



CENTRE DE GESTION SCIENTIFIQUE

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Public Policies
and the Transformation of Occupations in Cultural Sites.

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Abstract:

The French cultural sector is very active and includes a multiplicity of activities and occupations; today it is strongly characterised by the public sector's involvement in its management. Close to 25,000 people are more or less directly employed under its umbrella. Therefore the question arises, as examined in this article: how does the State steer occupations in the cultural sector?

This question provokes much interest when the State makes numerous attempts to develop a "new public management", in which human resources management issues take up central stage.

This paper is an attempt to describe present developments in the management approach of cultural sector occupations by its guiding ministry, by reviewing in particular the transition from a highly structured management style (public career role) to a management in which a new object of government, i.e. occupations and skills emerges gradually.

In fact, setting up an occupations and skills reference tool at the French Ministry of Culture, which is a tool that provides information on occupations and their development and, at the same time, a recognition tool for all the teachers with tenure who lead the transformation or creation of new occupations, seems to provide major support to boost a new venture in this respect.

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Introduction: Competing changes in the cultural sector and public action.

For a long time the cultural sector has been studying its *modus operandi* and its ability to respond to the public's (publics') demands, and to propose a better adapted policy of supply (accessibility, democratisation, selection, efficiency issues, etc.). For some years now, transformations linked to new conditions of practice have been added to this enquiry: the emergence of new technological and multimedia tools offering new means to practise certain occupations and new dissemination vectors, the explosion of new art forms and new practices (circus, street art, etc.), that change the traditional landscape and create new needs for references and labels, etc.. Maybe more than in any other, because it is inherent to its very nature as a creativity and innovation field, the cultural sector has undergone profound upheavals, translated into, or associated with the emergence of new occupations and the transformation of more traditional trades. We only need to think for example, of the hospitality or information processing occupations, to be convinced.

Furthermore, in France, the last few years have been characterised by ponderings on the very operation of the State («State reform»), greater user power, questioning of the legitimacy of the State relating to some of its traditional roles, decentralisation legislation, etc.) that have become evident here as well, as a transformation of public action and the emergence of new modes of public management.

And, as we are aware, in France as in many other countries, cultural sites are mostly under the direct custody of the State: national museums (Louvre, d'Orsay, Picasso, etc.), heritage sites (the palaces of Fontainebleau, Versailles, and others), archival services (and in particular, the Historical Centre for National Archives) are regulated by various statutes (public establishment,

national skills service, etc.), and direct dependencies of the Ministry of Culture.

Thus, the cultural sector is especially concerned with the developments of the public action modes. But as stated earlier, it is in itself the object of major developments.

The purpose of this paper is to study the way in which the French cultural administration is following the changes in the cultural sector and the occupations working in it. The issue in fact, has two faces: it is, naturally, a case of examining the way in which public authorities ensure the follow-up of changes in the sector and its occupations and learns lessons from these (for example, by modifying competitive recruitment methods, training modules, etc.), of watching how it steers these, that is to say, how it anticipates and guides these changes, but it is also a question of how present changes in public action are translated into the cultural sector, since the former are a direct challenge to the organisation of present administrations and to the way in which their agents are managed, inviting thus the introduction of a new system.

We shall see how, from such a perspective, human resources management could find itself at the centre, facing public action changes in the cultural field, in particular with the introduction of a skill-based approach.

In order to study this issue, we shall use a study presently in progress at the Centre de Gestion Scientifique (CGS), consisting in joining the French Ministry of Culture and Communication in its project to set up an occupations and skills reference tool. The project consists in identifying and providing a description for jobs and occupations in the different technical fields and cultural sites under supervision, and as they are implemented by the agents, as well as the skills developed therein.

Now, if it seems that setting up an occupations and skills reference tool contributes new knowledge on the way in which occupations are transformed in cultural sites, are we in the

presence of *active knowledge*¹, that is to say of knowledge that is susceptible to change the nature of relations, particularly among the different actors in charge of human resources management?

