sector. In the first case, they are signed with firms. In the second case, it is usually associations, local public

authorities or public enterprises that conclude them. Several kinds of subsidised contracts have been created since the first generation of TUC (collective useful jobs) in 1984. The ministry of labour services manages them.

The main political advantage of the subsidised contracts is to produce immediate effects on the labour market. They are regularly used to temporarily lower down the number of job seekers (in electoral times for example). The monthly unemployment rate is a social indicator largely followed by decision-makers as well as by public opinion. This explains why subsidised contracts have become of paramount importance; and are, at the same time, very criticised. They are deemed to offer a temporary relief without allowing a stable professional situation, even when they include training actions. As an instrument traditionally used by the socialist governments, these contracts have been criticised by liberal (right wing) politicians for generating unemployment traps. But even if the liberal governments prefer using tax exemptions, they also regularly use subsidised contracts when the unemployment rate gets high.

Used as a major policy tool, they still don't offer interesting perspectives in terms of integrated policy. They could be used as a useful instrument in a conciliation friendly policy, or to promote targeted integrated actions towards vulnerable beneficiaries. However, their implementation is usually conducted in an 'industrial' way, with the unique objective of lowering the unemployment rate.

4.3.2. Activating the minimum income

It is partly to answer this lack of activation (in the sense of articulating employment and social inclusion to foster a fair access to the labour market) that the RSA was implemented in June 2009. Replacing the former RMI (minimum income) and the API (single parents allowance), the RSA has been created in a deliberate 'activation friendly' way. The RSA is a minimum income granted to low wages workers and former RMI beneficiaries. To be eligible to the RSA, beneficiaries must be over 25 (or less than 25 parents and workers for at least two years). They also must have been working for a certain amount of time and in a setting of getting back to work. The RSA benefit is lowered as soon as their wages start to grow. The RSA benefit can be contingent upon training or coaching activities. It is then a supplementary income for working poor, aimed at keeping them on the labour market, as well as a minimum income for job seekers. It is financed by the *Conseils généraux* at the NUTS 3 level and implemented by the *Caisse d'allocations familiales* (CAF).

The implementation of the RSA is also interesting in the way this instrument has been launched. It first started in 2007 as an experimental device in twenty-five *Conseils généraux* (*départements*) before being evaluated, and then generalised. By this way, the RSA has introduced a new policy making process in the field of social policies. The experimental process, coupled with the promotion of RCT (randomised controlled trial) evaluation procedures has now become a way to promote evidence based policies with evaluation methods imported from the epidemiology science.

But the policy time goes faster than what is necessary to conduct a public policy evaluation. Therefore, this instrument was generalised prior to getting results of the evaluation procedure. Yet, results provided afterwards did not reveal any strong evidence of a positive effect on the beneficiaries regarding their professional re-integration. In June 2011, 2 million individuals were granted a benefit from the RSA, a third less than initially anticipated by the CAF services.

4.3.3. Local employment coordination structures (missions locales, comités de bassin d'emploi, maisons de l'emploi)

In France, the idea of building an integrated strategy is often represented by the concept of *guichet unique* (one stop shop). It takes the form of an integrated service in one single localised office. Two goals are underlying this strategy: the first one is to soften the sectoral compartmentalisation by housing several different service-providers belonging to different ministries under one roof. Here, the inte-

gration of services does not mean merging them in one single generalist service. The idea is rather to foster a common location for different specialised services. The second aim of this strategy is to promote proximity by delivering an integrated service at the community level. Once again, we find an experimental process at the beginning. Each of the three kinds of structures we are going to briefly describe starts with a local experiment generalised by the central state, and turned into a national public policy.

The *missions locales* were created in 1982 as a temporary local device aimed at providing a single location for youngsters aged between 16 and 25 for all their social problems. They were supposed to disappear as soon as what was considered as a temporary problem was over: youth massive unemployment. Firstly experimented in the northeast industrial part of France, they were then generalised. The way they were created is original: they rely on the initiative of municipalities' mayors. This political dimension of the *mission locale* has allowed them to build strong local partnership, which explains that they are still active, and became an important actor of social policies'institutional framework.

This is true for the two other structures: *comités de bassin d'emploi* and *maison de l'emploi*. The *comités de bassin d'emploi* have been initiated in 1981 as a coordination structure composed of local elected, employment civil servants and firms. They have been rapidly generalised, and in one decade, they rapidly decreased. The *maisons de l'emploi* were also initiated by local actors, and rapidly spread by the French government who gave strong incentives in the 2005th Social Cohesion Act. Five years later, those that were dynamic are still alive, but the weakest have disappeared, or have no effective action going on anymore.

The experience of these three structures promoting an integrated policies' approach reveals one important point in terms of territorialization. Although they started by the same experimental mechanism, although they are trying to bring together and coordinate local employment actors, and although they are strongly localised, one important rule emerges: local partnership cannot be prescribed from the national level at the same rhythm, with the same partners, and with the same success everywhere. What probably explains the persistence of the *missions locales* and their growing importance, is their political backing by local elected, and the intensive political work conducted by their collective representatives.

As the following scheme shows, the borders of public action's fields in France are not clearly defined and thus are floating. Indeed, even though each field are very different from the other in terms of its governance, its actors, etc., they all interact with one another.

Central   *"Déconcentration"* (decisions mainly taken at the central level but implemented by local authorities)   **Decentralised**

Labour — Employment — Vocational training — Social
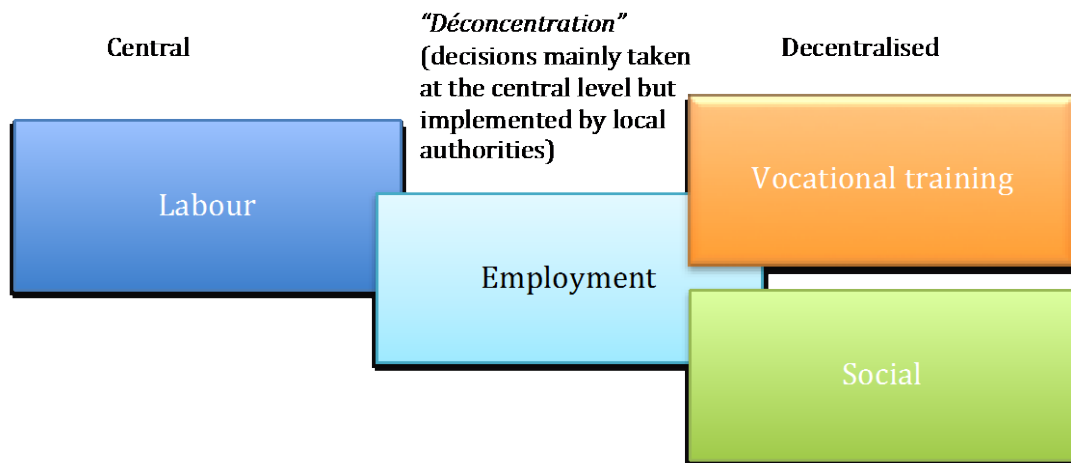
The French State territorialises policy fields that are flexible. What are the flexible policy fields? France makes changes in terms of governance when the situation is secure, when unemployment is low.

Labour Rights fall under the responsibility of the central state. It has always been hard to make changes in that field. Employment still mainly falls under the competence of the state. However, this field has largely been "*déconcentré*" to the large number of actors dealing with this field. Finally, social issues have strongly been decentralised during the past decades.

Regarding the intensity of change of employment policy, it seems possible to argue a double-sided change. On the one hand and with regards to the systemic action towards the labour market, changes introduced during the 2000's are incremental. Traditional instruments (subsidised contracts, tax exemptions, early retirements, etc.) remain unchanged and their relative importance varies only in terms of intensity. On the other hand and dealing with the action towards individuals, we can argue a change of paradigm. The overall goals have been progressively changed towards a new equilibrium between rights and obligations of beneficiaries. More individualisation and proactive behaviour is asked. The organisational framework has been transformed. For example, the merging of placement and payment services is clearly designed to allow the use of unemployment benefits to put pressure on job seekers. Finally, instruments are redefined to fit in the activation's philosophy. Individualised following, disciplinary instruments, and a targeted use of the minimum income scheme are clear examples of this redefinition. With regards to Peter Hall's framework (Hall, 1991) we can then argue as a preliminary conclusion that systemic action encounters a change of first order. Action toward job seekers tends to be central in French employment policy and faces a change of third order (change of paradigm). At the national level, we can observe a Janus-faced change, which gives to activation principles a growing importance. In terms of integration, the evolution is less convincing. Compartmentalization of public action domains seems to remain the rule although the territorialisation process has been eroding its traditional strength in the French administrative system.

REFERENCES

BARBIER J.-C., Activation Policies, Workfare and "Insertion", The Welfare State in the Age of Globalization, Lessons from the USA, France and the UK, Paper presented to the French-South African workshop, Centre d'études de l'emploi, 2000

BARBIER J.-C., Analyse comparative de l'activation de la protection sociale en France, Grande Bretagne, Allemagne et Danemark, dans le cadre des lignes directrices de la stratégie européenne pour l'emploi, Centre d'Etudes pour l'Emploi, 2006

BARBIER J.-C., THERET B., Le système français de protection sociale, La découverte, 2004

BERTHET T., CONTER B., « Activation des politiques de l'emploi : stratégie européenne et transformation de l'action publique en Wallonie et en France », in BARNAY T., LEGENDRE F. (and al.), Emploi et politiques sociales. Défis et avenir de la protection sociale, L'Harmattan, 2009

BERTHET T., CONTER B., Flexucirity : From the rise of a European model to its implementation in two countries, draft paper submitted to Revue de la régulation, 2011

CASTEL R., Les métamorphoses de la question sociale, Fayard, 1995

CAUNE H., JACQUOT S., PALIER B., "Boasting the National Model: The EU and Welfare State Reforms in France" in GRAZIANO P. (and al.) The EU and the Domestic Politics of Welfare State Reforms, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011

CLASEN, J. and D. CLEGG, Unemployment Protection and Labour Market Reform in France and Great Britain in the 1990s: Solidarity Versus Activation?, in "Journal of Social Policy", 32, 2003

CONSEIL ECONOMIQUE, SOCIAL ET ENVIRONNEMENTAL, Pôle Emploi et la réforme du service Public de l'Emploi : bilan et recommandations, Journal Officiel de la République Française, juin 2011

CONSEIL DE L'EMPLOI, DES REVENUS ET DE LA COHESION SOCIALE, Aider au retour à l'emploi, La Documentation Française, 2005

COUR DES COMPTES, Les contrats aidés dans la politique de l'emploi, octobre 2011

DANZER KANTOF B., LEFEBVRE V., TORRES F., Un siècle de réformes sociales, Une histoire du ministère du travail 1906-2006, Paris, La Documentation française, 2006

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND RESEARCH, Rescaling social welfare policies, national report France, 2006, 17

http://www.euro.centre.org/rescalingDocuments/files/France.pdf

ELBAUM M., MARCHAND O., « Emploi et chômage des jeunes dans les pays industrialisés : la spécificité française » in Revue Travail et Emploi 58, janvier 1994

EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OBSERVATORY, "Social cohesion plan presented", Sept 2004

http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/09/feature/fr0409104f.htm

GUITTON C., « La résistible ascension du territoire en matière de politique d'emploi : retour sur trente ans de relations entre politiques d'emploi, territoires et territorialisation » in BERTHET T. (et al.), Des emplois près de chez vous ?, Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 2005

JACQUOT S. LEDOUX C., PALIER. C, « The Europeanisation of conciliation policies in France : boasting… but learning », in GRAZIANO P. (et al.) Letting Europe in. The Domistic Usages of Europe in Reconciliation Policies, European Journal of Social Security volume 13, 2001

LAFORE R., "La décentralisation de l'action sociale L'irrésistible ascension du « département providence » in Revue française des affaires sociales n°4, 2004

http://www.sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/rfas200404-art02.pdf

MARIMBERT J., "Rapport sur le rapprochement des services de l'emploi", Rapport au ministre des Affaires sociales, du Travail et de la Solidarité, janvier 2004

PALIER B., Gouverner la Sécurité sociale. Les réformes du système français de protection sociale depuis 1945, PUF, 2002

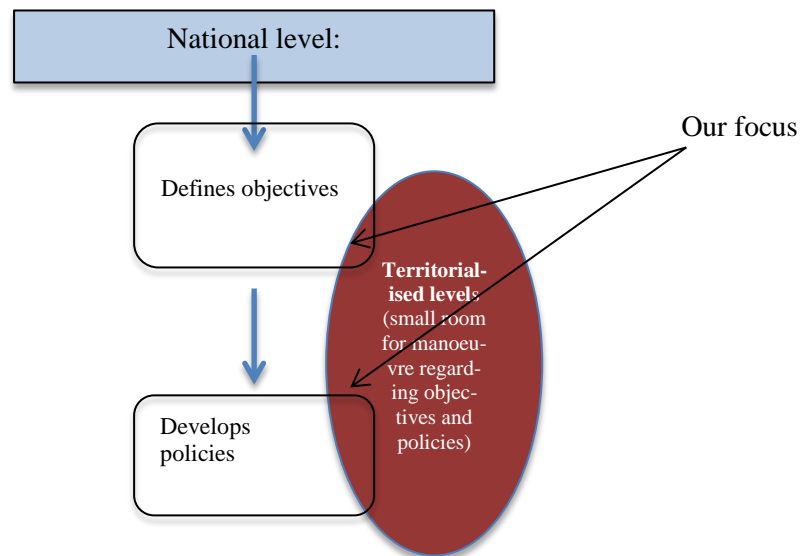# Work Package 4 – The Local Governance of Social Cohesion

1. INTRODUCTION

In France as well as in many other European countries, the governance of employment policies has been at the core of many debates over the last years. Indeed, since 2007, the country went through several reforms aimed at establishing a new balance between economic and social policies but the crisis effects seem to have thwarted the full implementation of this paradigm shift (Barbier, Knuth, 2010). One of the major stakes to tackle seems to be "clarifying the landscape" especially when dealing with local cohesion policies. Three levels of clarification are expected. An institutional one since the multiplicity of organizations tackling these policies results in relatively unclear share of competences and questions the articulation of the several policy fields involved in integrated social cohesion and employment policies. A territorial one as decentralisation is currently being discussed with regard to a third step where these policies are on top of the agenda. Last, there is an organizational level that relies on the central reform of service delivery processes and cooperation schemes (Van Berkel, Borghi, 2008). It puts the emphasis on the need to understand local governance schemes: the way policies are shaped and implemented, local actors' leeway, and the way the service is therefore provided. With regards to the implementation, France relies on a very important network[7] that interacts in order to achieve its common objective regarding employment. Moreover, employment has been promoted as a central issue through the increasing use of activation policies, which has fostered links between formerly isolated policy fields. Governance matters hence appear of paramount importance in order to structure this network efficiently, and to enable an integrated approach.

The difficulty to distinguish policy development from policy implementation in the French context can be explained by its main characteristic: a deeply centralised political system. Our fieldwork suggests that mainly all actors often have acknowledged this centralisation, and wouldn't think of major decentralising changes. "*We take as indisputable statement that it is the legitimate instance that decide* (State), *and we do not have to question that. Then, what's left? It only remains organisational matters that enable the delivery. (…) We implement. By definition, we agree with, and we implement*" (*Pôle Emploi*). They argue over who is in charge of what is already territorialised (which level, and state services versus decentralised ones). But most do not argue on what is being territorialised. Thus, even though decentralisation of the employment field has been recently brought up through the project of a third step of decentralisation[8], only some components of the employment field are considered (for example, decentralising everything that deal with unemployment benefit (conditions, amount, sanctions, etc.) will not be questioned). The centralisation of key components of the employment policies[9] hence appears as evident and acknowledged by most actors. It clearly fits in with the strong tradition of a centralised state.

---

[7] In France, a parliamentary report identified over 85 different kinds of institutions dedicated to labour, employment and training policies. Assemblée nationale, Rapport d'information déposé par la Commission des affaires sociales en conclusion des travaux de la mission sur la flexicurité à la française (rapporteur Pierre Morange), 28 april 2010

[8] The process of decentralisation in France went through two major phases often refered as 'steps' of decentralisation. The first one occurred in 1982-1983, and the second one in 2003-2004.

[9] Level of the unemployment benefit, definition of sanctions and conditions to be eligible to benefits, minimum income scheme, national employment agency, etc.

National level:

Defines objectives

Develops policies

Territorial-ised levels (small room for manoeu-vre regard-ing objec-tives and policies)

Our focus

It is also necessary to clarify what service delivery refers to. Indeed, sometimes, it is separate it from implementation. By service delivery, we understand organisations and front line workers that are work directly with the beneficiary. As some instances are prescribers, some are services providers, and some are both, a clear distinction is often complex to realise.

We will hence talk about service delivery as long as there is no intermediary between the beneficiary and the organisation / the front line worker. And we will talk about implementation when it comes to prescribers that are in charge of delivering a service through other organisations.

1.1. Socio-economic

The population of three cities that were selected for this national comparison represent 138,268 inhabitants in Tours (B), 239,157 inhabitants in Bordeaux (A), and reaches 257,351 in Montpellier (C) (2010 census).

Source: Insee (2009)

Unemployment rates by department (first trimestrer 2012)
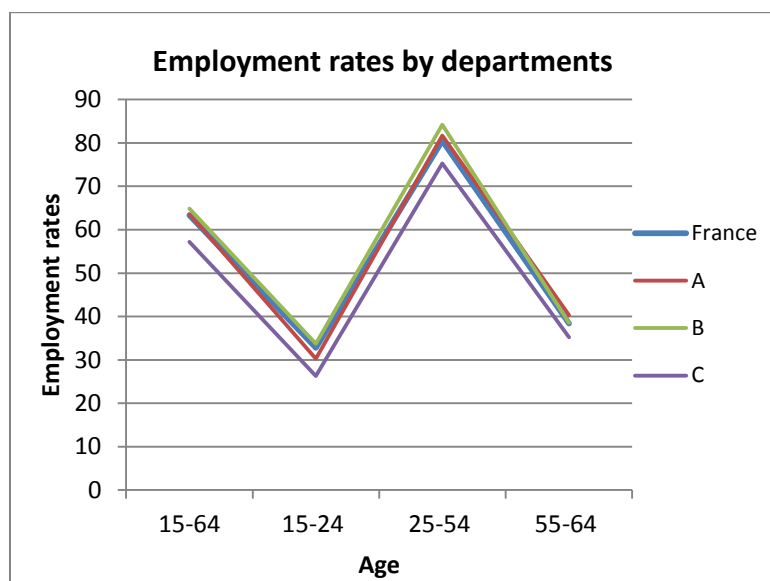
Source: Insee

Montpellier is the city that, compared to the national average and the two other cities, faces higher unemployment rates and smaller employment ones. However, the difference - in terms of both unemployment and employment rates - between Tours and Bordeaux is not as important.

It is of paramount importance to understand that the three cities selected are not major industrial cities. Therefore, one can assume they have not faced dismissals reaching the same extent than in the latters. Moreover, this analysis does not take into consideration rural issues that could be interesting to tackle in further researches.

1.2. Activation policies and employability provision

After a promoting activation without effectively implementing it, French activation policies have become 'stronger' and were made more formal over the last years. The transformation of the former minimum income RMI ('inclusion' minimum income) into RSA (active solidarity income), and the increasing conditionality of social benefits' conditionality shed light on the changes that have occurred and reinforced the implementation of activation policies. French activation policies relies on a hybrid system caught between a universal and a liberal system (Barbier, 2006), also presented as a "Bimarckian / Beveridgean welfare mix" (Barbier, 2000). With hindsight, it is argued that the liberal system is more likely to take over the universal one (WP2, France National Report).

Strategy and target groups

Even though activation policies are not specific to target groups but aim at reaching the entire population, it is interesting to bring the light on target groups and the way integrated employment and social cohesion policies address their specific issues.

How are target groups identified? Which are they? And how does the local level address that question?

Groups that are targeted in employment public policies change over time. It depends on national priorities, especially in times of economic difficulties. Then, among those priorities, local actors can focus on one or another. "*Each time there is a strong crisis, we have to work on priorities, and the priority is given by the State. Here, it was long-term unemployed, we are going to be more and more looking at youth and seniors; but suddenly, youngsters living in vulnerable areas get caught up within the youth category. And measures implemented do not always correct the imbalance that exists between the youth group and this specific youth group*" (*Pôle Emploi*). How do employment policies focus on target groups? Subsidized contracts, dedicated agencies (*Missions Locales* for youth or *Cap Emploi* for the disabled), specific policies (minimum income scheme) are the most common ways to target. It

aims at acting on the 'employment queue' (by helping vulnerable groups get ahead in the queue): "*There is a corrective action to regulate the situation*" (*Pôle Emploi*), "*the leitmotiv is to do more for those who need it the most*" (*Pôle Emploi*).

As agreed with other Localise partners, young unemployed and long-term unemployed are our two common target groups. Indeed, both appear as targeted by policies; or are at least identified as vulnerable groups regarding the access to employment (WP2 Comparative report, Berthet and Bourgeois, 2012). In France, they represent official categories (though tackled in different ways) that are targeted through specific measures.

As our third group, we decided to focus on migrants[10]. From a historical point of view, this choice appeared very interesting given that, as many academics demonstrated (Noiriel, 1988), France has often used immigration to fight against labour market's rigidity. In a time of economical crisis, when the focus has historically often been put on closing the labour market to foreigners (cf. ibid), it is hence important to analyse policies, which aim at facilitating this group's access to employment. Precarious jobs among migrants predominate (Morice et al., 2010). The emphasis was hence put on the fact that they represent the "*laborious population the most heaven sent*" (translated from Morice et al., 2010, p.16) to implement European promoted trends such as flexibility, more responsibility on workers, etc. Moreover, the integrated approach that has been previously defined seeks more equal opportunities. However, migrants face a very high unemployment rate (cf. infra) in France, and hence appear as a vulnerable group in terms of employment access.

Foreigners' unemployment rates

GEO/TIME	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
European Union (27 countries)	12,4	12,9	14,2	14,4	14,2	13,2	12,0	12,2	16,4	16,8
France	18,4	18,2	18,0	17,5	17,4	16,7	16,4	14,1	17,9	17,3

Source: Eurostat

Foreigners' employment rates

GEO/TIME	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
European Union (27 countries)	57,6	57,7	57,7	57,8	59,5	61,6	62,4	63,0	59,9	59,7
France	51,2	50,7	52,7	54,0	52,6	53,1	53,4	55,6	52,6	53,3

Source: Eurostat

Migrants' integration is set as a common European principle (European Commission, *The European Social Fund and Migrants and Minorities*, 2010). Hence, we should question the way local stakeholders try to implement such integration; and most specifically, how do they cope with the possible interaction between immigration policies one the one side and employment and social cohesion policies one the other. To briefly characterize it, immigration policies - caught between the control of borders and integration – can thus be considered as a double-sided sector with two cognitive and normative frameworks at stake. This statement results in policies that may sometimes be contradictory, as a recent research program (Mipex, 2011) demonstrated: "*newcomers encounter the least favourable and most contradictory integration policies of all major countries of immigration – more measures focus*

---

[10] In this context, we only take into account migrants with a legal status, which allow them to work (it means that we do not include legal migrants with no right to work and illegal migrants. Moreover, the focus is not either put on professional migration, as in that specific case, they will not meet employment public services as are already employed).

on unemployed migrants, while keeping millions of jobs closed"[11]. It makes the analysis of measures targeting (or at least the way they reach) migrants very interesting.

The way target groups are identified can be both bottom up and top down. Some groups are nationally targeted (youth); it hence follows a top down dynamic. Some others are locally identified as vulnerable groups that should be targeted. But in that case, it is not brought up to the national level. Among the three target groups selected, only one was clearly identified and understood in the same way by all: youth. Indeed, it is not a local specificity; it is nationally set up this way: youth is targeted, and youngsters are addressed to the *Mission Locale*. Established since a relatively long time, all acknowledge this instance. Such clear division of responsibilities and visibility guarantee good cooperation.

Long-term unemployed are not targeted as such by many actors. Only Pôle Emploi (national employment agency) uses the duration of unemployment to target. Usually, the duration of the unemployed status is not what is taken into account. It is rather the distance from employment, the age or the gender that are used to profile the unemployed. Long-term unemployed are though targeted through the minimum income scheme, which recipients are often long-term unemployed: "*long term unemployment, it's more the General Council through the minimum income scheme*" (City Council).

Regarding migrants, in 2010 an agreement was signed at the national level between the national employment agency, and the OFII (French office for integration and immigration) regarding the professional integration of new comers. This agreement aims at facilitating the communication between these two organizations. It has not been fully implemented by any of the three cases, even though it is under process. As one interviewee explained, migrants' professional integration cannot be politically prioritized in a time of economic crisis.

The goal regarding long term unemployed and youth is either long-term employment or qualification. As pointed out by local caseworkers, it puts social inclusion at the benefit of professional integration.

---

[11] http://www.mipex.eu/France, consulted on 16th of July 2012

2. RESEARCH METHODS

According to the Localise research framework, three local communities were to be chosen for the case studies. Thereby, we looked for cities with differences in terms of governance schemes, in terms of politics, and regarding their will to promote new institutions[12] or to rely on existing ones. Moreover, we tried to choose cities that were facing the same kind of employment challenges (no major industrial area, etc.), although at different extends in order to enable the identification of clear variables. The choice of the case studies represented hence a difficult task, as we were to choose these localities in one advanced, one average and one underperforming regions.

This classification enabled us to distinguish above and below the national average regions.

1) Gironde is above the national average, and Bordeaux follows this trend. It is its administrative centre, and the Gironde (NUTS 3) is part of the Aquitaine region (NUTS 2).

2) Indre-et-Loire (NUTS 3) is a relatively average department regarding the indicators selected, and Tours well represents it. This city is part of the Centre region (NUTS 2). It is not the capital of the Region as the two others cities selected.

3) Hérault (NUTS 3) is a department far below the national average (as well as the region it belongs to, Languedoc Roussillon (NUTS 2). The city of Montpellier is representative of this situation.

Table 1 – Selection of case studies

Case Studies	Regional classification	Regional labour market participation	Regional unemployment rate	Regional GDP
	Compared to the National average (2008)			
Bordeaux	Very strong	Above	Below	Equal or less
Tours	Average	Equal or less	Equal or higher	Above
Montpellier	Under-performing	Equal or less	Equal or higher	Equal or less

The very large number of actors involved in employment and social cohesion policies (cf. supra) at the national and furthermore at the local level made the selection of interviewees very challenging. We decided to have a common basis for the three cases studies[13]. But some interviews were left up to local specificities and topics. Once the main actors identified, we therefore decided to focus on the main actors involved with our three target groups (youngster, long term unemployed and migrants). We met policy makers, street level bureaucrats, elected politicians, and front line workers. Overall, we conducted 71 interviews and met 77 persons. The interviewing grid realised by the UK team was translated into French, and adapted to the national context.

---

[12]For instance in Tours, the governance of the *PLIE* (the local plan for employment and inclusion) is different than in Bordeaux (no *PLIE* in Montpellier) and the choice was made not to set up a *Maison de l'Emploi* (house of employment) as in Montpellier; whereas in Bordeaux the *PLIE* and *Maison de l'emploi* go through major changes in terms of governance. The RSA – which represents an activation-oriented measure – was organized in non-common way in Tours.

[13] Direccte, Regional Council, General Council, PLIE, Maison de l'emploi, Mission Locale, Regional Directorate of Youth, Sports and Social Cohesion, national employment agency, and at least one NGO

Table 2 – Participant organisation and number of interviews per case study

Participant organisations	A (best)	B (average)	C (under)
Regional government	7	5	9
Local government / Departement	3+3	4 + 8	3+6
Regional Public Employment Service	1	1	1
Local Public Employment Service			
National Agencies			
Regional Agencies			
Local Agencies			
Private sector providers			
Public sector providers			
Third sector providers	7	6	4
Third sector federations	4	2	
Chambers of Commerce			
Employer's federations			
Regional trade unions			
Experts	2	1	
Total of participants	27	27	23

3. MULTI LEVEL / CENTRE-PERIPHERY PARADIGM

Without doubt, the French political and administrative system remains highly centralised. It still relies on a centre-periphery dynamic, which explains why the three case studies show so many similarities with regard to multi-level integration. Hence, there is a hierarchical top down dynamic in policymaking where the activation policies are conceived at the central level while the local level is dedicated to their implementation. No decentralisation process has made local instances a relevant space to define such policies (only some related fields such as vocational training have been decentralised). It brings to light that proximity has not yet been acknowledged as a relevant level in the definition of general interest. Nonetheless, as Berthet and Bel explained, proximity's legitimacy falls within a trend that seeks to go further sectorialization (Berthet, Bel, 2009, Muller, 1985). Local empirical work shows the importance of proximity. Furthermore, it would be too dichotomous and restrictive to oppose a centralised system versus a highly decentralised one, a sectorialized model versus a transversal one, etc. Indeed, the analysis of the local level revealed many different strategies (from street level bureaucrats, front line workers, etc.) and territorial adjustments that are made possible because of a certain room for manoeuvre. This level of discretion enables singular integrated approaches from a city to another. Indeed, local representations of general interest, institutional redistribution, and instruments (Berthet and Bel, 2009) have been set up. But it relies more on the need for specific territorial answers, and on the decrease of national means, than on territorial instances' full legitimacy to take part in the definition and making of general interest - as the relatively insignificant bottom up dynamic attests. Yet, this centralisation does not necessarily imply that there is no or little multi-level integration. Indeed, sometimes, strong integration may occur in such context. Projects, or actions set up by local actors are sometimes assimilated to means of policymaking, even though major instruments and trends are shaped at the national level. Actors at the local level may have a room for manoeuvre regarding the definition of specific territories or groups, the choice of partnership and of services providers, and to some extents the way services (defined at the national level) are delivered.

3.1. Policy development

As stated, a top down dynamic prevails within this centre/periphery model in terms of employment policies. State services and their departmental units are in charge of developing and implementing national policies at a local level. Decentralised political bodies (regions, departments, and municipalities) also tackle issues that are related to employment. Every level tries to address employment since it is brought up by every interview as a central issue. The strong legal frame can explain this top down dynamic, as well as the governance scheme of most of the decentralised or devolved institutions that rely on an internal hierarchical organisation (*Pôle Emploi, Direccte*, etc.).

Given such centralisation, how do the different levels communicate with each other? Is there any room for manoeuvre for the local actors to participate in policy making?

One can assume that the transmission from higher levels (European, national and regional) to more territorialised ones (departmental, intermunicipality, local) works in a better way because it is more formalised, and because decision-making is a top-down process that requires such hand-over. Nonetheless, local instances refer to higher instances' prerogatives to implement their national policies, and may also take part to local projects. And yet, they usually do not communicate their actions to higher levels, except in the framework of formalised evaluations, and required reports.

In such a context, no strong specificities arose at the local level. The regional level usually appears as the strongest level to develop a common territorial strategy, but their level of discretion remains quite weak. They hence can work on territorialized priorities (public, territories, and partners). It is interesting to notice that from one city to another, different levels of public action may significantly arise or

be less involved than expected (the strong role of the city and the intermunicipality in Tours, the little involvement of the intermunicipality in Bordeaux, etc.). It is not related to their specific approach in terms of employment policies that is usually related to their acknowledged competences, but rather on specific local actors and historical dynamics that reinforce one instance over another on these issues.

Multi-level integration should here be understood as *"an arrangement for making binding decisions that engages a multiplicity of politically independent but otherwise interdependent actors – private and public – at different levels of territorial aggregation in more-or-less continuous negotiation / deliberation / implementation, and that does not assign exclusive policy competence or assert a stable hierarchy of political authority to any of these levels"* (Philippe Schmitter, 2004, 49). In our cases, what are the variables that enable or hinder multi-level integration?

The politics variable was brought up as an important variable with regard to cooperation schemes in all three cities. It was either brought up on similar issues (third act of decentralization for example), or on very different issues (personal arguments, representation of political positions, elective purposes highlighted, etc.). This variable impacts the way levels interact and to some extents it may enable the multi-level integration. Some of the rare bottom-up dynamics that can be noticed in terms of multi-level cooperation are often enabled because of the presence of national politicians on the local territory. They have the opportunity to bring up information directly to and from the national level. Moreover, they can use local practices as a showcase with political purposes.

Based on the empirical work, we can also assume that since the national government changed in 2012, multi-level integration has been impacted. Most regions in France are left wing as well as the central government. It is the case for the three cities. Hence, the fact that the government changed, somehow assigned a new role to decentralised organisations. They feel they have the duty to get more involved. *"Before, of course, we managed to work with technicians, but as soon as a policy came out (…), the Regional Council was against it (…) because of its position. And finally, we still managed to work. It was said, that's all. Now, we don't have that. (…) Regions have direct contacts with ministers' cabinets, and it creates problems. Because now, levels, what we call the 'central', the DGEPF at least for the policies they are in charge of, is squeezed. It means that ministers' cabinets deal directly with regions"* (Direccte).

Working among the different levels may also be facilitated by the geographical and political situation of city. For instance, in cities that are the administrative centre of their regions, all institutions are located in the regional capital-city, which represents an enabling variable of the multi-level dimension. The proximity of relevant institutions hence matters and facilitates this integration.

However, at the regional and infraregional level, every range of actors has its own administrative territorial subdivision (intermunicipality, city, department, employment areas, educational zones, housing districts, etc.). This "map and the territory" condition is a hindering factor. It makes multi-level cooperation very complex and is not commonly structured by territorial levels but rather by stakeholders.

Table 3 – Best practice example in multi-level coordination in policy development

FRANCE	Very few experimentations of multi-level integration occurred with the purpose to increase the coordination of levels in the public actions. Most of them were rather the consequences of multi-stakeholder coordination or multi-dimension integration. Nevertheless, some local practices aim at developing a local approach on employment and social cohesion. For instance, the *General Council* of Hérault (Montpellier) promote a multi-level integration through steering committees composed of front line workers and accredited bodies which objectives are to bringing feedbacks from fieldwork to policymakers. Such bottom up dynamic also occurs with minimum income recipients: the same *General Council* tries to involve the minimum income beneficiaries into the reflection on the implementation of the minimum income scheme. They can be organized into beneficiaries' groups, or take part in multidisciplinary team commission. Those groups aim at improving the support by matching the integration offer with the reality of the situations. On the entire department, there are five beneficiaries' groups covering the territory, which are meeting every fifteen days over a period of 6 months (every 6 months group changes). Even if such organizations to take into account the opinion of beneficiaries to adapt their policies is mandatory, for now it has not really be implemented in the other case.

3.2. Service Delivery

In the French political organization, the integration is central regarding the establishment of the main trends and policies; it is devolved and decentralized regarding its implementation, and the initiative of some local projects and experimentations.

The local level (i.e. sub-regional) is dedicated to implementation or service delivery, and not to policymaking. This paradigm can even be reinforced in times of economic crisis. Indeed, in such context, the local level is not empowered, and there is no strong promotion of a bottom up dynamic. Yet, service delivery is not as strongly centralised as policymaking. Indeed, even though a more rigid national framework may affect service delivery (more time spent in administrative tasks, budgetary decrease, bureaucratic financial monitoring, evaluations focused on employment outputs, incentives to promote specific instruments, etc.), the way the service is delivered is still mostly decided among the organisation, or by front line workers themselves.

Besides, the integration of several levels of public action can be found within an organisation for different reasons. First, It can be found in their governance scheme / body of governance: the boards or the steering committees that define the orientations of the service provider, and whose members are often elected members representative of national, regional, local institution, are multi-level (and multi-stakeholders). Secondly, multi-level integration relies on the structuration of service delivery itself. NGOs or private actors are funded to provide service delivery regarding employment, training, etc. by implementing specific measures and mobilising a wide and complex range of multi-level measures. In some cases, higher level institutions outpost staffs to NGO in order to facilitate the service providing.

