



Equity Trajectories : A strategic management for equity in public organisations

The case of a French territorial decision process: CSDU Valensole



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Introduction

The public performance, the effectiveness of the public actions and the management of the costs, are fundamental questions of public management today (Fouchet & Turc 2005). The decision-making process is the starting point of the public action. There is no action without preliminary decision. We focus our study thus and clarify the positioning of this research on decision processes.

The idea of equity is very strong in these processes. In each mission, each action given in the fields of public management, the duality settles between search for performance and respect of standards of justice. The equality, ethics are pillars of the democracy. The public action holds account of the stakes of balance between the various social classes. This situation, required to ensure an electoral fidelity, or with an aim of a territorial conquest, or again, simply by preoccupation for efficiency, it is in general remains deeply related to the action of the public sphere. Thus, if these missions and these actions of public utility take part unconsciously in the respect of the fundamental principle of equality, the public decision, base of any action, cannot be extracted. For accounts and budgets, for human relations, or for the local management of territories, the question of the equality of citizen face to the public utility is always so strong in the debates. Each citizen is free to reach the public services, free to express itself before the institution, in the same manner as others... It is a value of democracy.

The redistributive intentions of the public power, in the idea of public utility, precisely have sense only because the individuals have this theoretical equality of treatment, and this freedom. The question of existence of a public utility does not arise any more from now on. Moreover, that of the level of its intervention in the management of this distributive mission is crucial. The distributive objectives represent the base of thought for social justice. With the research of an interindividual balance, the question of redistribution is essential. However, the current treatment of justice by the public administrative field is not really investigate today. We thus try, in this research, to determine these essential bonds between decision-making process and distributive stakes, for public management.

In this framework, the public actions are expressed through concept of equity. The organizations of the public sector cannot be allowed to avoid these considerations. We then defined here the framework of analysis of equity in the sphere public and proposed the capacity of the decision-making processes to deliver the components of equity. These decision-making processes integrate into the time the systems of comparison, the ratios with models and theories of social sciences, and make it possible to study the share devoted to the criteria of equity. Thus, the fact of concentrating on these processes enables us to consider an empirical investigation under the best conditions. Equity is seen here like a management strategy, for the organization and for public property. The services public, definite like not-rivals, not-exclusive and of general interest, and approaches of equity, from the point of view of access, use and moral, will constitute the framework of our empirical investigation. Then we will put forward the need for studying these phenomena within the framework of decision-making processes. We will thus try to locate there the possible interactions between these six principal items.

1 Public Management and Social Justice: Equity in decision processes

1-1 Framework of this research

The object of our research not being to discuss only the political arbitration of justice, our matter will turn to the precise stakes of decisions, from the point of view of the organization. These stakes are very strongly directed towards concepts of performance, all the more today within the framework of the new finance laws applied to the public structures. The piloting of this organizations is done by guaranteeing a maximum transparency of budgets allocated.

In this logic, actions of management and control of management became much heavier, but also more precise. The initial objective of reduction of public deficits thus caused a new handling of the steps of management and strategic decisions. To analyze these processes of changes, from the point of view of distributive justice, we will specify the actors of the decision. The decision-making in the public field is rarely the fact of one person only. The complexity of processes is thus increased because of the individual stakes and points of view, often divergent. The political tendencies, the techniques of management and the objectives, intervene on several levels for each actor concerned with the decision. It is thus a question, initially, of locating the various types of actors taking left with the process.

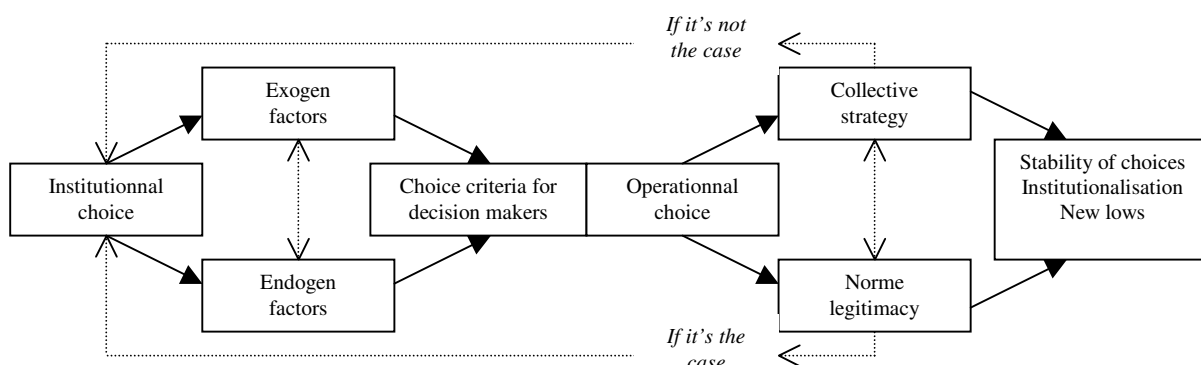


Figure 1 : Modelisation of a public decision process – Heikkila et Isett (2004)

Here, the theory of Simon (1983) proposing a limited rationality of the public decisions points out some paramount elements for the decision makers: first of all, the individuals in charge of the decision-making are all different, impregnated from beliefs and whose capacities differ (intrinsic capacities, psychological, links with direct environment, stakes of the capacity). Then, the decision-making itself cannot be done differently than produced by a reflected process, even in the case of an urgent decision-making. When the legal framework is very precise, the decision is there still the fruit of a process. Within this dynamic framework of decision, Turc (2003, p.122) shows, through a model of research from Eisenhardt (1989), that even in very dynamic situation the decision rises from an understandable process:

