

# The construction of the category of unemployed young people with no qualifications in Switzerland: A looping effect?

---

**Eva Nada, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland**

**Key words:** Activations policies - young unemployed - looping effect - level of “unqualification” - ethnographic research

## Abstract

This paper explores the process of the rationalization of activation policies towards unemployed young people in Switzerland. It aims at analysing the mechanism of normalization for the criterion of “unqualified” among unemployed young people with no qualifications. Empirical observations show the growing difficulties for personal counsellors to categorize an increasingly heterogeneous population of young unemployed people. These difficulties crystallize themselves with the definition of the criterion “unqualified”, thereby ushering in a new activation measure that appraises the school- and psychological aptitudes of young people. This measure partially determines the eligibility of the unemployed young people and participates in producing a norm of the “right measure” in relation to the level of “unqualification”. The concept of “looping effect” developed by Ian Hacking was used to analyse the mechanism of transformation of the category and its effects on the identities of both young people and the front line agents. The paper discusses how to apply a philosophical concept to the sociology of categorization in order to deepen our understanding of activation policies within the changing scene of European social policy.

## 1. Transformation of the unemployment category in an active welfare state

The concern for youth unemployment is considered to be a relatively new public issue. This concern emerged in the public sphere during the 1970s in Europe, and by the beginning of the 1990s in Switzerland. Defining the unemployment of youth as a new issue implies not only the existence of a distinction between people who are employed and people who are unemployed, but also within the unemployed people themselves. In other words, the creation of a new category within the unemployment policy partly underlies the new problem of youth unemployment.

In a context in which social welfare is profoundly questioned, the category of unemployment endures as a process of deconstruction that in some way is parallel to the process involved in its invention (Gautié, 2002). The definition of the unemployment category was derived from a non-linear process of objectivization, in which the question of sorting out the good from the bad unemployed person is particularly accurate (Salais, Baverez, & Reynaud, 1986; Topalov, 1994). The convergence of the economic, social and juridical points of view made it possible to go beyond individual characteristics to define the situation of unemployment. In this process, statistics played a significant role by making it possible to make sense of a collective situation (Gautié, 2002). The process of construction of the category of unemployment leads to the objectivization of the situation of unemployment and to treat it as an involuntary exclusion of economic repartition. In other words, it was the recognition that unemployment was irreducible to individual characteristics, and social rights were therefore granted on the basis of status and category, thus implying a protection against a risk seen as being collective (Dubois, 2009a). Since the 1970s, changes such as a flexibilization of the labour market, a crisis in social welfare and a destabilization of the family are expressed, among others, by a weakening of the unemployment category (Gautié, 2002).

Within these changes, the limits of the traditional category of unemployment were revealed, as the category of an unemployed person was defined as the male breadwinner who was financially responsible for the entire family. Family members were then protected through the integration of the father and/or husband in the labour market, but were also dependent on him. Social security was primarily constructed on a traditional division of roles in the family (Gautié, 2002; Weber, 2007). With social and economic transformations, in particular the increase of youth unemployment and the questioning of social welfare, this classical definition

of unemployment is challenged. On a public policy level, the deconstruction of the border and the content of the category of unemployment is characterized by the multiplication of the categories of intervention on a legal and administrative level (Gautié, 2002).

This paper explores the transformation of the category of unemployed and unqualified young people by studying the implementation of a new activation measure within the Swiss unemployment insurance system. The activation measure, which is called *Evascol*, is aimed at identifying the level to which young people are unqualified in order to steer them into the best economic sectors for their professional integration. The aim of this paper is to study the mechanism underlying the transformation of the category of unemployed young people by understanding the various elements interacting in this process.

## **2. Theoretical and conceptual considerations about categorization: “A looping effect”**

The multiplication and the de-objectivization of the categories of intervention are at the crossroads of the multiple transformations of the welfare state taking place since the 1970s. The ever-increasing logics of rationalization in social policies manifest themselves by the reinforcement of the control of abuse and the promotion of professional reintegration (Dubois, 2007; Ferreira & Frauenfelder, 2007; Perret, 2007). The adoption of these principles leads to a responsabilization of the beneficiaries as well as to an individualization of the social intervention (Dubois, 2009a). Due to an increase in the control of the costs, the role of the street-level bureaucracy has become crucial in categorizing the beneficiaries for the definition of their eligibility for social rights (Buffat, 2010; Dubois, 2009a; 2010; Lipsky, 2010). The individualization of social intervention implies that the process of categorization is less and less limited to the recognition of an institutional status defined by legal and administrative criteria, and one that increasingly involves an individual evaluation of the personal situation of the beneficiaries.