Table 4 – Best practice example in multi-level coordination in policy implementation

<table>
<tr>
<td rowspan="5">FRANCE</td>
<td>In all three cases, professional training and continuing education are the responsibility of the Regional Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The *Direccte* still have few training under its responsibility and *Pôle Emploi* advisers outsource unemployed to private or third sector operators. Profession training thus involves actors from all level increasing the need for a better multi-level coordination. Experimentations have been set up involving regional and local actors in order to avoid inter institutional concurrence and the juxtaposition of actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One interesting example is a database of the service of professional training *SIMFEA* engineered by Cap Métiers with the Regional Council of Aquitaine and *Pôle Emploi* (some other actors joined or will join: *Cap Emploi* for handicapped workers or *Mission locale* for youth). "*It was not easy at first (with Pôle Emploi). But then we went through a thorough analysis of our complementary training actions. This was the first step, and then we put our entire offer and their entire offer (of training programs) on the same database with the help of Cap Métiers (the Regional Employment and Training Observatory). Today the entire offer is available for all the operators and prescriptions increase*" explained the director of Training at the Regional Council. So even with a strong influence of the national, the local level dynamic makes the difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A similar experimentation has been implemented in Tours where minimum income scheme supervisors of the *General Council* are allowed to prescribe training without going through the Regional Council scheme. They established a short track that enables these referees to prescribe trainings, whereas they are usually not entitled to.</td>
</tr>
</table>

3.3. Summary

In conclusion, we observe that the top-down dynamic strongly prevails and even though the local level has its own projects, initiatives, objectives, etc., they are usually not brought up to higher levels. First there is a strong multi stakeholders' paradigm that can be mistaken for multi-level integration: integration of the several levels of public action is rarely realised on purpose, but rather *de facto* because of a strong multi stakeholders' integration. Promotion of multi-stakeholders' projects or cross sectional actions may hence enable multi-level integration. Hence it was difficult to identify best practices specifically aimed at improving multi-level integration.

Secondly, it is can also be explained because all levels are interconnected and rely on network and cooperation, and somehow on the urge of sharing funding.

In terms of multilevel coordination and communication, we observe that they there is no inter-institutional framework allowing for a strong coordination between policymaking and implementation. Each instance is organised on one level and is not connected really to the other.

Regarding governance typology, multi-level integration in implementation is less centralised than in policy making.

Table 5 – Barriers to multi-level integration per case study

		A	B	C
Multi-level integration	Policy development	- Centralisation - Politics variable - Numerous administrative subdivisions - Lack of communication between levels of coordination - Inter-institutional concurrence, and the tension and competition on competences - General Public Policy Review (RGPP) - Numerous mandatory steering committee, structured in an 'organ pipe logic'		
	Policy implementation	- Centralisation - Little room for manoeuvre for local actors - Numerous administrative subdivisions		

Table 6 – Enablers of multi-level integration and type of coordination by case study

		A	B	C
Multi-level	Policy development	- Proximity - Personal relationships - Some room for manoeuvre of local actors and case worker - Local expertise and territorialized diagnostics		
			- Presence of national politicians on the local territory and political purposes	- Politics
	Policy implementation	- Staff delegation - Some room for manoeuvre of local actors and case workers		

4. MULTI DIMENSION

Activation friendly integration policies have fostered the development of cross-sectoral policies (Barbier, 2000, Berthet and Bourgeois, 2012). It represents the most promoted integration within activation policies. Aiming at addressing complex societal issues that tackle several issues, cross-sectoral policies question the way policy fields relate to each other, the space dedicated to employment in wider public action[14]. It hence addresses the issue of vertical coordination. What are the variables that enable or hinder such integration? What multi dimensional frameworks does it lead to? Is there convergence or divergence in the way local cross sectoriality occurs in different regions? How is it interpreted and set up by policy makers, street level bureaucrats, and service providers?

Two main ways to deal with multi dimensional integration arose from the three local case studies: we may find organisations that integrate several dimensions, or cross-organizations' projects with different dimensions involved. Both represent different normative and cognitive ways to interpret cross sectoriality. Nevertheless, they are not antithetic and can be found simultaneously.

4.1. Policy development

Employment policies are rooted into two main nexus: employment / training, and employment / social. Local empirical work confirms that these two policy fields are integrated on a common basis. Nevertheless, social and training are not the only fields increasingly connected to employment issues. And other policy fields[15] are not integrated to the same extent from one locality to another. One can assume that they are thereby not acknowledged as central to reach employment for all. What are the variables that explain why one policy field is more integrated than another in a region? Are these variables strategic, operational, or interpersonal, etc.?

The following grid represents the shapes cross-sectoral dynamics take in each case study. It shows the connection between employment policies and other policy fields identified as possibly related for each of the case study[16]. It reveals a misfit with nationally integrated policy fields (except regarding training and social).

Interconnections that were identified between policy fields at the local level do not systematically match with those identified at the national level. Indeed, even though social and professional training policies are at both levels the two policy fields the most related to employment policies, other policy fields were also identified as fields interconnected with employment (among others). Housing and urban policies were often linked to employment policies at the local level (see grid above), whereas they were less linked at the national level.

Health and childcare remain relatively separated. However, attempts to integrate it within the scope of employment were made in one case. These similarities and discrepancies address the question of what are the variables enabling or hindering cross-sectoriality? What initiate it?

One of the most interesting points that arose from this multi dimensional analysis is the space dedicated to economic development. Indeed, in all three cases, it was highlighted as being of paramount importance with regards to employment policies. And yet, it is still only tackled in a timid way as it challenges the former social / employment nexus. Even in instances that are competent on both policy fields, they remain rather separated. Montpellier went further than the two other cities on that point.

---

[14] We have already highlighted the central role of employment in public action. However, analysing its interaction with possible related policy fields will enable the identification of local and/or national employment paradigm (social-oriented or more economic development-oriented, etc.)

[15] Urban policies, economic development, housing, health, and childcare

[16] Indicators to measure the level of integration of one policy field in employment policies:
- Steering committees connecting another dimension with employment
- Cross sectorial projects
- Often mentioned by local stakeholders as fields that are (or should be) interconnected

They have merged one department dealing with employment and inclusion, with one working on economic development in an instance that usually kept both relatively distinct. Moreover, this nexus was more acknowledged, at least in discursive way, by policymakers (see below).

	Bordeaux		Tours		Montpellier	
	Level of integration	**Reasons**	**Level of integration**	**Reasons**	**Level of integration**	**Reasons**
Professional training	**Very strong integration**: the Regional Council in charge of professional training is involved in most employment committees, and all refer to the duo "employment / training"	National trend: strong connection between employment and training Strong discursive focus on the link between both sectors carried out by the Chairman of the Aquitaine Region who is also the Chairman of the Association of French Regions, and fosters the increasing role of Regions regarding employment	**Strong integration**: the Regional Council in charge of professional training is involved in most employment committees, and all refer to the duo "employment / training" Cooperation scheme established in order to enable minimum income recipients' beneficiary to prescribe directly Regional Council's trainings	National trend: strong connection between employment and training	**Strong integration**: the Regional Council in charge of professional training is involved in most employment committees, and all refer to the duo "employment / training"	National trend: strong connection between employment and training
Social	**Strong integration** both at NUTS 3 level (General Council), and at the city level (social project of the city)	**National trend:** strong connection between social inclusion and professional integration (cf. Barbier's definition of activation) Top-down cognitive and normative influences Global approach of the individual	**Strong integration** (even stronger in that case than in the national context): see the role of the General Council in Tours	- National trend: strong connection between social inclusion and professional integration -Volunteer General Council in charge of this issue - Global approach of the individual	**Average integration** (weaker than in the 2 others cases) Actor in the charge of policy development at the local level foster an integration with economic development dimension (even the CG in charge of social integration) Yet social integration as the national trend in integrated with employment (benefit)	- National trend: strong connection between social inclusion and professional integration - General Council in charge of this issue but actors (CG, intercommunity) fostered a strong connection between economic development and professional integration - Global approach of the individual
Urban policies	**Average integration:** mentioned by few policymakers on specific measures (subsidized contracts, for instance)	Transversal policy field that can thereby represent a lever to tackle employment issues (urban policies as an instrument, notably used to address migrants' inclusion)	**Strong local integration:** employment committee related to urban policies within the local public employment service, PLIE related to an urban policy department in the intermunicipality	The city and the intermunicipality that are in charge of urban policies are clearly involved in employment policies, and use urban policies as a prism to carry out employment issues	**Strong integration** the volunteer public interest grouping is in charge of urban policy including actions on health and housing	-local explanation: public interest grouping

Housing	**Average integration**: few policymakers mentioned this dimension (which appears important for case workers). When mentioned, it is often related to services that focus on housing and that integrate employment issues (but not the other way around) No specific cross sectorial projects, but rather services that integrate both dimensions	Integration that mostly relies on the global approach of the individual Links between instances in charge of housing issues and employment policies that have not (yet?) resulted in common dynamics	**Relatively strong integration:** acknowledged as being closely interdependent, Rising common projects	Housing and employment units are often brought together in a more general unit (in the inter-municipality and the DRJSCS)	**Average integration** Many mentioned this dimension as an hindering factor but without any existing or rising project apart from specific target (Youth / Mission Locale) Actors in charge of professional integration tend to orientate beneficiaries are oriented to specific NGO's addressing housing issues Yet the Regional council foster an ' equal opportunities' approach (declined in their governance scheme)	-Integration that mostly relies on the global approach of the individual - Links between instances in charge of housing issues and employment policies that have not (yet?) resulted in common dynamics
Economic Development	**Relatively strong integration:** most policymakers mentioned it as an important field that should be interconnected with employment. The *Maison de l'emploi* absorbed the *PLIE,* and orientates its strategy towards relationships with firms.	Some promote a shift from employment / social to employment / economic development, but not a common acknowledgement so farThe existence of the *Maison de l'emploi* and its focus on economic development can foster such connection. However, all actors did not acknowledged this organization as central with regards to employment inclusion matters. Economic development hence remains secondary.	**Relatively strong integration**: many think it should be the policy field to be the most interconnected with employment, and regret that the paradigm of employment is strongly related to social matters. They argue for a paradigm oriented on more economic development. However, through 'inclusion clause' and *GPEC* (Forward planning of employment and skills), important bridges exist.	Most of the time, units dealing with these issues are separated among the same instance. What explain the existing integration are often personal opinions and/or past professional experiences. These policymakers explained they feel useless working on employment through the prism on social inclusion, when there is no job available.	**Strong integration:** Many instance working on employment issues also deal with economic development matters. The General Council has merged its social department with its economic development one.The necessary to connect both fields seems acknowledged by many actors (even service providers).Yet, no evidence shows whether it is only promoted through governance changes, or if it results in concrete actions that do not exist elsewhere. (paradigm changing, but not the instruments that are common to the three cases)	Several possible explanations:- the local socio economic context (under performing city) requires an innovative approach- local history (focus on firms' development since the 80's)- personal interest on that issue that was spread to other actors
Health	**Weak integration**: few policymakers mentioned this dimension. Rather acknowledged in a cognitive way as a necessary related sector, it does not result in the development of many concrete integrated actions. Mentioned by the case workers with regard to their global approach	Distinct instances, no strong common interest even though the spread of employment issues finds its way into health matters	**Average integration:** not many policymakers mentioned this dimension. However, those that mentioned it highlighted it as a major one to tackle. The General Council developed a measure targeted at minimum income recipients with regards to eventual health issues	Two possible explanations: - Fieldwork feedbacks from front line workers - Personal interest on that issue (related to personal beliefs, experiences, etc.)	**Average integration:** Some mentioned this dimension and health appears as an important obstacle for people away from employment. However, this question is not really taken into consideration (and turned into actions) by most of the actors Yet the volunteer public interest grouping is in charge	- The Public Interest Grouping ten to address the issue but not specific project described

Child-care	Weak integration: mentioned by few policymakers (the city) and some caseworkers. When mentioned, it is both as an important and difficult obstacle to resolve	Instances in charge of childcare issues usually belong to distinct units, far from employment matters.	Weak integration: the General Council has developed a childcare project that have impacts on employment, but was not directly set up on that purpose	Instances in charge of childcare issues usually belong to distinct units, far from employment matters.	Weak integration: mentioned by one policymakers who acknowledge that it is both as an important and difficult obstacle to resolve	Instances in charge of childcare issues usually belong to distinct units, far from employment matters.

The variables that were identified as enablers or hinders to the integration of several dimensions are: interpersonal relationships, politics, budgets decreased and proximity.

First variable, *informal relationships* are central at the local level. It is often the roots of partnerships among different stakeholders. Indeed, among the different possible schemes (national prerogatives making actors collaborate through a top down process, local actors that follow a highly formalised scheme to cooperate, and informal relationships that lead to formalised cooperation), the most usual one is the one that relies on informal relationships. In the three case studies actors put emphasis on the fact that cross sectoriality is often a matter of multi stakeholders dynamic. They work on relatively close issues, and informally share expertise, competences and knowledge. Once the link established between the two policy fields (either within the same institution, or in different ones), the policymaking process require a formalisation of the cooperation.

Moreover, the interpersonal variable also takes the shape of focusing on personal matters. Cross sectoriality often seeks to reach target groups. However, it has been demonstrated that groups that are targeted within activation policies at not necessarily those that are the further away from employment (see WP2 comparative report). As the level of discretion of policymakers at the local level notably concerns the choice of priorities (among which some secondary target groups), some may focus on one specific groups rather than another one (some interviewees highlighted the fact that their personal beliefs have an impact on established priorities, especially with regard to that matter: it is the case in Tours where one person has prioritized disabled rather than other possible groups based on personal sensitivity).

Second highlighted variable, does the *politics* matter in terms of governance of activation friendly integration policies? As Bonoli argues, this variable remains unsolved regarding activation policies (Bonoli, 2010). It is hence of paramount importance to try to understand to what extent does it play a role on established governance schemes.

The three case studies revealed that politics matters in policymaking, or at least in the modalities of implementation. It does so in very different ways, and mostly regarding multi level governance, but also with regards to both multi dimensions and multi stakeholders.

Based on the statement that employment – as a central issue to welfare states – is an issue all must address and get involved in, one could assume that it would emphasize sectorialization (everyone having its own project), and restrain cooperation. Nevertheless, it often creates integration with a political aim, rather than an integration aiming at facilitating the integration of the unemployed in the labour market. Hence, integration is not realised for its inputs, but following a strategic purpose.

The politics variable – as defined in this context – is balanced by an equilibrium established between the elected politicians and the street level bureaucrats. The latters manage to cooperate, no matter their elected representatives do not. It corroborates Lipsky's analysis demonstrating that implementers have a "policy making role" (Lipsky, 1980) (see multistakeholder's).

Then, the *financial variable and budget decrease* are also an enabling factor to multi dimensional integration. Indeed, many institutions went through important budget cuts. Hence, working with other units on common projects helps reducing financial inputs by sharing it. "*The major lever* (to integration)*, it's the decrease of resources. We cannot afford to be alone. (…) We better get into it* (integration of actors, levels and dimensions) *very quickly, to get along quickly because otherwise, we will all die*" (*General Council*).

Proximity between units working on different but related issues is once again a way to facilitate the integration of several dimensions. Whether proximity was set up on purpose or not, it creates interconnections between persons working on different issues that may discuss it over informal times.

However, communication does not always occur because of proximity. Indeed, it takes time to create a new institutional culture bridging formerly separated policy fields: "*We were brought together without creating much links... The DRJSCS, it's quite new, it's been two years. So it's true we have spent these two years working in parallel, each one handling its own measures. So now, I think that the upcoming*

years will be more about working together and see how we can work in complementarity" (DRJSCS). "*We probably don't work together enough. Just within the Direccte, in inter-services, it's complicated. (…) It's quite new. (…) It's true that it is two worlds that do not understand each other. Of course, since two years, it's opening. It's opening, but it's still difficult*" (Direccte).

Cross sectoriality can take two different organisational shapes: an integrated organisation, or an integrated project.

In the framework of integrated organisations, the promoted integrated strategy relies on the concept of *guichet unique* (one stop shop). It takes the form of an integrated service in one single localised office" (WP2, France). Two main examples can illustrate it: the *Maison de l'Emploi* and the *Mission Locale.* The first one was established as one stop shop. However, nowadays, they do not longer advise the unemployed. Within our three case studies, only one decided to set up a *Maison de l'Emploi.* Created in 2005 in an already complex employment network, some thought it represented an opportunity to organize employment policies, while others argued that it would just add another layer to the *millefeuille[17]*.

Launched in 1982, the *Missions Locales pour l'insertion professionnelle des jeunes* cover most of the national territory. Their objective is to guide and support youngsters (16-25) in all the dimension of their social and professional integration (see best practice table 8). They are locally created, chaired by a local elected and since their origin dedicated to an integrated approach of youngsters' difficulties.

Hence, even though empirical work corroborates that one-stop shops are popular (Van Berkel and Borghi, 2008) to tackle multi dimension and multi stakeholders' integration, the French context reveals that seeking integration with no focus on coordination of such integration does not reach its objectives. It explains why one-stop shops were not settled in all three cases: local actors look for the right balance between integration, coordination and readability for the beneficiaries. According to which variable (see variables below) takes over, the strategy might differ.

The integrated approach promoted by policymakers can often lead to a 'single referee' system. Indeed, this idea of 'one stop case worker' rather than a 'one stop shop' approach has often been fostered over the last years: cross-sectoral policies, and the way several dimensions are related to each other result in the need for one front line worker to be able to work on an integrated path. Such integrated path starts by removing social impediments (housing, etc.), then working on training actions if necessary. And finally, when the beneficiary is declared 'employable', looking for his integration on the labour market. In this activation perspective, it thus requires that one single caseworker supports the beneficiary all his/her way until the final step of professional integration. It does not mean that the case-manager will take care of all impediments (outsourcing is generally necessary), but that he/she will follow the entire process to make it coherent in an integrated perspective.

---

[17] *Millefeuille*, "thousand layers" is a french cake. Piling up several layers of dough makes the particularity of this pastry. In a metaphorical sense it relies to the superposition of many measures on a single territory or public. The term is regularly used by Alain Rousset, Chairman of the Regional Council of Aquitaine (regional level) to qualify the policy development landscape

Table 7 – Best practice example in multi-dimensional coordination in policy development

FRANCE	Even though the minimum income scheme's legal national context separates social inclusion and a more employment inclusion-oriented support, the General Council of Indre-et-Loire (Tours) decided not to follow that trend, and to deliver a socio-professional support, with no distinction. It aims at establishing a more integrated path, where employment is the common goal for all. It goes beyond the former distinction between social and professional support. (Nevertheless, the implementation phase encountered challenges to follow that trend (see below)).

4.2. The global approach

One strong component of the professionalization of front line workers in the field of social cohesion and employment inclusion is the global approach of the individual. It means taking into consideration that one may face several kinds of difficulties that should be addressed before being employable. Strong shared professional culture among case managers (see below), and bottom-up perspective in service delivery based on the individual's needs, are components that explain this long-lasting tradition of global approach.

The increasing promotion of employment at the core of other policy fields represents a hindering factor criticized by front line workers. Indeed, it appears as restraining the implementation of their global approach as it focuses only on one single objective: labour market access. Moreover, the increasing rigidity that affects some policies and / or organizations (more persons to support, more focus on employment that hinder the global approach, etc.) may also impede it. According to the service that is being delivered, the level of discretion of local actors is more or less important and enables them to implement their global approach to different extents. *"They don't tell me, now, you have the first appointment, you make him sign the contract straight away, it can wait until the second for example. We are relatively flexible on all of that"* (NGO PLIE). It indeed depends on whether the nature of the service previously defined is more or less rigid. *"With us, what they* (recipients) *have to respect is to come to appointments, to take part to visits, it's only little things like that, whereas someone who gets into the minimum income scheme system, that's other requirements..."* (NGO PLIE).

Enabling factors to multi dimension integration and to the implementation of the global approach in the service delivery are proximity, and strong professional culture (see below), governance schemes that reduce intermediaries between the service and the beneficiary.

Proximity again is an important variable. Putting different organizations with close interests in the same building, and the thereby established proximity gives more opportunity for cooperation (in all three cities some service providers are located in the same building than others, which facilitates cooperation). Proximity is also fostered through staff delegation (see multi stakeholders' integration). For example, someone working in the framework of a professional integration-oriented measure (*PLIE*, minimum income scheme, etc.) may often be found in an NGO that provides other services (trainings, social assistance, housing assistance, etc.). It hence bridges dimensions.

Professional culture also enables multi-level integration. The global approach implemented within the provided service relies on collaborative work, and very often on relatively informal relationships. Most connections are made during common meetings, and are maintained with no formal setting. Or they can also be made because of organisational factors (see previously minimum income scheme or *PLIE* referee that are host in an NGO for example). *"It's where* (employment forums), *since I started my career (…) it's where I managed to create contacts. Well, first I worked at the Mission Locale. So I already started to make my little network. But really, in employment forums, whatever forums, I go to*

talk to people, get information; I go get details on who they are so I can tell my beneficiaries (…). So most connection I have, it's through that. (…) It remains an informal network" (NGO PLIE).

The decrease of intermediates that enables cross-sectorialization is also a multi-level variable (see best practice table 4). In some situations, local actors have managed to reduce intermediaries in the service delivery process. They establish a short track that enables referees to prescribe services they are not usually entitled to (for example, in Tours, some social and professional counsellors can prescribe training sessions without going through the usual bureaucratic scheme). Such decrease of intermediates is made possible when there is good relationship among street level bureaucrats involved, as, even though it mostly affects the way the beneficiaries is being oriented, it is first of all a matter of policy-making.

According to caseworkers, the 'single referee' (see above) is not what enables such global approach. On the contrary, it is based on front line worker's network facilitated by a strong professional culture. The idea is hence not to be qualified to address all issues one may face, but rather to be able to cooperate well with a large range of actors, and to understand the individual in its totality.

Table 8 – Best practice example in multi-dimensional coordination in policy implementation

FRANCE	Developed within a national frame, and coordinated at the regional level, the mission locale are NGOs with local elected representatives in their governance board. They target youth with low level of qualification and aims at supporting young individuals (unemployed or not, but out of school for over a year) in all dimensions of their social and professional inclusion. They provide at least one or more locations in the city for youngsters aged between 16 and 25 for their entire social support. Aside from mobilizing national or regional tools and measures (in the framework of convention and partnership), the *mission locale* develop their own set of actions (driving license, access to housing, etc.) or mobilize a wide network of NGOs to provide tailored-made service delivery.
	They appear to be a one-stop shop for youngsters with both a multidimensional and multi stakeholders approach.

4.3. Summary

Policy-making, implementation, and service delivery do not follow the same dynamic. Indeed, while the activation trend and the necessity to face budget decrease have lead to the inclusion of several dimensions in employment policies (and it is progressively being established), more rigid schemes have also been promoted because of those two factors and with regards to service delivery (sanctions, quantitative evaluations rather than qualitative, focus on employment only without taking into account other dimensions, etc.). As Van Berkel and Borghi explained, "rather than solving (the ways in which national governments try to ensure that regional/local actors act in accordance with national policy objectives) by rules and regulations, several national governments nowadays use other means to influence regional or local decision making, for example by introducing performance indicators" (Van Berkel, Borghi, 2008, 396). Hence, even though multi dimensional integration remains quite strong at the local level, we can notice a contradictory dynamic. The identified gap between traditional multi dimensional fieldwork and increasingly promoted cross sectorialization in policymaking tests the relevance and coherence of the integrated approach at stake. On the one hand, activation friendly integration policies have fostered such approach. On the other hand, the latest approach seems disconnected from, and even impedes the traditional global approach service providers refer to. It thus questions the reasons why such integrated approach is promoted. Is it promoted because it is recognised as a new governance scheme that would facilitate employment inclusion (and the difficult adjustment that occurs between policies and service providing would be a matter of timing in the process of change of paradigm)? Or is the integrated approach above all promoted in order to deal with the decrease of national resources?

With hindsight, one can assume that multi dimension integration relies both on a policy window and on a strategy that aims to facilitate the entry of unemployed into the labour market. Vertical integration has reached a relatively strong level between several policy fields, which reveals that employment being at the core of public action is increasingly acknowledged with regard to policymaking. Social-oriented services are still reluctant to focus on employment, even though they observe and often fear a change of paradigm. Nevertheless, even though the change of paradigm is not always acknowledged, vertical integration is highly and successfully implemented.

It is though interesting to notice that, no matter the strength of integration with regard to both policy-making and implementation, coordination does not systematically follow. In other words, integration does not mean coordination.

Table 9 – Barriers to multi-dimensional integration per case study

		A	B	C
Multi-dimensional integration	Policy development		- Interpersonal variable - Politics	
	Policy implementation		- Professional culture - Adviser's skills and professional background - Administrative rigidity	

Table 10 – Enablers of multi-dimensional integration and type of coordination by case study

		A	B	C
Multi-dimensional integration	Policy development		- Interpersonal variable - Politics - Proximity - Budget decrease	
	Policy implementation		- Interpersonal variable - Proximity - Decrease intermediates - Professional culture (bottom up perspective and global approach)	

5. MULTI STAKEHOLDERS

Within the "*millefeuille*", and given the very large number of private and public actors involved in employment policies, employment policy fits into a hardly readable landscape (Mériaux and Bartoli, 2006). Multi-stakeholders integration has indeed reached a peak, which does not necessarily lead to coordinated and cooperative governance schemes.

In the three case studies, we observe the importance of organisational and geographical proximity as a strong factor facilitating this cooperation (see also multi-level integration): interpersonal and informal relationships are crucial for both policymaking, and service delivery. Thus, multi-stakeholder's integration tackles two major questions: how do stakeholders work together (enabling and constraining factors / informal and formal cooperation schemes, etc.), and what shape does the cooperation take?

5.1. Policy development

Since any kind of cooperation observed during our fieldwork - either multi-dimensions or multi levels – is related to multi-stakeholders' integration, one could expect the degree of integration - between public/public actors, or public/private actors - to be very high. But as pointed out by one interviewee, " *this integrated approach on employment policies does not really exists since there is a lot of side policies, relations but not real integration, the only possible integration can be achieved with territorialized-based actions involving all the actors"*(Direccte). What turn a simple relation into 'real integration'? What enables integration, or constrains it in the case of public/ public partnerships of private/public cooperation?

1)   *Public / Public integration* in policy making can be observed under three forms: multi-stakeholder's projects, multi-stakeholder's organizations (see also cross sectoral projects and cross sectoral organisations in multi dimension integration) and multi-stakeholder's coordination bodies.

The first ones arise from cooperation between actors working on common issues, or with a common interest (policy network and epistemic policy community). It can result from national priorities and orientations (target groups, youth, or disabled for instance or issues, such as basic skills or housing). Furthermore, as employment is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, it empowers everyone to legitimate its involvement in that topic. Besides, the economic crisis at stake has strong effects on public policies. Indeed, we witness an important budget decrease. Many attempts have been realised in order to reduce public expenditures. It also obliged instances to cooperate, to put their budget in common, to share staff, etc. in order to be able to elaborate projects. Thus, even though it was not its main goal, it strongly took part to the reinforcement of an integrated approach. But as one interviewee pointed out, isn't it a *"constrained integration"*?

As highlighted all through this paper, the second one, multi-stakeholder's organisations are aimed at coordinating a large sector (the *millefeuille*). Thus, even though contractualisation increased (mainly between the citizen and the State, but also among different organisations), the origin of local inter-agency collaboration often comes from interpersonal and professional affinities. Top-down directives promoting the creation of one-stop shops (for example, the *Maison de l'Emploi*) are not always the results of local needs but rather of a will to fit into national dynamics (notably in order to get funding). It is still hard to identify the inputs of such local organisations. Have they achieved their goal of improving coordination of local actors for both actors and beneficiaries' sake?

The third form is multi-stakeholder coordination bodies that are quite always multi-dimensional ones, and are often organised by territorial level. Empirical work shows that employment and training integration governance enforce a top down dynamic and appear unable to help information to travel upward. However they provide a room for cooperation between stakeholders even if it can be limited by personal relationships or politics variable. Others multi stakeholder bodies of coordination are also multilevel and most of these multi-stakeholders / multi-dimensional coordination bodies are mandatory; they are stipulated by signed agreements such as contract of objectives and means (*Contrats d'objectifs et de moyens* COM). For instance, the COM "Job integration and social inclusion of young" is a multi-stakeholder and multi-level convention on strategies, objectives and funds, signed by all the actors and operators in relation with youth employment.

The main enabling variables are institutional and professional culture (that can also be constraining variables) and geographical proximity. *Proximity* means both the formal interpersonal and professional relationship and informal relationships. The three cities selected were often presented as cities where people stay. Hence, even though there is professional mobility, it often occurs within the same city. People know each other and have been working together for years thanks to their network that they have established throughout their career. They know whom to contact according to different situations and they know whom they work well with and also whom they disagree with. Hence, it seems that the selection of partners is not often neutral, and only professionally based. Personal relationships appear to be a strong variable. These informal relationships though always lead to formalized cooperation schemes, impact a lot on the governance scheme and projects or actions itself[18].

It also brings the light on the gap that exists between policymakers and street level bureaucrats, notably with regards to an integrated approach as a strong component of the level of discretion of the latter. It puts the emphasis on the fact that personal matters are crucial when it comes to the level of discretion of both policy development and policy implementation.

In some case, these enabling factors may as well be hindering factors (institutional and professional culture, or political factors).

Another hindering factor brought up by almost all of the interviewees is that there are too many bodies of cooperation and coordination, which lead to non-decisive or useless / times wasting spaces as outlined by *Pôle Emploi*: "*at this scale of territory, the Regional Council gathers the same actors but without the subprefet on the issue of professional training. The subprefet consults on employment issues but not on training and the Regional Council on training but not employment... all with the same actors. The General Council invites us to talk about social inclusion policies around RSA in the technical committee, the City invites us at employment commissions... we are stakeholder in the PLIE; Mission locale.... Honestly it dilutes the decision-making. Anyway, for us, decision-making is mainly an internal process because we are still strongly under the influence of our national and regional framework*".

Multi-stakeholder policy making is also impended by competition and concurrence between institutions. "*Tools and procedures that aim at developing negotiated governance scheme in employment policy usually fail to thwart the effects of compartmentalization and inter institutional concurrence*

---

[18] More precisely, it appeared that street level bureaucrats manage to keep cooperating when elected representatives fight. In two of the cities, the local and/or regional political context has disturbed cooperation among some actors. There were major concerns at the local and regional level and some the political tensions involving competences and competition between the actors and relations between stakeholders. However, street level bureaucrats' duty – as being different than elected representatives – was not too strongly impeded. Thus, as already stated, they managed to cooperate, no matter their elected representatives were not.

that increase while every local / territorialized actor develop its own employment programme in re-sponse to local needs" (translated from Meriaux et Bartoli, 2006, p3).

Finally, organisational models and information systems are another most important barrier. Some or-ganisations are elected bodies and thus as pointed out by one *General Council*: *"there are 99 General Councils with 99 different organisations, 22 regions... 22 organisations...There are as many relations between us and the Direccte or Pôle Emploi for instance as there are departments and Region"*. Moreover, with each organisation comes an information system that might make it difficult to imple-ment an integrated approach. Each organisation has a defined territorial scale, thus it is the *canton* for the *General Council*, the arrondissement for *Pôle Emploi*, etc. Every local actor - either policymakers or operators who implement policies - expressed how difficult it is to deal with the inconsistency of their information system. Each organisation has it own information system, developed according to their missions, aims and strategies prior to any contract-based partnerships or integrated policies were initiated. Thus it is now quite tough to link information systems, especially with DUDE (*dossier unique de demandeur d'emploi*, single job seeker file) of *Pôle Emploi*[19].

Not only there are some technical thin consistencies, but also sharing information is strictly organised. Regarding some issues, social workers are bound to professional secrecy. Furthermore the Information Technology and Freedoms Commission (CNIL, *commission nationale de l'information et des libertés*) is an independent agency that provides a legal framework to protect privacy and identity in a digital world. It defines the kind of datas that can be exchanged between operators and somehow it may be a barrier to integration.

2)   The nature of the relationship between policymakers and services providers and different co-operation schemes can be subventions, tenders, service or staff delegation within the frame of the French public market code. With the trend of contractualisation, private and public stakeholder's inte-gration have reinforced the formalisation of the relationship and challenged the cooperation between services providers and ordering parties.

The variables that facilitate or impact this mode or cooperation are once again the personal or profes-sional relationships. But interviewees brought up some other variables.

- The first one is that with organizations that are in charge of the service delivery, different kinds of relationships arise: from partners to co-contractors. Indeed, traditionally based on partnerships and funding, the increasing use of call for tenders, although not used by all organ-isations, have challenged former relationships. Such contractual relationships make a coopera-tive policymaking difficult to settle, both partners having two distinguished positions: one be-ing the ordering party, and the other one being the service provider: *"The obstacle is, I'd say, it is change, clearly the nature of the relationship with the non-profit sector. (…) They are not partners. They are not colleagues. They are co-contractors. They have contractual obliga-tions"* (*General Council*). Indeed, once you share decision-making and policy development, it seems inappropriate or difficult to put those organizations you were partners with in a compe-tition position, which puts them in a very different relationship. *"How can we work as part-ners when we are at the same time in a public order dynamic that leads to competition. Some-times, when we have a need, a project for the territory, well then, we know that we have a qualification need in a specific field. And there are not 36000 training organizations that will help us with that. Sometimes, we even make them work together so that we can help us face those needs for qualification, and then, what do we tell them? We put them into a competition"* (Regional Council).

---

[19] Established in 2005, the DUDE created a single electronic file for each job seeker in order to ease infor-mation's circulation among employment services

- The second one is that about professional and institutional culture. This new trend of contractualisation has not yet reached a new management method at the local level. The new generation of civil servants appear to be more sensitive to this trend, whereas older generations find it both difficult and somewhat unfortunate. Even though they understand the aims of tenders in terms of management, it reinforces a hierarchy that does not always benefit local cooperation. It settles a more rigid and codified relationship *"on the pretext of promoting 'good, efficient and effective governance' "* (Borghi, Van Berkel, 2007) that defines each actor's duties, but does not necessarily increase their cooperation means.   Contracting-out often results in devolution with less collaboration, co-reflexion and co-construction (for example, policies aiming at promoting the professional integration of immigrants that are often contracted out to private partners with no real co construction or collaboration.

Table 11 – Best practice example in multi-stakeholder coordination in policy development

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="6" style="writing-mode: vertical">FRANCE</td><td>

The regional public employment service (SPER) and its departmental and local subdivision (SPED/SPEL) are among the several committees supposed to be a space to develop a common regional / departmental and/or local strategy on employment issues. One of its main objectives is to produce a common strategy amongst different stakeholders at each level[20].

These multi stakeholder committees organized by level provide a room for discussion appears to be more efficient at the local level (even if the local level has a little level of discretion in policy making).

Some issues arose that reveal that integration does not necessarily mean coordination.

- The aim is rather to produce common implementation, or to share results of tools or measure than producing a real common policy and defining a regional shared strategy
- At the regional level, the politic variable may hinder the aim of a common regional strategy. Moreover, the objectives of the SPER might be less to consult than to order and to endorse a top-down policy (mainly regarding subsidized contract)
- Some governance and power issues still remain regarding the leadership. Since employment is a prerogative of the state, state representative usually supervise the Public Employment Service concentration: the Préfet of region at the regional level (SPER) and its several equivalents (SPED, SPEL, local team). Yet the hierarchy and the centralised organisation of public administration may hinder the multi stake holder integration
- The major challenge of integration (both of stakeholders and dimensions) is to be able to set up common policies / instances / committees, etc. that are still readable, and facilitating, rather than time waste.
</td></tr>
</table>

5.2. Implementation

In terms of implementation, local authorities have some leeway. Indeed, territorial institutions often initiate experimentations[21] and all stakeholders work together at different modalities to organise service delivery. Hence, even though they don't have the power to establish employment policies, they can work on what surrounds the nature of the policy itself: choice of the local territories, targeting group with special needs, choice of partners etc. Moreover, there is a room for manoeuvre in the way case workers address social barriers to employment, the way they provide service to the beneficiaries, and to some extent, the choice of the measure that better fits, etc. As pointed out by both interviewees of the *mission locale* and *Pôle Emploi " the framework is given by the national level but then in practice, I mean the framework, and for instance the joint-contracting with the mission locale is essential, but then we have a latitude to develop actions with our partners at the local level according to the needs of the territory"*

---

[20] - At the regional level, the SPER is divided into two committees: a plenary one with elected representatives and street level bureaucrats working for the State, and a technical one with all the relevant technicians. Its objectives are to be the regional governance and a coordination body. It aims at defining the framework of employment policies at the regional level, to review implementation modalities of employment policies, and to oversee policies. The Prefet of Region manages the SPER. All the actors from the regional level meet on a regular basis including subprefet, Direccte, Chairman of the Regional Council, Pôle Emploi, General Council, URML (regional union of Mission locale), URPAC (regional union of PLIE).