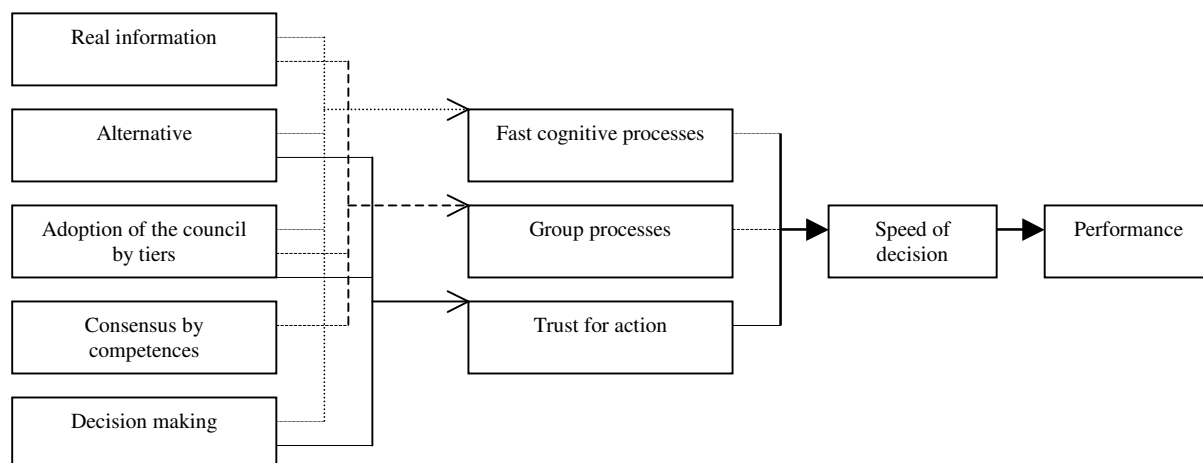


Figure 2 : Modelisation of a dynamic decision process – Eisenhardt (1989)

In his theory of limited rationality, Simon does not neglect either the role of the external actors, without possibility of reaching exhaustiveness of information, nor of their neutrality. Lastly, according to him, the future is not always foreseeable in the public sphere. Socio-organisational logic is thus prevalent. For this reason the rational models are replaced by more suitable models, making it possible to the decision makers to carry out the adequate choices in public environment. Thus, the incremental model, developed in its political aspect by Allison (1971), proposes a version of the decision-making processes based on the power relationship between the decision makers and the impact of these internal stakes on the final decision (electoral stakes, political ideologies, etc). The incrementalism will thus be done through the agreements and dissensions of fascinating parts. The model of the dustbin, as for him resulting from the theories from Cohen et al.. (1972), approaches the purely political decision-making processes, where the solutions seem to be the fruit of intuitions or bureaucratic stakes.

In this context, the effective decisions are made according to institutional interests and often reflect the politicking character of the decision makers. Lastly, according to Cyert and March (1963), certain decisions will act in the direction of an immobilization. This model of the status quo will lead the organization to avoid the change, by will of conservatism (Weick 1979) or by resistance to change, justified or not.

The whole of theories and models of decision which we studied here brings us more directly to position our framework of analysis. We will see in the empirical part of this research that the decision-making processes located on the various grounds of analysis move away appreciably from the generic models suggested in this chapter. To clarify these differences we take again the remarks of Bartoli (1997, p.230): "the traditional representation of the decision lets think that it can be caught in an instantaneous and rational way, on the basis of calculations or logical stages to cross. It is in some kinds the myth of the single truth which chairs this design, which assimilates the decision to the fruit of the think of a single actor in an unquestionable environment "; these traditional models are thus unsuited to the complexity of the public sector which we clarified in this chapter.

The public decision is thus not rational. It cannot use a single criterion and be deprived to consider the whole of the internal and external actors in his process. For as much, it is not unrealizable. And the fruit of the think carried out by the decision makers can at the same

time cover with management objectives and equity finalities. The requirements thus relate to the consideration of a total plurality (of the actors, interests, finalities) and the integration of the whole of these elements in a general step for the organization. The decision makers must thus become aware that the distribution of the services is done at the same time for each one and for everyone.

1-2 Comparisons and social values: Measures of equity in organisations

We know today that public performance is different from an effectiveness of actions and results. The interest of investigation in the field of public management is due, in particular, to the plurality of disciplines met there. Thus, as Santo and Verrier (1993) underline, economists, lawyers, managers, sociologists, historians, psychoanalysts, confronting their ideas, took an active part in the fast development of relatively recent theories and however essential in the management today. The idea of a best transparency in the management of costs thus appears as a normal thing here. The question of users and individualisms raises the often contradictory question of general interest.

The need of justice, and thus of equity, in society is determined by the injustices developed. It is a question of understanding at the same time the group relationships and the social conditions which develop requirement of justice. Harsanyi (1985) shows that collective interest is not the strict equality of a sum of individual interests. Thus, he recommends to respect criteria of neutrality, freedom, and equality. For him, the motivation of equity is not a question of individual interest; it does not act of a strength demonstration but rather of a social cohesion. Rawls (1971, p.18) had already expressed his desire to erase results of hazard, natural gifts, and social contingencies, on political and social powers.

The bond is extremely strong between motivation of equity and criteria of freedom and equality. Here, the individual interests must be erased in front of community interest. This equity must be managed and included in decision making. According to Rawls (1971), it is defined by primary goods. The list he gives, shows individual priorities in order to lead to a collective balance. The ethical designs of justice carried in particular by Selznick (1969) already led decision makers to become regulators, then giving to the public utility in general the capacity, and especially the absolute duty, to rebalance individual differences. The result is translated in terms of interindividual comparisons, offering thus intrinsically a great tool of decision and management.