By virtue of its increasing importance in activation policies, numerous studies have explored the category-making at the street level. On the one hand, some studies explored the practices of categorizations at the street level as coping strategies in order to make their work manageable, in addition to being a way of gaining satisfaction in their work (Lipsky, 2010). In this perspective, many studies have therefore studied the important role that moral and personal criteria play in the categorization and consequences for the beneficiaries (Buffat, 2010; Demazière, 1992; Valli, Martin, & Hertz, 2002). On the other hand, many studies have principally focused on the content of the categorization inherent to the context and logic of activation policies. Analysing the categorization at the street level helped to shed some light on the policy and its content, with what Yanow calls *policy meaning* (Yanow, 2003). According to Dubois (2009b), the contradictions and dilemmas of the street-level bureaucrats are inherent to the current political and socio-economic treatment of the beneficiaries of social policies. Category-making for the street-level bureaucrat is not only a way of coping, but also a way of concretely implementing the policy and legitimizing the discourse (Dubois, 2009a).

While an extensive amount of literature examines the categorization of the street level and the increasing role of the frontline agents, we know little about the place taken by expert and scientific knowledge in category-making. Since statistics played an important role in the objectivization of the situation of unemployment by defining it as a collective risk (Gautié, 2002), it is crucial to explore what type of expert and scientific knowledge underscores the practical logic of the categorization-making of the frontline agents in activation policies. The present contribution analyses category-making as an interaction between different scales and levels of analysis, including the contribution of scientific- and expert knowledge. It aims to go beyond the opposition between the macro- and micro level and the distinction between bottom-up and top-down mechanisms. Following studies analysing the content of the categories and its meaning beyond the official categories and practical logics they implied, the present paper analyses the production of the categories in the concrete and practical work where policies are enforced in everyday life (Dubois, 2009a).

To study the mechanism of making up categories, we draw upon the concept of the *looping effect* of Ian Hacking, (Hacking , 2004a, 2004b; Hacking, 1999). According to Hacking, “the making up of people” is a *dynamical nominalism* composed of two aspects. Firstly, there is a diversity of interactions between people and the ways they are classified. Secondly, the creation of a new classification or the modification of the criterion for the application of an old classification may have effects on the people being classified, who can take on or postpone the attributes that characterized the new class. Additionally, new possibilities of choice or living emerge from the creation of a new category. Hacking elaborates on the concept of the *looping effect* of human classification as describing the process of interactions between the classifications and the people they pertain to, and in return, the transformations we are making to the classification as a result of being classified. If Hacking emphasizes the fact that there are no two identical ways to classify people, it does not imply that an analysis framework constituting the interactions is not possible. Four elements characterize these interactions: (1) Classifications and criteria of application; (2) People and behaviours that are classified; (3) Institutions; (4) Knowledge. Within a perspective of the philosophy of sciences, he is interested in “human kind” in the sense of classifications that are made by human sciences.

*Human kind refer therefore to a kind we would like to have an exact systematic, general and accurate knowledge; classifications that could be used to formulate general truths about people. We want laws precise enough to predict what individuals will do or how they will respond to attempts to help them or to modify their behaviour.* (Hacking, 1995)

For the present study, the particular interest in Hacking’s theory is to consider the different levels of the making up of people as well as their imbrication, including scientific and expert knowledge. Hacking’s concept of the looping effect can reveal the strong links between these levels and how they influence the content of categories, the ways of classifying people and how to take charge of them . The concept of the looping effect makes it possible to understand the mechanism underlying the process of transformation that takes part at different levels, as well the imbrication of these levels.

Based on these considerations, the main topics addressed in this paper are to better understand the way the category of unemployed and unqualified people is redefined and to help identify the effects on the nature of the category, on the social intervention and on the logic of activation policies.

### **3. Methodological approach: An ethnography of the “making of” the category of unemployed and unqualified young people**

The present research analyses the imbrication of the different levels and the different agents taking part in the implementation of the activation measure entitled, Evascol, and its consequences for the transformation of the category of unemployed and unqualified young people. The aim of this measure, which was implemented in 2008, is to evaluate the school knowledge and intellectual aptitudes of the unemployed and unqualified young people.

An ethnographic research study was conducted between October 2010 and May 2011 among the three institutional sites where the unemployed and unqualified young people pass through: the unemployment office, Evascol and the semester of motivation.