- The same institutions (but a level below in their own territorial hierarchy) take part in *departmental public employment service* (SPED). This instance is similar to the previous one, on a departmental level in order to enable a more territorialized prism. The meeting is managed by the Préfet de department with local actors and is a more useful and efficient body, as recognised the local actors who are part of it (for instance the mission locale, but also the UT Direccte…).
- Finally, the SPEL *(local public employment service)* gathers authorities in charge of dealing with employment issues at the local level, on a monthly basis. They share information, consult each other about guidelines, new measures etc.

[21] It should also be noticed that since 2009 the French central government has launched a policy of funding youth social experimentation giving the local actors some opportunities to be financed for implementing innovative programs dedicated to promote the professional and social integration of youngsters. http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/ministere-1001/actions/fonds-d-experimentation-pour-la-1038/

Private / public partnerships in service delivery notably occur when policymakers contract out the service to an NGO's that may mobilise a network of partners in order to address issues out of their competencies; or through collective territorialised project (for instance see best practice table 12 on Ginko project in Bordeaux). Staff delegation in an NGO is another example of multi-stakeholder integration. For instance, the PLIE especially since it has been integrated in the *Maison de l'emploi (*House of employment in the case of Bordeaux) was supposed to be a one-stop shop and to strengthen multidimensional integration between employment and economic development. But, it is not only the strategy, objectives or the governance that are allegedly integrated, but also and mainly the people and the organization: professional counsellors work in NGOs, they are being paid by the *PLIE* but their office and their workplace are mostly in training agencies, or NGOs which provide services.

Interviews highlighted the impact of the variety of positions actors involved may occupy. As we observed many front line workers hold several positions at once. They hence depend on and rely on several organisations that all work with different networks, levels, etc. Even though it may represent an impediment (as it requires switching from one position to another very often, etc.), it also facilitates the communication between actors, and amongst different policies.

Once again, personal relationships impact and somehow enable any kind of integration (multi-level, multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder). Some others variables were highlighted in interviews.

Regarding the integration of stakeholders in the service delivery, social workers' corporatism is a strong facilitating factor that has placed such integration at the core of their work. However, it is more and more common to recruit new profiles that are less focused on social issues, and that are not incorporated into social workers' traditional professional culture. We can notice a contradictory dynamic through the sectorialization of competences. On the one hand, it helps removing a current obstacle: the reluctance to focus on results based on employment only. But on the other hand, it may also weaken links between services providers, those links mostly relying on a common professional culture.

The current trend fostering a more market-based approach is another variable impacting partnerships. It has resulted in an increasing need for service providers to gather among one big entity in order to be able to compete with other big organisations. At the same times, it results in practices of sharing and pooling tools, resources and project in order to face.

Lost in prescription

Many dimensions, many policies, and many organisations, all strongly interconnected, sometimes in a very organised way, and sometimes it seems more confusing. Even though every stakeholder knows more or less who is in charge of what, sometimes, a beneficiary can be found in different organisations and can benefit from different policies and services. *"so we have a population that is at the margins, supported by one instance or another. Because nowadays, people systematically get supported at some stage. But they come to see us for a daily help, an additional support. Because there is a lack of time from usual operators"* (City Council). The difficulty is hence to know which beneficiary is being supported by which organisation, and benefits from which service in order to avoid adding layers of services with no communication amongst them.

But it also questions the way the beneficiary finds his/her way without getting lost, lost in prescription. The minimum income scheme is unfortunately a "good" example of the beneficiaries' difficult orientation. As interviewees from *General Council* explained, beneficiaries are referred to either social or professional supports with a ratio defined by the law: 2/3 of beneficiaries to be referred to *Pôle Emploi* or Mission locale and PLIE (professional orientation) and 1/3 to be referred to a social support.

But local practitioners noted that career advice does not always correspond to the need of the beneficiaries and as pointed out by one local advisor: referring is very difficult. Some beneficiaries are for instance referred to the PLIE, but the caseworker in charge observes barriers to job integration (e.g. psychiatric problem) that he or she has to refer back the beneficiaries to *General Council* through its local agency. One CCAS director also told us that they support beneficiaries of the RSA that are re-

ferred to them (only single or separated person without child) but that they received lots of "lost people", beneficiaries referred to other actors, but who get lost in the process: *"either the orientation was not the right one, or the problem is that putting the stress on qualification leads us to forget some other issues of paramount importance regarding social inclusion and professional integration. Thus we don't really consider the global dimension of the person that is much more complex and that should lead us to use all leverage."*

A recent study conducted by the Ministry of Employment, Work, Professional Training and Social Dialogue pointed out that only 50% of the minimum income scheme beneficiaries stated that they are followed by a single referee, 25% do not identify their single referee but declare to be advise by an local operator and 25% state not to be advise at all (Dares, 2013). In such a large network of local operator that still relatively unclear, the difficulty from beneficiary to be supported or to receive unemployment benefit (youngster for instance) may results in non-take up.

Table 3 – Best practice example in multi- stakeholder coordination in policy implementation

FRANCE	the **GINKO PROJECT** is a local initiative based on social needs and dynamics in the North part of the town in the area called *Les Aubiers*. The estate developer with the *mission emploi Bordeaux* (the house of employment and the PLIE) and all the institutional partners (the state, the Regional Council, the *General council*) develop a program of qualification for 14 unemployed women from the neighbourhood. The objective is for them to achieve a qualification of agent of food service in order to get a long-tem employment contract in that area. All local actors (par les *CCAS*, *Pôle Emploi*, the *Mission Emploi Bordeaux Nord*) were involved in the process of selecting applicants, the target were unemployed with the RSA allocation and supported by the PLIE. There were three stages during this 12 months training path (trainees were paid during 10 of them) from May 2011 to July 2012): First, from May 2011 to September 2011, it was a awareness stage in order for applicants to discover the catering profession. It was financed by the ACSE (national agency for social cohesion) and the city of Bordeaux. Second, from September 2011 to December 2011, it was the pre-qualification stage on both key abilities and a culinary apprenticeship-training program financed by the Regional Council, the *General Council*, ACSE, the city of Bordeaux and the PLIE (ESF fund). It was implemented both by a local training agency (Archipel) and an outside training agency (AFEC). During this stage, trainees were providing food for local workers of the Estate developer. The third stage, from January 2012 to June 2012, was a qualification and job integration workshop financed by the Regional Council and the PLIE.

5.3. Summary

Integration can be an objective, a strategy at the national level with a will to foster a multi level and multi stakeholders and multi dimension approach but at the same time it can be impossible to implement at the local level. When combined with a top-down dynamic, integration of several stakeholders might be difficult to implement at the local level even with the proper instance of governance, contractualisation and formal organization.

Table 4– Barriers to multi-stakeholder integration per case study

		A	B	C
Multi-stakeholder integration	Policy development	- Institutional and professional culture - Opposite strategy - Leadership - Organisational models - Concurrence and competition - Contractual relationships in public private integration - Numerous bodies of cooperation and coordination		
	Policy implementation	- Concurrence and competition between service providers - Sectorialization of competences of case workers (less focus on global approach and more professional inclusion) - Organisational models - Information systems		

Table 5 – Enablers of multi- stakeholder integration and type of coordination by case study

		A	B	C
Multi-stakeholder	Policy development	- National dynamics: national priorities and orientations (targets, issues) - Institutional and professional culture - Interpersonal and professional affinities and relationships - Proximity - Reduced public budgets		
	Policy implementation	- Institutional and professional culture (social workers' corporatism) - Interpersonal and professional affinities and relationships - Proximity - Reduced public budget - Level of discretion of case workers and some latitude to develop actions - Staff Delegation - Variety of positions actors		

5.4. Conclusions

France is rooted in a centralized system, especially in terms of social cohesion and employment policies. The local level has thereby rarely been investigated. Yet, debates on the territorialisation of public policies, new governance schemes rising, and the increasing promotion of activation policies (among others) have challenged the former system. It sparks interest on this level. What is its leeway regarding the way employment policies are developed, implemented, and services are delivered? What are the convergences and divergences among different localities?

With hindsight, the three case studies conducted in France did not show strong differences. Given the French institutional landscape, one could expect service delivery and even implementation to encounter different frameworks regarding the ways policies are services are governed, whereas policymaking would be expected to be more or less similar from one case to another because of the centralized system. However, even service delivery and implementation follow a relatively common path. Rural or industrial areas would have probably led to bigger gaps among the cases, and to stronger governance differences. Based on that statement and given the cases that were chosen, the main question that arose was: are there governance factors that explain the performance of each city (under, average, and best performing)? What are the enabling and hindering variables that have an impact on governance of employment policies at the local level, and most especially on integration?

The main finding brought out is that integration inheres in the French landscape. This statement is even emphasized in the framework of employment issues, where the number of actors, dimensions and levels involved reinforce it. At the local level, some argue, others agree, but all communicate and interact within what was often illustrated by a cobweb (many actors / levels / dimensions all somehow interconnected). Hence, there is no lack of integration if we measure it according to the number and the intensity of vertical and horizontal interactions. Nevertheless, does integration mean coordination? It involves cooperation, and to a more limited extent coordination. Yet, the complexity reached at the local level in France highlights the difficulty to articulate such a high integration. Moreover, we often face two different dynamics within this integration: on the one hand, one related to policymaking, and on the other hand, one related to the service delivery. The misfit that arises from these two ways to cope with integration reveals the lack of a comprehensive strategy.

Looking at the three levels of analysis enabling the grasp of local governance, the level of public action did not appear as a strong component of an integrated approach. Indeed, cooperation among levels is mainly a matter of national policies trying to deal with its decentralisation process, which seems to remain unstable because of competencies issues and political debates. However, at the local level, the several institutions seem to work together, no matter which level is concerned. The focus is not put on the 'level' of public action as such, but rather on multi stakeholders' cooperation. Integration exists, but occurs *de facto*.

Cross sectoriality - the most promoted trend to foster integration - complies with the call for both the traditionally settled global approach of the individual in service delivery, and the will to promote employment at the core of other public issues, along with the decrease of budget that makes it necessary to share resources. But although this multi-dimensional aspect is acknowledged, the misfit previously presented reaches its peak in this setting. The complex articulation of formerly separated policy fields that are being increasingly encompassed brings the light on the time required for changes ("*the major challenge here is to overcome this institutional barrier and to ensure that demanding and enabling measures follow the logic of necessity and not primarily an institutional logic*" (Eichhorst and Konle-Seidl, 2008, 18)). These changes are not just a matter of policy instruments, but also tackle the policy paradigm (Hall, 1993, Eichhorst and Konle-Seidl, 2008, Berthet and Bourgeois, 2012). The local level highlighted what the comparison of national governance schemes had shown: "*the change thus seems to spread faster in regard with goals and instruments than within organisations*" (Berthet and Bourgeois, 2012). Hence, multi dimension integration may have reached its institutional goal (rationalizing public funding, etc.), but no major change can be noticed for the beneficiary, except from increasingly complexity.

Concerning the way stakeholders are coordinated at the local level, one can observe that even though new public management is promoted, it is set up progressively in order to avoid virulent controversies among public actors used to different partnership schemes. Multi stakeholders' integration is the core of the integrated approach at the local level, as interpersonal relationships play a role of paramount importance. Proximity facilitated by the local level is an enabling factor to integration. Nevertheless, new fostered cooperation schemes (tenders, contracting-out, etc.) challenge the traditional functioning of partnerships, and turn many former cooperation relationships into contractor / ordering party one.

In a nutshell, the difficult coordination of the integration results in the scarcity of co-production, nevertheless softened by an important share of experiences, resources (human, cognitive, and financial), etc. There is a lack of comprehensive strategy due to the economic situation, a remaining unclear decentralisation process, a poorly institutionalized bottom up dynamic, and a communication between different positions that becomes more rigid or and thereby less cooperative. And yet, the existing network, proximity and long-lasting tradition of the global approach enable a strong integration at the local level.

Table 3 - Governance types and coordination characteristics

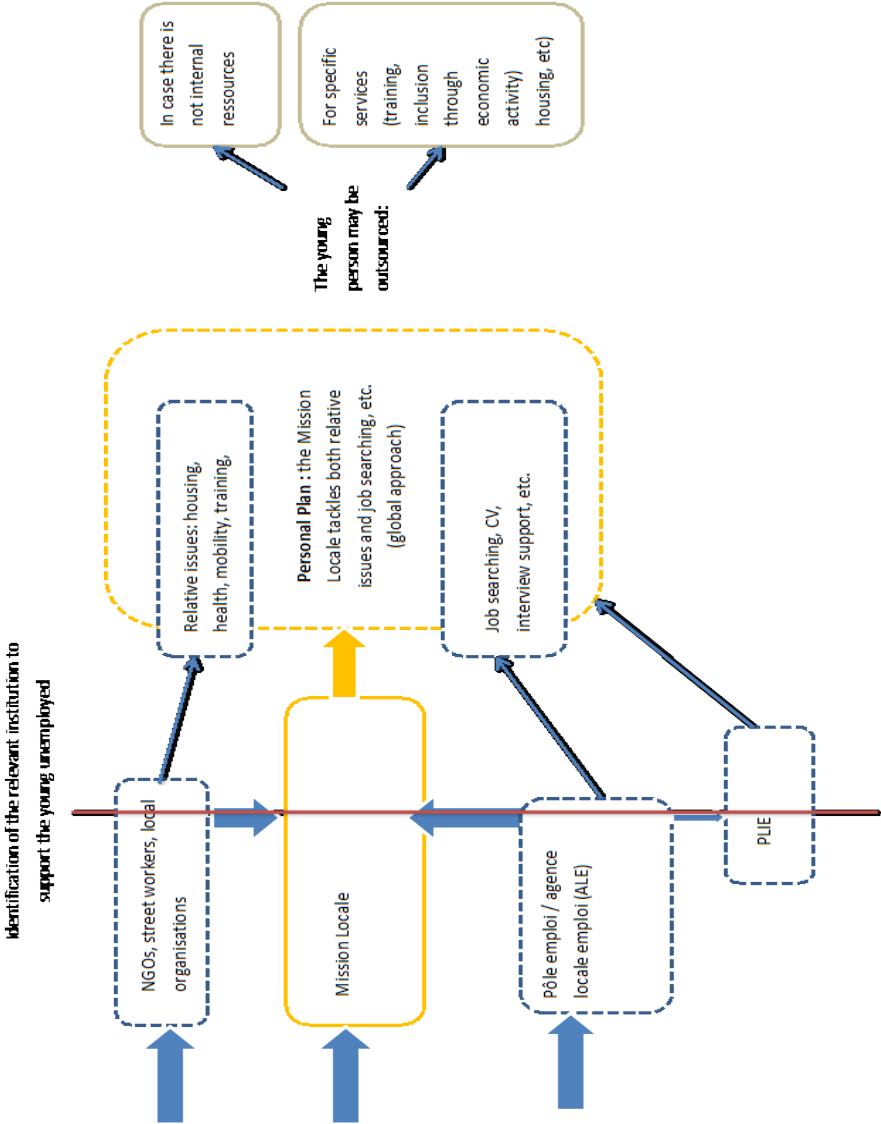|	Governance Type		
Coordination	**A mostly Public administration**	**B mostly Public administration**	**C mostly Public administration**
Multi-level	Centralised / *"Deconcentré"*[22]	Centralised / *"Deconcentré"*	Centralised / *"Deconcentré"*
Multi-dimensional	Coordinate / co production	Coordinate / co production	Coordinate / co production
Multi-stakeholder	Contractual / collaborative	Contractual / collaborative	Contractual / collaborative

---

[22] *"Deconcentration where the center holds the policymaking authority and 'lower' levels are delegated implementation tasks only"* (Van Berkel and Borghi, 2008)
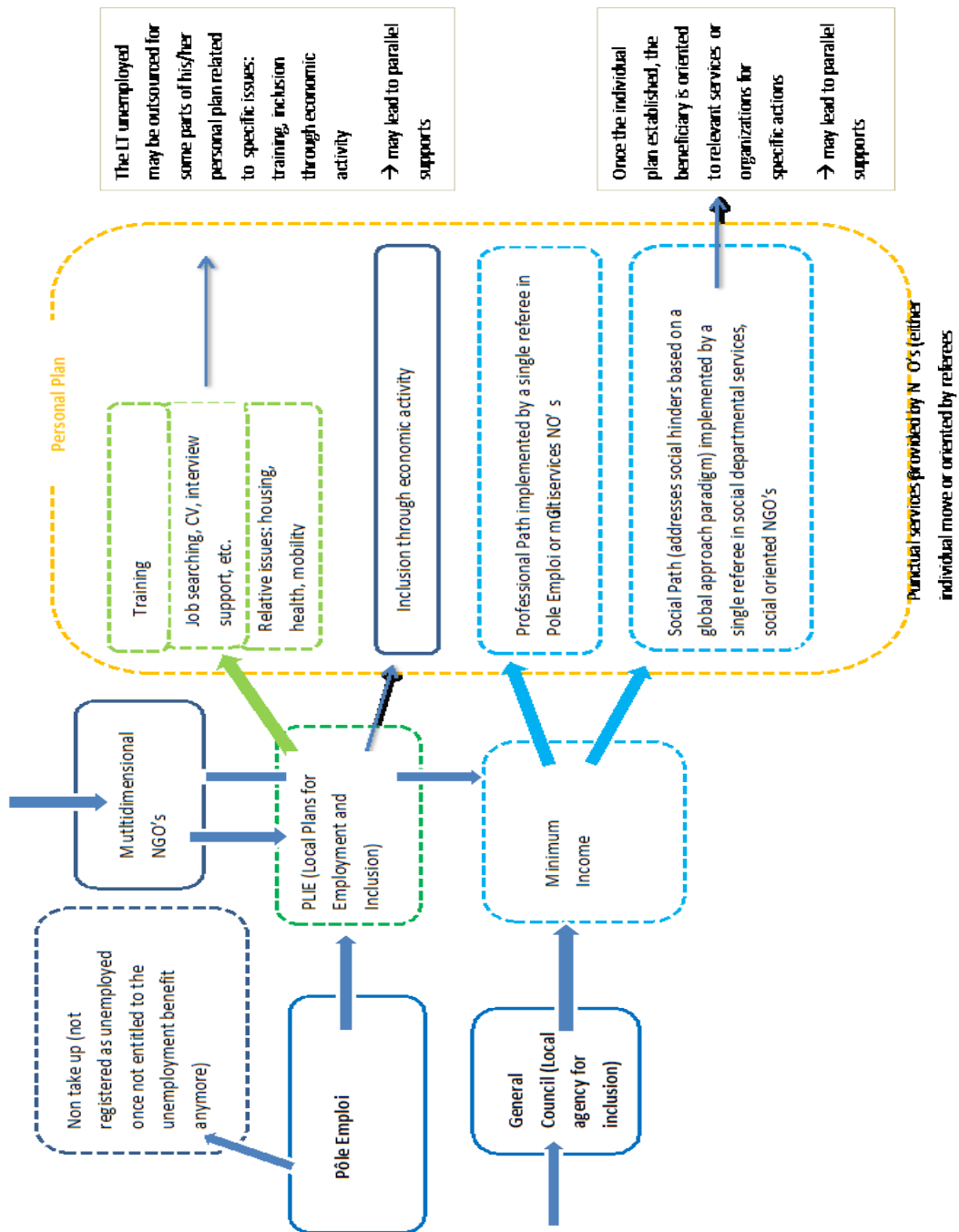
REFERENCES

Barbier J.C., (2000), Activation Policies, Workfare and "Insertion", The Welfare State in the Age of Globalization, Lessons from the USA, France and the UK, Paper presented to the French-South African workshop, http://www.socsci.auc.dk/cost/unemployment/New-Papers/barbier-gautie.PDF

Barbier J.-C., (2002a), «Peut-on parler d' « activation » de la protection sociale en Europe ?», Revue française de sociologie, n° 43-2, avril-juin, p. 307-332.

Barbier J-C, (2004c), La stratégie européenne pour l'emploi: genèse, coordination communautaire et diversité nationale, Rapport de Recherche pour la DARES, Janvier (contribution de Sylla N.S.).

Barbier J.-C., 2006, (avec des contributions de N.S. Sylla et A. Eydoux), Analyse comparative de l'activation de la protection sociale en France, Grande-Bretagne, Allemagne et Danemark, dans le cadre des lignes directrices de la stratégie européenne pour l'emploi, Rapport pour la DARES (ministère du travail), CEE, janvier, 217p., http://eucenter.wisc.edu/OMC/Papers/EES/barbier.pdf

Barbier J-C, Knuth M., (2010), Of similarities and divergences: why there is no continental ideal-type of "activation reforms", CES Working Papers/Documents de Travail, n°2010.75, Paris, CES Université Paris 1- Panthéon Sorbonne CNRS. ftp://mse.univ-paris1.fr/pub/mse/CES2010/10075.pdf

Berthet, T., & Conter, B. (2009). Activation des politiques de l'emploi: stratégie européenne et transformation de l'action publique nationale et locale en Wallonie et en France.

Berthet T., (2012), « Les politiques régionales de formation professionnelle: quelques lignes de changement » Schedae, Presses Universitaires de Caen, prépublication n° 3

Bonoli, G. (2010) 'The Political Economy of Active Labor-Market Policy', Politics & Society 38(4): 435-57.

Borghi, V., & Van Berkel, R. (2007). New modes of governance in Italy and the Netherlands: the case of activation policies. Public Administration, 85(1), 83–101.

Eichhorst, W., & Konle-Seidl, R. (2008). Contingent Convergence : A Comparative Analysis of Activation Policies. IZA Discussion Paper No. 3905. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor. http://ftp.iza.org/dp3905.pdf

Geddes, M. (2000). Tackling Social Exclusion in the European Union ? The Limits to the New Orthodoxy of Local Partnership. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 24 (December).

Lipsky, M. (1980). Street-level bureaucracy : dilemmas of the individual in public services. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi, de la Formation Professionnelle et du dialogue social, Direction de l'animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques, L'accompagnement des bénéficiaires du revenu de solidarité active, DARES Analyses , février 2013, n°08, 11 p.

Morice, A., Potot, S., & (Dir). (2010). De l'ouvrier immigré au travailleur sans papiers Les étrangers dans la modernisation du salariat (Karthala.). Paris: Hommes et Sociétés.

Noiriel, G. (1988). Le Creuset français - Histoire de l'immigration XIXe XXe siècles. Paris: Le Seuil.

Van Berkel, R. and Borghi, V. (2007) 'New modes of governance in activation policies', International journal of sociology and social policy, 27: 277-86.

Van Berkel, R. and Borghi, V. (2008) 'Review Article: The Governance of Activation', in Social policy and society, 7: 393-402.

Van Berkel, R., et al., (2011), The Governance of Active Welfare State in Europe, Palgrave Macmillan

APPENDIX

Youngsters' professional inclusion path

Long term unemployed' professional inclusion path

The LT unemployed may be outsourced for some parts of his/her personal plan related to specific issues: training, inclusion through economic activity

→ may lead to parallel supports

Once the individual plan established, the beneficiary is oriented to relevant services or organizations for specific actions

→ may lead to parallel supports

Personal Plan

Training

Job searching, CV, interview support, etc.

Relative issues: housing, health, mobility

Inclusion through economic activity

Professional Path implemented by a single referee in Pole Emploi or multiservices NGO's

Social Path (addresses social hinders based on a global approach paradigm) implemented by a single referee in social departmental services, social oriented NGO's

Punctual services provided by NGO's (either individual move or oriented by referees

Multidimensional NGO's

PLIE (Local Plans for Employment and Inclusion)

Minimum Income

Non take up (not registered as unemployed once not entitled to the unemployment benefit anymore)

Pôle Emploi

General Council (Local agency for inclusion)

70

Migrants' professional inclusion path

The migrant unemployed may be outsourced for some parts of his/her personal plan related to specific issues: language assessment, training, inclusion through economic activity

→ often lead to parallel supports

Once the individual plan established, the beneficiary is supposed to be oriented to relevant services or organizations for specific actions

→ may lead to parallel supports

Personal Plan

Personal network

Training

Job searching, CV, interview support, etc.

Relative issues: housing, health, mobility

Inclusion through economic activity

Professional Path implemented by a single referee in Pôle Emploi or multidimensional NGO's

Social Path (addresses social hinders based on a global approach paradigm) implemented by a single referee in social departmental services, social oriented NGO's

Punctual services provided by NGO's, often not specialized on employment inclusion, but rather on an integrated approach of migrants' integration

Non take up (if not entitled to the unemployment benefit, many do not see the need to register)

PLIE (Local Plans for Employment and Inclusion)

Pôle Emploi

Multidimensional NGO's working on immigration issues (language, social inclusion, employment, legal matters, etc.)

OFII (French organization of integration and immigration): only for newly arrived migrants

Presentation of the French institutional system

Skills assessment (1 meeting, no follow up)

71

Maps

Centre

Aquitaine

Languedoc Roussillon

WP5 - The local usages of Europe

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic researches have investigated the impact of Europe on national policies. It has revealed that it has a relatively weak influence (Graziano, 2012). The impact of the EU on local policies has been less analysed. Yet, in a context of an increasing interest of the European public authorities on subnational levels, this question appears important to address (Zimmermann, 2013). How does Europe impact – or not – subnational levels?

In this paper, we aim at analysing the "*mechanisms* through which the EU might affect more or less consistently the social cohesion policies of its member states, primarily at the local level" (WP5 theoritical framework). We will hence focus on the impact of Europe on the local level and we will try to explain that it "is not exclusively the EU impact on single policy fields but mostly whether and the extent to which organizational changes have occurred across various policy fields which go under the broader label of social cohesion" (WP5 framework).

When questioning local actors on Europe, we often noticed a lack of knowledge and of interest. The idea these actors have of Europe is blurred, complex, and leads to an attempt to avoid the issue. Yet, the need for European fundings and the awareness of its impact on the policies they are to implement and/or deliver constrain them to maintain certain knowledge on it. The main findings reveal that the influence of the European level on subnational levels varies according to several variables:

- The levels of public action: on policy development (national level), implementation (mostly regional), service delivery (local)
- Actors' positions: elected representatives, case managers, street level bureaucrats, etc. All have different stakes and belong to a different professional culture that may impact their perception of Europe and the way they use it or not.

In order to understand the different usages of European resources by local actors, we will first clarify the landscape by defining Europeanization, and setting it up in the French context. Then, we will address the usages in terms of policymaking, and of implementation / service delivery. The impact of Europe on local policies will be analysed. And to conclude, we will discuss the findings.

2. EUROPE AND THE LOCAL LEVELS

This paper takes up the debate on the specific usages of European resources. The notion of usages is here understood as the social practices through which "actors *engage with*, *interpret*, *appropriate* or *ignore* the dynamics of European integration" (Woll and Jacquot 2010: 220). Hence, the notion of usages does not only refer to the institutional context, but also to actors' ability to "choose and learn and thus develop agency independent of structural conditions" (Woll and Jacquot 2010: 220). Thus, we do not only take into account policy instruments' changes, but also the discursive, procedural, and cognitive dimensions of the change (Conter, 2012).

The French case highlighted a highly strategic usage of Europe, conceived as a mean to finance projects and/or organisations. This main usage is however not the only one. Indeed, other cognitive or legitimazing usages can be found, yet to a lesser extent and often related to fundings.

In this part, we will clarify the landscape through an analysis of the usages and resources of Europe at each level of public action (national, regional and local). It will enable us to grasp the institutional context in which interpretation, appropriation or refusal occurs (Woll and Jacquot 2012: 220).

Prior to describing the national (and infra national) context and to presenting the different kind of resources available, the concept of Europeanization should be defined. Increasinsly used in the literature, it has been defined in several ways. Radaelli defined it as "a process of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU Public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourses, political structures and public policies" (Radaelli, 2000: 4). Barbier explained that this concept usually does not enough take into account the cross influences and suggests defining it in the following way: "We shall consider "Europeanization" as the process by which national (and local/regional) politics, policies, polities, but also political cultures, discourses, ideologies, governance and government practices tend to lose their distinct national characteristics to new hybridized (=European) equivalents (politics, policies, etc.). This includes the impact of the EU policy process but goes beyond. In the domain of labour markets and social protection, the process of Europeanization tends to make these similar, resulting in the gradual construction of a "Europeanized" new common type. The counterfactuals of the new hybrid in construction lie in the existing national variety, a variety that has been commonly classified into "welfare", or "labour market" "regimes", or "varieties" (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Hall & Soskice, 2001). Because cross-influences are increaslingly pregnant in Europe, among countries, and not only coming from "the EU policy process", the assumption can be tested according to which these multiple cross-influences are gradually producing a new composite breed of policies, practices, values, norms and institutions" (Barbier, 2010). Finally (but not exhaustively), Graziano and Vink defined it as "domestic adaptation to European regional integration" (Vink and Graziano 2007: 7).

2.1. A comprehensive top down governance organized by levels of public action

Since the Lisbon European Council (2000), European strategic documents of the European Commission put the emphasis on the need to strengthen a strategic approach of social cohesion policies in order to foster a better integration of community priorities into national and regional development programmes. This strategic approach of the European Commission is presented at both the European level (in community strategic guidelines on cohesion – CSG) and the national level (with the national strategic reference framework – NSRF) (Europact Operational Programme, 2007: 4). "*Good governance is essential at all levels for the successful implementation of cohesion policy. These strategic guidelines should take account of the role of a broadly drawn partnership in the elaboration and implementation of development strategies which is necessary in order to ensure that complex cohesion strategies can be managed successfully and of the need for quality and efficiency in the public sector*" (CSG, Official Journal of the European Union from 21.10.2006, (16): 12).

European guidelines and funds are structured in a way that covers many of the facets of the policy as illustrated by the European Social Funds' example: principles of intervention and mode of selection, managing authority, indicators, budgetary envelop, monitoring and evaluation procedures, etc. It results in a hierarchical chain of guidelines documents (as mentioned in the CSG "*taking account of these strategic guidelines, each Member State should prepare its national strategic reference framework and the resulting operational programmes*" (CSG, Official Journal of the European Union from 21.10.2006, (17): 12)). These document are defined per level and always include several actors:

- **At the European level:**
    o **Community Strategic Guidelines**, Official Journal of the European Union (2006)
    o **Council Regulation**, Official Journal of the European Union (2006)

- **At the national level:**
    o **National strategic reference framework** (2007): "*For 2007-2013, French authorities must, according to community regulations on cohesion policy, establish a National strategic reference framework for the intervention of the Funds (ESF and ERDF).*

This framework must define the strategic orientation in order to contribute to the social and economic cohesion policy and shall constitute an instrument of reference for preparing the programming of the Funds. The strategic orientations from which national and regional operational programme will be framed, are defined in the NSRF considering community orientations and obligations as well as local, regional and national policies" (NSRF, 2007, p4) [23]

- o **The National Reform Programme NRP** (programme national de réforme, PRN) is drawn up by each state. It relies on three principles: (1) the principle of diversity and subsidiarity, (2) the principle of reconciliation of the European strategy with growth and employment and (3) the principle of appropriation of the concrete progress in Europe. NRP are supposed to represent the way each state will implement European strategies and recommandations into the national policies[24].

- **Regional or national:**
  - o **Operational Programme:** managing authority's strategic document (2007-2013 mentioned by Article 32 du CE n°1083/2006).

Yet, the European Union does not have any legislative power on these issues: "*these strategic guidelines represent a single indicative framework which Member States and regions are invited to use when developing national and regional programmes, in particular with a view to assessing their contribution to the Community's objectives in terms of cohesion, growth and jobs*" (CSG, Official Journal of the European Union from 21.10.2006, (17) p12).

The development of these national and regional programmes relies on a complex multi-level stakeholders coordination process. For example, the national strategic reference framework, whose guidelines will affect both national and regional operational programmes, is based on an extensive consultation conducted by the Interministerial Delegation for Territorial Development and Regional Attractiveness, the former General Delegation for Employment and Professional training, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishing, and the Ministry of Overseas Territories. The Interministerial Delegation for Regional Planning and Competitiveness and the General Secretariat for European Affairs set up a reflexion group with the related ministries, organisations of elected members and representatives of the Regional and General Councils (NSRF, 2007: 6-7). The Ministry of Finances, Economy and Employment established a special commission on the "employment package"[25]. This specific group gathers State representatives, Regional Councils, social partners, and organisations of elected members, heads of national NGOs network, and relevant representatives consular chambers (NSRF, 2007: 6).

As one can see, such framework relies on many instances and actors, which results in a complex coordination framework.

Europ'Act is a tool, financed by European funds, which purpose is to facilitate the implementation of such governance and the strategic management of social cohesion policies in France for 2007-2013.

---

[23] http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/Centre-de-ressources/Ressources-reglementaires-et-strategiques/Cadre-de-reference-strategique-national-CRSN (accessed march 20th 2013)

[24] http://www.tresor.economie.gouv.fr/Programme-national-de-reforme (accessed march 20th 2013)

[25] *"The Employment package (launched April 2012) is a set of policy documents looking into how EU employment policies intersect with a number of other policy areas in support of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It identifies the EU's biggest job potential areas and the most effective ways for EU countries to create more jobs"*, http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1039&langId=en

The next European programming period (2014-2020) relies on three main dynamics[26]:

- **A simplified organisation between European and National levels:**

The coordination of the different policies occurs at three different levels:

- European: The common policy framework (Cadre Stratégique Commun - CSC) specifies the general strategy orientations, the Structural Funds' spheres of action and their coordinations;

- National: the partnership contract defines the common framework for the structural funds (ESF, ERDF, EAFRD and EFFMA)

- Programmes: promotion of operational synergies.
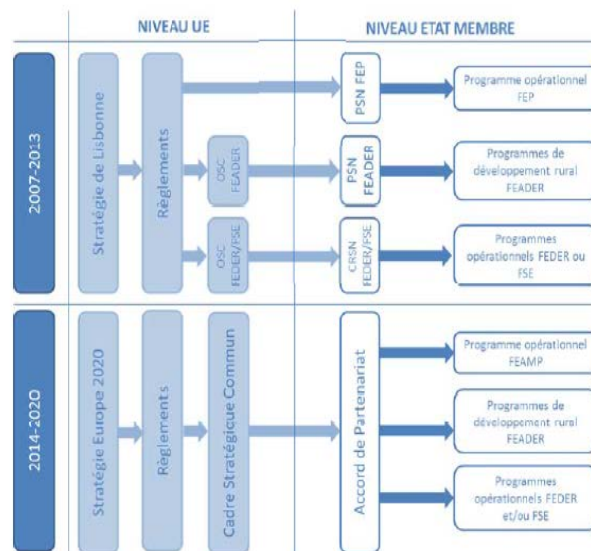
- **A policy coordination fostering multilevel coordination.**

However, even though a multi level dynamic is promoted, it falls within a framework characterized by a very large number of actors that may impede it (the national body for preparing the partnership agreement gathers 71 actors).

- **A more integrated approach** putting the emphasis on multi-level integration (as fostered by the article 5 of the draft of General Regulation – see below -, which refers to partnership and multi-level governance in all stages of design, implementation and monitoring of activities).
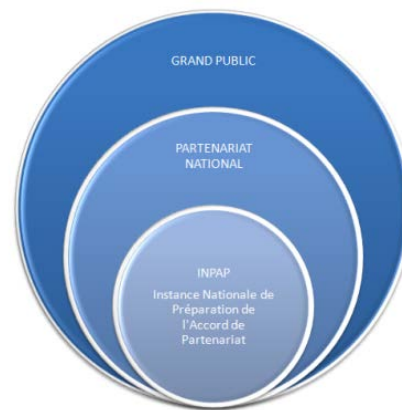
Article 5 of the draft General Regulation on partnership and multi-level gouvernance[27]

For the Partnership Contract and each programme respectively, a Member State shall organise a partnership with the following partners:

(a) Competent regional, local, urban and other public authorities;

(b) Economic and social partners; and

(c) Bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, nongovernmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting equality and non-discrimination.

2. In accordance with the multi-level governance approach, the partners shall be involved by Member States in the preparation of Partnership Contracts and progress reports and in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. The partners shall participate in the monitoring committees for programmes.

---

[26] http://www.partenariat20142020.fr/organisation.html *accessed le 22 mai 2013*
[27] http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=233&langId=en accessed june 3rd 2013

3. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 142 to provide for a European code of conduct that lays down objectives and criteria to support the implementation of partnership and to facilitate the sharing of information, experience, results and good practices among Member States.