Equity as a tool was largely carried by the work of Homans (1953) and Adams (1963) which give principal elements of a model. According to them, equity simply results in a ratio, taking into account the contributions of each one and their different outputs. This equity is not limited to this proportion. It must be regarded at the same time as an effective perception in the interrelationships and a system of comparison, but it is also the product of established social standards. Thus, it is always located between a teleological approach of action and its ontological original version (by the philosophers). In this context, we localise the decision maker in the heart of tensions generated by this opposition within public organisations. Schermerhorn and al. (1998, p.38) try to give a model on the theory suggested by Adams, illustrated below:

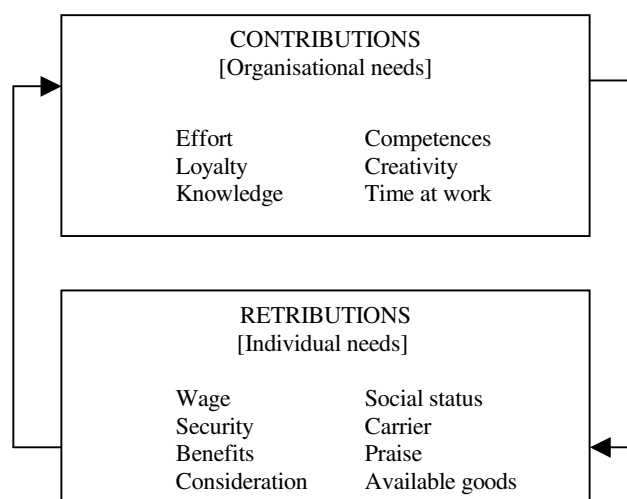


Figure 3 : Principal elements of interpersonal comparison processes, [Schermerhorn and al., 1998]

The level of remuneration is calculated with individual contributions and, once confronted with other individuals, determines the level of equity or inequity of the relation. This ratio can however be negative. Consequently, the subject perceives a feeling of under-payment or under-treatment and can reach a feeling of inequity and comparative frustration (Benraïss and Peretti, 2001). It is in this comparison that the individuals estimate themselves in situation of "under-equity" or of "sub-equity" (Peretti, 2004). Work of Thériault (1991) enables us to better determine these two concepts and their consequences; the first being related to a feeling of deconsideration and frustration, involving a dissatisfaction, and the second on a feeling of concern, insecurity and thus of dissatisfaction, compared to the referent.

In both cases, the individual in a psychological position of discomfort will seek to rebalance this comparative situation by reducing the latent feeling of inequity. He then will cause modifications of terms of the trade (Homans, 1974), or cognitive adaptations of the ratio "inputs/outputs". He will carry out a brutal and significant increase in his inputs or outputs according (Thériault, 1991) or will be able to leave the structure, or at least this situation of discomfort (Adams, 1964). Sometimes for the strongest individuals, they will seek to push the individual referent to modify his inputs or outputs by decreasing the intensity of the interaction or by stopping any collaboration. It will sometimes even manage to force him to leave his own situation (Cook and Hegtvedt, 1983). In any event, this individual in situation of comparison will seek to change point of reference, like had supposed Festinger (1954). Walster et al. (1973) propose to supplement the bases of the model described by Homans and Adams, adopting a formula which authorizes consideration of negative outputs, (i.e. sanctions). According to them, for an individual A and an individual B, "equitable" situation is described then as follows:

$$\frac{[OA - IA]}{|[IA]|} k_A = \frac{[OB - IB]}{|[IB]|} k_B$$

I : Incomes [or contributions perception]
O : Outcomes [or retributions perception]
k : [+ or -]

Figure 4 : Interpersonal comparisons ratio - Walster and al. [1973]

1-3 Equity as strategic element for decision-makers

Equity is deeply related to the distributive strategic stakes of the decision makers in the public organizations. Each decision-making process indeed carries inherent values at the same time to the psychology of the individuals who make it up and to the collective objective of the action considered. In this direction, the aforementioned process is connected with a strategic step. The Decision Support System of Henderson and Schilling (1985) is integrated throughout identifiable processes for the public organizations. This DSS can, according to authors, to make it possible to make more efficient decisions in connection with the request of the users. However their tool of analysis will pose a certain number of matters of application proving the idea that equity is not a value in oneself, nor a constant value. This research on equity shows, like Leventhal & al. (1973) and Tornblom (1977), that the rules of justice are modified in particular according to the nature of services (or goods) suggested.

In terms of strategy, these data are thus of primary importance since, knowing the effects of their changes, the decision makers will be able to anticipate or even sometimes to cause changes of attitude of the users with respect to their perception of equity. Sen (1995) puts forward the difficulties of decision-making in a context of social choice, in particular in a will of search for rationality of decisions. It is, according to him, difficult even impossible, to consider at the same time collective and individual and choices. He proposes at least to consider the listening of users in the decision-making processes.

Other elements can be integrated into a strategic step of justice. First of all, like showed it Greenberg (1978), the motivation of actors, like their implication in processes of equity, are related to natures of the remunerations which are allotted to them. Thus, these remunerations (in the terms of Adams in 1965) vary individual perceptions of equity, according to the effects of social image which they return and according to the material benefit that the users withdraw. In these circumstances, the most the service distributed is rare, the most individual will devote a feeling of equity. Then, according to studies undertaken by Selznick (1969), principle of justice changes in a radical way according to the number of decision makers on the same hierarchical level. Thus, when this number is raised, Selznick shows that justice is translated mainly through egalitarian rules. Conversely, when the number of identical statutes is weak, the rule of justice will be that of differences. The effect of network becomes very important here. We will integrate it in our empirical study.

We see which are the systems of a decision-making process based on principles of justice, with an aim of operating a strategic step for the organization or the institution. Since the studies carried out by Deutsch (1974 - 1985), which largely examined the field of the decision to determine the principles of justice, we know that the duality between the way of granting individual remunerations and the respect of collective dynamics in a group is the fundamental problem of the decision-making processes as regards justice. For Deutsch (1975), this duality is in fact the base of the decisional strategy. Thus, the equitable character of a decision varies with the objectives of actors. In this system, the rule of the proportionality is sometimes complied with, sometimes subjugated by egalitarian aspects. The dilemma is strategic here for the organization.

We show here the strategic aspect of the stakes of equity in the public decisions. These stakes are not considered as an obstacle for the organization in terms of performance. It makes it possible to the decision makers to compose, in a distributive logic, long-term action plans for the organization. However, we show here the limits of such a system based on differentiation

and definitively define the suitable framework of analysis in the public field. Thus, this consideration of equity, founded on the differential adequacy, must avoid encouraging the decision makers to choose communitarists or discriminating steps. The first difficulty for the decision makers is not thus so much to integrate these stakes of equity into the process, but not to confuse the application and the rule. In any case, the principle of equality should not be replaced by equity. These two concepts are complementary.