In Switzerland, unemployment insurance became compulsory for all workers after a popular vote in 1976, and was translated into the Federal Law on Unemployment Insurance and Insolvency in 1984. Since then, every worker, from 15 (the age when individuals are freed from compulsory school) to 64 years old (the age of retirement) has been covered by financial compensation for losses due to unemployment, but also for other situations such as a significant reduction in working hours or when a worker is released from the period of contribution under specific conditions (due to training, divorce or separation, illness or imprisonment). The unemployment insurance system was radically modified in 1995 when

Switzerland was exposed to an economic crisis and to unemployment rate increases for all categories of the population (from 1.1% in January 1991 to 4.5% in January 1993). This reform encompassed the implementation of activation policies in Switzerland (Maeder and Nadai, 2008; Buffat, 2010; Perret & al., 2007), with the changes in the law being motivated overall by the will to fight against abuses and to help promote professional reintegration (Moachon, 2007; Perret et al., 2007). During the second revision of the law in 1995, the semester of motivation was implemented as an insertion measure dedicated to unqualified and unemployed young people. In this sense, the policy of fight against the unemployment of youth is included in the logic of activation policies. Evascol was then implemented in 2008. Over a period of one month, young people attend an information session, pass three exams and have three face-to-face interactions with psychologist-guidance counsellors, one before the exams and two afterwards.

Three types of research methods were used to explore the mechanism of the *looping effect*. The first method was a participant observation in the activation measure Evascol, with weekly observations being carried out over a three-month period through participation in the everyday life of the institution. More precisely, I attended six information sessions and three exams sessions, although most of my observations were made during the face-to-face interactions between the young people and the psychologist-guidance counsellors. I followed up on 32 young people, out of whom 10 were fully processed meaning during the three face-to-face interaction. For 20 of them, at least two of their three meetings were observed, and I also paid attention to having a representativeness of the five psychologist-guidance counsellors working with Evascol.

A model of observation was designed in three parts: (1) the proceedings of the exchange, in addition to the attitudes and practices of both (2) the young beneficiaries and (3) the psychologist-guidance counsellors. For the latter, I paid specific attention to their professional practices in terms of how they presented and justified the process of evaluation, as well as the results and their report with particular attention to delicate situations. Both their degree of investment according to the situations and their different reactions expressed toward young people were also particularly observed. After the interview, I often asked about their impression of the young person and how they considered their possibility for professional integration. Regarding the young beneficiaries, I paid specific attention to their reactions and behaviour during each interview and in comparison with the different phases of the Evascol intervention. I was looking to see if they accepted or questioned the requirement to pass exams and their reactions toward the questions of the psychologist-guidance counsellors. I also focused on their attitudes and reactions when they received their results at the three different exams, as well as the recommendations made by the psychologist-guidance counsellors in the reports handed to the placement counsellors. To establish their background, the first face-to-face interaction focused on questions about the personal life of the young. In some cases, the personal files of the young beneficiaries were also used as a source of information. When the psychologist-guidance counsellors were leaving their office to make some photocopies or grab some files, I exchanged a few words with the young people about what they thought about Evascol.

Classical concerns in ethnography studies are the possible effects from the presence of the researcher in the field. Even if I was not mandated by the institution and I was clearly identified as an academic researcher, the point that appeared as being more problematic was not my presence during the interactions, but my interest in the files of the young people and the various written documents. Records reveal the tensions and power relations and the leaving of a material trace of these aspects (Coton & Proteau, 2012). Except for the element discussed below, my presence did not seem to affect their practices with the young people. Informal interviews were also conducted about the young people we met, with explanations given about the different elements and how they interpreted the chances of success or failure for the young people.

The psychologist-guidance counsellors systematically introduce myself as a student carrying out a work on unemployed young people and asking them if they would not mind if

I assisted at the meeting. Nobody had a problem with my presence, though being installed at the same table with the young people and the psychologist-guidance counsellors probably increased the feeling among the young people of being dominated since they were facing not one representative of an institution, but two. Indeed, even if I was introduced as a student, I was nonetheless part of an institutional setting, and one from which they were very often stigmatized.

The second research method was comprised of semi-structured interviews with the five psychologist-guidance counsellors working with Evascol and the Evascol's responsible in the Office of vocational guidance who, among other apparatus, ran Evascol and participated in its implementation. I also conducted a semi-structured interview with the person responsible for the measures of insertion at the unemployment office, and who also participated in the implementation of Evascol, as well as an interview with one of the founders of the semester of motivation. In addition to the semi-structured interviews with different agents, four individual interviews and informal talks with young people I met through Evascol were carried out, all of which took place after the last meeting after the restitution of the final report.