What are the impacts of the introduction of new knowledge on the organisation and under what conditions will a government project focused on skills as a new object, become a management practice, a new form of governmentality² ?

D) Transformation of occupations in the cultural sector

Following the example of numerous fields of public action, the cultural sector in France faces profound transformations: greater user power and, at the same time, new public policies, calling into question of the State's intervention, devolution and decentralisation movement (particularly topical), emergence of new fields (cultural mediation, preventative conservation, etc.), new art forms and new multimedia tools, etc.

All these changes have an impact on the shape of occupations found in this sector: new occupations emerge, new skills are required to assume emerging roles, job descriptions are transformed, in a general context of transformation of public expectations regarding cultural institutions. Furthermore, population changes, reflecting the wide movement that is beginning to affect numerous administrations, are at the root of a renewal - probably major renewal - of certain bodies of Culture, in the relatively close medium term (5 years).

¹ See F. Kletz, O. Lenay, *Savoir actif et changement dans les organisations : L'introduction du PMSI réforme-t-elle le pilotage du système hospitalier ?*, *Ruptures*, Vol.8, n°2, 2001, pp.6-20.

² The concept of governmentality was coined by Michel Foucault, i.e., See "La gouvernementalité" in *Dits et Ecrits*, T.3, 1975-1980, Gallimard, pp. 635-657. For a translation of the concept into management, please see O. Lenay, *Regulation, planning and organisation of the hospital system. The role of management tools in the development of public policies*, doctoral thesis at the Ecole des Mines de Paris, March 2001.

This paper does not deal with the multiplicity of movements in the associated sector and local initiative occupations, which are often at the vanguard of innovation and emergence of new fields. It focuses exclusively on occupations managed directly by the Ministry of Culture and Communication, that is to say a total of approximately 25.000 people (Ministry officials, public establishment employees, including substitutes), and is a structuring reference for the whole sector (by recognising certain occupations, the State assigns them an exportable label). This Ministry is in fact divided into different types of institutions (half of its employees are part of public institutions such as the Louvre or the National Library of France) and different regions (Regional Directorates of Cultural Affairs).

In order to illustrate the transformation of numerous occupations³ in this sector, the authors have chosen two, described hereunder.

a) The emergence of the occupation of mediator

We are familiar with the occupation of meet-and-greet officer; it has long been a part of cultural sites open to the public. What is perhaps not known is that in France, in the last ten years approximately, meet-and-greet officers have been grouped with guards and warehouse personnel in the one and only body (in fact, two bodies: technical meet-and-greet officers and assistants, surveillance and storehouse personnel), in order to assist mobility. These are very large bodies (some 3,300 budgetary positions just for the Ministry of Culture account, taking into account that they also exist in other administrations, such as the library storehouse workers, under the

³ As may be obvious, the authors have opted for the term “occupation” (“métier” in french) in the entire text, rather than using “employment” (“emploi”) or “position” (“poste”). An entire paper would not be sufficient to justify this choice, so difficult is this question and so abundant the literature on the subject. This choice was made

National Ministry of Education or that certain establishments employ contractors and substitutes directly), and they conceal quite a diversity of roles, particularly with respect to the size of the establishment in which they work. On the other hand, membership of one or the other of these two organisations does not correspond to different roles and tasks.

The vast majority of employees working in museums carries out tasks that are traditionally associated with the museum guard image (and certain employees present themselves spontaneously that way), that is to say preparing rooms before the museum opens, surveillance, guidance and response to visitors' questions, etc.. In some instances, employees have been able to train in order to perform more technical tasks in the security PC. On the other hand, in historical monuments, the role of meet-and-greet is obviously more developed, since employees who so wish, may take charge of guided visits.

Regarding this general landscape, the situation has evolved a little and atypical situations have emerged.