2 Qualitative data analysis

Our instrumentation is thus focused in situations where the knowledge of public decision maker is satisfactory, where the access to the resource perhaps a stake of equity, and where the political play is regarded as an entering data and not like the main data of the process. We thus extracted three criteria from the definition of public services to integrate them into the matrix of exploration (Miles and Huberman 1991, p.185). These criteria are two orders: ontological and teleological.

First of all, ontological, i.e. describing the nature of the things. In our context these criteria are referred to the public utility in oneself. Here the idea is that of the mission of public utility and not its application to the ground. Thus, we define it in the literature by the following criteria:

Non-Rivality : (Samuelson 1954, Musgrave 1969, Romer 1993). There is no setting in possible rivalry between individuals. This principle is defined by criteria of continuity. Public goods and public services are by definition inexhaustible, i.e. the use of the same service by an additional user is always possible.

Non-exclusivity : (Samuelson 1954, Brown and Jackson 1978, Van Den Doel et al.. 1993). It is here defined in direction of common good. This criterion is characterized in particular by its universality. The public goods and services belong to everyone. There is no individual selection users compared to others.

General Interest : (Cicéron [Long et al.. 2001], Rousseau [Mairat 1996], Spinoza [Francès 1994], Tocqueville [Keslassy 2000]). It is the interest of the community as a whole; in fact equal to or higher than the sum of the particular interests. In addition, these criteria are teleological, i.e. concerning the application of public services. For these, we focused on those which concerned the management of equity. Thus, at the end of the review of literature, we could highlight the general fields of action of the concept of equity in the managerial field of the public sphere.

Access : (Rawls 1985, Kellerhals et al.. 1998). It is the idea of an equitable selection of the distribution of goods and services. We determine the precise criteria of access to the public services.

Use : (Adams 1965, Kellerhals et al.. 1998). It is the use of the public services which the users can provide. It is the process of use itself, after distribution, which must be of an equitable nature.

Morals : (Aristote [Saint-Hilaire 1992], Spinoza [Appuhn 1965], Arnsperger et al. 2000). It is characterized by the beliefs and the shared values of each individual.

Within this framework, these two types of criteria (ontological and teleological) enable us to answer the two essential questions of our research: Does this decision respect the framework of a mission of public utility? (ontological) and, is there, in this decision, a will to produce or manage a service equitably? (teleological).

We insist here on the fact that the definitions of use and access are well turned towards the analysis of equity. There is thus no link to do with the non-rivalry of use and the non-exclusivity of access, defined by economists. We do here the distinction between these theoretical principles and the practical application of equity from the point of view of its access and its use.

The example of the emergency helps (firemen) shows us the overlap of these criteria. One will be able to speak about access initially, defining at the same time the fact that, for each new urgency, the service will not be saturated (non-rivalry), and will not be the subject either of a selection or a differentiation (non-exclusivity). Moreover, the teleological problems also clash: The effective management of helps will have to take place for all individuals (access) and in any circumstance (use).

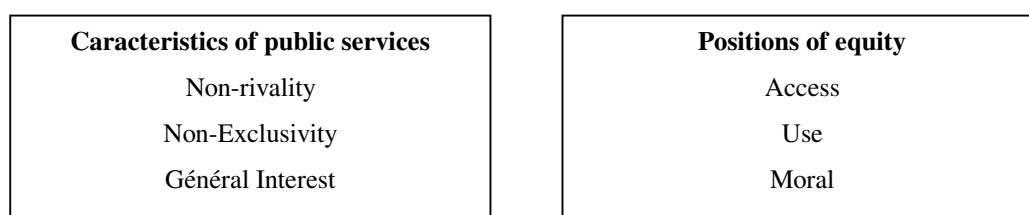


Figure 5 : The first items of the research

The whole of these criteria, resulting from the transverse literature in the field of equity and the public sector, leads us to consider these six major categories which we will apply thereafter to the various cases of investigation. We confirm our starting matter here, excluding from this research the continuation of a step purely positivist and deductive. Indeed, if these major categories result directly from the study of equity theories and public institutions, the emergent cases data of analysis constitute the there afférant whole of categories (Girod 1995). Thus, our approach falls under a primarily exploratory logic whose abduction (within the meaning of Koenig, 1993) holds an important place in the final process of categorization. This direct confrontation between the invested theory and grounds points out to us the step of perpetual revaluation of the recherche object according to the results.

The functional capacity of the case studies method concerning exploration is largely advantageous for several reasons according to Yin (1984): the possibility of collection of information close to reality, the interaction between the researcher and his object of analysis, the sum of information collected, the possibility of description of not easily discernible bonds of causality in a quantitative analysis. In addition, according to Eisenhardt (1989), the true added value of this method is at the level of its adaptability in particular when the context is difficult, or that the former contributions do not make it possible to acquire a sufficient knowledge. According to Yin (1994, p.13), this strategy is adopted if one wants to undertake "a study whose data sources are multiple and convergent". For Miles and Huberman (1994) finally, the wealth of information collected makes it possible to propose more easily of the new conceptualizations. These data interact in a flexible way and make it possible to maintain a bond between the ground and the definite conceptual framework. In these terms, the researcher will have to carry out perpetually returns on the definition of the research object, while bringing correct elements there, but while taking care however not to exceed the limit of his framework of analysis (Strauss and Corbin 1994, p.158).

3 CSDU Valensole : A french territorial case study

3-1 Framework of the case study

The law of July 13, 1992, supplemented by that of February 2 1995, concerning the new plans of waste disposal domestic and assimilated, is the base of the decision of establishment of departmental centers of storage and waste disposal. The decision of installation, for this type of center on the site of Valensole (French Department 04), is directly related to this law and the collective need which it represents. More precisely, this study is integrated in the project of sustainable development (PADD).

The diagram below shows the structure of the project decisional cell. It enables us to represent the relations between people, parts of project, parts of decision.