4. At least once a year, for each CSF Fund, the Commission shall consult the organisations which represent the partners at Union level on the implementation of support from the CSF Funds.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=67&langId=en&newsId=7956

2.2. The regional level, the key level of the hourglass

A large part of the implementation process of both national and European guidelines occurs at the regional level. As described in the national strategic reference framework (NSRF), implementation requires coordination and partnership with local authorities: "*Partnership with local authorities is of paramount importance and shall be developed in the context of their new responsibilities and competences. This partnership covers the elaboration and the assessment of the national strategic reference framework as well as the elaboration, implementation, assessment of the operational programmes. All partners must be involved, especially the Regions, at every stage of the programming, as well as the State services, local authorities, social partners, consular chambers and NGOs. The operational setting of these partnerships will be defined in the operational programmes.*" (NSRF, 2007, p90)

What makes the regional level so meaningful? This can be explained by different variables that are shaped in an hourglass scheme: the regional level is a strategic level allowing the circulation of the guidelines and fundings between the highest levels and the local one. Besides, its importance has been reinforced in the recent debates about the management of European funds at a local level[28] (April 2013).

-   **Regional instances are the regulating authorities.** The Regional level is often perceived as the level responsible for the employment policies' implementation. Between 2006 and 2013, 85% of European Social Funds were though under the responbility of the regional state representative (Préfet of Région). "*From the decision of the Inter-ministerial committee for territorial development and competitiveness of March 6th 2006, the national programme is "déconcentré". This déconcentration results from: on the one hand an increasingly territorialized employment policy, and on the other hand the extensive competence devolved to local authority*" (PO FSE, 2007-2013: 8).

-   **Operational multi-stakeholder integration at the regional level.** Indeed, the regional level is very often the operational level where programmes / projects / actions / steering committees and so on take place (for example, the territorial diagnosis that precedes the NSRF (NSRF, 2007: 8), the state-region contract[29], regional planning committee with thematic technical subcommittees, and regional management / monitoring / evaluation committees (PO FSE, 2007: 118)).

2.3. A strategic local level?

At the local level, our interviews shed light on almost exclusively strategic usages and resources of Europe. When talking about Europe, the emphasis was almost always put on European fundings.

As WP2 and WP4 demonstrated, the local level is mainly dedicated to implementation and service delivery and to a lesser extent to policy development. At this level, strategic resources and more often

---

[28] http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2013/04/cir_36859.pdf accessed le 22 mai 2013
[29] http://www.datar.gouv.fr/cper-20072013-orientations-et-domaines-de-contractualisation and http://www.datar.gouv.fr/contrats-etat-regions accessed on March 20th 2013

identified than cognitive ones that are mostly perceived as concerning the national level. Indeed, the impact of Europe on the local level is assimilated to either the fundings, or its side effects (evaluation, monitoring, etc.).

However, European policies generate concrete and symbolic resources, etc. (Conter, 2012). These elements are interpreted, selectionned by the different actors involved. It leads to the necessity to take into account the "political work" realised by these actors within the European construction process (Jacquot et Woll, 2004: 7). This "political work" concerns the translation of actors' social position (institutional position, interests, values) into their practices (discourses, negociations, decisions), even though some actors have only little discretion (Conter, 2012). Thus, even though the room for manoeuvre of local actors remains limited, they do not only have an executive role (Lipsky, 1980, Pressman/Wildavsky 1984). The decision-making facet of implementation and service delivery calls for a deeper analysis of Europeanisation of the local level. Indeed, they deal with national services that are impacted by European regulations. Hence, they are also impacted without always knowing it.

These impacts are what the following empirical analysis aims at understanding.

3. STRATEGIC USAGES OF EUROPEAN RESOURCES

As already stated, one the main issue addressed in this paper is the usages of European resources at the local level in France. The centralisation of employment and social cohesion policies (WP2, WP4) results in broad outlines in the following share of competences: policy development is mainly a national competence, and policy implementation and policy delivery are respectively a regional and local issue. Hence, one may wonder to what extent do the usages of European resources differ according to the policy phase. Policy development covers a much broader spectrum of usages than policy implementation through a strong impact of cognitive dimensions. Besides, our case studies showed strategic usages of European resources in both policy development and policy implementation, that is to say at the national, regional and local levels.

When addressing the question of the usages, we should remind the three main categories that were distinguished by Woll and Jacquot (2010):

(1) Cognitive usage:
- Ideas, expertise used by political entrepreneurs, advocacy coalitions, public policy networks, experts, etc.
- Cognitive resources aimed at influencing both political élites and the electorate/stakeholders

→ It corresponds to the persuasing and interpretative contexts. It firstly seeks to facilitate the understanding and interpretation of a political issue. It also favours the spread of the concepts in order to reach common understandings of mutual stakes (Conter, 2012).

(2) Legitimizing usage
- Institutions, legal resources, budgetary resources, political resources used by bureaucratic actors and decision-makers
- Political resources aimed influencing the electorate/stakeholders

→ This approach aims at reinforcing the political legitimacy (Conter, 2012).

(3) Strategic usage
- Discursive reference to EU as a course of legitimation used by politicians and lobbyists
- Legal, financial, institutional resources aimed at influencing political élites

→ Such usage refers to the idea of taking advantage and transforming resources into political practises (Conter, 2012).

Table 1. Characteristics of the different types of usage

	Elements Used	Type of Actors	Political Work
Cognitive Usage	- Ideas - Expertise	- Political entrepreneurs - Advocacy coalitions - Public policy networks - Experts - Epistemic communities	- Argumentation - Framing of political action - Problem building
Strategic Usage	- Institutions - Legal resources - Budgetary resources - Political resources	- Bureaucratic actors - Decision-makers	- Resource mobilisation
Legitimizing Usage	- Public space - Discursive references	- Politicians - Lobbyists, special interests	- Justification - Deliberation

Source: Woll and Jacquot (2010)

3.1. Policy development process

Throughout the policy development process, European resources are mobilized by national and to some extents regional actors, but more rarely by other subnational actors. Addressing the usages of European resources in the policy development process by national actors will give some insights about the type of resources that are available and the way they are used.

We will address this issue with a set of questions:
- What kind of European resources, if any, do actors mobilize with respect to social cohesion and employment policies?
- For which purpose are these resources mostly used (organizational and/or policy change)?
- What kind of use is made ?

3.1.1. Funding, framing, regulation

As already mentionned, a broad-spectrum of resources[30] are mobilized at the national level. We observe that the first set of resources falls under the scope of 'ideas' (such as targets, themes, criterion, etc.) and the changes of 'framing of actions' (the choice of the main level of action, the market-based approach, etc.). The comprehensive and hierarchized governance scheme previously presented represents an explanatory factor to explain these cognitive usages of European resources as it helps the setting of a strong cognitive framework. The comprehensive strategy indeed facilitates the diffusion of a defined cognitive framework.

---

[30] Types of resources (Jacquot and Woll 2003, 2004; Woll and Jacquot 2010; Graziano, Jacquot and Pallier 2011):
- legal resources (legislation, case law, etc.),
- financial resources (direct such as EU funds or indirect as budgetary constraints);
- cognitive resources (ideas, communication, etc.),
- political resources (blame avoidance, legitimation, etc.) and
- institutional resources (committees, agencies, etc.),
(WP5 theoretical framework, Oct. 2012)

The second set of resources - as important as the first one - is the budgetary and legal resource. Indeed, most interviewees explained that these were the main reasons why they would 'use' Europe. One can thus assume that the change in the framing of actions and ideas is the result of European fundings. It would thus mean that it is a side effect of the strategic usages of European resources.

3.1.2. Using resources to change policy

Two kinds of changes can be distinguished: on the one hand, there are organisational changes, and on the other hand, there are policy changes. It appears that the ones we encounter the most are focused on the policy itself (its paradigm, and so on), while organisational changes are more often the consequence of the policy change than the main goal.

Policy changes imply that *the guiding principles*, *targets* and *thematic* may have slightly evolved at the local or regional level following national changes. The cognitive usages of resources such as ideas or expertise impact the way of framing issues and/or actions. For example, principle of complementary action and funding and subsidiarity impact the framing of *Pôle Emploi* actions at the regional level, but also its organisation (*Pôle Emploi*, regional level). With regards to target groups or areas (such as youth or seniors, leaving in specific areas called '*quartiers prioritaires*' - priority neighbourhoods), themes or principles of actions, interviewees observed a convergence between national / local resources and European ones: *"the European Union defines its objectives, which we find later... we find them in the orientations and priorities of actions financed throught the ESF, so they appear through the objectives of ESF... So for some of the themes, priorities converge"*.

For example, even if European objectives and directives *« result in our action but through national directives of our direction »*, it really depends on interactions and relations between the national and the European level, and it impacts service delivery at the local level. *"For instance the exemption of unemployed senior citizens from the requirement to seek employment has been phased out with the European objective of an increased employment rate of seniors, or new action plan on seniors have been implemented on seniors citizen and that is what clearly is a European policy"*.

Nevertheless, European objectives may also help to address new issues by focusing on specific / new principle and criterions. *« It is not only about fundings because they are thematics, targets or issues which we would probably have addressed to a lower extent... on gender equality, without Europe we would not have progressed that much »*.

Organisational changes are mainly related *to legal resource* and the *ways of translating European resources into national guideline.* As developed in the §2, the new generation of European fundings and programmes appears to be more influenced by European objectives of integration.

> **ESF Operation Programme at the crossroads of a multi-stakeholder and multi-level organisation (2007-2013)[31]**
>
> The ESF Operational Programme is set up by the Ministry in charge of Employment building on:
>
> - **References in community texts** (Lisbon strategy, Council recommendations to France, Community strategic guidelines (2006), Council Regulation (2006) and **in national frameworks** (National reform programme, 2007; National strategic reference framework, 2007) and **on the assessment of programme funded by ESF**;
>
> - **Regional contributions** to the national operational programmes established by the *Préfet of Région* (including a diagnosis, the strategy and the proposition for regional allocation of the funding as well as the proposition for regional partnership and the coordination with other fund (ERDF, EARFD for instance)
>
> - **Summary of regional proposal** as the result of bilateral meeting organised with each Region in order to be consistent with national operational programme
>
> - **Technical committees** with the main national partners
>
> - **Interministry coordination meeting** under the auspices of the SGAE (*Secrétariat général aux affaires européennes*);
>
> - **Conclusion of the national body of consultation** that met twice gathering state representatives, regional councils, social partners, associations of elected members, national NGO network head, and relevant representative consular chambers
>
> **- And the result of ex ante assessments**

The main types of resources used in the policy development process mentioned in interviews were:

- First and mainly, budgetary resources that were mentioned by all interviewees, but also ideas and framing of actions (targets, thematics) but that were most of the time perceived as a resource used to reach the budgetary ones (if one want to get funds, he/she has to fit into and refer to European cognitive resources);
- and then, legal resources and institutions.

3.2. Policy implementation

In the field of social cohesion and employment policies, implementation and service delivery are often under the responsibility of the regional and local levels. Regional actors implement employment and social cohesion policy and local caseworkers provide and deliver actions/services. At these two levels, we observed very little knowledge of European Union's orientations. Apart from regional executives referring to specific European guidelines, to regulation of SSGIs (social service of general interest) or SGEIs (services of general economic interest), or one local city representative referring to integration, most of the interviewees refer to Europe, acknowledge Europeans resources yet without really understanding it. Either Europe is too far or / and caseworkers have no time to take interest while they have to address many other daily practical issues: *"we know that European directives will sooner or later impact our policies on our territory. Yes, but nevertheless Europe stay, well..., one has to say, a bit far, and once more it is not a criticism about Europe, it is not that we are not interested or that we do not want to work with Europe... but we are a very operational direction, once more we are fully focused on addressing our recipients' issues on a daily base"*.

In this context, what kind of resources do local actors mobilize?

---

[31] PO FSE, 2007-2013, p9

3.2.1. Funding and references: displaying European resources

The same sets of resources are used in both implementation and service delivery: they are mainly budgetary, but also discursive, and to some extent framing the action. But the cognitive usage of targets or thematics in the framing of action for instance, or the legitimization usage of the European legal frame may also be a strategic. The lack of readability and detailed knowledge of the guidelines lead to what could be called a 'soft' cognitive usage. By this, we refer to a more discrete cognitive usage, meaning that actors use it without always being aware of it. *"Once I thought there was a European strategy for employment, a basic strategy, a few years ago I guess with the Luxembourg Summit, the famous... but, when you are on the field we have not readability on this..."*. But it seems important to display European resources and references: *"I think that there is a link, at least it is displayed but... I don't really see it on the field"*.

Thus, the most important resource is fundings (especially the ESF). Precise knowledge on European resources such as fundings is considered useful, yet very specific and very strategic: *"the operational programme sets up the frame, it relies on European recommendations that we are going to explore and we are going to design project that fits because we need the funding. So yes there is an influence but an influence under obligation"*. It often occurs that the specific knowledge is outsourced (see §4).

However, the social project of Bordeaux (§4.1) represents a counter example of a multi dimensional and multi stakeholder project specifically referring to the European idea of integration.

3.2.2. The strategic usage of resources may lead to organisational changes

The strategic usage of the different resources aims at helping local and regional actors to achieve their agenda and reach their goals (see §4). Yet some organisational changes may arise. In our local case studies, organisational changes were mainly related *to legal resources* and new contractualisation patterns (from partners to co-contractors, see WP4).

It though encounters many challenges. For example, the intermediate bodies that benefit from ESF and manage both fund and project faced several organisational issues: *" We have been orientated towards a more global subvention for the programming of 2007-2013 and since we are intermediate body... we... well we are not ready with our organisation to such a global subvention, with such level of requirement, more and more... binding control... we step out of such a global funding for a bilateral funding with ESF, that require that we select service provider through tender"*. Thus, it shows that organisational changes are not made because they are acknowledged as a way to face new challenges, but rather because local actors try to fit into European recommendations following a strategic dynamic. Hence, it shows the lack of a comprehensive strategy characterized by required changes instead of intentional ones promoted by Europe's 'soft governance'.

4. BROAD-SPECTRUM IMPACTS OF EUROPEAN RESOURCES ON LOCAL SOCIAL COHESION AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

As already stated, our empirical investigations revealed the importance of the strategic usages of European resources at the local level. Interviews showed the scarcity of references to European guidelines and orientations. Indeed, local actors are not fully aware of these European strategies and guidelines with respect to employment and inclusive growth such as Europe 2020 strategy. Cognitive resources are either limited to the national level (ministry, national networks, etc.), or mobilized by regional actors, but very rarely at a more territorialized level (municipality, local NGOs, etc.).

Nevertheless, interviewees mentioned many impacts of Europe on management, engineering, formal requirement, bureaucracy, financing, human resources and so on. These impacts are most of the time perceived as constraints. Can it be explain by the little awareness on European resources? Why are EU resources more likely to be considered as constraints rather than opportunities?

Even when the purpose of the usage of Europe is strategic and aims at getting fundings – and therefore represents an opportunity -, it is still almost systematically presented at the same time as constraining. These are the following reasons that were mentionned:

- Funding come with side effects (control, rigidity, less discretion, etc.)
- The lack of understanding of European programmes
- Some impacts are not related to strategic usages. For example, SSGI and the regulation of state aid. These elements that are linked to Europe are perceived as complexifying the landscape and thus hindering the implementation of policies.

Nevertheless, actors use European resources and / or adapt them with respect to their own projects / actions in order to achieve their goals.

4.1. Role of EU on integration

The lack of awareness of Europe trends was highlighted when asking interviewees about integration. We meant to analyse whether EU is perceived as having a role for realizing integration (multi-level, multi-stakeholder, multi-dimensional).

Questioning integration was difficult to translate since integration is largely used in french (it often refers to the public action towards this integration of migrants, or to the social/professional insertion of individuals in the society). When asking: "does an overarching 'integrated' strategy between employment and other social policy areas exist for supporting disadvantaged groups locally?" (WP4 and WP5 research framework), the concept of integration had to be defined. Then, it turned out to be first understood as a multi dimension approach, then as a multi stakeholder but rarely as a multi-level one.

These multi dimensional and multi stakeholder dynamics were not related to European guidelines, but rather to national prerogatives. For example, the promotion of multi dimensional integration is seen through two prisms: a national prerogative according to street level bureaucrats and local politicians, and with regards to the global approach implemented by caseworkers. But no interviewees assumed Europe was at the origin of the fostered multi dimensional dynamic.

Only one multi-level, dimensional and stakeholder project referred to integration as a European orientation: the social project of Bordeaux. Set up by the city, this is a three years plan of actions based on a state of the art and social diagnosis, the organisation of collective analysis based on consultation, and the writing of a shared plan of integrated actions to implement. The consultation is based on cross-sectoral thematic workshops (housing, childcare and family, precariousness, social link and ageing) involving everyone who is interested.*"At first I thought we needed a cross cutting approach: multi stakeholder and multi dimensional in order to take into account that the person we deal with is not*

only an unemployed, not only a parent or a student... He is everything. This integrated policy is important for us and to Europe that is keen on integration".

4.2. Link with local actors

This 'soft awareness' of European guidelines and orientations is characterized by very few specific references but a global discourse on the impact of the European strategy on the way local actors interact with Europe. We addressed two sets of questions dealing with the way local actors consider resources (opportunities of constraints):

- How local actors to pursue their own political agenda eventually transform these re*sources?*
- How does their relation to Europe transform local actors?

4.2.1. *Using European resources to fulfil a local political agenda*

Few local actors deny any influence of European resources on their own agenda. Most of them rather shed light on the complex relationship they have with European resources (mainly budgetary and legal). They acknowledge the influence of European resources on their agenda, mainly on national agendas. They explain how they use legal resources and institutions to pursue their own agenda at the local level. *"We look for funds and programme that fit the best our project... and we try to find a budgetary line... we try to find our place in the OP rather than it orientates us in our local agenda...".*

4.2.2. *Transformations of local actors*

Several facets of Europe arouse the interest of local actors. We have demonstrated that most of them are related to budgetary resources: being funded by European funds - or intending to be - impact local structures at different levels: management, engineering of projects, etc.

- **Handling internal organisation and external resources: more professionalization?**
The two main issues mentioned by the different categories of local actors (street level bureaucrats, caseworkers, etc.) are the impact on the internal organisation and the need to outsource some of the technical information related to European funding. Internal organisation may change in different ways or because of different reasons:

- Managing fundings:
  Intermediate bodies: Some instances at the regional, departemental (such as Regional or General Council) or local level are intermediate body, such as the PLIE (local plan for integration and employment). As demonstrated in 3.2, some instances face important difficulties managing global subvention and tender as well, they thus globalize it.
- Managing call for tenders and public procurement:
  Relations between state services and service providers have changed from a "*subvention type of scheme*" to a more contractual partnership. But relations between service providers have changed too. Some are intermediate bodies and thus contract with other providers they finance.
- Managing human resources:
  Project management impacts human resource management. As pointed out by one caseworker:"*usually, ESF provides fund for project, with a due date. Thus we keep on managing projects so we can keep our staff and caseworker*". Local service providers were unanimous pointing out the need for a new managing culture and professionalization and somehow the need of new competence inside (or outside) the structure.
- Outsourcing project management or resources on European guidelines: project engineering or

reliable information on European resources often appear too complicated to deal with. Hence, local instances may prefer to outsource it (to national network head for example).

- **Engineering local projects with European funds: towards more uncertainty?**

All the interviewees insisted on the complexity, the burden of formality, the multiple levels of control and evaluation of European fundings. *"Seriously, team of caseworkers exert themselves, they can't stand it anymore, and it's complicated... the assessment, the control... payments are delayed and you are told to expect one more control... People are worn out".*

As a result, a local service provider cannot implement a project with European funding on its own. Putting ressources in common is thus necessary. As pointed out by interviewees, managing a European project is complex and risky because of several elements: *"first, implementing small local projects with European funds is complex, then, payment are postponed and offbeat, you get the funsd four years after filling the application, so really it is not encouraging".* A local organisation looking for European fund for a local project must:

- *"Be of a reasonable size":* according to interviewees, a small organisation is unable to manage the administrative side of the European fundings. Indeed, in some regions, a minimum amount has been set up for small projects. In Aquitaine it is 23 000 euros. A project asking for less than this amount will not be reviewed. Side costs are mainly administrative and human resources ones.
- *"Be prepared to face delays in funding":* *"most of the programmes are co-funded by the State and Europe, and engineered as a labyrinth system... it costs so much... it seems to me it is out of proportion, and the delays, the 'cash timing difference' 'the cash flow impact' is such that it can undermine the health of small organisations".* Indeed, two recent reports of Europ'Act support this idea, as shown in the following table. As of February 1st 2013 only 36% of the ESF has been paid; this rate is up to 38% for the Regional competitiveness and employment objective[32].

	ESF		FEDER	
	2012	**2013**	**2012**	**2013**
Programming rate	81%	94%	70%	81%
Payment rate	17%	36%	17%	35%

- *"Expect numerous controls and be ready to justify everything".* As underlined by many actors, some of these levels of control are set up at the national level like an umbrella strategy*: "France adds up some obstacles, some keylocks".* These controls are either administrative or related to the objective of the project. Some actors pointed out the importance of such evaluation on objectives and results: *"We have to specify the public and recipients, and then we have to provide services for these recipients. So it is easy to say we are going to support the seniors, but*

---

[32] From the following documents DIACT, DATAR, Europ'Act, Rapport stratégique 2012 sur la mise en œuvre du cadre de référence stratégique national et des programmes opérationnels 2007-2013, Connaitre les programmes européens, décembre 2012 : 64 ; and DIACT, DATAR, Europ'Act, Etat d'avancement des programmes Européens, Etat financier au 1er février 2013, Connaitre les programmes européens, 2013 : 4.

then you have to "localise" them, to understand and to organise the service to target them. That is a good thing"(Pôle Emploi, local level).

Local actors mobilising European budgetary resources should expect some uncertainty on the project itself, and the organisation due to European but also national rules (level of control, "stop and go" of national, organisation of the decentralisation still in progress).

SSIG and uncertainty

Besides these changes that are related to budgetary resources, one legal facet is also debated and may interfere with the way local actors provide services, without any direct link with budgetary resources and European fundings: the SSGEI (social service of general economic interest) and SSGI (social service of general interest). They tend to change the relations between local actors and Europe toward a more structured relationship but at the same time toward more uncertainty.

The social services of general interest (SSGI) are an emerging category of services of general interest (SGI). SSGIs can be an economic or non-economic activity. The label 'social' does not prevent it from being an 'economic activity'. Thus, some SSGI are SGEI - Services of General Economic Interest – and are defined by the European Commission "as economic activities which deliver outcomes in the overall public good that would not be supplied (or would be supplied under different conditions in terms of objective quality, safety, affordability, equal treatment or universal access) by the market without public intervention." (European Commission, 2013: 21).
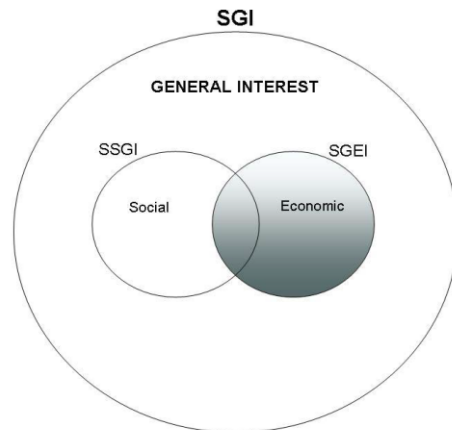
SSGI gather two types of social services:
  (1) Statutory and complementary social security schemes covering the main risks of life, such as those linked to health, ageing, occupational accidents, unemployment, retirement and disability,
  (2) And other essential services provided directly to the person "faced by personal challenges or crises (such as debt, unemployment, drug addiction or family breakdown" (European Commission, 2013: 22).

Several criterions help defining SSGI such as: solidarity, non-profit, involvement of volunteers, recipients, users and asymmetrical relationship between recipients and providers, free service. Yet based on the subsidiarity principle, each state defines the missions and obligations of their social services. In France, the scope of SSGI is wide and heterogeneous.

As long as there was no EU legislative framework applicable to SSGI, they were subject to the legal regime of SGI. SSIG could have been subject to rules on State aid control, rules on freedom to provide services and the liberalisation of these services, rules on requirement of prior notification, with risk of overcompensation, of incompatibility with Common law rules. Local, regional and national actors questioned the impact of these rules on the ways services can be organised and financed by public authorities in Member States, the modalities of selection of the service providers in case it is outsourced, and, more generally, the regulatory framework.

The European Commission must ensure "that public funding granted for the provision of such services does not unduly distort competition in the single market". But the Almunia package adopted in December 2011 and April 2012 provide new rules[1] and published a guide for the provision of social services[2]. It provides guidance and explains how EU rules in the field of state aid, public procurement and the internal market apply to services of general economic interest (SGEI). In summary, "under the new rules, a public service compensation of an amount below €500,000 per undertaking over three years is deemed free of state aid. In addition, social services are exempted from the obligation of prior notification to the Commission, regardless of the amount of the compensation they receive. All other SGEIs are exempted provided the compensation amount is less than €15 million a year"[3].

SSGI and SIEG were rarely mentioned by interviewees (3 out of 78 interviewees):*" I told Mr X., I told him, we are off topic we are above the minimi on our subvention and hum..., it is not okay... Answer? " We don't care, it's Europe". So... I was like... « Yeah well, we don't but...»... So I was really interested in the last package on SSGI ... but besides me, I don't think anyone was interested. Europe is absent"*.

[1] see IP/11/1571, MEMO/11/929 and IP/12/402
[2] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-123_en.htm
[3] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-123_en.htm

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Three case studies

An overall analysis shows that there is only little difference from one city to another. Indeed, we have identified the same usages of European resources in the three case studies. Nevertheless, there are some differences in terms of the extent each city uses European resources. Indeed, in Tours, the usage of European funds is less important than in other cities (the General Council – decentralised departmental instance – does not use any European funds for example). The main explanatory factor is the size of the city. It is not a regional capital, but only a departmental one. Hence, local and departmental actors explain that « *Europe is too complicated (…) it is not our culture* ». Regional and national instances are the ones considered strong enough to face European complexity.

All public authorities in the two regional capitals use the financial resources (not only the Regional Council, but also the General Council). We can assume that bigger cities are more able to deal with European funds (they have the knowledge and the means) and hence develop a local culture that is not reluctant to Europe, whereas smaller cities that less directly work with Europe do not develop such culture.

Socio economic datas do not seem to be a variable impacting the extent and kind of usages of European resources.

5.2. "Influence under obligation"

The influence of Europe at the local level in France is relatively weak. Only very few local actors are aware of European strategies and guidelines and it is related to strategic needs and/or personal interest.

European guidelines and orientations are not well known, and local actors get interested about them when required, meaning when they need to fit into these guidelines and orientations to get fundings.

Thus, strategic usage of resources is the main kind of usage. The cognitive usage is a side effect of the strategic one. And the legitimizing usage is less usual. It has mainly been identified in the national employment agencies to explain their management schemes (notably regarding its governance schemes, its choice of targets, and increasing sanctions). Hence, it seeks to explain national changes and is not directly used by subnational levels.

The resources used by local actors are heterogenous. At the local level, they are mostly used to fit into European recommendations in order to get fundings. Hence, they are conceived as constraints more than opportunities. Yet, when the resources are used to increase the knowledge on Europe and to learn about good practices and recommendations, resources are then conceived as opportunities. It is more rare and it is the result of an individual variable.

National policymakers more than by implementers and service providers use European resources. Indeed, as the strategic usage is predominant and aims at getting funds, it concerns the policy development. Implementers and service providers follow nationally defined frames. They have to follow national policies that were influenced by European trends. Often, these trends are related to increasing quantitative evaluations, sanctions, etc., which explain why local actors perceive European cognitive and financial resources as constraints.

	Elements used	Main Usages
Policy Development	→ Mainly **budgetary resources** But also to some extent → **Ideas** (targets, themes) → **Framing of actions**: main level of action (regional), market-based approach	→ **Strategic usage** (budgetary resource, legal resource) → **Legitimizing usage** (ideas, framing of actions) – Pôle Emploi
Policy implementation	→ **Very little knowledge of EU's orientations** → Mainly **budgetary** → and to some extent **framing of actions** (targets, themes)	→ **Strategic Usage** (budgetary resource, legal resource)

Impact on		Reasons
Their agenda	→ **Not really at the local level** To some extent targets and themes	→ Top down dynamic → Influence of the national level
Their organisation **Their actions**	→ Need for ESF project manager → Funding based on projects, and thereby limited in time. It means that positions and actions are unsustainable → Requires treasury → **Focused** → Co-funding	→ **Complexity** → **Many controls** → **Delay of payment**

Subnational authorities are of an increasing interest for Europe through promoting their involvment in employment and social cohesion policies. Even though local actors in France still ignore Europe when they can, and use it only when strategically needed, many acknowledge that it would be interesting to deepen their knowledge of Europe. Finally, we have been able to observe a somehow feared relation to Europe at the local level. This distrust is counterbalanced by an increasing need to use European resources and a growing understanding of its possible benefits (cognitive and strategic).

REFERENCES

Cadre de Référence Stratégique National, Programmes de la politique européenne de cohésion économique et sociale 2007-2013, 7 juin 2007, 116 p.

CONTER B., (2012) La Stratégie européenne pour l'emploi: de l'enthousiasme à l'effacement, CRISP, Bruxelles,

Décision du Conseil du 6 octobre 2006 relative aux orientations stratégiques communautaires en matière de cohésion, (2006) Journal officiel de l'Union européenne 21.10.2006, (2006/702/CE), 22 p

DIACT, DATAR, Europ'Act, Europact Operational programme, 2007, 103p.

DIACT, DATAR, (2013) Europ'Act, Etat d'avancement des programmes Européens, Etat financier au 1er février 2013, Connaitre les programmes européens, 25 pages.

www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/content/download/23672/209107/file/Etat%20davancement_01-02-13.pdf

DIACT, DATAR, (2012) Europ'Act, Rapport stratégique 2012 sur la mise en œuvre du cadre de référence stratégique national et des programmes opérationnels 2007-2013, Connaitre les programmes européens, 124 pages.

http://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/Centre-de-ressources/Etudes-rapports-et-documentation/Rapport-strategique-2012-sur-la-mise-en-oeuvre-du-cadre-de-reference-strategique-national-et-des-programmes-operationnels-2007-201

ESPING ANDERSEN, G. (1990). The Three Worlds of Welfare capitalism, Cambridge: polity press.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2013), Guide to the application of the European Union rules on state aid, public procurement and the internal market to services of general economic interest, and in particular to social services of general interest, SWD(2013) 53 final, feb. 201, 110 p. http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/overview/new_guide_eu_rules_procurement_en.pdf

GRAZIANO, P.R., JACQUOT, S. and PALIER, B. (2011): Introduction: The Usages of Erope in national Employment-friendly Welfare State Reforms, in: Graziano, P.R., Jaquot, S and B. Palier (eds.): The EU and Domestic Politics of Welfare State Reforms. Europa, Europae, Palgrave: 1-18.

GRAZIANO, P. R. (2012): Converging worlds of activation?: Activation policies and governance in Europe and the role of the EU, International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, Vol. 32 Iss: 5/6, pp.312 – 326

HALL, P. A. & SOSKICE, D. W. (2001). Varieties of Capitalism. The Institutional Foundation of Comparative Advantage, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

HAUT CONSEIL A LA VIE ASSOCIATIVE (2012) , Avis du HCVA sur le paquet Almunia, Adopté en session plénière du 15 novembre 2012,

http://www.associations.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/hcva_paquet_Almunia.pdf consulté le 21 mai

JACQUOT, S. and WOLL, C. (2003) 'Usage of European Integration - Europeanisation from a Sociological Perspective', European Integration online Papers (EIoP) 7:12. http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2003-012a.htm

JACQUOT, S. and WOLL, C. (eds) (2004), Usages de l'Europe: acteurs et transformations européennes. Paris: L'Harmattan

JACQUOT, S. (2008) 'National Welfare State Reforms and the Question of Europeanization: From Impact to Usages', Working Papers on the Reconciliation of Work and Welfare in Europe (RECWOWE)   2008:01.

http://www.socialpolicy.ed.ac.uk/recwowepudisc/working_papers/01-08

La politique de cohésion 2007-2013. Commentaires et textes officiels, (2007), Luxembourg: Office des publications officielles des Communautés européennes, 160 pages.

LIPSKY, M. (1980). Street-level bureaucracy : dilemmas of the individual in public services. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

PRESSMAN (J.), WILDAWKY (A.), Implementation, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1984.

Programme opérationnel Fond social Européen 2007-2013, (2007) Ministère de l'Économie, des Finances et de l'Emploi Délégation Générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation professionnelle Sous-direction du Fonds Social Européen, juin 2007, 164 p.

RADAELLI, C. M. (2000), 'Whither Europeanization? Concept Stretching and Substantive Change', European Integration online Papers 4.

RÈGLEMENT (CE) No 1083/2006 DU CONSEIL du 11 juillet 2006 portant dispositions générales sur le Fonds européen de développement régional, le Fonds social européen et le Fonds de cohésion, et abrogeant le règlement (CE) no 1260/1999

WOLL C., JACQUOT S., (2010), « Using Europe : Strategic action in multi-level Politics », Comparative European Politics, 2010,

ZIMMERMANN K., (2013), Local policy integration funded by Europe? The impact of the European Social Fund on local social and employment policies in Germany, Paper presented at the PhD conference: Local welfare systems and social cohesion Barcelona, Departament de Sociologia, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona June 2013, 10-12

WP6 - The individualisation of interventions

1. INTRODUCTION

"Do more for those who need it the most"; this is the new leitmotiv promoted by the public employment service in France. It emphasizes a series of key concepts among which the central ones are individualization, categorization, vulnerable groups, targeting and profiling. All related to one another, they have been increasingly used by public stakeholders in the field of employment and more especially in the field of labour market integration policies. This paper aims at identifying the degree and nature of the individualisation of interventions of social cohesion and employment policies in one case study in France and its consequences on the service (the consequences of these services on the individual will be further developed in WP7). Do the tools elaborated in order to individualize the service enable a tailor-made support? How are individualization, profiling and categorization related? What are the consequences of this individualization trend on the overall organisation of the public employment service? And what are the consequences for a specific vulnerable group: long-term unemployed? This report will also tackle the construction of citizenship with regards to the accountability of the citizen, the public service and its intermediary (the street level bureaucrat). Has individualization modified the former balance between right and duties for both the citizen and the public service? Can we observe a new 'social contract'? Last, we will analyse the spectrum of choice labour market integration policies provide in this new framework that fosters a stronger individualisation of services.

Thus, this paper first describes organisational and governance context in order to clarify the landscape. Then, relying on the idea that it is at the implementation level that structural contradictions can be identified (Dubois, 2012), the governance structure of everyday work will be examined in order to shed the light on managers' and street level bureaucrats' discretion, and to understand the organization of daily practises. This work on street level bureaucrats - understood as part of the policymaking process (Lipsky, 1980; Wildavsky and Pressman, 1984) - aims at completing the analyses of labour market integration policies (see Localise reports, Barbier, 2005, Kunzel, 2012, Van Berkel, De Gradd, Sirovatka, 2011, etc.). The implementation and the development of an individualised approach will be analysed and will consequently question the degree of standardisation this framework implies. A chapter will then analyse the categorization process, before presenting the share of responsibilities at stake in this landscape.

In sum, this report investigates how the question of social cohesion and individualisation is taken in charge in the general common procedure for long-term unemployed with regards to five tensions the empirical work and the literature highlighted: (1) individualised versus generalised services, (2) program-driven versus organization-driven services, (3) integrated versus sectorialized services, (4) universalist versus differentialist approach, (5) localised versus territorialised services.

2. METHODOLOGY

The common choice we made was to analyse individualisation through a specific group: long-term unemployed. This group revealed some very interesting insights with regards to the categorization process. Indeed, the definition of a long-term job seeker (the 'long-term unemployed' designation is not frequently used, actors – and policies - rather refer to long-term job seekers instead – see also chapter 4 and 6) can be both different from one organization to another, and changing over time. Currently, the official definition (the one used by the national employment agency and by the national institute of statistics and economic studies) defines a long-term job seeker as a person that is registered at the national employment agency for over a year[33]. Yet, a report realised in 2011 by the national employment agency broadens this definition (Pôle Emploi, 2011). A long-term job seeker is there someone that has been registered at the national employment agency for over twelve months within the last eighteen months. The main finding of this report is that long-term unemployed are not a homogenous group. Some have been unemployed for over eight years whereas some others have worked every now and then over the last months, but have not worked enough to be drawn back from this category.