- the increase of administration, management and organisation tasks: in certain institutions, employees are gradually given responsibilities of a job called «training assistant» that includes team coordination and planning tasks. It may be noted that these tasks are not recognised by a body or specific grade.
- Involvement in scientific policy: in the case of the Archives, employees in charge of warehousing of documents in a section (movement and re-packaging) may participate, apart from their meet-and-greet and surveillance of reading rooms tasks, in classification work, with a heritage approach. Certain curators go even further and advocate the idea that museum employees should be actively involved in a

preventative conservation policy.

But certain new roles have emerged in particular: institutions have sought to promote cultural mediation and employee role multiplicity. Thus, tasks relating to guided visits, individual cultural mediation with commentary on works or exhibitions on show, but also cashier and more traditional roles relating to surveillance of rooms. This kind of development, facilitated no doubt in the case of recent institutions (such as the Tokyo Palace for example) and by the recruitment of all employees on the basis of this definition of occupation, seems to be only marginal still. However, it paves the way for a richer work experience for employees. Today, many institutions wonder how to implement a certain task, either by tagging it on to the meet-and-greet role, or by separating it at a relatively faster rate. The emergence of this new occupation seems to answer to general considerations arising directly from the increased politicization of the public visiting cultural institutions, encouraged for many years now, but also to more endogenous forces linked to the desire of some meet-and-greet employees to enrich their occupation, particularly of those increasingly numerous agents who are over-qualified for the pre-requisites of meet-and-greet and surveillance tasks.

b) Transformation of information occupations, and in particular, those relating to documentation

Here again there are within the cultural sector, important occupations relating to information supply and processing. Documentation is a particular case in point. Two bodies are concerned in the Ministry of Culture: documentation clerks and people in charge of document studies, but in reality, these two groups quite often end up taking comparable roles, in various assignments

(national and community museums, archives, heritage and architecture, DRAC, etc.). Activities range from the more traditional documentary work (indexation, cataloguing, setting up thesauri, etc.) to designing exhibitions with a view to highlighting the documentary background, in which case occupational issues arise especially for those in charge of documentary studies, with respect to curators.

However, the conditions of the practice may vary according to the place where the person is working and the job held in the relevant organisation. In a certain number of assignments there are document specialists who are placed in the conservation department, either in museums or archives. This does not necessarily mean that their roles only include implementation tasks, and exhibition design. may, on the contrary, be an integral part of documentation activities (and this is, no doubt, an expanding activity), but it is the conservation activity which, in the wider sense, guides the documentary activity, since the latter is not autonomous. Furthermore, and this point will be revisited, the skills associated to this documentation entity are, in fact, close to the conservation entity, since they rely above all, on a large mastery of the art history period relating to the documented works. The difference between curators and document specialists, in the wider sense, is then basically a matter of direct contact with works for the former, and contact with secondary material for the latter. In these situations, document technique is somehow secondary with respect to the knowledge of the object to be documented. It may even be learnt on the job, according to some document specialists.

But the development of certain documentation techniques, propelled by different forces, seems to question this first overview. They could be:

- an additional need to make accessible to the public any available documents, for

example, through distance access to a digital database,

- the development of the nature of the documents that have been also digitalised initially
- or also a growing will to set up network operational modes for document activities, in order to avoid redundancy of effort (for example going through and indexing new publications), or more fundamentally, in order to offer to the public new access modes to knowledge.

All these developments lead to the increasing professionalism of the documentation profession, including specialist training, organisation of document specialists going beyond institutional borders, professional publications, etc. In fact, the occupation may in certain cases (particularly Art Colleges) undergo much deeper changes, thus becoming one of the motors of cultural institution development, by offering a new vision of the contributions made by documents, which is a real knowledge field, offering a new vision of the art world, or even of the world.