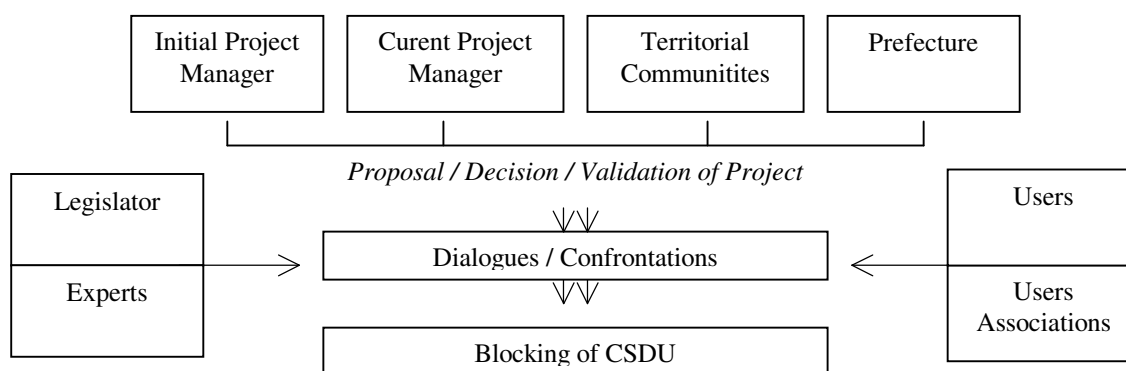


Figure 6: Structure of the decision-making process of the CSDU

3-2 Tensions, Decision process, Public performance: an equity trajectory in analyze by the phases of decision

A political project with mitigated reception

The idea to even build a CSDU on the plate of Valensole produces multiple effects and reactions. Often, the users and certain elected officials raise the question of adaptability of the territory and of coherence of the decision "really necessary was to choose Valensole? There was not an other solution? However had side of Manosque, a site been retained... why it was not selected? I'm wondering... ". The speech of this official of a city neighbor is not marginal. Many individuals share this point of view and this incomprehension.

The true beginning of the decision-making process takes effect at the time of effective acceptance of the project on the site of Valensole. The questions which arise first of all are "why" to have said yes to the project? and "why" to have chosen this protected zone? As of the first talks, with an assistant of the mayor and a city council man, the history of the decision appeared very clearly: the moment of decision-making to install this CSDU on the site of Valensole, subjected to the appreciation of the prefect, begins really in the early of 2002; after many contradictory feasibility studies carried out by several experts. It will be here PHASE 1 of the process we study.

PHASE 1	Non-Rivality	Non-Exclusivity	General Interest
Access	58	76	107
Use	60	44	152
Moral	135	94	140

Table 1 : Results of codings – Phase 1

This first decisional phase relates to the political will to establish the CSDU on this specific territory. Here, the results show a strong implication of the decision makers on the level of general interest. The interaction between morals, use and general interest are largely proposed in the answers. That can be explained in particular by the strong implication of the elected officials in the territorial stakes. This phase of decision already puts in opposition the local councillors and the project managers. They do not raise really a collective question. Indeed, their interest is not in the integration of a CSDU on a territory, nor the political stakes that involves; but rather the financial stake which is woven behind the project. Thus, these results of the first phase indicate a strong implication of decision makers in environmental and territorial questions, ... and electoral goals.

This first phase, clearly poses the debate between pragmatism and ethics. Here, the officials and managers of this project do not raise the question of opinion of users. Thus, according to them, ethics and morals of this CSDU establishment should not be called in question by the users. That is explained by the fact of not wanting to confront users with the decision-making since this one "would not be received by the taxpayers" according to a town official "the inhabitants would never have accepted that on their city if one had left them the choice... besides, one is elected to represent them, then it is not necessary they intervene afterwards". Ethics is not done to a positive bond. Here, it is not the considering of environmental factors which precedes...

Lastly, we will raise here that use is largely discussed, always in his interaction with general interest. This shows in fact the initial question for the decision makers: the need for a CSDU. Indeed, the law has then envisaged it in its texts for two years, and especially this zone is blocked in terms of waste treatments. The officials thus have the mission of finding a solution "waste does not disappear alone... it should well be managed " will tell a dissatisfied official.

The departmental plan of waste disposal (PDED), approved by the Prefecture and studied by the engineering and design department TRIVALOR between September 2001 and February 2002, was financed by the general council of French departement 04. This last, initially, had eliminated the option of Valensole for the establishment of this CSDU, being considered too permeable and unsuited to this type of installation. The creation of this center of technical hiding is thus on political and territorial stakes. In the same way to the department and city of Valensole, the elected officials clearly ask the question of coherence of such an installation on a protected site.

Thus, prefecture receives, throughout the year 2002, multiple requests for revision of this project. In particular, investigations and feasibility studies are carried out in order to determine the criteria of adaptability and the coherence of this CSDU creation on Valensole. The geological and hydrological investigations, which put in front of the weaknesses on the level of the ground and its geometry, justify concerns of officials. The latter propose in particular an instability of the grounds and a permeability, contradictory to the current

decision of hiding waste. Moreover, these expert reports make state of a badly known hydrology and thus of a possibility of risks additional and left "with the chance".

The decision-making process having resulted in choosing Valensole to install this type of equipment, is a real interrogation in terms of objectives and strategy, according to badly evaluated and badly controlled risks. However, the actors implied in the decision validate this choice and ratify a step which caused interrogations on behalf of experts. The decision makers thus do not hold obviously account of the reports and position in favour of the effective installation of this project.

Intransigence of the decision makers, in spite of experts recommendations... and without users opinion

The question of stake of such a decision, and implication in term of equity is thus dominating. Studies and expertises of the grounds and their sealing, put forward of many problems of stability and of hydrological movements, however officials will continue in their project, without considerate these multiple calls : “reports did not say that it was not possible to make the CSDU but there were risks, it is not the same thing " In mind of decision makers, these expert reports then gave enough arguments to start the establishment. This event constitutes a first "critical incident" [IC 1] (Flanagan 1954). Decision makers give here their agreement for the drilling and the effective establishment without considering the contradictory evaluations.

The decision makers are not all of the same opinion. The decisional cell knows then a period of doubts and hesitations. Most engaged officials for the project will speak about "... deliberated will to harm the development, even of the area...". The others, more moderate, raise the ambiguous question of coherence of this establishment on a protected zone : " accept this project and budgets, even if it means to disfigure the landscape, or to privileging tourist aspects...".