Table 1

Percentage of long-term unemployed (over 12 months) since 2008 in the European Union, France and the Aquitaine region

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
European Union (27 countries)	2,61	2,98	3,84	4,14	4,64
France	3,11	3,51	4,04	4,16	4,30
Aquitaine	2,41	2,70	3,03	3,36	3,29

Source: Eurostat

The empirical analysis has been conducted in the city of Bordeaux. Caseworkers from the main organization of the public employment service (Pôle Emploi) were interviewed, along with street level bureaucrats working on a specific program (the minimum income scheme support). This choice is based on one key characteristic of the French governance system (Berthet, Bourgeois, Tourne Languin, 2013): the important outsourcing of both actions and a part of the support of vulnerable groups to service providers and to partners. Consequently, it seemed inappropriate not to analyse both the main organization in charge of delivering labour market integration services, and one of program that often reaches long-term unemployed and that is outsourced to non-profit organizations[34]. The program chosen is the support organized in the framework of the minimum income scheme as it reaches many long-term unemployed[35] and is an interesting program to investigate when working on activation policies (it is often used to illustrate the French activation – see Zirra, 2010). Hence, we addressed the matter of the individualisation of services for long-term unemployed through an interesting organisational approach that is not an innovative case, but rather a traditional one that can be found in many other situations. The reason we did not choose an innovative case relies mainly on the fact that in a highly centralized system, there is only few – if any – innovative cases framed at the local level. The case presented in this paper is not only based on one organization but on one program. Hence, we do

---

[33] http://www.insee.fr/fr/methodes/default.asp?page=definitions/demandeurs-emp-longue-duree.htm

[34] Hence, when needed, we will distinguish the two kinds of organizations we met in order to shed the light on the similarities and divergences between the national employment agency and private service providers.

[35] A recent report (Caf, 2013) described five profiles of minimum income recipients: (1) young unemployed with diploma starting their labour market integration with no specific difficulties, (2) unemployed who cannot benefit from the unemployment insurance anymore registered at the national employment agency for over a year, (3) women that are isolated and have childcare issue, (5) older beneficiaries that have several difficulties. Amongst these categories, we met unemployed at the end of their unemployment benefit and isolated women that also fit into the previous category.

not analyse the way street level bureaucrats deal with long-term unemployed in one specific organization, but rather how one specific program addresses the individualisation of long-term unemployed. This program – the minimum income scheme – set up a specific service with regards to its governance scheme and its approach of the beneficiary. Thus, it is not an innovative case as it is spread on the whole national territory, but it is particularly interesting and relatively innovative compared to other services. Moreover this income scheme is a former local experimentation that has been generalized to the entire territory after its evaluation by a RCT (randomized controlled trial) procedure. It will thus be important to question the articulation of programs-driven approaches versus organizations-driven approaches / the impact of the measure cognitive and normative frameworks versus the impact of the organization's culture in order to illustrate the complexity street level bureaucrats and beneficiaries face with regards to the governance and the implementation of services.

Four interviews were conducted with street level bureaucrats working at the national employment agency. One manager from the same organisation was also interviewed in order to test his/her impact on the organisation of the service (hence enabling us to test Evans' argument on the influential role of managers in the implementation stage (Evans, 2011). Four other interviews were conducted with street level bureaucrats working on the support set up in the framework of the minimum income scheme (RSA). Due to the program-driven approach we decided to take, it was difficult to meet caseworkers working in the same organization on the same program (as minimum income scheme program referees are not numerous within one organization, but are rather in many different organizations). Therefore, we met these street level bureaucrats within three different organizations. Seven interviews were conducted with long-term unemployed that were chosen by street level bureaucrats within service providers in charge of implementing the minimum income scheme. The main selection criterion was related to the distance from employment. Indeed, we wanted to meet with long-term unemployed that were on a labour market integration path (instead of a social one). It means that long-term unemployed we met did not have strong social impediments that would – according to the street level bureaucrat in charge – make them 'unemployable'.

Table 2: Interviews[36]

	Street level bureaucrats
1	Employment national agency
2	Employment national agency
3	Employment national agency
4	Employment national agency
5	Non profit service provider
6	Non profit service provider
7	Private service provider
8	Private service provider
9	Head of the local employment national agency
	Beneficiaries
1	LTU
2	LTU
3	LTU

---

[36] About 25 more interviews were conducted in the framework of a Phd on the implementation of cross-sectorial policies (Bourgeois). These interviews were conducted with caseworkers from service providers organizations and the national employment service.

4	LTU
5	LTU
6	LTU
7	LTU

The issue of unemployment and labour market integration policies is sensitive. In a time of high unemployment rates, the efficiency and relevancy of their service are often called into questions. The numerous criticisms towards their services in the media have introduced a kind of reluctance towards external observers, which made complicated meeting with street level bureaucrats and long-term unemployed. Consequently, we had to go through a heavy administrative system to allow the interviews with street level bureaucrats. Yet, this empirical analysis occurred in a favourable policy window (the new plan - *Pôle Emploi 2015*- developed by the national employment agency states that a closer relationship with the academic world should be promoted). This dynamic clearly facilitated our approach but we were still unable to interview long-term unemployed. It was easier to have access to street level bureaucrats working for service providers and partners. Nevertheless, due to the program-driven orientation, we had to go through several intermediaries to know whom to contact. Regarding long-term unemployed, street level bureaucrats managed the interviews that took place in their office. This process of organizing interviews reflects the *millefeuille* facet of the system (Berthet, Bourgeois, Tourne Languin, 2013), along with difficulty to identify some of the key actors of the service.

3. ORGANISATIONAL AND GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

In France, activation was progressively developed. First promoted without being effectively implemented, it has become more formal over the last decade. Several measures were developed in order to introduce activation polices in France. It was for example, the objective of the transformation of the former minimum income scheme - *RMI* ('inclusion' minimum income) - into the *RSA* (active solidarity income) in 2009. The creation of *RSA* reinforced the conditionality of social benefits. It also reinforced the link between social assistance and employment policies. These two dynamics demonstrate the promotion of an activation-friendly integrated approach (Berthet, Bourgeois, forthcoming). Moreover, changes that affected the organizational structure of the services in the employment public service shed light on a reinforced (yet limited compared to some other countries such as the UK) marketisation and contractualisation that are at the core of the activation trend (Berthet, Bourgeois, forthcoming).

Even though decentralisation processes have transferred some responsibilities to subnational bodies, the French political and administrative system remains centralised. Regarding the sector of employment policies, the State keeps the prerogative (Gramain, Exertier, Herbillon, 2006). Local stakeholders develop some projects at the local level. Yet, they are mostly in charge of developing national policies on their territory.

The organisational structure of the PES at the territorial level takes the shape of a *millefeuille*[37] (Berthet, Bourgeois, Tourne Languin, 2013): the regional representatives of the state *(the Préfet of region, the SGAR: secrétariat général aux affaires régionales* - General secretariat for regional affaires -, and the *DIRECCTE* - Regional directorate for companies, competition, consumption, work and employment -), the Regional Council, the General Council (and a network of territorialized agencies implementing its policies), NGOs, private actors, national employment agencies (regional and departmental offices and their local agencies), and many others tackling employment through their own responsibilities.

The main actors in charge of delivering labour market integration policies for long-term unemployed are the local national employment agencies that cover one delimited territory and are often specialized on one (or several) sector of activity (hospitality or business for example), its partners, its service providers and other actors such as NGOs (see below). Activation policies have reinforced the central role of the national employment agency. Indeed, the conditionality attached to the registration as an unemployed has made it an almost compulsory step in many aspects.

The *Revenu de solidarité active* – thereafter the *RSA* - (active solidary income) is the minimum income scheme, which replaced the minimum income scheme (revenue minimum d'insertion RMI) that was established in 1988. Established in 2008, the RSA was set up to fight against possible inactivity traps. It aims at completing the income of the beneficiary, to "guarantee its recipients sufficient means for living, in order to combat poverty, encourage the exercise of or return to professional activity and assist in the social integration of recipients" (Law n°2008-1249 of December 1st 2008). It supplies an income provided an active search for a job or a vocational project (training) is being carried out. It shows a major step towards activation (Berthet, Bourgeois, 2011). According to Zirra, the RSA was "attached to the newly created Pôles Emploi creating a universal minimum income scheme administered by a one-stop-shop for all jobseekers and benefit recipients, and endowing case managers with real sanctioning capacity (Clegg and Palier 2010)" (Zirra, 2010, p.15).

Partners are acknowledged as such by both policymakers and caseworkers. They have frequent contacts and their speciality is clearly identified by all. Service providers are chosen through tenders. They are either private organizations or non-profit organizations. They have a contractual relationship with the national employment agencies. And they often find it complicated to reach caseworkers from

---

[37] Also the name of a French cake, it literally means 'thousand layers'. In a metaphorical sense it refers to the superposition of many actors, organizations and measures.

the national employment agency if they need to talk about one unemployed. Beneficiaries are orientated to them by national employment agencies' caseworkers (and sometimes, by others such as the General Council) with an 'outsourcing sheet' that demonstrates the formal and contractual facet of the relationship. Last, the national employment agencies' caseworkers may guide the unemployed towards other actors with whom they do not have a contractual relationship. In this case, they cannot formally outsource the unemployed, but can only advice them to contact these organisations. These guidances are based on the knowledge of the local network.

Central organization	Partners	Service providers	Other actors
National employment agencies	Mission Locale (youth)	Private organizations in charge of delivering one specific service	Local actors working on related issues
	PLIE (local plan for economic inclusion)		
	Cap Emploi (disabled)		

This multiplicity of actors and the important use of outsourcing rely on the will to have specific services for either specific groups, or specific needs. Indeed, partners focus on specific groups. Service providers are in charge of delivering some services that are defined in time (usually last a few months) and that are more intensive that what can be done by the national employment agency. Moreover, outsourcing represents a way to address peripheral hinders (linguistic matters, social, housing, etc.) as it enables caseworkers to orientate the beneficiary towards an organization identified as able to address these hinders. Here, we have a large understanding of outsourcing: we understand it as the process of orientating the beneficiary to another service provider for both short-term action and global counselling. Based on that definition and with regards to all long-term unemployed[38], we can estimate the use of outsourcing at approximately 90%[39]. All the beneficiaries we met went through an outsourcing process at some stage of their labour market integration path (as minimum income recipients or before).

---

[38] Not only minimum income recipients, but also long-term unemployed that are entitled to the unemployment benefit. In the case of minimum income recipients, the outsourcing concerns mainly short-term actions as the main service provider was already chosen upon its experience and capacity to target long-term unemployed.

[39] In 2002, the outsourcing of measures by the employment ministry and its agencies reached about 700M€ (6% of the total expenditure on active policies). At the national employment agency, the usage of service providers is very important; it increased tenfold between 1998 and 2003. See Berthet 2010

4. TWO DIFFERENT DAILY ROUTINES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE BENEFICIARY/CASEWORKERS RELATIONSHIP

Although the caseworkers we met all share the same objective: to facilitate the entry/return of the jobseekers onto the labour market; we observe a wide range of ways to address this aim. The different situations differ with regards to the governance structure of street level bureaucrats' everyday work, and to their level of discretion. Indeed, each program and organization has its own organizational scheme that frames the work of the caseworker, that can even get caught between two different schemes he/she is deemed to follow (the organization and the program's ones).

Prior to analysing the individualisation process, we need to clarify the landscape and to explain how caseworkers fulfil their duties, how is their everyday shaped and in what context they provide the service. Hence, we will first present their daily practises, their tasks and the way their timetable is organized. Then, the trajectory of the long-term unemployed will be developed in order to show how the individual fits into this landscape. Last, we will present the main criteria used in labour market integration services (on what criteria are caseworkers evaluated and how are they controlled).

4.1. Daily routines: a segmented random organization versus a focused routine

National employment agencies' caseworkers described a wide range of tasks pointing out a kind of randomness of their everyday work routine. They have three main tasks according to the group they provide services for: unemployed, enterprises and employees.

- The most well known of their task is to provide services to the unemployed (information, orientation, unemployment benefit calculation, and programmes). There are two levels. First, they receive unemployed at the information desk who come looking for advice, documents or information. At the second level, they manage their 'portfolio' [40] (*"to give life to your portfolio, it's sending offers, follow unemployed (…) and also well know the services we can offer"*). They contact persons that belong to their 'portfolio' for face-to-face compulsory appointments or by phone and emails in order work on their labour market integration.
- They are to provide information for employed people and advise any workers regarding employment.
- They also collect offers and set up a hotline for questions from enterprises.

Caseworkers explained that it is the 'local management team' or the 'local organisational technical team' (depending on its designation that has changed over the last years) that usually sets up their weekly planning. They insist on the fact that there is no typical day. Tasks are planned on a half-day unit basis: *"We can't talk about a typical day. A typical week, yes, it's more adequate. A typical day, it will be a program organised by .. hum.. how.. now, it's our head of production team, before, it was our team manager, the name has changed, it doesn't mean the same things, now, it's true, it was the head of the production team, and it became the team manager"*. Back office tasks are supposed to be dealt with within the time dedicated to meet jobseekers. There is no specific time dedicated to these tasks outside the appointments themselves.

The time dedicated to face-to-face interviews and counselling does not represent the main activity of the street level bureaucrat working at the national employment agency (whereas it is usually the main part of the activity of street level bureaucrats working in private organisations). At least one half day, they have to welcome people at the reception desk for advise and questions. They also have half days to work with enterprises. Some are also in charge of processing unemployment benefits calculation. And last, they have one half day for staff meetings when the agency is closed to public.

---

[40] Literally, « *portefeuille* » in French

The recent national Employment strategy fosters the reinforcement of caseworkers' autonomy (it is one of the six orientations (see below))[41]. Increasing caseworkers' leeway aims at improving the service delivery for those who need it the most and on a tailor-made basis.

Yet, this discretion appears to be more a way to address organisational matters than counselling issues. Interviews shed light on recent organisational changes that are supposed to relieve the burden of the monthly mandatory meetings with all the unemployed in the caseworkers' portfolio. Consequently, they have been allowed to choose how they want to contact people they are in charge of (even though there are two compulsory face-to-face meetings).

National employment agencies' caseworkers manage a profiled portfolio they choose.

- "Follow-up modality[42]": for job seekers that are relatively independent in their search and do not need regular meetings, job seekers considered as close to employment
- "Guided modality": for job seekers that need to support from their counsellor and more regular meetings
- "Strengthened modality": for those that need strong support from their counsellor in their labour market integration path through very regular meetings

Regarding the content of the counselling, they remain relatively free to choose the way they want to deal with the person's issues. They choose the programs or actions they propose and service providers they can direct towards. Nevertheless this choice is constrained. They have to choose amongst existing programs (that according to caseworkers have only changed to a limited extent), and service providers that have been selected through tenders. Yet, some explain that they have somehow lost autonomy[43] or that these changes did not really increase their room for manoeuvre because of the development of more rigid frameworks in parallel. Interviews brought up the factors upon which subjective experiences of autonomy rely on professional background and seniority (see 6.b).

The landscape that shapes caseworkers' everyday work is quite different in private organizations in charge of delivering services to long-term unemployed (Local plan for employment and inclusion – *PLIE* -, departmental house for social inclusion – *MDSI* -, NGOS, and enterprises). These caseworkers also talk about the burden of administrative tasks (in some organizations, they are accountable for every quarter of hour), but they insist on the fact that they have one single main task: counselling.

They are concentrated on their counselling task that integrates administrative works. They sometimes also work with enterprises, but it is usually related to one unemployed they are working with and they do not distinguish this task from the counselling one. Thus, all their daily practises are linked to their 'portfolio'.

In these organizations in charge of delivering services to long-term unemployed, the nature of the relationship between the paymaster and the provider may impede caseworkers' room for manoeuvre. For instance, organizations that provide services to unemployed that are outsourced by the national employment agency usually still have a certain discretion regarding the way they handle their schedule (their own organization of their timetable), the counselling itself (less pressure on putting the unemployed on other actions, on how to address peripheral hinders, etc.), but are required to follow a more

---

[41] "Give more room for manoeuvre to caseworkers in order to implement the individualisation of the service offer" (BOPE, n°71, 16 juillet 2013)

[42] The usage of the term « modality » shows clearly that the different kinds of supports differ mainly in terms of structure (frequency of the appointments, communicating tools) rather than with regards to the counselling itself.
In French, they are called: *modalité suivie, modalité guidée, modalité renforcée.*

[43] "Between before and now, let's say that counsellors – and this is my point of view – have lost autonomy. We have a reinforced control from our hierarchy; it's not bad you know, it's just a matter of perspective. (…) So there is a very more accurate framework of our interviews, with schedules… a segmentation of our interviews with big items we have to tackle."

rigid framework (notably with regards to the frequency of the appointments). Hence, the control is made on the edges of the service and less on the content of the counselling: *"Pôle Emploi's services are very restrained by the contract, especially in terms of administrative tasks. We'll have appointment every fourteen days precisely for example or every five working days"*.

4.2. The individual's trajectory

The traditional labour market integration path usually follows the following steps: the unemployed is supposed to register at the national employment agency at first, and is then directed towards an appropriate program (delivered by the national employment agency or other organisations if necessary). Indeed, the national employment agency being responsible for both placement and unemployment insurance, it is a major step. The unemployed is supposed to have one referee caseworker. This referee can belong to various organisations that are either partners or service providers (the national employment agency for most unemployed, Mission Locale when the unemployed is between 16 and 25 years old, PLIE for some long-term unemployed and other 'far from employment' unemployed, other private organisations[44] when the unemployed is a minimum income recipient). The beneficiary gets his/her referee through different processes: he can contact the organisation that is going to ensure his/her support, or he/she can be orientated there on one's formal guidance. In the case of minimum income recipients, the general council, in charge of the implementation of the RSA, usually makes the first guidance. A paradoxical situation often occurs in such context: several referees that are not aware of the multiple overlapping supports simultaneously conducted for the same beneficiary. In this situation, the beneficiary will be advised different paths, and can easily get lost into prescriptions (Berthet, Bourgeois, Tourne-Languin, 2013) and guided in many different ways.

The system and the way the beneficiary perceives it seem to be less accurate and more utilitarian: *"So, the departmental house of solidarity and inclusion was for the housing issue. As the national employment agency sent me here (service provider), I only go to the national employment agency to check the job offers and to sign on every month, but otherwise, no. I'll meet my counsellor after because now, I'm with the service provider for six months. So it's after that she/he will meet me to put things down, not before"*.

People go to the national employment agency for special needs such as a training or urgent question and mainly regarding the unemployment insurance: *"yes, because the national employment agency, it's if you really have a big issue to sort out that you take an appointment, but otherwise, it's about after six months that they see that you are still here without a job"*. Long-term unemployed expectations are low[45] and their usage of the employment public service is often strategic.

Although one caseworker is presented as the single referee of the unemployed, he/she still has to ask the stakeholder that has outsourced the unemployed not only to approve but also to make the formal guidance. They are the single referee but can't access some information or direct to any training without the agreement of the ordering party: *"I don't have a login to make formal guidance... I have no room for manoeuvre in terms of orientation, it has to be the referee"*. From then on, the quality of the relationship with the ordering party may impede the efficiency of the counselling provided by its partners: *"they have the magic button"*. In some cases (when the service provider is a partner (see chapter 3)), the single referee is the one that is in charge of path management: *"Usually, we are the only one because we are on what we call the 'path management', which means that if someone is codified as among our beneficiaries (and if this codification is still in the national employment agency's files), he/she will be sent back to us"*.

---

[44] By private organisations, we refer to the legal status. It can be both non-profit organisation and lucrative businesses.

[45] This observation may result from the fact that we had to meet unemployed through other services than the national employment agency. Thus, they were all outsourced and supported by service providers.

The complexity of the relationships with the national employment agencies has increased consequently due to the increasing number of jobseekers' registration. Unless caseworkers have a strong network inside the national employment agency it may be difficult to contact the caseworker in charge: "*what is problematic is that we don't have their phone numbers*".

Figure 2: Long-term unemployed trajectory
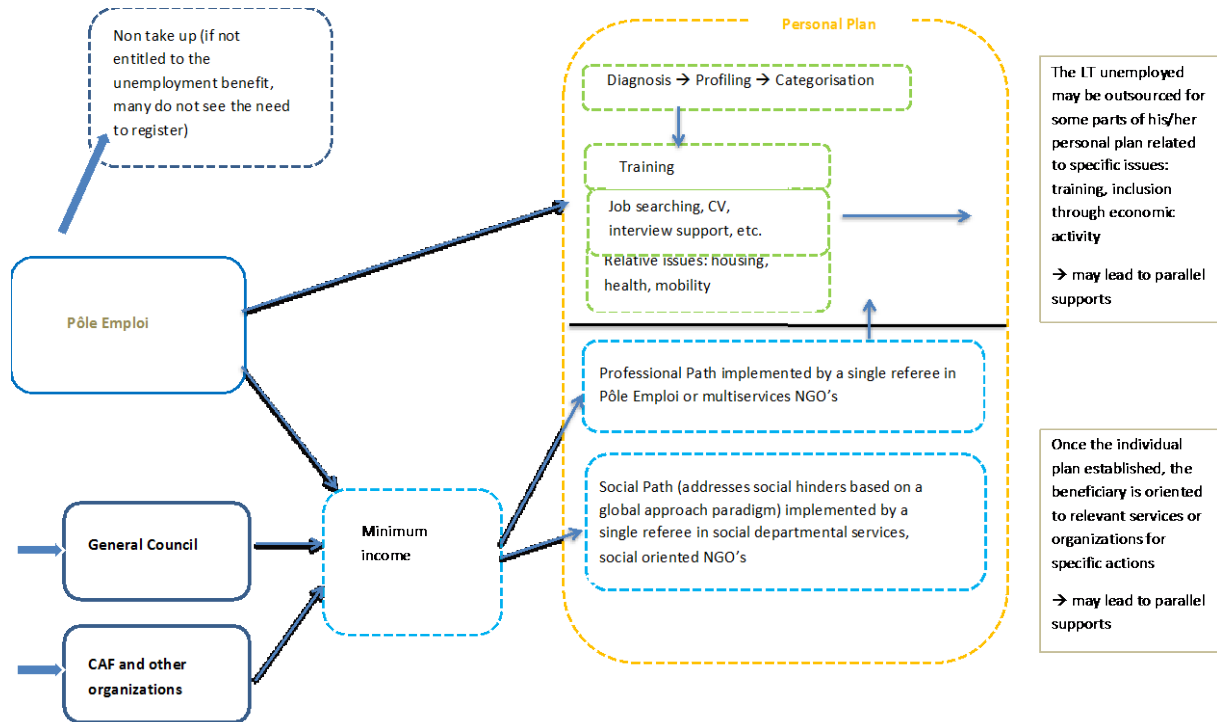
Source: based on Berthet, Bourgeois, Tourne Languin, 2013

4.3. The increasing control of caseworkers' work

Within the last decades, the promotion of public tenders led to news forms of governance. It notably related to the will to foster new public management methods in the field of employment. Yet, even though its implementation remains limited, it has encouraged an increasing control of caseworkers' actions.

On what basis are caseworkers controlled? What are the criterions used and how do street level bureaucrats interpret them? Identifying the criteria used to evaluate caseworkers' work and the level of discretion they have should enable us to grasp paradigmatic elements of labour market integration processes.

At the national employment agency, caseworkers do not have strict numeral objectives to achieve. Monitoring relies on annual interviews with the head of the agency that analyse the work of the casework based on indicators they find on their IT system. The IT system aims at picturing the way the caseworker handle his/her portfolio (how many people have left the portfolio or have entered, what is the frequency of the appointments). The elements of paramount importance according to caseworkers are the number of actions towards which the caseworker has directed unemployed and the number of unemployed put on a job offer published by the national employment agency

These indicators do not seem to strongly affect caseworkers' room for manoeuvre so far. "*The counselling of the unemployed? As I told you, according to me, the room for manoeuvre is on... the content of the counselling. It hasn't changed. Even services do not change, it's always the same thing, we have the business creation, the project, the research*". Yet, it may impede and/or orientate the service towards specific purposes (for example, prescribing unemployed on one outsourced service). "(Our indicators are both) *quantitative and qualitative. Well, then, after, the aim is really collective action, so you know, to convoke as many persons as possible, to work on CV, promote service offers, enterprises, to link the unemployed to service offers, to employers*". Even though all caseworkers do not perceive the use of indicators in the same way, all acknowledge that it can be a tool to improve their work, and that it is not used as a strong pressuring tool for the management team (yet, some fear it could become one). Nevertheless, the risk is that it may lead to trying to fit in with the criteria (find someone that corresponds) rather than seeking the usefulness of the action (facing one's issues, looking for a measure that corresponds). "*So, the requirement to 'place a product' – quotation marks – on a measure, we can face it sometimes. But maybe in a small agency they would tell you it's a pressure. In a big one, we always lack measures. In a small agency, I guess it could be a constraint to find someone in a portfolio that corresponds. Out of 60 counsellors, as the work is not totally individualized, out of 60 counsellors with different kinds of modalities, it's not a big constraint*".

Moreover, the indicators used question the changes in the 'portfolio' with the objective of ensuring an active service. But they do not seem to address its quality and its results in terms of social and employment integration.

4.4. Different relationships according to the frequency and stability of the relationship

Long-term unemployed expressed various degrees of relationships with the caseworkers they met during their integration path. Indeed, when they meet quickly someone that will not have time to listen to their needs and their trajectory, they usually do not put their trust in them and do not expect much from the service provided. They then may initiate an instrumental relationship (go to appointment when compulsory with no expectations and in return ask for documents, for trainings), or do not contact the person anymore. It also occurs when they go to the same institution expecting to meet with the same person they had met before and meet someone else. This situation can be explained by the change of counselling modalities or a modification on the profile of the unemployed. Most of the long-term unemployed we met encountered these situations while being followed by the national employment agency. They are now reluctant or have only little expectations when they are convoked[46]. "*At the national employment agency, when you want to see your counsellor, it's not immediate unless there is something very very urgent. But usually, you have to take an appointment and it's after two weeks that they give you one. (..) But you know the national employment agency, we go there for researches, all that, but otherwise, if we don't have any specific needs... well...*".

When being supported by private providers, they usually meet more often and always with the same caseworker during longer interviews. Moreover, the interviews are less standardised (see chapter 5) making it more flexible according to the beneficiary's needs. It then depends on both interpersonal matters and on the caseworkers' ability to create a relationship. Yet, the framework in which private providers work seems to represent a facilitating factor for a relationship where the unemployed feels at ease.

From caseworkers' perspective, both frequency and stability in the relationship with the unemployed also appear of paramount importance. Indeed, caseworkers working at the national employment agency often face changes in their 'portfolio', which they have not initiated. It occurs when someone's situation changes or when someone was sent on a program for a few months and comes back in anoth-

---

[46] It is important here to remind that long-term unemployed we interviewed were now supported by private providers and not anymore at the national employment agency. The modalities they talked about are not anymore at stake. It is thus important to cross this information with the perceptions of caseworkers working at the national employment agency.

er 'portfolio'. They have an orientation aim more than a counselling one, as corroborated by one long-term unemployed: "*So when I came to register, they told me they would be in touch soon after. They sent me a mail to give me an appointment well, two weeks later. So I came, we talked about what I had done, studies, jobs I had before and all that. She took notes and well. It's how it all started. Immediately, she put me in contact with... I had a counsellor* (a service provider)". Consequently, they do not seem to expect the same kind of relationship other caseworkers wish to develop. The lack of continuity in the support leads to a matching purpose (putting the beneficiary on the appropriate program or outsource him/her)[47].

As already demonstrated, caseworkers working in private organizations (partners or service providers) usually have more time dedicated to their counselling task (administrative duties included). Hence, even though they also have a large number of individuals to work with, they explained that they do not switch from one task to another and are focused on one main task. Indeed, they do not see their tasks as separated in different ones, but rather perceive them as a whole rooted in a path perspective. This analysis relies mainly on their ability to organise their schedule. Moreover, because they have no specific framework to follow with regards to the interview they organize, they are less constrained with regards to the content. This landscape facilitates a listening, considered as central in their task: "*being a counsellor means having big ears everywhere. Big ears because you need to listen a lot the person you follow who come here to have quality listening and not a passive one. It is really an active listening and a listening that will enable us to efficiently find solutions, suggest things, integrated data we did not think of, that are not always strictly professional but that interferes with that*".

---

[47] At the time of the empirical work, caseworkers did not have enough distance to analyse the new modalities that were established. Within the first months of the new modalities framework, they explained things did not really change, but they expect the situation to settle with regards to the stability of the relationship (but not the frequency because of the numerous unemployed they work with and the time dedicated to this task that does not allow regular interviews).

5. INDIVIDUALISATION – STANDARDISATION OF INTERVENTIONS

Caseworkers insist on the fact that one the key facet of individualisation is the adaptation of the counselling to the needs of the person: "*individualisation of the path, it's also taking into account the (…) demand*". They explain that individualising the service means being able to identify and address peripheral impediments (such as health, social, housing or childcare issues) in a more comprehensive way. It both enables and requires taking the individual as a whole and not only through the prism of employment.

In this part, the standardisation and individualisation of interventions will be put into questions with regards to the activation trend, promoted through most recent social cohesion and employment policies. We will first present the extent to which activation has led to more standardised ways of delivering service. Then, we will try to grasp the individualisation dimension in caseworkers' practises. Last, the consequences of this system (being simultaneously standardised and individualised) on the unemployed will be developed.

5.1. Activation polices fostering standardised paths?

In both the national employment service agencies and service providers, socio-professional paths are always somehow standardised.

In the first case, services are set up in a formalised way. Even though caseworkers are increasingly autonomous in the modalities of their counselling task, the standardisation concerns the content / steps of the counselling. Official documents from Pôle Emploi, such as Official Report or legal decrees for instance, defines the precise organisation and schedule of a socio-professional path[48].

In the second case, the contractual relationship resulting from the tender comes with rigid frameworks (in terms of schedules and evaluation). Some dimensions are standardised (appointments' frequency for instance), but caseworkers adapt this framework. Moreover, they 'de-standardise' within the path. Indeed, their room for manoeuvre especially concerns the content of the path.

Interviews with caseworkers from the national employment agency revealed the highly formalised structure of the early stages of the support. Registration and profiling is not to vary from one unemployed to another. Besides, caseworkers are supposed to follow the scheme and are provided with framed 'questionnaires'. The first interview (registration and diagnosis interview) is formalised and timed (50mn interview). Caseworkers enter online all the information, collect and verify all the documents, eventually calculate the compensation entitlements and make a diagnosis. Based on that diagnosis, the unemployed is put in one of the three profiles (followed, guided or reinforced). Each local agency defines the specificities of the three types of guidance based on the national guidelines[49]. Nevertheless, all three are based on variables of distance to/from employment and/or employability degree. The nature of the counselling is supposed to vary according to the type of guidance[50].

As already mentioned, there are no mandatory monthly meetings anymore with each jobseekers of the 'portfolio'. New mandatory milestones are a 4th month and a 9th month meetings. In between, the caseworker may contact, call in or email the person. On the 4th month: "*Here, let's say we have to go over the profile of the unemployed, which means to make sure he looks, the job he looks for, that he*

---

[48] *Sources :* Bulletin officiel de Pôle Emploi, 29 décembre 2011, n°123; Circulaire DGEFP no 2008-18 du 5 novembre 2008 relative à la mise en oeuvre du projet personnalisé d'accès à l'emploi et à l'offre raisonnable d'emploi;

[49] In the agency where interviews were conducted, the followed modality corresponds to people looking for jobs that have many vacancies and unemployed ready to work. The guided modality is for people who need to elaborate their professional project and those who need trainings. The reinforced modality corresponds to young unemployed.

[50] This system is relatively new as it was implemented at the beginning of 2013. It is therefore difficult to analyse its results and interviewees explained that they are in a transition period that might not reflect the real effects of the new system.

has a space on the internet. For example, make sure he has the tools to look for a job, check how he finds offers, check his degree of autonomy, whether he has peripheral hinders that appeared between the time of his registration and now or that he has not told us then. Well, things like that. So it's quite framed". Not all caseworkers make the same usage of the formalised interview outlines. Some (mainly the ones with the most experience) tend to step back from these outlines. Yet, interviews are always segmented in order to collect information on the unemployed: "*So there is a framework, much more precise for interviews with time frame, and a segmentation of the interview in big items we need to tackle. So it's planned*".

Facing a large number of people in their portfolio (the average, based on our interview, is 170 individuals in one caseworker's 'portfolio'), caseworkers from the national employment agencies outsource people to other organisations. This increasing trend – along with the promotion of new public management methods - has reinforced the standardisation of relationships[51].
Long-term counselling and short-term actions are distinguished. "*It is standardised... We do way more standardisation on services we handle, on short services that are standardised. The counselling, it is a service - with quotation marks – a follow-up spread over time, it cannot be standardised. Even us, we could not handle it*". According to street level bureaucrats, long-term counselling cannot be standardised whereas short time action can.

Nevertheless, crossing information from street level bureaucrats that work in both national employment agencies and private organizations showed that not only is it a matter of length of the counselling, but it is also a matter of both the perception of the global approach and the organizational structure.
Thus, the follow-up delivered by national employment agencies' caseworkers is shaped by guidelines, recommendations to focus on the professional project and the injunction of employment. It may lead to more standardised follow-up than in other organizations. In these organizations, an administrative rigid framework may impede caseworkers' practises. However, their room for manoeuvre (see chapter 4.1) enable them to deliver a flexible service with regards to addressing peripheral hinders and to adapting the follow-up to the individual.

5.2. Promoting individualisation through standardised actions?

Individualisation is a key concept of the strategic guidelines of PES. However, in everyday work, how do caseworkers define and implement it in a context fostering standardised procedures? What variable may restrain the implementation of individualisation for some or enabling it for others?

Individualisation is assimilated to the degree of flexibility in adapting the support to beneficiaries' needs or interests. Hence, when addressing this issue, caseworkers (from all organisations) refer to their room for manoeuvre. Indeed, they support the idea that individualising the integration path is first and foremost about their own flexibility (for example, in choosing how to communicate in order to adjust the intervention to the needs of the individual). It explains why the way policymakers try to develop individualisation relies on giving more room for manoeuvre to caseworker. However, as we just demonstrated, it goes along with what some perceive as a standardisation of the procedure. Hence, there is a room for manoeuvre on the form, on the communication means. But giving more room for manoeuvre to the caseworker does not systematically equip him/her to individualise the follow-up.

---

[51] The share of information between ordering parties and service providers is limited. Service providers find it difficult to reach national employment agencies' caseworkers (no direct phone line, not always a direct contact). Yet, the informal dimension of the share of information used to be crucial and might be impeded by the rigid framework established through these new relationships. "*There are things we can't write* (on the unemployed evaluation or prescription sheet). *Things we cannot say, for example, health issues. I mean there are ways to put things. (…) Not everything can be written on the file*".

At the national employment agency, the three main components of the follow-up caseworker has discretion on are:

- The end of the monthly mandatory meeting: "(…) *with the old monthly meeting, it was... I thought it was less relevant because we were so overburdened because we had to meet people that did not always needed it no matter what. But following these obligations... Now, the system is more flexible. The fact that we can have tailor made milestones enable us to do so according to the planning*".
- The communication system: "*But it depends of the caseworker, how he/she works, you see? I mean that the 2015 plan puts the emphasis on the counsellor's autonomy regarding the way he/she handles its 'portfolio'. So here, I am maybe more used to work with emails, phone, so I have multiplied such contacts. Others will prefer face-to-face appointments. It all depends on the person*".
- The evolving information system: "*… In 15 years, after seeing many measures, I thin that now we think differently. But the core of the job has not really changed. Expect from improvements... IT system and also well... on the idea that well, everyone does not have to be seen on a monthly-base, it's not worse if the room for manoeuvre is here. It is maybe more that*".