Thus the document specialist trade is evolving strongly at present, it could be said it is exploding and we should now refer to different document specialist profiles, which may be described as follows :

- Conservation documentation or the primacy of the object «to be documented» over documentary technique: in this model, the skills required to carry out document specialist tasks are clearly classified: in the first place, mastery of the knowledge of the object documented (history of art in particular) and only in second place, an ability to implement the documentary techniques that have been adapted

- «Technician's» documentation or the model of the occupation subjected to document (new) technology: this second model is very clearly the opposite of the first model and, in certain cases, it seems to follow it. It is often the case of situations in which document technology has supplanted the object to be documented, for example under the influence of highly «technical» documentary production contexts (example of the restoration laboratory at the Louvre Museum where the cards of works that have gone through the laboratory include a combination of x-ray plates, digitalised views, texts, etc.) or the case of documentation that has become «autonomous», for example when a small documentation centre is established where there is no division of work among the conservation specialists, and the activities of the centre are very similar to those of a library.

- The expansionist documentation or the model of the «exploded» occupation: in this case, the document specialist's trade seems to have dissolved into a wider activity that includes :

- positioning as an actor in the relevant world of art⁴ (contemporary art, for example), in the shape of the organisation of events (exhibitions, showings, invitations to artists, etc.)
- and a new offer of services to (internal or external) partners of the institution, in order to give them the keys to understanding the world of art in which they move; for example, in the case of an Art School, this could be in the shape of training work for the students, by providing them with access to information on the place they will take as artists in contemporary society).

⁴ H.S. Becker, *The worlds of art*, Flammarion, 1988.

Certainly documentation work is still very much present in traditional activities of going through magazines, indexing and cataloguing, setting up databases. It even takes the shape of the second model described earlier, with respect to the recording of new documentary technologies on line. However, it only provides a vague definition of the area of activity of these employees who, although they are documentation clerks in charge of document studies or even library curators, have widely reinvented the conditions of practice of their occupation.

We have just seen two examples of occupations that are under development or profound transformation, with the emergence of a new profile or the explosion of the traditional trade. Now, as indicated earlier, one of the fundamental features of these occupations is that they are a part, directly or indirectly, of the public arena: either because their holders are State employees (or employees of a territory community), or because they are employed by an institution under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture.

How, under these conditions, are the public authorities associated with these transformations? And firstly, how do they identify transformations of jobs that are sometimes much localised? Also, do they seek to encourage these transformations and guide them? And finally, are there no management tools and rules (such as statutes, etc.) that oppose such movements and act as powerful return springs?

II) Transformation in return of the management mode of these trades – The example of the jobs and skills reference tool

In this part we shall see:

- that the transformation of occupations mentioned above requires a new style of management that goes beyond the traditional management based on managing in large numbers, very structured by administrative categories, particularly bodies;
- that henceforth occupations and jobs must be the leaders and be followed, they require the decentralisation of the mode of management, and the emergence of a new management object: skills (thus with the stake of learning through knowledge);
- this requires new management tools, such as the jobs and skills reference tool, to help visualise new objects of government such as skills and employment, and the evolution of representations and mentalities, as well as the increasing professionalism of the personnel manager «occupation».

These different development modalities of HRM [Human Resources Management], the basis of a «new public action», will be involved in the transformation of occupations by constructing a knowledge and recognition tool that will offer new reference points for employees (since the tool «descends» to the employee, which gives it its strength), but at the same time, will control the way in which its action is translated into work.

But these tools, and beyond this set of changes, are slow and difficult to construct, because they need to capture individual skills and validate them. There is also the question of the amount of detail of the descriptions, and of the strategic choice of jobs and occupations identification that should be included in the reference tool.

Now, the personnel management style existing to date within the ministry is not synchronised with the changes described earlier, thus making its reform even more essential. This part of the

paper presents a preliminary diagnosis of the jobs and employees management modes as implemented to date.

a) The body: an object of organisational management ?

An analysis of the personnel management mode in the ministry leads to the actual distinction of two levels: central management services and local managers. These two levels have a common characteristic: personnel management as it was practised, had, in both cases in fact, an essentially «administrative» character, with personnel follow-up and structured through the object «body» without any knowledge of the true roles performed by the employees. Thus it is common to talk of work articulated around particularly numerous «management acts», and dealing essentially with the recording and formalisation of events marking the employees' career: sickness leave, maternity leave, promotions, leaving the body, etc.