This PHASE 2 is a transition in the process, renewing the question of equity. Confrontations in town council will give place to the vote of the CSDU effective establishment to a narrow majority and only one abstention. This phase is thus defined by the deployment of project by the prefecture, in September 2002, and its effective installation, “as soon as possible”.

We perceive a multiplicity of stakes and interests in the matrix of the second phase (presented below). It was not really possible to distinguish an interaction here in a frank way. At least, the results of coding put forward three of nine regularities observed. Side of elected officials, it is mainly the question of morals which emerges. Its interaction with the general interest (variable always strongly presents in this case), and with the non-rivality, reflect these public actors concerns.

PHASE 2	Non-Rivality	Non-Exclusivity	General Interest
Access	49	55	59
Use	45	111	83
Moral	104	75	105

Table 2 : Results of codings – Phase 2

Indeed, according to them, greatest concern is to produce a tool for the community. It is here a question of a strong relation to the users and an expressed conscience of the consequences as regards management which this CSDU implies. Technicality and respect of environment are strong concerns for officials. On the other hand, managers have different concerns. According to them, it is the fact of producing a universal tool which precedes "the goal for us is to answer the collective request. One needs a CSDU on this zone, it is a fact. If one starts to look at each individual one will never succeed! " In this context, this private company has an unquestionable interest in the realization of this public CSDU, within of course a universal framework, but in considerations, probably, more pragmatic.

Project stopped by users intervention

The decision of establishment being actually ratified in spite of experts opinion, the action of users increase progressively, and their groups become increasingly virulent in particular against the town hall, which incarnates a relation of proximity. Users meet in March 2002 and produce an information memorandum, which will be duplicated and distributed to all citizens, in the largest geographical area. They inform media, and in particular local press which seizes the subject. Users will be received in prefecture where they will expose reasons for dissatisfaction. This meeting seems to have been the beginning of a new general context. Consequently, reactions become even stronger and users oppose more and more elements to the project. Sometimes accusing technical inconsistencies, political standpoint, territorial stakes ridiculed or officials blindness due to "their financial appetite" or their "electoralist and politician behavior ", according to the person in charge for the "association of valensolais". Users league literally against majority and go expressing their dissatisfaction on the site itself. This brutal revival of the users action, during these last months, causes a stop in the process. It is the second critical incident [IC 2].

This PHASE 3 gathers the whole of the successive and negative reactions in response to this prefectural agreement. Counter-evaluations are carried out, ordered by users, associations of citizens, or of other local actors concerned with this project. A consequent number of meetings, public debates, reports of investigations, were provided and were used as support for the taken steps in comparison with the law. The latter having then sliced for a revision of the project. Recourse to justifications where debates are in tensions opposing general interest of the community and moral equity becomes very frequent (161 occurrences). Officials and users confront themselves directly at the time of hearings, or by way of press, on the nonmoral character and the concept of public utility.

PHASE 3	Non-Rivality	Non-Exclusivity	General Interest
Access	129	87	78
Use	103	59	88
Moral	114	125	161

Table 3 : Results of codings – Phase 3

This project has the characteristic to produce consequent effects on environment, well-being of users, and regional planning. Waitings and obligations are different for each actor of this process. For managers, the objective is the construction, for officials, their policy and their

credibility is engaged, for users, their well-being is threatened; for institutions of the State (Diren, Drire), the environmental rules should not be ridiculed.

Users weren't questioned by the decision makers on the establishment of this CSDU. "We do not consider that does not relate to them, but for what it would have been used? " It is however very often on this point the users will return in the various meetings. For certain elected officials, commune of Valensole or close communities, it is also the central problem of the project failure "If one had implied the inhabitants earlier, that could have avoided this kind of problem... It is also their money after all ". Citizens have felt this lack of transparency and had the feeling to undergo the decisions relating to the CSDU. There is well a tension between general interest and moral equity of this decision which dominates this phase of project. Here, officials managers reconsidered this phase by expressing overall their regrets not to have tried to integrate the citizens in the step. Moreover, at this phase, problems of ethics, morals, appear clearly.

A territorial coalition blocks the decision-making process

The group of managers is clearly detached from officials. Indeed, it seems that the brutal introduction of users into the process does not cause the same effects for each actor of decision. If officials receive this new "variable" like "a situation to be managed...", the carriers of project, private field, raise the question of future of the CSDU. They badly control social compartments and do not manage to evaluate the impact of these dissatisfactions. They are nevertheless very anxious, regarding the financial mass implies in this project. They start to doubt the future of project. They don't know really which position to adopt, nor decision to take. With media, this situation becomes fuzzy. Users mobilize press and officials of the city neighbors.

Officials of other cities are convinced of the users arguments, in particular concerning traffics and environment destruction. Although the other cities of the department have to gain from establishment of CSDU on Valensole (they would profit from the structure without taking costs, nuisances, responsibilities), they are mobilized in their turn against the project. Users still, and public neighbouring, interfere; creating a conflict and especially ambiguous context between different parts of the final decision. This crisis becomes regional, the decision makers are in a true dead end. It is the third critical incident [IC 3] of this project. Taken between their duty of elected officials to maintain a peace social and a listening of the citizens, and the inexorable call of the financial and political aspect of such a project, the decision makers have well evil to agree on a policy. Sometimes for the quality of users life, sometimes for the zone development, officials change almost positioning with each council.

We enter thus PHASE 4 of the decision, its current stagnant position. It is the longest of the studied process. This situation is important in our analysis and causes our attention since it puts in prospect at the same time the current state for the decision and its stakes in terms of equity. In such situations where the territorial stakes are important, in particular in terms of public health, prefecture can slice arbitrarily. Thus, all these efforts and dialogues between users and elected officials can be finally subjected to the arbitration of prefecture. This last has responsibility, in this type of ambiguous situation, to slice to finish debates. In the case of this CSDU, prefecture has today the possibility of not following the opinion of expert in public structures (DIREN PACA for example) nor that of local councillors of the various institutions and leval authorities (department for example). He can thus take the decision to

grant, under its responsibility, authorizations of drilling. However, the situation is today at the dead point. The users committees, as well as the various local pressures, obviously obliges prefecture to choose abstention... "for the moment" will say a user.