I collected different official documents concerning Evascol, its organization, its functioning and its process of implementation, and I also had access to the personal files of the young people I followed during the process with Evascol, including a copy of their French, mathematics and aptitude tests. Lastly, I also had many official reports and evaluations concerning the measures of insertion for the unemployed young people.

#### **4. The “making up” of the category of unemployed and unqualified young beneficiaries: “A looping effect”**

This part is divided into three analytical steps that correspond to the three phases of the *looping effect* identified by Ian Hacking (Hacking, 2004a; Hacking, 1995; 1999). First, I will study the difficulties and uncertainties facing the frontline agents when the category of unemployed and unqualified young beneficiaries interacts with the people attempting to enter this classification. I will describe representations of the difficulties, the types of solutions proposed to overcome them and the specific elements leading to the implementation of the new activation measure, Evascol. Second, as a result of the uncertainties of the process of categorization, I analysed the normalization of the criterion for the unqualified that resulted from the implementation of Evascol as a policy answer to overcome the uncertainties and difficulties of categorization. Third, I will question the effects from the nature of social intervention on the frontline agents charged with implementing Evascol and its potential effect on unqualified and unemployed young people classified through Evascol.

##### ***a. Interaction between the classification and the young people classified: Institutional and social conditions for placement counsellors in relation to the difficulties in classifying young people***

The process of eligibility for young unemployed and unqualified people is primarily implemented at the Regional Placement Office (RPO). After the administrative registration, which is the first step for transforming an individual in the administrative category unemployed, the young person will be directed towards an RPO and placement counsellors, whose job it is, is to follow up the category of unemployed and unqualified young beneficiaries. In the canton studied, there are eight placement counsellors who are specifically trained to take charge of this population. Their role as defined by law is to determine the employability of the unemployed and to suggest the most adequate measures of insertion in favour of professional integration. Placement counsellors must evaluate the chances for the administrative category of young unemployed and unqualified people of finding an apprenticeship position within the constraints laid down by the law. In other words, the placement counsellors have to identify the elements that could prevent the young people from succeeding in their process of professional insertion with



regard to administrative and legal constraints. Indeed, the legal time limit at their disposal is a maximum of one year; it is therefore considered that there must be a “synchronicity”<sup>1</sup> between the present needs of the young people and the appropriateness of their needs with the offer of the insurance law. As the person responsible for the measure of insertion at the unemployment office put it, “*We need to select the young people who really want to enter a process of professional insertion, rather than the young people who corresponds to a type of profile.*”<sup>2</sup> In his words, both formal and administrative categories are less relevant and not adequate enough to determine the eligibility of the potential beneficiary mainly because, “*We really have a law which is normative regarding the time and the prerequisites, which are very clear.*”<sup>3</sup> The discourse of the responsible person is totally in line with the logic of activation policies, thereby implying an increase in control, as well as a case-to-case intervention. Therefore, administrative categories are not accurate enough to ensure oneself of the eligibility of a beneficiary. In this context, a specific importance is put on a mastery of French and the scholarly level as the main criteria to be identified by the placement counsellors, as these two factors are considered to be “*really the most important point in our culture*”.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the command of French and scholarly knowledge are identified as the two most important dimensions of evaluation in determining to which extent the young people can receive a measure of insertion proposed by the insurance law.

Placement counsellors have the responsibility to make a first diagnosis of the young person’s situation and to make a “good decision” regarding young people within the legal and institutional constraints. In the logic of activation policies, they have more power to make the decision, they are also under more pressure, as they are more responsabilized, while also being confronted with a more complicated situation and they are also under pressure to be more efficient with less means (Dubois, 2009a; Evans & Harris, 2004; Morgen, 2001). The administrative injunctions and constraints underlined by the responsible person of the measures of integration at the unemployment office have a bearing on the enunciation of the difficulties encountered by the placement counsellors in categorizing the young people, “*If they are asked to make a diagnosis on the scholarly aspects and they don’t have the means to make decisions, it’s a bit awkward.*”<sup>5</sup> These uncertainties and difficulties can be interpreted as a gap between what they are asked to accomplish and the means at their disposal. The administrative and legal constraints weigh on the difficulties and uncertainties in the categorization, but they also must be articulated in relation to the transformation of the population encounter by the placement counsellors.