Regarding central management services, management by the body and centralisation of management actions do not lead personnel managers at the ministry to develop their knowledge of the employees other than in a global way, in terms of «population». It is a case of managing large numbers, and knowledge, with the exception of any problems, does not need to be at the individual level. Furthermore, one of the stakes in this central management in the framework of equal management, consists in preserving maximum homogeneity of the body. Finally, only some bodies that result from the historical integration of occupations ('art' trades for example) in the context of operation as an integral body, have the advantage of a more detailed knowledge of performed tasks. With this exception, bodies are not homogenous units, rather they group quite a diversity of populations, in some cases even without a true common denominator.

Naturally, apart from central personnel managers, there are local HR (Human Resources) correspondents, particularly in cultural institutions, which have managed to develop very precise knowledge of the trades present in their institution, thanks to their direct contact. However, even in these cases, the object «body» offers them few opportunities to express this knowledge at the different moments of HRM, and finally, there is very little articulation of these two competence fields. The opportunities to articulate them are limited to some «great moments» of the HRM: publication of holiday notices, assessment cards, Joint Administrative Commissions, etc.

As a whole, HRM skills still need constructing with respect to «occupations and skills» objects, including at the local level; this is evident in the concern expressed by local managers when faced with the decentralisation of certain management actions.

b) Consequences on the different HRM moments:

We have just seen that personnel management as it is practised today within the ministry is not conducive to awareness of the true trades that are developing in the various cultural sites. There is only a highly administrative knowledge of the body, concealing the strong diversity of work content..

In these conditions, we perceive the difficulty of participating in the transformation of these trades, and in establishing the most appropriate devices to train, recruit or assign employees as a function of their competences required for these new occupations..

As a matter of fact, almost every moment in HRM suffers from a lack of knowledge on the

nature of the various jobs:

- *dealing with vacancies*: along the process, ministry personnel managers are often called upon to assist in recruitment or establishment, to look for and find potential candidates. At present, this task is carried out in an amateurish manner, resorting to the direct knowledge of individuals, or by trial and error, with obviously limited results that are due to the lack of knowledge on the occupations to be provided (their description, evolution, stakes, etc.) and on the skills acquired by employees all along their career. In these conditions, it is impossible to know whether the job that has become available may be adaptable to a certain candidate. This allows, or even leads to, assignments that are often far from the core of the body's mission (for example, surveillance employees assigned to administrative activities).

- *organisation of competitive examinations*: when a competitive examination is launched, the question arises of the job description for the position and the type of skills required (knowledge or know-how to be used in the professional activity). HR managers then find themselves lacking and unable to help the competitive examinations office in the preparation of such exams.

- *training follow-up*: here again, training carried out by employees is not followed up by the ministerial offices. At best, they are informed of the title of the training module but do not know what skills are gained. In any case, they are often unable to participate in the design of a training programme tailored to each employee's needs, or to participate in the least reflection on how to enrich the mission of this

occupation or that.

- *negotiation with trade unions*: at the time of examinations for promotions, debates arise on the reality of the tasks performed by this employee or that, and it is difficult to argue, as a consequence of the lack of job description tools. Likewise, discussions with trade union organisations regarding the recognition of a new speciality within the same body (for example in the technical field) often hit the difficulty of finding information on the actual tasks performed.
- *design and follow-up of objectives charts*: these have been in place at the Ministry of Culture for some ten years, as a tool to distribute jobs within the ministry. But this procedure has not given satisfactory results; here again, there has been a lack of references to allow the assessment of personnel needs in each establishment or office. In fact, management of personnel does not provide always the information on which tasks are actually performed (for example, by employees or administrative assistants). Suddenly, it is difficult to judge on the grounds for a global demand for personnel arising from an establishment, and even further, to decide over competing requests in a context of limited resources.