The tension between general interest and moral equity is accentuated and its perimeter of implication widens, implying as well the commune of Valensole and its “neighbors”. One finds the crushing weight of this trajectory in the results of coding in discussions with 176 occurrences in the concerned category against 62 occurrences on average in other categories.

PHASE 4	Non-Rivality	Non-Exclusivity	General Interest
Access	71	30	96
Use	46	32	65
Moral	95	59	176

Table 4 : Results of codings – Phase 4

3-3 Which results on this equity trajectory ?

The various phases of this CSDU project propose a certain movement of equity in decision. We observe that tensions largely evolved from the first to the last phase (cf table below).

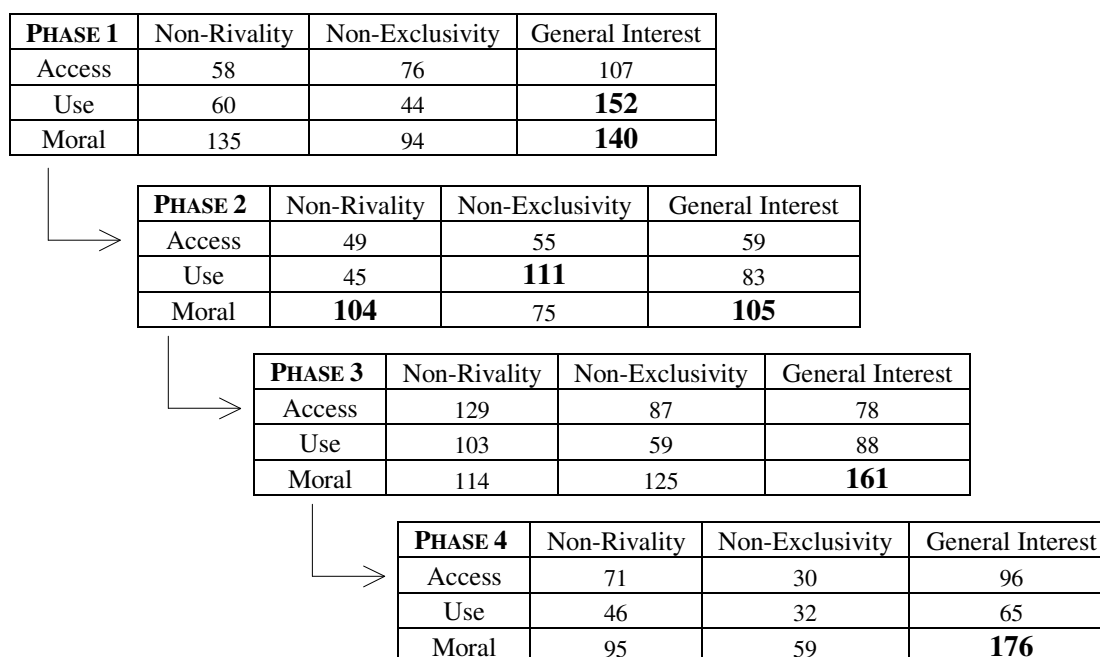


Figure 7 : Results of codings for the four phases

This diagram shows evolution of the process. General interest here is clearly highlighted. Indeed, throughout decision-making process the interaction [moral - general interest] is significant. This regularity follows nevertheless an instability of intensity. The simple

calculation of average below enables us to highlight the intensification of these trajectories starting from the second phase:

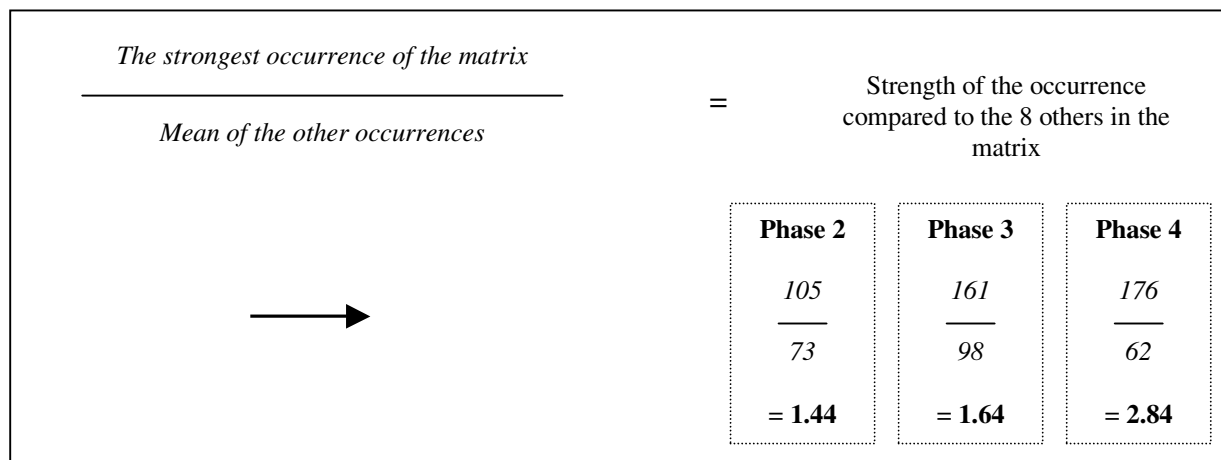


Figure 8 : Calculation of the trajectory intensity

CSDU Valensole in a dead end

The observed regularity of a tension [moral - general interest] becomes stronger as the decision progresses. That makes it possible to interpret the trajectory like a stagnation in the search of a objectivation and a standardization of equity to the detriment of its pragmatic dimensions. Indeed, the whole of interviews indicates in a recurring way an interest carried for morals of decision and with the inscription of its deployment in the definition even of public utility (ontological dimension). However, these remarks engage obviously only officials and do not allow in no case managers of project to setup these precepts. In this frame, decision enters a cycle of self-justification, for the wellbeing of community. Absence of true reflexion on its installation, which irritates users and officials of the close communities, shows focusing on the ideology of public service, and a pragmatic absence of engagement. For Folger and Cropanzano (1998), the acceptance of a decision is related to the way in which the decision makers will communicate the fruit of their process near users. Here, the communication is not efficient...