All interviewees emphasized the fact that a tailor-made counselling involves addressing social impediments and providing services according to the individual's project. Nevertheless, the empirical work revealed that caseworkers from the national employment agency are not really focused on counselling but rather on prescribing and outsourcing. They have a "*rich tools catalogue*" and choose the fittest. They can also outsource the long-term unemployed to another service provider.

Caseworkers in service providing organizations relate the quality of their counselling to their capacity to individualise their service: "*well, for me, when I'm with someone, it's not the same thing than with the previous person or the one that follows*". Individualisation requires time, method (rather than tools) and network. Caseworkers are able to manage the schedule, content and organisation of the socio-professional path. Appointments usually last longer than within the national employment agency.

The frequency of the interviews is scheduled, but caseworkers often adapt the rhythm because they perceive adaptation as the key factor to individualise the service. "*There are some people I will need to see, so exceptionally two times a week, if there is a precise thing to sort out in emergency, etc.*". Consequently sometimes caseworkers play with the edges in order to fit in the contractual obligations. For example, they will predate interviews and adapt their schedule according to their timetable and the individuals' needs. It shows that the way the organizational framework has been thought does not reach its objectives, as it does not enable caseworkers to individualise. Hence, even though individualisation is promoted in legal documents, it seems that the landscape does not always facilitate its implementation, thus questioning the ways that are developed to foster it. Moreover, the fact that street level bureaucrats manage to adapt the structure according to their needs and the beneficiary's needs shows that the organizational framework only structures the procedure to a certain extent. The shape and modalities of the counselling are set up. But the procedure can be slightly adapted with regards to delays and schedules.

Caseworkers also put the emphasis on the method they use: "*so, we were talking about tools before. Well, we rather have a methodology to readapt the several services we provide. Not readapting, but rather re-appropriate. It would be that. To re-appropriate them with regards to the persons we have, well, everyone wins at the end*". Method – understood as the way to use tools in order to develop a labour market integration path - as a paradigm of intervention is thus more important than tools (such as trainings or CV workshops).

Nevertheless, it appears that individualisation does not take on the same understandings for all. No clear definition was given making the individualisation incentive relatively blurred for caseworkers. For example, while many see individualisation as an adaptation capacity, others perceive individualisation as working with the person alone: "*we have to say that individualisation of the interviews at all*

costs, if we get stuck on that, it can't work. For example, it is not rare to see people coming with others. Well. What do we do? We individualise interviews, we are supposed to see them alone, but it can't work this way. If they come with people, it's because there is something behind, it means that the person comes with her network. And actually, we see it clearly, if we do not accept the network during the first interviews, the person won't talk and won't adhere. So, what's the point? The point is to respect the terms of references or to make the person agree with the approach". Some also point out that individualisation as focusing on the individual's needs might not be the answer to labour market integration issues of people that are far from employment: "*It's a very westerner ideal that does not work and is very individualistic actually. And the projects that result from that follow this ideology, but do not work for all. And no matter the cultural origin. Excuse the expression, but someone really in needs is centred on his/her needs. And it's normal. And that's where we need to be able to do something. That's what makes sense for them. On the contrary, with these actions that are a little locked, we don't systematically have the disposals to do that. But I think that the counsellor's skill is to know how to overcome this, and to readapt things*". Individualisation appears here as a paradigm that is interesting for some (with incomes for example), but does not reach the needs of others (long-term unemployed with very little income that first of all need an income before working on their professional project).

There is a global tendency of individualising the edges of the follow-up (organizational matters and tools): adapting the ways caseworkers contact the unemployed according to the beneficiary's needs and resources or adapting the frequency of the meetings according to the distance from employment. While this trend concerns all unemployed, the individualisation of the content of the follow-up (what to work on, how to address the different issues that are to be tackled) mainly concerns those that are considered as far from employment, which includes long-term unemployed amongst others.

6. CATEGORIZATION AS A WAY TO INDIVIDUALISE

Our observations suggest that with regards to process and tool, fostering individualised counselling has resulted in the reinforcement of categorisation. Nevertheless, even though the categorisation seeks to make the landscape clearer for the numerous service providers and to develop tailor made services for some categories of people, it means that unemployed have to be put into boxes that represent official targeted categories: young, long-term unemployed, disabled, people living in a sensitive urban zones (*ZUS - zone urbaine sensible*), women, minimum income scheme recipients. These boxes open up specific services / programmes that were developed for such or such group in order to address its specific issues. However, some job seekers do not fit into these boxes. Many are on the edges of the categories (they are 6 months too old to be considered as young for example). It leads caseworkers to develop a 'do it yourself' approach in order to make people fit into the categories that entitle the individual to a service.

6.1. What usages of categories?

There is an important variation of definitions of the long-term unemployed (see chapter 2) amongst the organizations and caseworkers in terms of unemployment duration: "*there are those that will tell you that a long-term unemployed is someone that has twelve months within the last eighteen months. Then, there are those that will count 24 out of 36. So, what's a long-term unemployed? Because 12 out of 18, it's not always a catastrophe*". Hence, the category of long-term unemployed is put into questions: "*we can't say that there is a specific counselling for long-term unemployed because at some stage there are all jobseekers. We should stop that, we should stop ourselves from looking at them as long-term unemployed, because, then, at some stage, we do not manage to work with them anymore*". After all, most talk about the individual: "*The word I could use, and that I do not use very often, it's beneficiary. But usually, I talk about an individual* (personne), *an individual that is part of such or such measure*".

Most of the caseworkers we met in our case study, no matter they work for service providers or the national employment agency, refer to the unemployed with the following terms: *le bénéficiaire* (beneficiary), *le demandeur d'emploi* (the jobseeker), le *bénéficiaire du RSA* (minimum income scheme recipient), and most the time, *la personne qui vient nous voir* (the individual that comes to see us). All of them criticized the term "client", mentioning it with quotation marks referring to new public management. It shows that caseworkers have kept their social workers tradition (see 6.b) of taking the individual as a whole. But it also puts the emphasis on the social-orientated dimension of their work.

Long-term unemployed are sometimes pictured as 'service consumers'. Indeed, most of them are used to go from one organization to another, either on their own move or outsourced by the national employment agency (or other organizations). Interviewees often complain about how they are sent from one place to another: "*They made me go round and round. I went back to the national employment agency. (…) She sent me I don't know where. They sent me to two different places to end up here*".

Some of them have developed a real knowledge of the organizational structure of the PES and of existing services, but most of them get confused with the different organizations they are confronted to and the program they follow. Since they go from one place to another, they are often in relation with several caseworkers, sometimes on the same issues. The long-term unemployed we met explained they have to repeat their story all over again each time. They do not always understand (or care) for the logic of intervention or hierarchical relation between actors. They somehow are lost in the process of being outsourced in order to enable a tailor-made counselling.

The key characteristic of the trajectory of long-term unemployed is hence that several actors, programs and organizations embed it. Usually, they are outsourced on different programs and/or private organizations that are specialised on counselling far from employment jobseekers. It is complicated to have a

clear view of their trajectory as there is no typical one and as it is usually a complex one (see figure below).

Such different designations and categorisations are related to:

- the perception the counsellor has of his/her job (purposes, posture, role),
- the professional and/or organizational culture,
- the perception of the individual unemployed: his/her responsibility in his/her search, the category in which he/she belongs, in which he/she can fit in.

These factors corroborates on the one hand Lipsky's analysis (1980) that sheds the light on two major factors that influence street level bureaucrats' behaviour (the organizational context and "the intrinsic cognitive-emotional utility functions of individual street level bureaucrat" (Rice, 2012, p.2)), and, on the other hand, Evans' work that put the emphasis on the professional and organization cultures (Evans, 2011).

Nevertheless, no matter his/her perception, using categories is necessary in the French framework. Indeed, it is a profiling tool that enables the caseworker to put someone on an action made for such or such category. "*We have one individual, a unique one, in front of us, with specific needs (…). Even though we are into individualisation, we try at some stage to put people into boxes (…) It is a bit annoying because taking them as individual is our strength and that will tell them that*". Hence, as already demonstrated, giving more room for manoeuvre to the counsellor does not automatically make him/her able to individualize the service. We notice a paradoxical situation: the promotion of individualisation came along with the development of categorization.

Profiling is a key step of counselling. What are the categories used? Who define them and on what criteria? As already stated, the main variables used to profile the unemployed are the distance from/to employment (notably with regards to peripheral hinders), the degree of autonomy with regards to their job searching and the feasibility of the project. Being 'employable' means that "t*he individual is ready to go to work, he/she has the skills… he/she has everything. But then, the job offer is missing. He/she is employable. (…) It means that there is no hinders and that he/she can directly be at work*". According to interviewees, most of those that are registered as jobseekers are 'legible'. However, most caseworkers argue that within the jobseekers, there is few that are not looking for a job or any service, but rather for the benefits that are entitled to registration as jobseeker (they most of the time evoked the free transportation card – see 6.c).

The main dimensions that are taken into account in order to conduct the profiling and to make the individual legible to the caseworker are:

- Mobility: is the unemployed able to go to another city / neighbourhood (both with regards to its material and cognitive resources)?
- Language knowledge: is the unemployed able to communicate? What are his/her language skills (writing and speaking)?
- Autonomy: the evaluation of the autonomy is based on the assumption that the more autonomous the unemployed is, the more employable he/she is
- Communicating tools: how does the unemployed communicate? How does he/she introduce him(her)self? In sum, what first impression will he/she give to an employer?

To put an individual into one category, formal documents are analysed (diploma for example) and the fact that one comes with documents is also an indicator, his/her reactivity during the interview and the way he/she communicates. Hence, even though not all caseworkers have the exact same definition of the criteria they use to profile the unemployed, we can identify three main categories of indicators that are used to measure the distance to/from employment: if the professional project matches with the labour market reality, peripheral hinders and the unemployed ability to actively look for a job (Lavitry, 2012). In sum, profiling mainly relies on subjective criteria (for example: the evaluation of the personal situation).

6.2. The diversity of counsellors' profiles

We have already demonstrated that many changes have occurred in the field of employment and social cohesion policies (in terms of paradigm shift, management tools, organisation practices, etc.). It also applies to human resources strategies. Indeed, interviews with street level bureaucrats showed that there are many different profiles among them. We can first make a distinction between service providers that have until recently – and yet, not for all – mainly hired social workers, and the national employment agency that has hired different profiles of workers over the years. Indeed, we observe different profiles in different periods of time: "*in my generation of counsellors - because at this time, there were competitive exams and the modalities were very much oriented according to the profiles they wanted. So, there were 'trends', and that's true that the year I did it, they were strongly looking for work psychologists (…) We had year 98, year 99, we recognize each other. (…) In the agency we find generations - even though we are not of the same age but I mean generation of counsellors – that were hired within the same periods of time*". Hence, after a period of time where work psychologists were targeted, commercials also became the target in order to reinforce the bridge between the jobseeker and the business world. Regarding service providers, they have to be divided into two kinds: public and non-profit private organisations on the one hand, and on the other, profit organisations. The latters that have more recently became central actors in the field of labour market integration services, are composed of profiles quite similar with the ones found in the national employment agency. Public organisations (such as Missions Locales) and private non-profit organisations have mainly hired social workers for a long time. Now, some of them tend to hire more heterogeneous profiles (commercials, people coming from universities, etc.). And after the introduction of a socio-professional counsellors training, all the previously quoted actors now increasingly recruit social-professional counsellors.

Towards a more structured occupational group[52]?

While the diverse profiles previously introduced used to be more social-oriented, many interviewees have the feeling that the introduction of the more recent profiles (commercials, but also – even though to a relative extent - socio-professional counsellors) introduced or reinforced a shift towards a more employment-centred approach.

They fear that it will change the conception of the street level bureaucrats' objectives. Indeed, the latters are concerned that when they acknowledge a global approach based on the « human » in its whole (with social hindrances, family issues for example), more commercial profiles are more focused on labour market integration and are less concerned by 'peripheral hinders'. They usually argue that it is not their job, their competence and their task and thus, they orientate the beneficiary towards another organisation dealing with these issues. The actions that are set up are similar in both cases: they all orientate the beneficiary towards the most adequate organisation. The difference relies on the conception of a path towards labour market integration that takes into account a comprehensive integration compared to a more sectorialized and fragmented one where the street level bureaucrat only concentrates on labour market integration. The new profile of socio-professional counsellor (with the diploma) appears as a balance between both profiles (social versus employment oriented), which corroborates the search for professionals that were able to address both simultaneously. Hence, there has been a human resources strategy shift in many organisations which, facing a lack of job opportunities, looked for professionals that could eventually facilitate the communication between the labour market services world and the business one.

Nevertheless, it has challenged the former idea of the older occupational group that sees labour market integration as part of the social integration process, as a mean to achieve a more comprehensive integration. Whereas for newer counsellors labour market integration is the final aim and social integration is peripheral (as the term 'peripheral hinders' suggests) even though still necessary to address.

---

[52] Demazière and Gaddéa define an occupational group as "groups of workers practising an occupation with the same name, and which are consequently socially visible, acknowledged and which benefit from an identification. They occupy a differentiated space in the social division of work, and are characterized by a symbolic legitimacy" (Demazière, Gaddéa, 2009, p. 20)

Hence, not only do organisational practises and new management tools hinder the cross-sectoriality that represented a strong root of the profession, but the human resources strategies that were adopted also seem to impede the development of the global approach that seeks to address all issues that one may face in a single integration path. All in all, the development of such strategies is somewhat paradoxical with the promotion of cross sectoriality by policymakers.

In a paper that compares different sociological approaches, Vezinat invites academics to question the sociology of occupational groups with regards to specificities related to the national typology of welfare states (Vezinat, 2010). Esping Andersen argues that France is a conservative/corporatist welfare state (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This feature represents an explanatory factor to the persistence of the global approach in spite of an emergent occupational group with a new cognitive framework, and governance schemes that challenge its implementation. It is not due to an institutional culture as this statement occurs in many different institutions (national employment agency, Missions Locales, PLIE, and so on. It is neither a professional one, but rather to an occupational one. Indeed, in the case of street level bureaucrats working on labour market integration, street level bureaucrats that have been working in the field for over a decade have observed a recent professionalization process. This new occupational group is hence recent, and consequently a new professional culture has not yet settled. And the former landscape was made of too diverse profiles with their own professional cultures to talk about a common professional culture. We thus make the hypothesis that it is more an occupational culture that was shaped through common values that enables the global approach to remain (even though challenged by new organisational practises).

6.3. The de-legitimatization of the unemployed: some consequences of the activation paradigm on the street level bureaucrats' work

The activation paradigm fostered the registration of all unemployed at the national employment agency in order to ensure an active behaviour. It means that through the increasing linkage between formerly distinct policy fields (especially the social assistance one), it has promoted the registration of individuals who did not previously registered at the national employment agency. It became a compulsory step in order to benefit from social benefits or other services. "*I think that there is an entire system to review in terms of the registration as jobseeker. Because, here, people get registered for the bus card you know. They well understood that if they only register for that, we don't register them. So now, they say that yes, they look for jobs, for some hours of cleaning. It's an entire mentality we need to change, but...*". Hence, some unemployed might be de-legitimated in their approach.

Moreover, caseworkers explained that very often, long-term unemployed are far from employment. Generalist counsellors (working with all categories of people) are not able to address peripheral hinders directly. Thus, these unemployed are or could be better followed by specialised agencies. Many of them (and all the LTU we met) are provided with other services and/or benefits (minimum income benefits, social assistance, housing assistance, etc.). In these organizations/services, the unemployed benefits from this specialised service recommended by national employment agency caseworkers. Yet, they still have to be registered as unemployed there if they want to benefit from these services and/or benefits. Therefore, they register and are called for interviewees that are often considered as useless by both caseworkers and unemployed. Moreover, it makes the registration at the national employment agency a non-voluntary process unlike what it was meant to be originally.

Counsellors argue on their lack of skills and remind us that it is not their task to provide a social service. It sheds light on a divergence of perceptions between policymakers and those that implement the policies putting the emphasis on the necessity to analyse street level bureaucrats' work (Van Berkel & Valkenburg, 2007): recent policies put the emphasis on the idea that everyone falls under employment matters even with social issues, that everyone should think in terms of employment and employability; whereas street level bureaucrats delivering labour market integration services explain that social issue is not theirs to address. "*We have not sorted out the issue of the number. We have not either sorted out the confusion between Pôle Emploi and a social organization. Because, I don't know if it's everywhere*

the same, but it's probably our biggest problem. Because people that come here for Pôle Emploi, they get the service, and to be honest, people are rather satisfied.. "

While many dimensions of the activation trend have been acknowledged by caseworkers to different extents (new public management, individualisation, territorialisation, cross-sectoriality, etc.), they often criticize the idea that all unemployed should be actively looking for a job no matter they have other issues to deal with. Indeed, they criticize the incentive to register as unemployed and to work with everyone on employment issues without taking into account their distance to employment. Hence, we observe that amongst "those that would need it the most" (Pôle Emploi 2015), some are de-legitimated by counsellors, hence revealing a divergence between discourses and the real impact of the policy (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973). This de-legitimization process may occur when they perceive a strategic usage of the employment service, or when the unemployed is too far from the core issue tackled at the national employment agency (employment) and first of all need a social counselling.

Service providers are not concerned by this situation. Indeed, they are not a "compulsory step". On the contrary, only already profiled and categorized people are orientated to them. Hence, they spend the first interview identifying the profile of the unemployed and his/her project. But this profiling step does not aim at putting him/her into one category, but at developing the counselling path.

6.4. The categorized unemployed: standardisation of the national employment agency versus a more individualised service provided by service providers

How do long-term unemployed experience this categorisation and profiling process, and a certain standardisation of the service?

Our interviews revealed that long-term unemployed feel they receive a more individualised service with service providers than from the national employment agency that most of them perceive as a 'toolbox' enabling them to get services or as a controlling agency in charge of sanctioning and/or ensuring their active behaviour.

Long-term unemployed we met do not seem to expect both service providers and the national employment agency to help them to an important extent. Indeed, they put the emphasis on the scarcity of jobs and the difficulty to find a job no matter their skills, networks, etc. Most of them have benefited from several services over the months (/years) that they perceive as means to maintain a link with employment matters. Nevertheless, even though they acknowledge the purpose of the services they are being oriented towards, they are often discouraged by the economic situation.

Supported by service providers, they all agree on the ability of the caseworker to individualise the service and have the feeling both their situation and their project is taken into account. According to the long-term unemployed we met, the motivation is the central dimension that is of interest to case-workers working in an organization that provide services: "*you have to be motivated*". They have almost never mentioned any skill-sets or experiences that would make them more or less legible to the bureaucracy, but rather to the employer. The category of long-term unemployed seems to prevail over other possible legibility criteria such as diplomas or skills. Indeed, the category of long-term unemployed is often associated to 'far from employment' and to 'peripheral hinders'. The skills and competences criteria are thus secondary if other obstacles hinder the labour market integration. In this case, the first criterion is the assessment of the cognitive and material resources (motivation and material hinders such as childcare issues or mobility) [53]. According to beneficiaries we met, once being put into

---

[53] Results can be different for highly qualified long-term unemployed. Their skills and competences being more important, it might be the main legibility criteria used. Our analysis is based on the long-term unemployed we met (with relatively low degree of qualification and peripheral hinder(s)).

the official category of long-term unemployed and being orientated towards a specific organisation, the main dimension that plays a role in the relationship with the street level bureaucrat is their motivation to find a job and to overcome their hinders. It is based on the assumption that given the low qualifications of many long-term unemployed and the several peripheral obstacles that may hinder their labour market integration, the main resource they can use is their motivation. It shows a pessimistic vision of the labour market integration of long-term unemployed. Moreover, it puts great emphasis on the individual's responsibility to find a job.

Long-term unemployed we met were not apprehensive of the way street level bureaucrats perceive and assess them. However, based on their experience with the national employment agency, they explained that they have to "*fit*" when meeting one caseworker there. In other ways, rules are to be followed and it is better to agree (to come to the appointment, not to express your difficulties but show your motivation and active behaviour, etc.) in order to avoid sanctions and to keep the caseworker on his/her side. A street level bureaucrat explained: *"we are at the crossroads... there is the confusion for the minimum income scheme recipients, it's not clear sometimes, there are deprived. (…) They don't understand well the situation but they feel they should lie to us a little bit, and that's the problem. That's the confusion"*. Hence, a relative fear of the national employment agency can be identified. The fear concentrates upon the ability of radiation on the one hand, and is explained by the threatening tone of the formal communication ("*all our mails are threatening. Even the convocation mail are threatening*").

7. RESPONSIBILIZATION AND AGENCY

As Brodkin explains, "all too often, bureaucratic discretion is the nemesis of accountability" (Brodkin, 2008, p.1). Yet, it is a matter of paramount importance when tackling individualisation and implementation. Who is responsible for what in the process of labour market integration? What are the caseworker's responsibilities, the public employment service's ones, and the ones that fall under the unemployed? How is it perceived and how is it implemented?

With regards to unemployment the activation paradigm fosters a shift of responsibilitization from the State to the unemployed (Berthet, Bourgeois, forthcoming). However, both caseworkers and long-term unemployed we met revealed that the balance between their distinct roles has not deeply and really changed.

7.1. Contractualisation: a formal tool

Contractualisation questions the nature of the relationship between the state and the citizen. It challenges the place, role, duties and rights of individualisation and organizations (Berthet, Bourgeois, forthcoming). Contractualisation can also be analysed and understood with regard to the relationship amongst private and/or public stakeholders. Here, we are interested in the responsibilities allowing access to the services provided by the agency and the individual's understanding of his/her responsibility for the situation. Therefore, in this part we address the contractualisation issue in terms of formalisation of rights and duties between the state through the caseworker and the unemployed.

Over the past decade (and even more), contracts have always been used in labour market integration and social cohesion policies. They have always stated the rights and duties of actors involved (the beneficiary and the state through the agency and its caseworker). If one goes to a service provider, another contract that corresponds to the specific service he/she will get has to be signed. The signature of the contract usually occurs during the first interview.

The contract mainly represents a tool for caseworker. According to them, it is a tool to set the terms of the service and of the relationship between both stakeholders. The commitment dimension remains relatively absent from caseworkers' point of views.

The main purpose of the contract is to open up a space for discussion, shedding the light on its instrumental dimension. Two main objectives underlie this step of the relationship (a third one was also mentioned):

- (1) to express the duties of the unemployed: "(…) *By contractualisation, what do you mean? Interviewee: To come to an agreement on what he/she will do for his/her search for employment*",

- (2) to put the emphasis on the need for an active behaviour: "*between the individual and us… they are actors of their own future… and consequently, we won't do without them, we will always do with them*",

- (3) to create a relationship based on a mutual involvement where the caseworker's duties would mainly be to give information and the unemployed duty would be to be motivated and to be involved. With regards to this purpose of the contract, the caseworker that mentioned it explained that according to him, it is not a shared aim by all caseworkers and that it depends on their profiles (caseworkers with a commercial background or coming from the unemployment insurance would be less concerned by the idea of a mutual involvement than others for example): "*Contractualisation, it's really… but it's also, well, it's also to inform the unemployed. (…) Therefore, at the minimum, we owe the unemployed clear and precise information. (…) If we don't contractualise at the beginning, if we don't inform the*

individual of the rights and duties. He/she has rights; we have to inform him/her about these rights, it's important. But he/she also has duties, we also have to inform him/her that he/she can't just register".

Except from one experience, no caseworkers have ever been confronted to a refusal of the contract. Regarding the content of the contract, no one was able to tell us its exact content (neither caseworker, nor unemployed). It reinforces the idea that caseworkers use it as a tool, as a material support to initiate the relationship. In sum, the contract is a formal tool that finalizes the diagnosis. It is a formalism instrument.

From the unemployed point of view, the contract does not represent an incentive or a document that can be used afterwards by any of the stakeholders. They sign it as they sign the numerous documents they have to sign during their labour market integration path. "What is this inclusion contract? Interviewee: *Nothing, you sign a paper to ask them to renew it*".

7.2. Who's responsible?

Hence, while the public employment service is still responsible, to a certain extent, for the labour market integration of unemployed, the promoted new public management aims at making caseworkers accountable for the service. However, "even advanced efforts to improve accountability by applying New Public Management (NPM) techniques of performance measurement and 'pay for performance' contracting, at times, may do more to provide the appearance of accountability than accountability-in-fact" Brodkin, 2008, p.2).

Caseworkers explained that they have a certain their responsibility in the labour market integration of the unemployed. But this responsibility remains limited compared to the one of the unemployed. "*I'll say it's 50/50 because we both sign. But in real life, it's the unemployed that will look for a job, it's 100% for the unemployed in a way. Well, more than the responsibility, our duty is to inform at first. To inform him/her, to advice him/her as much as possible. And there are those that are able to do, and those that are not*". Thus, caseworkers are facilitators and enablers. "*Yes, obviously, there is a responsibility. Because, yes, we are to guide the unemployed, to give me job offers, to give him/her the tools he/he doesn't have, to check that he/she really looks for a job. Yes, there is a degree of responsibility. (…) But it's limited because we don't see the individual that frequently. And because there are other actors*".

Two kinds of responsibilities arise: a responsibility vis-à-vis the State (in terms of public expenditure), the employment public service and the incentive to bring the unemployed back onto the labour market or on training (caseworkers are responsible for decreasing the number of unemployed), and a responsibility towards the unemployed him(her)self (caseworkers are then responsible for the individual's (re)integration on the labour market). The objective is the same in both cases, but the dynamic that underlies the approach differs. They are accountable for the same thing but not towards the same actor. These approaches are not usually dichotomous, but are rather embedded in the point of view caseworkers develop in terms of responsibility. They are caught between traditional socially orientated approaches that focus on the individual's integration, and between a pressure to reduce the number of registered unemployed and the de-legitimatization process at stake in some situations. "*Yes, it's his/her search for employment. It relies on him/her. And that's what they forget, because they come to the public employment service with a leitmotiv that says that we have to find them offers, we have to find them a job. So, by contradiction, we can't oblige enterprises to hire them*".

In the case of the national employment agency, as the main objective is to direct the unemployed, to put him/her on programs, the responsibility is less focused on the labour market integration's path. It hence less relies on a continuous work, but rather on punctual actions. The responsibility with regards

to the labour market integration is then directly put on the unemployed, and less on the caseworker that is not part of an integration process.

Long-term unemployed corroborates the share of responsibilities caseworkers presented. The expectations are on acquiring tools to facilitate the integration (mainly: how to write a CV, how to look for jobs) and/or getting access to services and trainings. They do not expect caseworkers to look for jobs for them. They do not expect to get a job thanks to the service either. They see the labour market integration counselling as a continuous facilitating service. Hence, long-term unemployed are sceptical about their (re)integration on the labour market, but they remain involved and concerned. The relationship with the service provider and the modality of their counselling (increasing frequency, being listened to and having their projects and personal situation taken into account) seems to be more empowering and motivating than the sanctions (that are though not strictly implemented) and incentives that lead to strategic usages of the service.

7.3. The weak implementation of sanctions

Sanctions have been developed over the last decade in France in the national employment agencies and in the framework of the minimum income scheme (Dubois, 2007). Service providers are to report any non-attendance or passive activity to the ordering party (the national employment agency or the authority in charge of the minimum income scheme – the general council).

Yet, caseworkers have a room for manoeuvre with regards to the implementation of these sanctions.

In the case of the national employment agency, as warnings are automatically sent in case of absence, there is no leeway. But crossing of is very rare according to interviewees.

"*Sanctions are due to a lack of information from the unemployed. I mean that if someone is absent to an appointment but that he/she sends us an email saying sorry I was absent, I think that 80% of the caseworker will enter an appointment saying to him(her)self he/she will convoke again. But they don't have internet access, they don't know what is a computer, so to let us know... Then, we have 48 hours to enter an appointment, an excuse. Then, the 'listing management' goes, and it's not in our hands anymore. So you have a certain room for manoeuvre... I mean I would do it, but someone who has just arrived...*".

As Lavitry explained, "the control of the active search for employment, which goes along with a development of the sanctions, makes the caseworker even more accountable as it can be the starting point for an adjournment of the unemployment insurance" (author's translation, Lavitry, 2009: 5). Hence, a strict implementation of the sanction would put the caseworker in a situation where his/her own perception of an active behaviour could cross-off one unemployed. It explains why they usually explain that sanctions are useful but rarely strictly implemented. They use their discretion to evaluate a "right middle": "the parsimonious usage of the sanction in case of job refusal or insufficient active search could be explained by administrative modes of putting people away, but also by a professional rooted in the willingness to defend a 'right middle'" (Lavitry, 2009: 5). "*Yes, so sanction with regards to what? To sanction means we cross the individual off; that he/she won't benefit from his/her minimum income benefit for example. He/she is sanctioned if he/she doesn't come to an appointment let's say... counselling interviewees. In this case, it's logically the same for everyone. Then, he/she is sanctioned if he/she does not reply to job offers. If he/she sends us back the offer saying, well no, I'm not looking, it's not something I'm interesting in, you bother me. Then, he/she will be sanctioned, of course. He/she will be sanctioned if he/she does not reply to actions, convocations. He/she can be sanctioned, of course. But you know, there is also a human facet, which is handled by the manager that takes into account the global situation. An individual who... you know... with factual elements, I mean an individual that systematically misses appointment, I think his/her excuses will hardly be admissible*".

Hence, sanctions are implemented to a limited extent. Conditionality is formal and represents an incentive, but hardly leads to sanctions (Zirra, 2010; Clegg and Palier, 2010), but only to warnings. There are two levels of sanctions according to caseworker: one that is considered more 'right' (missing several appointments without any justification with a clear lack of motivation and involvement), and one considered too strict and dehumanized (following strictly the rules without taking into account peripheral factors). Some argue that the new generation of counsellors will act differently and may follow the rules without using their room for manoeuvre. It sheds light on the fact that no matter the level of discretion caseworkers may have, the main issue relies on their awareness and usages of this discretion (Lipsky, 1980). The kind of usage and whether they are aware or not of their discretion is subjective as it relies on their professional and personal cultures and experiences and on their perceptions (see de-legitimization of the beneficiaries). The management team supervises these subjective criteria and controls them to a certain extent as they explained they are aware of the several practises caseworkers mentioned. It shows "the role of shared professional commitments, transcending the distinction between local managers and practitioners" (Evans, 2011: 377). They seek a balance between the nationally fostered implementation of activation-friendly policies (with its conditionality, sanctions, employment for all, more rigid frameworks and standardisation of some practises) and former practises and professional cultures focused on the individual / the human (meaning they maintain a certain discretion and flexibility).

8. CONCLUSIONS

Analysing individualisation in practise in one local entity contributes to the research on local worlds of activation and on the research conducted on implementation issues. One of the main tensions that arise from this research is the difficulty to make the relationship between organization-based and program-based actions clear. It reveals a complex governance structure in France, which makes the implementation of activation policies a difficult task for caseworkers, and easily makes the beneficiary lost in the system.

Individualisation is acknowledged by all as crucial to labour market integration services. Understood as giving more room for manoeuvre to caseworkers, this promoted trend is hindered by the lack of time caseworkers have to work with each individual. Moreover, it appears that the way policymakers have fostered individualisation does not enable or equip caseworkers to individualise the service. It may even sometimes impede individualisation. Indeed, the counterpart of a promotion of a more important room for manoeuvre is the development of more rigid frameworks. It takes two different shapes according to the organization concerned. Regarding the national employment agency, caseworkers have more discretion on the modalities of the relationship with the beneficiary (the way he/she is contacted, the frequency of appointments). But their schedules are also very constrained and the content of the counselling (what is to be dealt with, where to direct the unemployed) has become more rigid. In the case of private service providers/partners, their room for manoeuvre is high regarding the content of the counselling. They have less power than the national employment agency (cannot formally send someone to another organisation for a program or a training as easily as them), but do not have frameworks to follow during their appointments. Nevertheless, they have to follow increasingly rigid guidelines with regards to the modalities of their work (frequency and length of appointments).

Even though cross-sectoriality is promoted by policymakers and street-level bureaucrats and has led to several changes of governance structure and policies (the creation of the RSA for example reinforcing the link between social assistance and employment policies), services are still relatively segmented, which adds up to organizational complexities (Geddes, 2000) for both caseworkers and long-term unemployed. Nevertheless, the changing landscape results in making the registration at the national employment agency a compulsory step for all. However, local agents still wonder to what extent is everyone able to work on labour market integration?

Even though the individual's responsibility is central in getting a job according to both long-term unemployed and caseworkers, labour market integration services are perceived as facilitators. They work on how to search and on peripheral hinders (childcare, housing, mobility, language skills), but the individual is rarely blamed for his/her unemployment while the economic situation is often pointed out. However, there is a kind of de-legitimization of the labour market integration process that occurs for those further away from employment (or those that are considered as 'inactive' and having a strategic usage of the employment public service). In this landscape, the motivation of the unemployed represents both a legitimacy (the unemployed is legitimate to benefit from a service over his/her motivation) and main legibility criterion (the (re)access to the labour market relies notably on the individual's motivation). Motivation and personal competences, along with the identification of peripheral hinders are the main dimensions that make the individual legible to caseworkers. .

Discourses could reflect a dualisation of the labour market policy putting the emphasis on vulnerable groups. Yet, at the national employment agency, the struggle to affirm a position between social assistance and labour market integration in a context of increasing control of caseworkers' activity and results, and being given a certain room for manoeuvre, a selectivity process could occur (Lavitry, 2012) leaving those that are the further away from employment (those that are de-legitimized in their labour market integration) aside. The strong divergences identified between caseworkers working at the national employment agency or in service providers' organizations do not only rely on different

professional backgrounds and organizational cultures, but also on the different rooms for manoeuvre they have and on the objectives that stem from the organizational scheme (counselling versus orientation).

REFERENCES

Barbier, J. (2005). Activating social protection and employment insurance. TLM.NET 2005 Working Papers No. 2005-26 Amsterdam: SISWO/Social Policy Research.

Berthet, T. (2010). Externalisation et gouvernance territoriale des politiques actives de l'emploi. *Revue Française de Socio-Économie*, *6*(2), 131. doi:10.3917/rfse.006.0131

Berthet, T., & Bourgeois, C. (2012). European Comparison of the National Governance of Integrated Social Cohesion. Retrieved from http://www.localise-research.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/WP2-2.1.pdf

Berthet, T., Bourgeois, C., & Tourné Languin, K. (2013). The Local Governance of Social Cohesion French National Comparison. Retrieved from http://www.localise-research.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/D4.1_Country-Specific-Reports.pdf

Berthet, T., Bourgeois, C., (forthcoming). Towards 'activation-friendly' integration? Assessing the progress of activation policies in six European countries, *International Journal of Social Welfare*

Brodkin, E. Z. (2008). Accountability in Street-Level Organizations. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 317–336. doi:10.1080/01900690701590587

Caisse d'Allocations Familiales, Typologie des bénéficiaires du RSA soumis aux droits et devoirs, *L'essentiel* décembre 2013 n°141 https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/cnaf/Documents/Dser/essentiel/141%20-%20ESSENTIEL%20-%20Typologie%20Rsa.pdf

Clegg, D., Palier. B., (2010). "Implementing a myth:. the growth of work conditionality in French minimum income provision." In *Wokfare Revisited*, eds. Ivar Lødemel, and Amilcar Moreira: Policy Press.

Demazière D., Gaddéa C. (2009), *Sociologie des groupes professionnels, Acquis récents et nouveaux défis*, Paris, La Découverte.

Dubois, V. (2007). Etat social actif et contrôle des chômeurs: un tournant rigoriste entre tendances européennes et logiques nationales. *Politique européenne*, *21*, 73 – 95.

Dubois, V. (2012). Le rôle des street level bureaucrats dans la conduite de l'action publique en France. In *La France et ses administrations. Un état des savoirs*. Bruxelles: Bruylant-De-Boeck.

Esping-Andersen G. (1990), *Les Trois mondes de l'État-providence*, Paris, puf.

Evans, T. (2011). Professional, Managers and Discretion: Critiquing Street-Mevem Bureaucracy. *British Journal of Social Work*, *41*, 368–386. doi:10.1093/bjsw/bcq074

Geddes, M. (2000). Tackling Social Exclusion in the European Union ? The Limits to the New Orthodoxy of Local Partnership. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *24*(December).

Gramain, A., Exertier, A., & Herbillon, J. (2006). *Rescaling Social Welfare Policies in France* (pp. 1 – 65). Noisy-Le-Grand, Strasbourg.