Finally, this analysis shows personnel management practices at the ministry, the idea of an extreme difficulty in being involved in the transformation of occupations in the sites it supervises, thus strengthening the need for new management tools based on better knowledge of jobs and their relevant skills, making a true guidance possible.

It must be noted, though, that many personnel managers find it difficult to imagine how this type of tool will be used, and the new practices it might create. However, whether we are dealing with personnel managers in technical services, in the DRAC or in establishments where this role is clearly defined, this population is particularly interesting inasmuch as it is the place where local transformations of public action may happen, and it is also the place for follow-up and for local accompanying actions for occupations transformation⁵.

c) Reference tool implementation procedure

Now, the occupations management style is at present undergoing a process of development in the Ministry of Culture and Communication: the latter recently launched a process to change its HRM practices. The main idea underlying this project is quite similar to the description provided in the introduction: a good number of HRM sections are conditioned by the perception of the bodies and are not sufficiently reliant upon the knowledge of conditions affecting activity performance and jobs as they are performed «in the field» (in this case, the different technical directions and cultural sites under supervision); furthermore, there is also the need to respond to organisational changes such as de-concentration of certain management acts (sickness leave, requests for part-time work, etc.): in fact, to date many personnel management tasks were carried out by the personnel central service and it is expected that these will be delegated to more local levels in the future. This perspective requires, as we shall see, the development of knowledge systems and new human resources management roles at the local level, particularly with respect to institutions such as the Louvre, whose critical size from the resources management point of view can not be contested.

⁵ This in itself is another example of occupation or trade (Human Resources manager), under strong (potential)

In order to support and facilitate this reform effort, the ministry has decided to set up a jobs and skills reference tool that can be applied to all employees. As indicated earlier, the project consists of describing actual jobs, as they are performed by the employees, as well as the skills developed therein.

This reference tool will also provide information on cultural sector activity changes, by way of the follow-up of the various trades. The idea is to provide the ministry with concrete data on the content of occupations transformation and on the skills provided by the relevant employees; this could launch a series of actions related to these changes (training, development of recruitment competitive examinations, staff evolution, etc.).

One of the major interests of the skills notion is that it leads directly back to the employment situation in the context of which it can be studied and comprehended. Therefore, skills retained and produced by individuals must be identified and their adaptation must be planned, with an occupational description of needs. With this in mind, we are no longer interested only in this or that person's status, or in the body that person belongs to, but rather in the nature of their tasks, the content of their trade or occupation, their qualifications and skills.

From the individual point of view, the project of establishing a «trades and skills» object of government may lead to an improved consideration of the specificity of skills developed through time and the need to acquire new skills, and in particular, the supply of better adapted training.

And finally, it is obvious that this guidance mode must allow the efficient management of the various human resources traditional dimensions (remuneration, recruitment, etc.), whether these

are carried out at the central administration level or whether they are delegated to more local levels.

But this concept is difficult to implement and countless complications arise when attempting to carry out a process based on the skills logic: should there be a preference for general or specific skills? What devices should be set up to validate skills in the field? How is skills management to be articulated with other elements in the organisation? How are individual skills to be understood? How far can we go in the management of individual paths on the basis of the notion of competence in the general framework of the public function? And, in a more global sense, what to do so that this tool may really lead to new practices?

All these questions beg the study of the methodological aspects of setting up such a tool..

d) Methodology issues related to the construction of a reference tool

Jobs and trades are not stable entities that may be readily detected and identified. On the contrary, they evolve, their borders are ill-defined, even conventional, and their description may be quite varied, particularly as a function of the preferred degree of detail. Furthermore, their description also depends on those who are in charge of the task; it is, above all, a representation issue.