We thus moves away gradually from a step of management. The stagnation in morals and general interest then does not produce any positive effect on a dynamics of action. Thus, one can conclude that, when the trajectory moves away from an antithetic management of equity, its control suffers. The contradictory tensions of equity were destroyed here while focusing on ethics of public action. In this frame, these pressures useful for equity management cannot be isolated from public decision, if one wants to preserve control of this process.

	Non-Rivality	Non-Exclusivity	General Interest
Access			
Use		2	1
Moral	2		1 - 2 - 3 - 4

	Non-Rivality	Non-Exclusivity	General Interest
Access			
Use		●	●
Moral		●	●

Figure 9 : Equity Trajectory

Moreover, this stagnation seems auto-enforce owing to the fact that decision makers have recourse to a new ideology of action. This result corroborates a proposal of Starbuck (1982) who describes organizations which invent new ideologies to previously justify to have acts starting from ideologies. It is probable that ideological climbing supported this trajectory at the point to forget obvious pragmatic considerations. The decision makers, being taken refuge in ideological justification, find, at the end, a situation of double constraint (moral and general interest) which they generated. The decision-making process becomes independent. This trajectory is thus not deliberated, but quite emergent. The decision makers didn't know to put in connection the idea of a public utility of general interest, the moral of its deployment, and the management of its cohesion in terms of technical feasibility and relation to users. This last, by exerting its capacity and its pressure on politicians, knew, in their turn, involve the decision in a dead end.

This one could thus have been avoided if users and experts could have been heard before... within the framework precisely of moral action and general interest. Here, according to (Chavas and Coggins 2003), one should not sacrifice ethics to personal profit or effectiveness. In the following figure, in order to clarify our remarks, we carried out an enlargement of the various phases in the process. Same manner that for initial matrix, we carried out a calculation of standard deviations to the average to determine the most obvious interactions in the trajectory.

PHASES OF DÉCISION		Non Rivality				Non Exclusivity				General Interest					
		Mutability	Continuity	Free service	Simultanéité	Collective service	Diversity	Principle of repartition	Universality	Responsability	Social cohesion	Performance	Feeling of social justice	Control	
Access	Norm														
	Procedure														
	Will / Attraction														
	Egality														
	Liberty														
Use	Distributivity														
	Ask														
	Differential adequacy														
	Utility								2			1			
	Efficacy														
Moral	Citizenship														
	Solidarity														
	Ethic			2	2							3	1 2	4	2
	Justice														
	Equilibre			2											

Figure 10 : Presentation of the phases in the first subcategories matrix

These tensions lead us to specify the corresponding equity trajectory. The emergence of this trajectory is due to external actors of decision and, in fact, negative management of the process by persons in charge. The tuggings between officials and managers did this situation failed. The decision began while focusing on political elements, then relegating to the last plan management concerns. Thus this trajectory is not only dictated by the field reality, but it is also very confused in its management. The dichotomic tensions which constitute the essence of design of distributive equity are approached in an anarchistic way, with liking of events. This failure is thus closely related to the incapacity of the decision makers to harmonize and manage their own decision.

These results show that the general problems of case CSDU are around three large axes of reflexion: Environmental questions, political comporments, and management processes. Indeed, it is not only a question of establishing a sorting office. This project focus in the same time on political and electoral pressures. These three elements, policy, multi-actors, and environmental, constitute the general base of thinking which comes out from these results. It should then be understood here that the establishment of a CSDU on a protected zone does not ask one only type of question.

In conclusion,

Equity is defined by a whole of double constraints which are located here. The manager is confronted there in his exercise. The analysis of equity cannot be done on a purely rational mode. The nature even of public utility does not allow it. We thus propose to reject the mono-criterion approach of normative schools of justice. The manager cannot do without control of these tensions. The simple measurement of a level of equity does not allow its control. It will thus be necessary to consider equity in all the complexity of its confrontations, and to integrate these last in the management of organizations.

Equity is not a constraint but an object of management. It is what we could show through this case study. Tensions we studied exist in decision-making processes into organizations. However, that does not deteriorate possibilities of management into structures. The management of public organizations is not mono-criterion; with single objective. Here, the divergent purposes cohabit to answer public utility mission of organizations. It is what we show by the means of this illustration, by equity trajectories. Thus we answered the question of the equity concept definition in organization. It cannot be single and its management passes by a study of decisional phases. The trajectory thus exists indeed. However, can we manage these trajectories?

La vision des trajectoires s'oppose à une version purement normative ou pragmatique de l'équité. Elle confronte les décisions théoriques à la réalité de terrain. Ces trajectoires proposent donc approche dynamique de l'équité. On n'étudie alors plus le concept en lui-même et ses caractéristiques, mais plutôt les transitions d'une phase à l'autre. On ne pourra pas parler de gestion de l'équité si sa trajectoire n'est pas maîtrisée d'un bout à l'autre de la décision. L'équité est toujours présente dans les rapports à la décision publique, encore faut-il ne pas la subir pour qu'elle participe au succès. Nous l'avons compris, il ne suffira pas, pour cela, de se signaler « équitable ». L'équité est un savant mélange entre ontologie et téléologie... elle ne se proclame pas, ni ne se subit : elle se gère.

The trajectories vision is opposed to purely normative or pragmatic version of equity. It confronts theoretical decisions with the reality of ground. These trajectories thus propose a dynamic approach of equity. One then does not study any more the concept and its characteristics, but rather the transitions from one phase to the other. One will not be able to speak about management of equity if its trajectory is not controlled from one end to another of the decision. Equity is always present in public decisions, still should it not be undergone so that it succeed. We understood it, it will not be enough to announce "equitable". Equity is a scientist mixes between ontology and teleology... it is not proclaimed, nor undergone: it has to be managed.

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