Künzel, S. (2012). The local dimension of active inclusion policy inclusion policy. *Journal of European Social Policy*, *22*. doi:10.1177/0958928711425270

Lavitry, L. (2009). De l'aide au contrôle ? Les conseillers à l'emploi à l'épreuve de la personnalisation. *Travail et Emploi*, *119*.

Lavitry, L. (2012). Le jugement d'employabilité : un nouveau savoir pour gérer les chômeurs ? *Sociologies pratiques*, *24*(1), 53. doi:10.3917/sopr.024.0053

Lipsky, M. (1980). *Street-level bureaucracy : dilemmas of the individual in public services*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Pressman J., Wildavsky A., (1984) *Implementation*, Berkeley, University of California Press,

Pôle Emploi (Direction Études, statistiques et Prévisions), juil 2011, Les chômeurs de longue durée en décembre 2010 : ancienneté, récurrence et situation au regard de l'emploi, *Repères & Analyses* n°31

Rice, D. (2012). Street-Level Bureaucrats and the Welfare State: Toward a Micro-Institutionalist Theory of Policy Implementation. *Administration & Society*. doi:10.1177/0095399712451895

Van Berkel, R., Valkenbur (2007). *Making it personnal : Individualising Activation Services in the EU*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Van Berkel, R., De Graaf, W., & Sirovatka, T. (2011). *The Governance of Active Welfare States in Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Vezinat N. (2010), Une nouvelle étape dans la sociologie des professions en France, *Sociologie* [En ligne], N°3, vol. 1, mis en ligne le 28 octobre 2010, consulté le 22 novembre 2013. URL : http://sociologie.revues.org/517

Zirra S. (2010), "The Bounded Creativity of Domestic Appropriation. Explaining Selective Flexicurity in Continental Countries", Les cahiers Européens de Sciences Po, n° 02, Paris: Centre d'études européennes at Sciences Po

APPENDICES

1. Interview guide for caseworkers
2. Interview guide for long-term unemployed
3. National employment agencies' socio professional path

Interview guide in French

Caseworkers

ENTRETIEN AVEC LE CONSEILLER

Informations à donner au début

- Le but de l'entretien :
- Confidentialité : anonymat, pas de nom et pas de diffusion de l'information aux collègues ou manager
- Utilisation des résultats (qui / comment) : Programme de recherche Européen
- Publication des résultats :

Age:
H/F:

Pour commencer

- Education et parcours professionnel

- Formation spéciale pour l'accompagnement de DELD

- Nombre d'années d'expérience de gestion de portefeuille et accompagnement

- Temps complet / mi-temps

I. Information sur l'ALE Pôle Emploi / autre

- o Quelle est la mission principale de PE ?

- o Quel est votre rôle à Pole Emploi / nom de la structure (préciser)?

- o Comment y a-t-il de personnes employées?

II. Information sur l'organisation d'une journée de travail

- o Comment se passe une journée type?

- o Combien de bénéficiaires rencontrez-vous par jour? Et combien de temps passez-vous en moyenne avec chaque personne?

- o Avez-vous le temps de préparer vos rdv avec les bénéficiaires ?

- o Quelles autres responsabilités avez-vous (ex administratives, dossiers administratifs, extra/intranet, projet…) ?

- o Comment arrivez-vous à gérer toutes ces tâches? Y a-t-il des choses que vous ne pouvez pas faire faute de temps?

- o Quel est votre rôle dans la relation avec le bénéficiaire ? Et à Pôle Emploi ?

- o Vous sentez-vous personnellement responsable du bénéficiaire ?

- o Que se passe-t-il quand un bénéficiaire prend contact avec Pôle Emploi ? Que se passe-t-il ensuite ?

- o Qui rencontre-t-il/elle?

- o Le bénéficiaire a-t-il un conseiller référent spécifique ?

- o Y a-t-il une personne spécifique qui suit ce qui se passe avec le bénéficiaire ?

o En moyenne, combien de conseillers de PE accompagnent des DELD ?

o Y a-t-il un nombre précis de DE que vous devez rencontrer par jour ou par mois?

o Pouvez-vous décrire un rdv type avec un DELD ?

o Ces rdv sont-ils planifiés ?

o Combien de temps durent-ils ?

o Qui est à l'origine de ces rdv (le DELD, vous, autres) ? Avec quelle fréquence / régularité ?

o Où ont lieu les rdv avec les bénéficiaires? (Si possible, noter l'organisation spatiale: bureau fermé favorisant la discrétion ou espace ouvert : relation impersonnelle, massive processing)

o Contactez-vous aussi les DELD en dehors de ces rdv (mail, tél…) ? Dans quels cas?

III. Suivi et contrôle dans l'ALE / autre structure

o Comment votre travail est-il contrôlé par vos supérieurs / managers?

o Sur la base de quels critères ?

o Est-ce qu'il y a des indicateurs de performance / qualité ? (si possible collecter des tableaux de bord)

o Que mesurent-ils ?

o Qui les définit ?

o Sont-ils pertinents ?

o Que se passe-t-il s'ils ne sont pas atteints ?

o Ces indicateurs de performances influencent-ils / impactent-ils votre journée de travail?

o Pouvez-vous être récompensés pour de bons résultats? Comment ?

o Vous est-il déjà arrivé à vous ou à un collègue d'être sanctionné ? Pourquoi ? Qu'en pensez-vous ?

o Comment les objectifs et les indicateurs de performance influencent-ils votre travail avec les DE ?

o Que se passe-t-il si un DE fait une réclamation à propos d'un conseiller ?

IV. Le Traitement des bénéficiaires

o Quels sont les outils que vous utilisez quand vous travaillez avec un DELD (dossiers et documents administratifs, trame d'entretien, test psychologique, PPAE ou autre plans d'action…) ? (si possible collecter)

o A quoi servent-ils ?

o Comment estimez-vous leur utilité (dossier et document administrative, trame d'entretien, test psychologique, PPAE ou autre plans d'action…) ? En quoi vous aident-ils à travailler avec les bénéficiaires? Quels outils préférez-vous utiliser ? Pourquoi ?

o Pouvez-vous les modifiez ? Comment les adaptez-vous dans votre travail au quotidien ?

o Avec vous un format pour les entretiens et rdv, un modèle, une liste de questions que vous utilisez pendant un rdv avec un DELD ? (si possible, collecter)

o Comment les trames d'entretien ou de rdv sont-elles préparées ?

o Les autres conseillers les utilisent aussi ? Est-ce obligatoire ?

o Qu'en pensez-vous ?

o   Comment traitez-vous, utilisez-vous l'information ainsi collectée ?

o   Les DE doivent-il remplir des documents, dossiers, test… ?

o   Quel type de dossier? (à collecter)

o   Quelles informations sont collectées ?

o   A quoi servent-ils ? Sont-ils obligatoires? Que pensez-vous de leur contenu?

o   Discutez-vous des résultats de tests avec les DE? Cela aide-t-il les DE à évaluer leur situation ?

o   Prenez-vous des notes pendant les rdv ou collectez-vous l'information d'une autre manière à propos des bénéficiaires ? comment ?

o   Que contiennent vos notes? D'autres personnes y ont-elles accès ? Qui ? Comment utilisez-vous cette information ?

o   Parlez-vous avec vos collègues des bénéficiaires? C'est-à-dire ?

o   S'il y a des guide de rdv / trames d'entretien : Est-ce parfois difficile de coller à la trame pendant le rdv ?

o   Quelles difficultés apparaissent avec les DELD ? Comment gérez-vous la situation ?

o   Est-ce que les personnes à difficultés (reprendre les mots du conseiller) ont quelque chose en commun ? Pouvez-vous les décrire ?

o   Quel terme utilisez-vous pour parler des DE (bénéficiaire, allocataire, …) ?

o   Quelles caractéristiques du bénéficiaire sont prises en compte pour rendre le chômeur actif / responsable dans sa recherche / to plan activation (personnalité, éducation, compétences...)?

o   Pourquoi ceux-là ?

o   Vous avez dit avoir collecté de l'information sur une DE XXX, qu'en est-il d'autres problématiques telles que (prendre un exemple non cité par le conseiller) qui peuvent limiter l'accès à l'emploi. Quelle est votre marge de manœuvre ?

o   Qu'en est-il de l'employabilité ? Est-ce pertinent? Quelles sont pour vous les dimensions pertinentes de l'employabilité ?

o   Les autres conseillers peuvent-ils participer ? D'autres acteurs locaux ?

o   Que faites-vous si quelques choses est au-delà de votre champs d'intervention ?

V. L'activation

o   De quelle manière vous y prenez-vous pour rendre un DELD actif

o   Y a-t-il un plan d'action individuel pour chaque individu ? (Noter le nom utilisé par le conseiller) Pouvez-vous le décrire ? (récupérer un modèle)

o   Quelles informations y figurent ?

o   Comment est-il partagé ? Quel est le rôle du PPAE?

o   Que proposez-vous au DE ?

o   Qu'est-ce qui décide de ce que vous pouvez proposer ?

o   Quelles sont les étapes pour rendre un DE plus actif dans sa démarche ?

o   Quel est le cadre ?

o   Quel est le rôle du DE dans la définition du PPAE ?

o   Jusqu'à quel point les actions / propositions sont-elles sur mesure pour le DE ?

o   Quelle est sa marge de choix ?

o   Avez-vous la possibilité d'adapter les actions aux besoins ou intérêts du DE ? (si non, pour-quoi)

o   Le faites-vous souvent ?

o   Les bénéficiaires participant-ils aux choix des actions, des programmes mis en œuvre pour eux? (si non, pourquoi)

o   Les responsabilités du DE et de PE sont-elles écrites dans le PPAE? Comment ? Ce plan d'action impose-t-il des obligations à PE et au DE, ou uniquement au DE ?

o   En terme de responsabilité, quelles sont les conditions que doit remplir le DE pour obtenir de l'aide de PE? Sont-elles obligatoires ? Y a-t-il un suivi, une evaluation permettant de verifier qu'il/elle les remplit bien? /

o   Quelles sont les sanctions? Comment sont-elles appliquées?

VI. transfert d'information entre les organisations

o   Est-ce que vous coopéré quotidiennement avec d'autres organisations, institutions pour

des DELD ?

o   Lesquelles ?

o   En quoi consiste cette collaboration?

o   Comment affecte-t-elle les DELD ? Comment cela agit-il sur leur chance de trouver un emploi et sur leur bien être ?

o   A votre avis, cette coopération fonctionne-t-elle bien par rapport au DE ?

o   Si non, pourquoi?

o   Quels défis, difficultés émergent d'une telle coopération ?

o   D'où viennent ces problèmes ? Comment les gérez-vous ?

o   C'est-à-dire ?

o   Informez-vous les DELD de ces autres prestataires ? Dans quelles situations les orientez-vous vers ces organisations ?

o   Avez-vous quelque chose à rajouter ?

Merci pour votre temps et votre coopération!

Interview guide in French:
Long-term unemployed

ENTRETIEN AVEC DES DELD

Information à donner au début

- Le but de l'entretien: connaître la situation et le parcours du DE, ses attentes, le contenu et son « vécu » de l'accompagnement (participation, objectifs…) avec à Pole Emploi
- Confidentialité : anonymat, pas de nom et pas de connaissance du dossier du DE
- Utilisation des résultats (qui / comment) : recherche Européenne sur les politiques de l'emploi

Age:

H/F:

I. Parcours et situation de l'interviewé

- Pouvez-vous me parler un peu votre situation / me raconter un peu votre histoire ?
- Avez-vous une famille?
- Où vivez-vous?
- Quelle est votre expérience professionnelle?
- Et au niveau logement ?
- Avez-vous fait des études ?
- Comment ça se passe au niveau du travail depuis que vous avez quitte l'école / fini les études?
- Quel était votre dernier poste? Pendant combien de temps ? Que s'est-il passé ensuite ?
- Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous au chômage ?
- Est-ce votre première inscription au chômage ?
  - Si Non : Pouvez-vous m'en dire plus, svp. Comment s'est passé la première prise de contact avec PE / *autre* ? Qu'est-ce qui vous a décidé à les contacter? Qu'attendiez-vous?
  - Avez-vous déjà bénéficié d'une aide sociale, d'un accompagnement (par une association, la municipalité, un organisme de formation, un prestataire …)
  - Si oui : Dans quelles circonstances? Qu'est-ce qui vous a décidé à les contacter? Qu'attendiez-vous?

II. Avec Pôle Emploi

a) Structure de la relation
- Comment se passent vos rdv à PE ?
- Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous inscrit?
- Avec quelle fréquence êtes-vous venu à des rdv? Combien de fois êtes-vous venus à des rdv depuis que vous êtes inscrit ?
- Qui rencontrez-vous?
- En quoi consistent ces rdv? Pouvez-vous me donner des exemples?
- C'est utile? En quoi?

- Etes-vous encouragé à poser des questions à votre conseiller?

- Vous apporte-t-il/elle des réponses utiles, qui vous aident ?

- Comment s'adresse-t-il à vous? (Est-il/elle bienveillant, poli, indifférent, impoli)

- Avez-vous ressenti de la pression? A propos de quoi ? (demander des précisions sur les formes de pression autant positives que négatives qui ont pu être ressenties)

- Comment se passe un rdv typique, pouvez-vous le décrire?

- Comment décririez-vous votre relation avec le conseiller?

b) Diagnostic et catégorisation

- A votre avis, est-ce que le conseiller a une connaissance approfondie de votre situation ?

- Si non: quelles sont les info qui lui manquent? Pourquoi ?

- Vous souvenez vous des questions que votre conseiller vous a posées pour comprendre votre situation ? C'était quand ?

- Que vous a-t-il/elle demandé sur vous ?

- Les questions portaient sur votre éducation, parcours professionnel, votre vie privée ?

  Vous a-t-il/elle questionné sur vos attentes?

  Vous a-t-il/elle demandé ce que vous vouliez faire professionnellement ?

- Avez-vous été surpris par ces questions ? lesquels, pourquoi ?

- A-t-il/elle expliqué le pourquoi de ces questions?

- A-t-il/elle expliqué à quoi serviraient vos réponses ?

- Avez-vous eu à remplir un dossier ?

- A-t-il/elle expliqué l'objectif de ce dossier ?

- Avez-vous passé des tests ou fait des bilans (de personnalité, de compétence…) ?

- Si oui: quels étaient ces tests?

- Qu'en pensez-vous (des tests)?

- Sont-ils utiles ? comment ?

- Sont-ils problématiques ? Comment?

- Avez-vous eu votre mot à dire sur les résultats pu / discuter les tests?

- Si oui: comment cela s'est-il passé?

- Est-ce que ça a changé quelque chose ?

c) Services & conditionnalité

- Comment s'est construit votre plan d'action (plan personnalisé d'accès à l'emploi ou autre) ?

- Pouvez-vous me dire en quoi il consiste ?

- Avez-vous participé à sa définition ?

- Ce plan d'action a-t-il été écrit ?

- Est-ce un plan d'action individualisé ?

- Vos responsabilités pour trouver un emploi y figurent-elle ? comment sont-elles formulées ?

135

- o Etiez-vous d'accord avec votre conseiller sur le plan d'actions (PPAE / plan personnalisé d'accès à l'emploi) qui vous a été proposé ?

- o L'avez-vous signé ?

- o Que ce serait-il passé si vous aviez refusé de le signer ? Avez-vous été informé des conséquences d'un tel refus ?

- o Cela vous est-il arrivé ou aurait-il pu vous arriver ?

- o Que vous a-t-on proposé pour votre accompagnement ? (en termes d'offre d'emploi, d'action d'accompagnement, d'allocation)?

- o Qu'en pensez-vous ? Cela correspondait à vos attentes ? à vos besoins ? sinon pourquoi ?

- o Avez-vous eu le choix ? ou y avait-il une seule option ?

- o Avez-vous pu choisir les actions (programmes) ? le prestataire ?

- o Avez-vous été obligé de participer à des actions de formation, des périodes d'insertion, de mise en situation ? Quelle en est votre expérience ?

- o De quelle aide avez-vous bénéficié ? (demander des précisions)

- o Y avait-il des conditions pour en bénéficier ?

- o Avez-vous des obligations à remplir, des actions à faire par vous-même pour en bénéficier ?

- o Y a-t-il un suivi ou une évaluation de la manière dont vous remplissez vos obligations ? Et est-ce que ça détermine si vous recevez ou non une allocation ?

- o Cela est-il positif pour vous ? comment ?

- o Ou négatif ? comment ?

- o Avez-vous déjà eu l'impression que le conseiller vous positionnait ou vous incitait à vous positionner sur une action ou un programme qui ne vous intéressait pas ?

- o Si oui: par exemple ?

- o Y a-t-il eu des propositions de offres de PE que vous d'avez pas suivies / acceptées ? De quel type ? Pourquoi ? Y a-t-il eu des conséquences ?

d) Agency

- o Pouvez-vous agir sur votre l'accompagnement ?

- o Pensez-vous pouvoir défendre votre intérêt dans votre relation avec PE ? Pourquoi ?

- o Vous est-il arrivé de souhaiter participer à tel ou tel type d'action / programme et que cela ne soit pas possible ? Pouvez-vous m'en dire plus ? Qu'avez-vous fait ?

- o Est-il arrivé que vous ne soyez pas satisfait de l'accompagnement ? C'est-à-dire ? Qu'avez-vous fait ?

- o Vous êtes-vous trouvé en situation pénible ou difficile avec votre conseiller ? A propose de quoi ? Qu'avez-vous fait ?

III. Responsabilité et responsabilisation

- o Avez-vous pu obtenir les informations dont vous aviez besoin à l'agence PE ?

- o Cela a été facile de rencontrer et d'avoir accès aux personnes que vous aviez besoin de rencontrer ?

o Pensez-vous que l'on vous vous a suffisamment et clairement précisé la démarche de l'accompagnement et les responsabilités / la répartition des responsabilités à chaque étape ?

o A votre avis, quelles raisons et circonstances ont causé votre chômage ?

o Etes-vous vous-même responsable du fait d'être au chômage ? dans quelle mesure ?

o Auriez-vous pu faire les choses différemment (pour ne pas être au chômage) ?

o Qui ou quoi en est la cause ?

o A votre avis, pour PE, qui est responsable de votre recherche d'emploi ? Vous ou eux ?

o Qu'est-ce que vous devez faire vous-même pour trouver un emploi ?

o Quelle est la responsabilité de PE ou des prestataires ?

o dans le PPAE, a quoi PE s'engage-t-il ? quelle est la responsabilité de PE ?

IV. Relations avec les conseillers de prestataires

o Avez-vous été orienté vers d'autres prestataires ? lesquels et pourquoi ?

o Si oui : quel est votre expérience de leur aide ? accompagnement ?

o Cela vous a-t-il aidé ? Comment ?

o Cela a-t-il compliqué les choses ? comment ?

o Comment ça se passe en passe entre PE et le prestataire ? (transmission des info, des données, réalisation des diagnostics)

V. Evaluation de l'accompagnement par le bénéficiaire, impact sur le bien-être:

o Que pensez-vous ? Comment l'évaluez- vous ?

o Vos besoins ont-ils été pris en compte ? de quelle manière ?

o Pensez-vous qu'ils ont tenu compte de ce que vous vouliez ? Ou avez-vous été obligé de vous positionner / avez-vous été positionné sur un ensemble « tout prêt » d'actions et programmes ?

o A votre avis, un plan d'action individuel est-ce utile ? comment ? pourquoi non ? cela vous a-t-il servi ?

o Pouvez-vous m'en dire plus sur votre situation actuelle (professionnelle et personnelle) ?

o Dans quelle mesure votre situation s'est-elle améliorée ou dégradée depuis vos rdv avec PE ? Quel est le rôle de PE dans le fait que cela ait changé en mieux / pire ?

o Dans quelle mesure l'aide / l'accompagnement a-t-il influencé votre confiance / votre assurance ?

o Dans quelle mesure les actions / services pourraient-ils être améliorés ?

o Enfin, comment évaluez-vous votre expérience avec PE ?

Merci pour votre temps et votre coopération !

National employment agencies' socio professional path:

Registration at the national employment agency

Rights of the unemployed :
- Access to the national employment agency's services (job offers, placement advice, etc.)
- Unemployment benefit (in some cases)

Convocation:
Finalization of the registration

Duties of the unemployed:
- Renew his/her registration based on an actualisation calendar
- Define and update the personal action plan
- Do positive and repeated actions to search jobs
- Accept reasonable offers
- Accept training, inclusion and help to find jobs actions
- Accept subsidized jobs offers
- Go to all the national employment agency's convocation
- Inform the national employment agency of all the changes regarding the situation

1st appointment:
« Diagnosis and registration interview » (50 minutes)

Framed

If refusal
- Possible radiation (or legitimate reason)

Individualised plan to get back to work (PPAE) and Employment reasonable offer (ORE)
(not later than 15 days after registration)

Developed and updated by the unemployed and the caseworker
In concrete terms, the PPAE is realised on the basis of the profile of the unemployed and conclusions from the 1st appointment.

PPAE Criteria
- Training;
- Skills;
- Knowledge and competence acquired during work experience;
- Personal and familial situation;
- The local situation of the labour market.

Content of the PPAE
- Precise the nature and characteristics of the job that is looked for, the geographical area, and the expected salary
- **Actions towards which the unemployed has been orientated. I**

Three different types of support: followed, guided, and reinforced

Actions, workshops (CV, etc.)
ACTIVE PORTFOLIO

Orientation (with assessment sheet) to service provider
INACTIVE PORTFOLIO

Appointments to work on the PPAE (frequency depends on the types of support)
Compulsory appointments: 4th and 9th month

Sources :

138

WP7 - The impact of an integrated approach on social cohesion

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In France, the development of activation policies over the last decade has fostered the promotion of a linkage between formerly distinct policy fields (Barbier, 2006). This activation-friendly integration approach (Berthet, Bougeois, 2014) has been implemented through several processes: discourses reinforcing the importance of employment matters in other policy fields such as health or childcare, cross-sectoral projects, cross-sectoral organizations, conditionality over employment matters on social assistance benefits, coordination instances, and others. Nevertheless, implementation challenges arise, notably due to a discrepancy between the approach promoted by policymakers and the one developed by street level bureaucrats (see WP4 and WP6).

In this paper, we seek to analyse the effects of an 'integrated' social and employment policy in terms of social inclusion and well-being of the vulnerable individuals. We thus want to explore three groups of questions: How local experts perceive implementation process and evaluate it? Does everyday practice of these policies address specific problems of vulnerable individuals? How is it assessed by vulnerable individuals in terms of their impact on well-being, work prospects, participation in society?

1.1. The minimum income scheme: an integrated programme?

Choosing an innovative case amongst the three cities and the several organizational structures we met during the different parts of the project represented a difficult step. Indeed, from one city to another, some details differed. But no strong specificities that would make one case more innovative than another arised. As already demonstrated, even though a decentralisation process was launched in the 1980's in France, the French landscape remains highly centralized with regards to employment policies. And the degree and nature of integration of social and employment policies does not vary, especially regarding the linkage between social and employment policies (the variation are on health and economic development[54]). Hence, the choice was made to work on the stronger city (see WP3 and WP4):

Case Studies	Regional classification	Regional labour market participation	Regional unemployment rate	Regional GDP
	Compared to the National average (2008)			
Bordeaux	Very strong	Above	Below	Equal or less
Tours	Average	Equal or less	Equal or higher	Above
Montpellier	Under-performing	Equal or less	Equal or higher	Equal or less

Source: WP4

In the French landscape and with regards to integration matters, the case of the minimum income scheme (thereafter *RSA*) represented an innovative – or at least an interesting – policy to analyse. In theoretical frameworks, "innovativness" refers to organisational arrangements and policies' integration. Based on that definition, the RSA program is a good example of policies' integration as it reinforced the link between social assistance and employment policies. Moreover, the follow-up provided in this framework has set up a 'single referee' system in an attempt to make the cooperation of several

---

[54] See Appendix 1

141

stakeholders clearer for the beneficiary's sake. Both these characteristics (cross-sectoriality and the organizational structure) make the RSA program a case study that should enable us to grasp the consequences of the integrated approach promoted in France. However, it is not an exception or a unique case as it is similar in other cities.

Thus, in this paper we will focus on the people processing organised in the framework of RSA but we will also compare it to the way people are processed at the national employment agency in order to shed light on the divergences and convergences and to identify the facilitating and constraining factors.

1.2. People processing in the French landscape

At the local level, the support of long-term unemployed (LTU) relies on the share of beneficiaries amongst the several organizations involved. Some are dedicated to specific groups. Local national employment agencies are for all unemployed and jobseekers. In the latter, the profiling enables the orientation of the unemployed on the reinforced, guided or followed modality based on his/her distance from employment. According to the profile, some unemployed will be outsourced to other organizations.

The support of the minimum income scheme recipients, managed by the General Council, is singular: RSA recipients are profiled in one category (social-orientation or labour market integration orientation) by an 'orientation desk'. This profiling will determine the organization that will take his/her support in charge[55]. In the project, the RSA was supposed to make the registration as jobseeker compulsory for all minimum income scheme recipients. However, as Barbier explained, "although it states a general obligation of recipients to look for work, the RSA Act envisages that recipients do not register at Pôle Emploi and exercise their obligations with other associations or units designated by the Départements' authorities (Conseils généraux). This ambiguous provision is linked to the fear of communication of higher figures of unemployment"[56].

The people processing thus relies on two (non-exclusive) principles: orientation and outsourcing. The orientation depends on a collective decision, while the outsourcing is often decided by the caseworker. The outsourcing system corresponds to a situation where another organization (partner or service provider) takes the unemployed in charge. The caseworker from the national employment agency puts the unemployed on an action, and he/she is then counselled for a limited period of time (more or less long) by another organization. The relationship between both organisations (the organization that outsources the unemployed and the service provider) is contractualised.

In discourses, the promotion of the individualisation of labour market integration paths and of tailor made services (see WP6) justifies the usage of outsourcing. Indeed, specialised services providers are called upon to adress specific obstacles (LTU for example). Outsourcing is also used when the issue to tackle is out of the intervention perimeter the caseworker or the organization has defined (for example, are childcare issues to be dealt with within the organization or not).

1.3. Description of selection of interviewees and other datas

In the framework of this work package (and the WP6), 16 interviews were conducted with both caseworkers and beneficiaries. This analysis is also based on interviews conducted in the framework of WP4.

---

[55] Indeed, as explained in WP6, groups that are targeting by employment policies (especially vulnerable groups) are distributed among different specialised organisations (Cap Emploi for disabled, Mission Locale for young). In the RSA case, recipients are sent to either service providers (private profit or non-profit organizations), either the national employment agency or social organizations depending on the distance from employment.

[56] Barbier, 2010 :37

	Street level bureaucrats
1	Employment national agency
2	Employment national agency
3	Employment national agency
4	Employment national agency
5	Non profit service provider
6	Non profit service provider
7	Private service provider
8	Private service provider
9	Head of the local employment national agency
	Beneficiaries
1	LTU
2	LTU
3	LTU
4	LTU
5	LTU
6	LTU
7	LTU

Analyzing the implementation of the RSA requires meeting with several stakeholders as different organizations are in charge of the delivery of the service. Hence, we met caseworkers from the main organization in charge of implementing labour market integration policies (the national employment agency – *Pôle Emploi*), but also private service providers in charge of the delivery of the minimum income scheme follow-up. Often, in one organization there is one (or a few more according to the size and speciality of the organization) caseworker that is also a minimum income scheme referee. Consequently, we had to meet caseworkers from several organizations.

Regarding beneficiaries, we did not manage to get in touch with beneficiaries through the national employment agency. Caseworkers working in private organizations arranged our meetings with voluntary LTU that are minimum income scheme recipients.

Additionnally, more interviews were conducted with street level bureaucrats in the framework of WP4 and of Clara Bourgeois's Ph.D. dissertation.

2. ACTIVATION OF LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF POLICY MAKERS

In this part, two different LTU processing will be presented as planned by national and local policy-makers. Then, drawing on the interviews and documentary analysis, we will present the way these local policymakers perceive and evaluate them.

2.1. Two typical processing of long-term unemployed in local organisations involved in activation policies

How are LTU processed? Who is in charge of their labour market integration? Who delivers the service? And last, but not least, how is the service framed?

The typical processing of minimum income recipients will be first presented with regards to the way it has been designed by policymakers (and not yet with regards to the way it is implemented – see chapter 3). Then, the following figure shows the typical processing organised by the main organisation (the national employment agency) for LTU.

Figure 1: The governance of minimum income recipients:

144
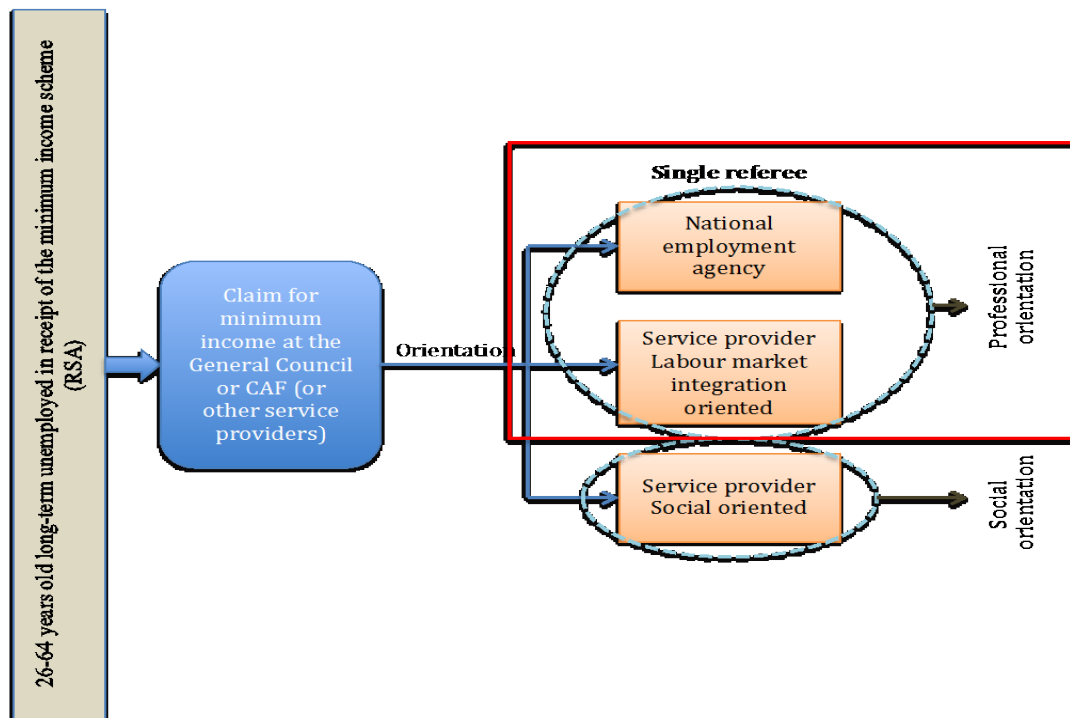
Figure 2: The governance of LTU:
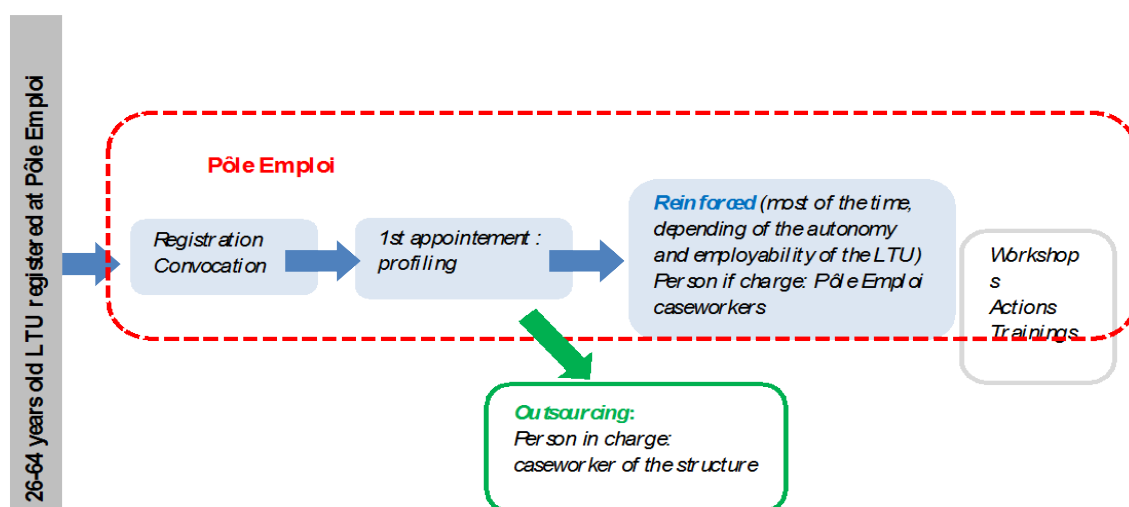
The "long-term unemployed" category can refer to a broad sprectrum of situations and profiles. This category is defined by duration of unemployment. Some are minimum income recipients (when they are not entitled to the unemployment insurance anymore[57]). Following the individualisation trend and the distance from employment criteria to target unemployed (see WP6), different kinds of supports were set up and are provided by different actors.

LTU, as other groups targeted in employment policies, can be supported by both the national employment agency (as the central actor) and service providers. The process of outsourcing vulnerable groups to service providers has increased over the last decades, supported by different cooperation strategies.

At the national employment agency, there is a specific follow-up called 'reinforced' dedicated to unemployed that are far from employment (including LTU). Caseworkers in charge of this type of follow-up have less unemployed to follow in order to be able to meet them more often.

---

[57] The length of time of the unemployment compensation varies with regards to the working periods and the age of the person. The maximum length for those that are less than 50 years old is 24 months. For those that are over 50 years old, it is 36 months. http://www.pole-emploi.fr/candidat/la-duree-de-votre-indemnisation-@/suarticle.jspz?id=4118

Figure 2: The follow-up at the national employment agency – people processing[58]

Registration at the national employment agency

Rights of the unemployed :
- Access to the national employment agency's services (job offers, placement advice, etc.)
- Unemployment benefit (in some cases)

Convocation:
Finalization of the registration

Duties of the unemployed:
- Renew his/her registration based on an actualisation calendar
- Define and update the personal action plan
- Do positive and repeated actions to search jobs
- Accept reasonable offers
- Accept training, inclusion and help to find jobs actions
- Accept subsidized jobs offers
- Go to all the national employment agency's convocation
- Inform the national employment agency of all the changes regarding the situation

1st appointment:
« Diagnosis and registration interview » (50 minutes)

Framed

If refusal
- Possible radiation (or legitimate reason)

Individualised plan to get back to work (PPAE) and Employment reasonable offer (ORE)
(not later than 15 days after registration)

Developed and updated by the unemployed and the caseworker
In concrete terms, the PPAE is realised on the basis of the profile of the unemployed and conclusions from the 1st appointment.

PPAE Criteria
- Training;
- Skills;
- Knowledge and competence acquired during work experience;
- Personal and familial situation;
- The local situation of the labour market.

Content of the PPAE
- Precise the nature and characteristics of the job that is looked for, the geographical area, and the expected salary
- Actions towards which the unemployed has been orientated. I

Three different types of support: followed, guided, and reinforced

Actions, workshops (CV, etc.)
ACTIVE PORTFOLIO

Orientation (with assessment sheet) to service provider
INACTIVE PORTFOLIO

Appointments to work on the PPAE (frequency depends on the types of support)
Compulsory appointments: 4th and 9th month

Sources :

---

[58] There is no formalized framework of the people processing organised by service providers.
Sources : Bulletin officiel de Pôle Emploi, 29 décembre 2011, n°123; Circulaire DGEFP no 2008-18 du 5 novembre 2008 relative à la mise en œuvre du projet personnalisé d'accès à l'emploi et à l'offre raisonnable d'emploi; Entretiens avec les conseiller agence

Do these different kinds of support address specific problems of vulnerable individuals? In order to answer this question, it is important to know what policy areas of beneficiraies' life are taken into account, and which ones are not (or less). In this part, we will focus on both legal documents, and interviews of policymakers. Street level bureaucrats' and beneficiaries' point of views will later be developed. Nevertheless, it is of paramount importance to remind the strong impact their room for manoeuvre may have with regards to the issues that are tackled (or not) (see also WP6).