This led to the determination of the level of accuracy in the description of jobs and of the way in which they would be described, particularly in the case of emerging occupations. A follow-up committee was established, including representatives of the ministry bureaux and human resources managers, particularly from the General Administration Directorate. The committee

was to ensure the suitability of the tool to the needs of the ministry, and to continuously change the direction of study according to priorities at the time, but also to debate the following points: should there be a preference for wider categories, with «generic» trades, or, on the contrary, were more precise and «contextual» categories to be chosen? Was the description of the job to be based on a list of tasks, or should it also deal with the level of responsibility, autonomy and skills required? And finally, how much detail should the description have? Should it be a wider description of the job or on the contrary, should the job be dissected and with a detail of more or less basic tasks? As we can see, the job description phase takes us to major, non neutral methodological issues.

e) Birth of a new management object?

At this stage of the study it becomes clear that the object body does not allow the inclusion of all the HRM stakes and that it is important to produce new knowledge on trades and their dynamics. The introduction of the jobs and skills reference tool explicitly sets this objective.

But can we refer to the true birth of skills as an object of government, in which a profound modification of HRM practices at the ministry could operate? Are we in the presence of the birth of a governmentality form that takes skills as its object? What is, then, the multiple (institutional, administrative, juridical or organisational) knowledge that may contribute to the description of the object and enable the definition of efficient collective action on its basis?

Certainly, it could be said that the jobs reference tool is far from ensuring, by itself, changes in

⁶ See P. Zarifian, *Objectif compétence. Pour une nouvelle logique*, Editions liaisons, 1999.

the ministry's occupations management, and that at best, it is a passive follow-up instrument for the evolution of such trades, and what is more, always lagging behind professional dynamics.

However, this would mean that some of its major features are forgotten, i.e.:

- the fact that it is a recognition tool: thus it offers an encouragement to identified members of an occupation, and a source of motivation, particularly because of its official and shared character;
- its structuring character: once constructed, it has very structuring effects on the representation of actors, particularly ministerial managers (who then "see", or don't see, such occupation in this landscape), and on the policies to be implemented;
- its strategic character: the choice of occupations or trades to be included therein is not a passive or neutral choice, but rather a strategic - and therefore active – choice;
- and finally, the very process of reference tool design necessitates penetrating into the professional dynamics of trades (as seen in the description of the two occupations studied in the preceding section), and by itself, beyond the end result, it is a knowledge tool which leads to useful learning for the management of trades.

Conclusion :

The process launched by the ministry is a good example of the way in which an administration can introduce a new approach based on occupations, by analysing the management structure that it plans as the foundation of this dynamics, but also the difficulties encountered at the very design stages of the process, as well as later, at the time of implementation. At the same time, it illustrates the major importance of changes in the human resources management mode within these administrations: trades evolve, others emerge and also deserve particular attention and guidance, beyond the traditional management of the body, which has its logic and relevance in the career public function, but which can not structure it all. Management by trades allows not only the substitution of the body management, but also its completion, by penetrating in the gaps of the previous management: it visualises the employees' tasks, recognises them, guides their evolution, provides new training or mobility policy instruments, etc.

Thus, occupations or trades gradually become a true object of government. But, as we have seen, its management is not simple: firstly from the "technical" point of view, occupations are a conventional object with necessarily arbitrary borders and wording; but also from the strategic point of view, the identification and design of occupations does not depend only on the content of work, but it has to do with high-stake choices. And finally from the "dynamic" point of view, because behind trades management we find professional dynamics management; the latter obviously has multiple dimensions (knowledge and skills dynamics, content of actual roles, actual coordination modes, the identification and involvement ability of incumbents) that help define the levers of organisational and management process of this occupation dynamics.

Therefore, it is not only a case of designing occupational cards in a reference tool, but beyond this, it is a question of guiding their development whose motors are varied and specific, that is

to say to carry out a global study of each occupation and to be able to act upon its change of direction. The reference tool appears, therefore, as the first phase of the establishment of a new object of government.

We are better able to understand the reason why certain reference tools designed in the past went unheeded: in this matter, the tool is only an empty shell. It only makes sense when it is related to other elements: a new «concern» for employees, the will to design new HRM practices, the study and implementation of new organisational modes, etc.