In Bordeaux[59], the employment / vocationnal training nexus has been strongly acknowledged by all stakeholders involved (it is a strong national trend – see WP2 and WP4). The second policy field that is also strongly related to employment is the social one. The development of cross-sectorial conditionality that was reinforced with the creation of the RSA is a good example of the increasing link between both fields. The close relationship of vocational training and social assistance with employment policies was mainly initiated by national recommendations over the last twenty years. Policymakers and managers perceive both as key elements that are to be taken into account and addressed in order to enable the unemployed to be able to get back onto the labour market (social assistance) and to fit into it (vocational training). Then, childcare, housing and health were mentioned by policymakers as important fields to take into account. Yet, even though also promoted by national policymakers, the development of a strong relationship between these fields did not reach the same degree than vocational training and social assistance. As they are not prioritised, they are not on the agenda (nor national or local). Yet, at an organizational level, managers mentioned them more often. Indeed, as issues that strongly affect the ability of the unemployed to look for and find a job, they become crucial to address. Hence, the spheres of beneficiaries' life that are taken into account are numerous. However, taking them into account does not systematically mean they are addressed for all that. In France, the strong usage of outsourcing relies on the idea that peripheral hinders to employment (such as mobility, health, and many others) should be handled by specialised authorities (and not by the public employment service itself). Only training and social assistance (to a certain extent and only in the framework of the RSA) are supposed to be taken into account simultaneously[60]. Other issues can be tackled but they are supposed to be handled by specific organizations[61].

In order to get a service, the signature of a contract between the service provider and the unemployed is a compulsory step (see WP6). In the RSA situation, the contract depends on the organisation implementing the service.

Table 1 : Minimum income scheme contracts

Referee organization	Contract
Pôle Emploi	PPAE (labour market integration personalised plan)
Mission locale, local plan for inclusion and employment	CER PRO (Professional mutual commitment contract)
NGO's and other public organisations	CER (Mutual commitment contract)

---

[59] Most cities are similar with regards to the degree and nature of the cross sectoriality they promote. Indeed, it is mainly based on national recommandations and local entities do not seem to have developed a specific cross sectoriality with regards to employment policies. Yet, the degree of cross sectoriality may slightly differ from one city to another. See appendix

[60] As explained in WP2, another exception is the *Mission Locale* that is a one-stop shop for youngsters that relies on a comprehensive and multidimensional approach.

[61] However, as we observed in WP6, it also depends on street level bureaucrats' perception of their job.

After the unemployed's registration to Pôle Emploi, the first appointment occurs within the following days. As RSA recipient, the delay might be longer (a few weeks). But in this case, the unemployed is often already followed by an organisation. It is commonly agreed by both policymakers and street level bureaucrats that once the unemployed has registrered and has been profiled, the first step is to develop a labour market integration path. In order to do so, caseworkers try to find adequate services in order to remove the main obstacles that hinder his/her labour market (re-) integration. Yet, even though there are numerous services for unemployed, all target a specific population. And among them, some are very quickly overbooked. It can make the orientation towards a service complicated. Hence, the service that is proposed to the unemployed is not always the one the caseworker would think as the most relevant. But sometimes, it is rather the one that is available and corresponds to the category of the unemployed. It shows that the unemployed can relatively quickly get a service, but that it might not be the most relevant one according to his/her need. Moreover, this ideal order of assigning services can be impeded by the idenfitication of the obstacles (it might sometimes be difficult to identify the right obstacle). The price of the service does not seem to strongly affect the choice of the service. Yet, punctual services seem to be favoured (compared to long training for example).

2.2. Social and employment policies perceived by policymakers

Here, we seek to address the following question: how are the programmes targeted on LTU evaluated by policymakers?

Local policymakers put the emphasis on the fact that programs targeting LTU are mainly about (re) mobilizing the unemployed and putting him/her back in motion. In sum, these programmes' objectives are to make the unemployed active in his/her search for employment. Hence, the main impact on LTU seems to be behavioral rather than professional. Indeed, even though the promoted aim is labour market integration, the result (and sometimes the aim that is presented as being the most realistic) is to keep the unemployed active. This statement is corroborated by the fact that the evaluation of socio-professional inclusion of LTU is mainly measured with regards to the active behaviour of the unemployed.

In concrete terms, the support organised for LTU by the national employment agency is evaluated upon the following criteria: actions that are supposed the put the beneficiary into measures, training, and placement. Indeed, the follow-up and evaluation tools of caseworkers' counselling are the following: number of LTU put on a project/action, number of unemployed outsourced, number of job offers that have been sent to an unemployed and number of trainings. For service providers, the main criterion is the return to employment and/or putting the unemployed on a training program related to his professional project.

Until recently, the national employment agency was mainly an organization that orientates, rather than one in charge of counselling, which explains the criteria used to evaluate the provided services[62]. Yet, this might change over the following years because of '*Pôle Emploi 2015*' (the new program of the national emlpoyment agency) and the effect of the new modalities framework (see WP6).

---

[62] This task was previously fulfilled by another para-public agency (AFPA – *Association pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes*) and its body of career advisers. Some of them have been integrated in Pôle Emploi but not enough to support a widespread guidance and career advice. There is actually a hole in the fishnet concerning careed counselling dedicated to jobseekers and salaries.

3. PEOPLE PROCESSING FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRATS

In this part, we present the policies in practise and the way street level bureaucrats perceive the people processing, the governance structure and the organisational arrangements. Indeed, there is a difference between what policymakers planned and the policy in practise (Pressman, Wildavsky, 1984). This difference relies notably on the role of caseworkers in the implementation of public policies (Lipsky, 1980). This role is strongly related to their room for manoeuvre and their daily practises that questions their ability to adapt or change a policy. This analysis is necessary to grasp the reality of the policy and thus to understand the impact it may have on the beneficiary.

3.1. A comprehensive diagnosis

The diagnosis step is crucial in labour market integration services. In a period of increasing individualisation, it has become even more central as it enables street level bureaucrats to categorize the unemployed in order to provide a tailor-made service. Indeed, categorization represents the main strategy used to individualise the French employment public service: putting the individual into one category enables targeting and settling a specific programme to address the main issues this category can face.

We have previously presented what policy areas policymakers see relevant to connect in order to address unemployment. In this section we first present the issues that are included in an assessment of LTU's life situation and the problems that are ignored or even excluded as not being part of street level bureaucrats' interest and responsibility. Then, we will present the way street level bureaucrat perceive, analyse and evaluate their working tools for the purpose of work with LTU.

Criteria used to conduct the diagnosis are relatively similar between the different actors we met. However, the development and implementation of this diagnosis (how it is used, how are the different criteria identified and analysed) differ from one organization to another and/or from one caseworker to another. The convergence of the different approaches seems to be a particularity of LTU: all are based on the fact that there is a diversity of possible hinders, but also that LTU are confronted to at least one of these obstacles. In their situation, the diagnosis is mainly about identifying those obstacles (and simultaneously identifying the professional project and/or options).

The main dimensions of the beneficiaries' profile the street level bureaucrat will take into account in his/her diagnosis are both personal and professional. The main ones are:

- Social skills: It tackles the reactivity and capacity of adaptation skills:

> One caseworker explain that for those with "*little autonomy, and maybe also unconfident with regards to taking more responsibility, well, for those people, they don't always have the possibility to adapt. Because we do have to adapt, (…) we ask more and more in terms of flexibility*".

- Personal / familial environment: what perception does the unemployed have of the labour market and of his/her unemployment situation?

> "*The lack of language skills, at first, the lack of diplomas, the lack of professional network, the familial environment… I am very sensitive on this point because I realised when I worked in another agency with very very difficult cases, that, sometimes, we had parents, or even grandparents that were also unemployed, ok? So, that, that is irreversible. The person has very much less chance to find a job if her/his familial environment does not work*".

- Language skills: French writing and speaking skills, communication skills (formal versus informal language)

- Diplomas, trainings and work experiences: what is their experience of the labour market (length, working hours)? To what job can they pretend with regards to their curriculum?

- 'Peripheral hinders': childcare, housing, health, and mobility.

Even when caseworker have solutions to overcome one - or several - of these hinders, they emphasize the difficulty to collect information: "*mobility, yes, but with the mobility programme, we have a good answer. So I tried to 'jump on' it, and I still try to take advantage of what seems to work. But then, we understand the reality, it helps measuring the situation, because, sometimes, people tell us some things and we realise that they said something else to the person in charge of the mobility programme. So, as we communicate well, it helps regulate the discourse and see what the real difficulty is »*.

The conditions under which service providers and the national employment agency realise the diagnosis are not the same. Indeed, the diagnosis conducted by the national employment agency (therefore based on a universal service dedicated to all job seekers) is very broad; whereas the diagnosis realised by service providers is already more targeted. The RSA recipient has already been put into one category that corresponds to his/her program. Following this categorisation, he/she was orientated towards his/her single referee in charge of the counselling. The diagnosis is then less formal and more focused on obstacles that may hinder his integration onto the labour market. To illustrate this argument, we will first present the conditions in which the diagnosis is realised in the main employment service for LTU but also all other unemployed and job seekers. Then, we will present the conditions in which the diagnosis is realised in the framework of the RSA.

At the national employment agency, the diagnosis is timed. It occurs at the end of the first meeting: this registration meeting lasts 45 to 50 minutes in total.

> "*It is structured. So we have a limited time: 45 minutes, which is let's say, timed because we have to click when the person arrives, and click when the person leaves our office. There are two major points to address: compensation and the project to get back on the labour market. So we need to register the person administratively speaking, so we have to check the management list in order to make sure he/he is a job seeker, to check his/her ID, inform him/her on his unemployment benefit, check his bank information, make sure we have all the documents for the file (…). We have to identify the jobs codes[63] that correspond to what he/she is looking for, check the websites he/she uses to search, make sure he/she has a space on the website as job seeker, give him his/her unemployed card, explain him/her what it is, give him/her job offers, identify actions/ projects (…). For those that are the furthest away from employment, guide them towards organisations that may help them on the professional project (…) and insist on the need to update their situation because if he/she doesn't, he/she will be un-registered automatically. Well, all that in 45 to 50 minutes*".

Street level bureaucrats in charge of the implementation of the support organised in the framework of the RSA follow a less rigid framework for the diagnosis. The first formal diagnosis is realised on the basis of the file the unemployed sent to register as a RSA recipients. Then, once the beneficiary is being orientated to his/her single referee, the diagnosis is an on-going process:

> "*The first period is really dedicated to the production of a social diagnosis and to identify the hinders because the people that are sent to us have social hinders (…) so the idea is to take about two months to put all that down and then start resolution approaches*".

---

[63] *Codes ROME (*as they are called in the french system) are the french employment codes. To one job is supposed to correspond one code.

Thus, even though the first interview is dedicated to getting to know the beneficiary, diagnosing his/her, this step is neither formalised nor timed. The first meeting introduces both the street level bureaucrat and his/her way to approach the counselling, and the beneficiary (his/her project, his/her experience, his/her main hinders). This on-going process enables the street level bureaucrat to overcome the difficulty to grasp the real hinders encountered by the beneficiaries. For example, one street level bureaucrat explained that mobility is not only a matter of having or not a driving licence or a car, it is also and even more importantly a matter of the way the person perceives mobility and space. Hence, taking time to make the diagnosis thus enables them to understand the cognitive hinders and not only the material hinders that are the only ones often mentioned.

For all, the first interview is also a time of exchange between the beneficiary and the caseworker. This time is about getting to know the expectations of both actors and informing the beneficiary on his/her rights and duties through the contractualisation step. One of the specificity initiated in the framework of the RSA is the development of collective information to inform beneficiaries and initiate the counselling.

The tools are not similar from one organisation to another, or from one program to another. However, they take into account the same criteria. In that respect, they are relatively standardised. Among the service providers we met, the fact that they are in charge of providing a service on the basis of a contract with a financing and decision-making authority put them in a position of providing, and not co-constructing the service. The content of the counselling (meaning what is being talked about, how are hinders addressed, actions the beneficiary is orientated towards) is decided by the caseworker. When the counselling supposes an orientation on a service or other programme / action, this scope of action remains limited to existing actions. There is no formal frame of interviews even though caseworkers have to write a report after each meeting. However, the modalities (frequency of meetings, final objectives) are formerly defined.

In the national employment agency, the counselling is much more standardised, while the modalities are made more flexible over time.

Figure 3: Two approaches of individualisation
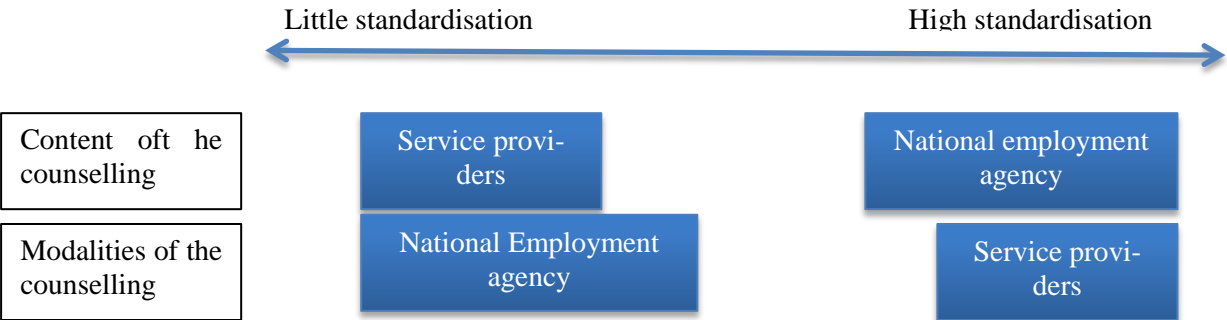
All meetings take place at the organisation's office. Caseworkers implementing the RSA often receive the beneficiaries in order to preserve the privacy. Yet, some are in an open space separated by room dividers. In half cases, caseworkers do not have their own office but go from one office to another. In the other half, offices are assigned to one caseworker. These features depend on the organisation. It can be both a choice and a consequence of the building. Yet, privacy can represent a factor of non-take up (see chapter 4 on this issue).

3.2. Targeting: a facilitating room for manoeuvre

How do street level bureaucrat perceive and analyse their own working tools? Do they find these tools efficient to address the labour market integration of long-term unemployed? Has the program at stake in this report initiated an innovative way to tackle this issue?

The activation program at stake in this report relies on two pillars already presented: an orientation towards a single contact and the orientation on punctual and short-term actions. Once the single contact in charge of the path identified, the unemployed is supposed to keep this contact for his/her whole integration path. However, in practise, the unemployed often has several contacts. It can be because he/she is being followed by several organisations without telling one another, or because one case-worker is absent or changes occupation and transfers his/her 'portfolio' to another one. Hence, the unemployed can get into an orientation circle.

Street level bureaucrats, when working on the RSA, have more time dedicated to their counselling task than when working on the universal support provided by the national employment agency. Moreover, they are often specialised on vulnerable groups and therefore can focus on the programs, actions, trainings and methods targeted at these groups. In this context, the adaptation to the specific needs of LTU is facilitated. It is also facilitated by the fact that LTU is an official category, even if the precise definition is discussed and debated amongst the different actors that claim the speciality. Indeed, the categorisation of this group of individual has led to specific services and tailor-made actions. However, it also means that when one does not get into one category, it cannot benefit from the service, no matter it would seem relevant to the caseworker. Consequently, some caseworkers try to make their beneficiaries 'fit' into one category in order to access a service, which points out a gap between policies and policies in practise.

Moreover, in a time of promotion of individualisation, the need for flexibility in the counselling has been highlighted. As we previously argued, it can take different shapes (see figure 3): when room for manoeuvre is given on one facet of the counselling, another facet is constrained in order to maintain a certain equilibrium of control on the implementation and delivery of the service.

Moreover, the strong usage of cooperation in a multi-stakeholders framework (see WP4) usually takes two different shapes with regard to the service delivery: either the beneficiary is sent on one action by his/her contact that still manages his/her labour market integration path, or the beneficiary is outsourced to another organization that takes over the management of his case. In both situations, the communication has become more and more rigid and formalised. Even though it creates a kind of neutrality enabling all actors to work together no matter their personal links, it can also represent an obstacle to communication that used to rely on informal relationships.

According to street level bureaucrats working on the RSA support, they appreciate having more room for manoeuvre in the way they decide to work than at the national employment agenc's case managersy. Yet, the heavy administrative work they have to do (reporting for example) can sometimes represent a burden, even though they manage to deal with it thanks to the timetable they manage:

> *"Reports… They are generated by software, so we just fill the little boxes (…). Our organisation advised us to fill it during the interview with the individual. (…) But personally, I don't work this way. I use the time for the unemployed, to look at him/her into the eye, no behind my screen. I take notes like old times."*

The other main constraint is the lack of new actions. Very often, LTU go from one action to another one. Names of the actions change, but caseworkers with a rather long working experience (about 20 years) explain that it remains more or less the same. On that point, they often agree with local policymakers' analysis that sheds light on policies' capacity to keep the unemployed active, but hardly ever lead to employment.

3.3. Overall assessment of activation system of LTU by street level bureaucrats

Caseworkers have expressed a relatively negative opinion of inclusion policies in terms of resources / dedicated means (number of counsellors, number of unemployed to follow, time). What feature LTU and RSA recipients is the importance of hindering factors. Caseworkers explained that some can be addressed and are taken into account in the labour market integration path. But some obstacles are so important (for example, if one does not speak French) or too far from the caseworker's skills and responsibilities (for example if one has addiction issues) that they often have to leave the unemployed aside without concrete solutions to overcome them.

Caseworkers working with LTU are often more sensitive to social issues as they are often confronted to unemployed that have social hindrances keeping them away from employment. They cannot ignore this issue. In terms of impact, the main effect of activation policies they highlighted is the fact that it keeps LTU active; it facilitates an effort to get into motion.

The usage of sanctions has not really been effectively implemented within service providers (only the main PES organisation – the national employment agency – has timidly implemented them).

What really makes the difference according to caseworkers is the time they have to realise their follow-up and counselling and the frequency of the appointments. The - even narrow - room for manoeuvre enabled by the lack of highly formalized and rigid framework in terms of content of the counselling facilitates the development of a good relationship between the caseworker and the beneficiary and enables a tailor-made support, perceived as highly necessary for LTU.

Yet, the standardisation of the reports and the rigidity of the communication amongst stakeholders constrain the share of information, especially with regards to peripheral hinders that are less taken into account in some organisations.

4. PEOPLE PROCESSING FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

4.1. Characteristics of interviewees[64]

As already mentioned, seven interviews were conducted with long-term unemployed. Their individual profiles differed with regards to their professional experience and the kind of obstacles that hindered their integration onto the labour market. Yet, they were all selected by caseworkers following some criteria:

- All unemployed we met were minimum income recipients.

- They were all supported by a service provider that was not the national employment agency (even though many were still registered as unemployed at the national employment agency).

- All were considered as close to employment by the caseworker in charge of their follow-up.

- But all had peripheral hinders to address (childcare, health, mobility, housing). These hinders were relatively weak and already partly overcome for some as all were 'employable' according to their caseworkers.

- We met both men and women. All were over 30 years old.

In terms of education and working experience, the degree of qualification differed from one person to another. All have had working experiences in different fields (maintenance, trade, plumber…). It is interesting to note that women are very often orientated towards maintenance jobs.

The cause and types and of their social problems were often related to familial issues. Indeed, in 3 cases, women were left alone with young children, after a relatively long time of unemployment in order to look after the children, and no money in a non-supportive familial environment. In this situation, finding a job became difficult, as they did not have any solutions to look after (or before) the children after kindergarten or school. There is also the accumulation of issues (housing, health, childcare). Other factors may hinder the labour market integration according to beneficiaries: age, level of training, lack of experience or lack of coherence in the professional path that may somehow discredit the unemployed.

In these different situations, unemployment resulted from hinders one could face. And long-term unemployment resulted from the difficulty to remove obstacles and, additionally (and consequently) the difficulty (made more and more complicated to overcome over time) to find a job after a long period of unemployment.

Facing a situation of unemployment, the lack of material resources and the difficulty to find a job led them to contact the employment public service. Moreover, it is often perceived as a compulsory step as it opens up rights to several services and benefits.

For long-term unemployed, even though those we met were not entitled to the unemployment benefit anymore but were entitled to the minimum income benefit, there is an emergency feeling. They expect concrete answers; they expect "*to find a solution*".

None disagree to register as unemployed or minimum income scheme recipient and all referred to their referee and the integration process they initiated in 'good' terms. Even though caseworkers explained they sometimes have to deal with beneficiaries that are not motivated and only come to appointments to get financial benefits, we only met beneficiaries that were motivated and were involved in their

---

[64] See appendix 2

labour market integration path. It is interesting to stress that all have had a strong history with labour market integration actors. As long-term unemployed, they have often been followed by different organisations / through different policies and by different actors. Consequently, as one mentioned: "*things repeat themselves*", therefore unemployed often go round and round in circles. Out of the seven interviewees, only one seemed to have a clear understanding of the system.

They know the main actors, but their understanding of the role and working schemes remains relatively blurred. They know where to go and know where to find internet access for example, but they get mixed up with names of the organizations and programmes.

4.2. Reconstruction of encounters with PES & other organisations involved in delivery

As explained, long-term unemployed we met have had a long relationship with public employment services. Therefore, during our interviews, none were able to recall their first encounter with the PES. Some were able to remember their first meeting with the referee in the framework of the minimum income scheme. Yet, crossing this information with the one given by the caseworker, we realised that some elements were mixed up: who orientate them/told them to go in this organization (mixing up between a universal follow-up organised by the national employment agency and the follow up organised in the framework of the minimum income scheme), who is their single referee (some evoked other referees), etc. It once again sheds the light on a system where the unemployed can get lost.

As most interviewees explained, the first interview with caseworkers in charge of delivering the service in the framework of the minimum income scheme for long-term unemployed is focused on the profile of the unemployed and his/her professional objectives.

> "*Interviewer: what were the first questions that you have been asked? Interviewee: Our life, what we did, our life in general. Interviewer: Not only about employment? Interviewee: First of all, what we are looking for, our objectives. All that kinds of things and professional issues mainly*".

However, long-term unemployed don't always give all information, leading to a situation where some issues are left apart and not sorted out.

> "*Interviewer: You told me you have a little daughter and maybe a follow up on that point. (…) Interviewee: No, and I didn't tell my referee because otherwise, she could have suggested me, I don't know. Interviewer: Why didn't you tell her if it's not indiscreet? Interviewee: I don't know, she didn't take the liberty. I didn't either*".

They expressed different perspectives from caseworkers on that specific programme and caseworkers from the national employment agency. According to them, the latter often don't accept childcare issues as an explanation for unemployment.

The perception of conditionality depends on the unemployed degree of autonomy and his knowledge of the system. It also depends on the stakeholder in charge of the programme. Indeed, when unemployed are confronted to the national employment agency, they talk about a sword of Damocles with regards to the consequences of conditionality. Whereas in the framework of the minimum income scheme or other programs implemented by other organisations, the signature of a contract is mentioned as a formality. Some don't remember signing a contract; some others get mixed up between the several inclusion contracts they have signed over the years. For example, one person explained, "*the minimum income benefit is not conditional*". It shows that the sanctions that may arise from conditionality are not strongly emphasized and enforced. The relationship between the caseworker and the LTU is here based on a mutual commitment and respect, but not on threats: "*If you justify, no problem.*

But if you miss two appointments without prior notice... you have to be correct. If they are, you have to be too. It's a commitment".

The scope for manoeuvre they have does not seem to represent an issue for LTU. Indeed, most of them expect the caseworker to handle the labour market integration path and do not ask for more voice. They feel there is a certain co-construction dynamic, especially on the choice of the professional project. The caseworker is the one taking decisions, but the unemployed is not passive for all that.

> *"I told* my caseworker (about a subsidized contract) *but she didn't want me to do it. Because honestly, if I would have done that, it would have been to have a contract, money, minimum of 700 euros or something like that, (…). I told her, maybe not the first day, but after four or five meetings. I told her and she said yes, yes, I wanted to talk to you about that, but it's too early. She told me why and I have to say, she was right".*

While on the several programmes available, there is some scope of choice; there is less choice and possibility with regards to reorientation. Some jobs are often recommended without taking into account the profile of the unemployed: several interviewees mentioned housework for example. The specialisation of caseworkers on one group (here long-term unemployed) hence seems to represent a facilitating factor to understand the profile, to diagnose it, and to take into account peripheral hinders. Yet, it also seems to go along the specialisation on some jobs often recommended to LTU, but that don't always correspond to the variety of profiles one caseworker may meet.

One interviewee with a tertiary level (6 years of university) explained she was advised to look for housework because the caseworker "*knew this field, she encouraged to go there*".

Once the follow up launched, the LTU is asked to complete tasks by him/herself and/or with the caseworker. In the case of someone with a professional project: work on the curriculum vitae, find job offers, find contacts, and work on the network. Otherwise, the first task will be to work on the professional project (get information on jobs, etc.). There is very little use of tests and of skills assessments for this group of unemployed.

In sum, LTU expressed a common trust towards the caseworker they work with. Yet, it is to the caseworker to get the information that the unemployed will not always give.

> *"That's hers to tackle* (personal) *issues. Then, as I told you, if she doesn't, I won't tackle them either".*

4.3. Assessment of everyday practice of policies in terms of impact on well-being, work prospects, participation in society

Long-term unemployed we met often make a different between the several organizations they have been working with, and most especially between the national employment agency and other actors.

The people processing organised by policy makers is not clear for them. They do not understand what are the relationships between actors: who is a service provider, who is the financial organization, who is the single referee, who is the main authority in charge of their labour market integration path, and so on.

In terms of orientation towards one or another organization, they consequently remain relatively passive. They usually perceive orientation as a good opportunity to work on specific issues or in a different way that may help. Yet, their expectations remain low: "*I did many many actions that helped, I'm not saying it hasn't. But, after all, they don't give us what we really need because there is a labour market here. And many people will judge someone that does not have a diploma or else. You got to handle things*". But, in several cases, their labour market integration paths correspond to an orientation path: they go from one organization to another one continuously.

As the entire system – and especially in the case of long-term unemployed with peripheral hinders – relies on orientating the beneficiary towards specialised organization to remove obstacles, it often creates a blurred landscape for the beneficiary. They don't get the difference between the organization in charge of their inclusion and the organization in charge of a specific service. Therefore, they often don't know in which program they are, when one program or service ends, etc.

Indeed, even though the service provided in the framework of the minimum income scheme is targeted to long-term unemployed and caseworkers are more used to diagnosing peripheral hinders and taking them into account, it does not mean they are able to address them. They often identify them and then orientate the beneficiary towards the most relevant organization in order to work on the obstacle (for example, housing or health issues).

Despite of this unclear people processing, LTU we met emphasized the high quality of the service provided in the framework of the minimum income scheme. The frequency of the appointments and the fact that caseworkers take into account their global profile are key factors to evaluate the organization of encounters. It enables a trustworthy relationship. LTU also feels that they are less pressured on time issues and that the workloads is less heavy than at the national employment agency.

LTU we met all preferred the service provided in the framework of the minimum income scheme than the one they had at the main PES organization. The reasons are the frequency of appointments, the availability of the caseworker, the way they are listened to, the way their obstacles are taken in account.

> "*It is more interpersonal. They are more into listening. It's something else. It can't be compared. Interviewer: What is the difference according to you? Interviewee: It's a smaller organization. There is less people. We have a better follow-up here. The person really takes care of you from A to Z whereas at the national employment agency, we always meet with different people. They are always called and I think they have too many people to meet and that they can't follow every one. Here, that's different. No, no, you can't compare.*"

Currently, most LTU we met seemed relatively confident and motivated. The motivation is an important element as all raised it. It shows that the PES cognitive and behavioural expectations have been integrated. Nevertheless, they remain more pessimistic with regards to developing an interesting professional path. They opted for a financial approach, meaning that their objective (at least their short time objective) is to find a job that will initiate a new dynamic. Nevertheless, the childcare issue remained unsolved for all women we met. The only way to tackle it was to look for job that did not need early or late hours[65].

The support they received helped them to remain/become active in their search. It appears as a strong re-rallying element and as a good networking tool.

The main cost of free service is that LTU have to explain their life several times. The important number of actors the LTU meets reinforces it. It may lead to leaving information aside. "*So often, I will tell my story, I tell, tell again. It's routine now! (…) You always have to explain, re explain, re explain, it's tiring*". A border is often crossed to tackle private life issues, making the unemployed unconfortable.

---

[65] That point is of paramount importance as we showed in WP4 that childcare is one the issue that is the less taken into account by national policymakers, while we now see that it is one of the main hinder to labour market integration and that caseworkers do not have solution to address it.

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;">

The non-take up

Questionning the impact of activation policies on LTU raises another question: the non-take-up issue. Indeed, an analysis of the impact of services on LTU in terms of labour market integration and well being could be completed by an analysis of the reasons why some people that would be entiled to the service do not ask for it. In France, a debate on the non-take up of the RSA was initiated by academic researches over the last years, which led to several books and articles on the topic (for example, see Warin, 2012).

According to Okbani's analysis, "lack of knowledge or bad understanding of the minimum income scheme appears as the first statistical reason of non-take-up". She sheds light on several other possible factors explaining the non-take-up such as a "complex application process" and the lack of clear information, but also "psychological identification cost" and "stigmatization fear".

It corroborates and emphasized what LTU told us during interviews (complex system, lack of information). But it also adds some other possible impacts of the service as it was shaped by policymakers and implemented by street level bureaucrats that are related to stigmatization processes and represent a cost for unemployed.

</div>

Source: Okbani, 2013

Regarding the global PES system, LTU think that a more comprehensive approach could help them finding their way within this complex landscape. They notably highlighted the need for a single referee. It shows that the development of a single referee system that occurred over the past years have not reached its objective, and has not been properly implemented. They also mentioned a single file that would be centralized and available for all actors with the permission of the unemployed.

According to LTU, the people processing could also be improved if they would get information about all services / trainings available at the beginning of the support that would enable them to become more active in their labour market integration path (instead of letting the caseworker choose).

5. CONCLUSION

The impact of activation policies on long-term unemployed is hard to evaluate. That is why focusing on one specific programme and comparing it to the most common service provided by the main public employment service organisation appeared as the best way to highlight the several variables playing a role in the quality of the service.

Moreover, analysing the implementation of the minimum income scheme enabled us to have enough perspective in order to provide an analysis. Indeed, the follow up organised in the framework of the national employment agency has just changed, making it very hard to analyse with so little distance.

This analysis enabled us to shed light on the fact that there is an important discrepancy between the way the policy was planned and its results. Indeed, the objective of making the landscape clearer by establishing a single contact system has not yet been fulfilled. The landscape remains relatively blurred for LTU that are sent from one organization to another one. Yet, services they are provided seem to fulfil their activation objective as the main impact all agreed on is that it keeps/makes the unemployed active.

Moreover, the minimum income scheme reinforced the linkage between formerly distinct policy fields (social and employment). In that regard, the means and tools caseworkers have at their disposal seem to facilitate a comprehensive approach taking into account the several obstacles one may face in his/her labour market integration. Yet, based on WP6, one could argue that it relies on service providers' professional culture, and not only on the new policy framework. Nevertheless, the way the scope for actions is conceived by policymakers seem to maintain a room for manœuvre with regards to the 'content' of the service, perceived as central in street level bureaucrats' work.

However, it is interesting to highlight that sanctions have only been really implemented to a very limited extent, especially by service providers. Hence, the understanding of the policy seems relatively adaptable. One manager explained that there is no strong pressure yet put on quantitative outcomes and sanctions in order to give time to caseworkers to integrate new paradigms. Therefore, it would mean that the change of paradigm goes first through the policy itself and then is supposed to spread over caseworkers.

In terms of well being and impact on the LTU, the services seem to maintain a relationship between the labour market and the unemployed. It thus represents a way to remain active and to reduce or limit the distance from employment. However, even though social obstacles are taken into account by the caseworker, they are not always addressed and overcome. In terms of well-being, caseworkers that have more time to follow the unemployed and can listen to the entire life story (meaning diagnose the peripheral hinders one may face) get build a trustworthy relationship and work on one's professional project. If caseworkers are too constraint by a rigid framework or cannot meet with the person on a regular basis, the relationship seems more complicated to develop, leading to limited results in terms of well being.

REFERENCES

Barbier, J., & Knuth, M. (2010). *Of similarities and divergences : why there is no continental ideal-type of "activation reforms",* Document de travail du centre d'économie de la Sorbonne, Paris.

Lipsky, M. (2010 [1980]). *Street-level Bureaucracy : Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.

Okbani N., (2013), *How a controversial minimum income scheme can be legitimated by its evaluations: The case of the RSA evaluations in France*, paper presented at the 1st International Conference on Public Policy (ICPP), Grenoble, France

Pressman, J.L., Wildavsky, A., (1984). *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington Are Dashed in Oakland; Or, Why It's Amazing that Federal Programs Work at All, This Being a Saga ... on a Foundation*, Revised. ed. University of California Press.

Warin P. et al. (2012) *L'envers de la fraude sociale: le scandale du non-recours aux droits sociaux*, Paris, La découverte

APPENDIX 1 :

Multi dimensional intergration in Bordeaux (WP4 comparatif)

	Bordeaux	
	Level of integration	**Reasons**
Professional training	**Very strong integration**: the Regional Council in charge of professional training is involved in most employment committees, and all refer to the duo "employment / training"	National trend: strong connection between employment and training Strong discursive focus on the link between both sectors carried out by the Chairman of the Aquitaine Region who is also the Chairman of the Association of French Regions, and fosters the increasing role of Regions regarding employment
Social	**Strong integration** both at NUTS 3 level (General Council), and at the city level (social project of the city)	**National trend:** strong connection between social inclusion and professional integration (cf. Barbier's definition of activation) Top-down cognitive and normative influences Global approach of the individual
Urban policies	**Average integration:** mentioned by few policymakers on specific measures (subsidized contracts, for instance)	Transversal policy field that can thereby represent a lever to tackle employment issues (urban policies as an instrument, notably used to address migrants' inclusion)
Housing	**Average integration**: few policymakers mentioned this dimension (which appears important for case workers). When mentioned, it is often related to services that focus on housing and that integrate employment issues (but not the other way around) No specific cross sectorial projects, but rather services that integrate both dimensions	Integration that mostly relies on the global approach of the individual Links between instances in charge of housing issues and employment policies that have not (yet?) resulted in common dynamics
Economic Development	**Relatively strong integration:** most policymakers mentioned it as an important field that should be interconnected with employment. The *Maison de l'emploi* absorbed the *PLIE,* and orientates its strategy towards relationships with firms.	Some promote a shift from employment / social to employment / economic development, but not a common acknowledgement so farThe existence of the *Maison de l'emploi* and its focus on economic development can foster such connection. However, all actors did not acknowledged this organization as central with regards to employment inclusion matters. Economic development hence remains secondary.

Health	**Weak integration**: few policymakers mentioned this dimension. Rather acknowledged in a cognitive way as a necessary related sector, it does not result in the development of many concrete integrated actions. Mentioned by the case workers with regard to their global approach	Distinct instances, no strong common interest even though the spread of employment issues finds its way into health matters
Childcare	**Weak integration:** mentioned by few policymakers (the city) and some caseworkers. When mentioned, it is both as an important and difficult obstacle to resolve	Instances in charge of childcare issues usually belong to distinct units, far from employment matters.

APPENDIX 2 : TABLE OF INTERVIEWEES

Gender	Age	Qualification / work Experience	Hinders	Unemployed since	Cause of unemployment
Men	30-35		Homeless Health	April 2012	Arrival in Bordeaux
Men	45-50	Technical training Plumber	Housing One small child Separated	2013	Worked overseas, return to France
Women	45-50	Master biology (Mali & USA) Hasn't worked for over 20 years to raise her children	Housing 2 children Separated	Fall 2012	Arrived in France to raise her children, divorced (husband overseas). She was host by her brother who died. Consequently, housing issues.
Women	50-55	No education House renovation for 25 years, grape-harvest	Health	Several registration in the past 30 years	Health issues
Men	30-35	Training in the metalworking industry	Health	First registration 2000. When younger, went to the Mission Locale	Accident Long inclusion path
Women	40-45	Has worked as a home help. Hasn't worked for a long time	Children	2010 (not the first registration as unemployed)	Hasn't worked for a long time
Women	40-45	Very active woman in the past: trade, receptionist	Children	2012	Her husband was a policeman and had to move from Paris. She followed him and didn't find work in the countryside and looked after his children. Then: divorce

TABLE DES MATIERES