The transformation of the representation of the population who are unqualified, unemployed and young puts forth scholarly aptitude and a command of the national language as the main issues in the process of the eligibility of young beneficiaries. Indeed, when the category of young was created in the second revision of the law in 1995, scholarly knowledge was not an issue at all. The primary concern at the time was the meeting of some rationalization interests and keeping up the motivation of the young unemployed who were just coming out of compulsory school. For the social workers at that time,<sup>6</sup> the loss of motivation resulting from being unemployed at this age was evaluated as the main risk and was to be prevented by implementing a measure that offered activities very close to what the young people would be doing in their first year of apprenticeship. The meeting of the concern of some social workers and the rationalization interest of the policy maker at the federal level gave birth to

<sup>1</sup> Indigenous term used by the responsible person for the measures of integration at the unemployment office.

<sup>2</sup> interview of the responsible person for the measure of integration at the unemployment office, December 2, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> interview of the responsible person for the measure of integration at the unemployment office, December 2, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> interview of the responsible person for the measure of integration at the unemployment office, December 2, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> interview of the responsible person for the measure of integration at the unemployment office, December 2, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with one of the founder of the motivation semester, 26 September 2012

the semester of motivation, which was the apparatus implemented in the law at the time of the second revision in 1995. Today, the interpretation and representation of the risks that the young people were exposed to and handled have changed. This is not to say that the interpretation of the risk through the lack of motivation has disappeared, but other risks also play a role in the unsuccessful professional integration of the young people. Looking at the way the placement counsellors represent and interpret the situation of the young unemployed and unqualified provides insight into the increasing importance given to both the scholarly level and the command of the national language.

The placement counsellors are confronting a diversity of situations for young persons for which they are having trouble in evaluating their employability in terms of their chances of succeeding at finding an apprenticeship by the end of the support period proposed by the unemployment insurance.<sup>7</sup> They no longer take for granted the success of the semester of motivation in finding a position of apprenticeship, as there has been a high rate of failure. Many young people who followed the semester of motivation found an apprenticeship, but failed by the end of the first year either because they failed the exams or quit early. Some of them registered again at the unemployment insurance office, which in turn questioned the personal counsellor about the way the young unemployed without qualifications were orientated and the relevance of indistinctly supporting the young people. On top of that, they noticed that they took charge of an increasing number of young people who had been out of any institutional environment for two or three years before registering at the unemployment insurance office. In the indigenous language, it would be said that these young people were “at odds” meaning it is difficult to trace exactly what they had been doing since they finished compulsory school. They also encountered difficulties during their scholarly curriculum, hence reinforcing the representation that they were “at odds”. As a result, scholarly certification and marks seem out of date for the placement counsellor, not accurate enough to be trusted and unable to provide a current image of the level of knowledge of some of the young beneficiaries. Considering this interpretation of the young people’s situation, it is difficult to know whether they will be able to compensate for this double gap of scholarly difficulties and dropping out of institutional settings after compulsory school and still succeed in their professional integration. This interpretation of the situation helps to construct a representation of this population at the border of the category of the unemployed and unqualified young people, for whom the tools and instruments at the disposal of the placement counsellors are not accurate enough to evaluate their degree of employability and the possibility of compensating for their shortcomings at the time at disposal.

In response to the charge that they have difficulties in evaluating young people in a context where the institutional and administrative pressure is strong, the placement counsellors argued that they lacked the tools and instruments to decide which young persons should benefit from the support of unemployment insurance. They expressed their desire to have an instrument capable of helping them to determine the degree to which the young unemployed beneficiaries are unqualified in order to implement the law as well as to perform the constraints underlining it, such as control and professional reintegration.

Uncertainty and difficulties are inherent in the practices of frontline agents in activation policies; even more, they established the necessity of the role of the placement counsellor. Indeed, uncertainty and the strength of the institution are necessary to each other (Dubois, 2009b). At a certain point, uncertainty and difficulties became unbearable for the placement counsellor when the gap between the category and the population is too wide to implement the law. These difficulties and uncertainties are the result of the constraints and demands weighing on the placement counsellors, and in this case, coping strategies as well as “triaging” techniques do not allow the counsellors to overcome them (Lipsky, 2010). On the contrary, the

<sup>7</sup> The higher constraint is the time of the support offered by the unemployment insurance. For the category of young unemployed and unqualified it is 12 months. Normally a motivation semester lasts 6 months and can be extended to 12 months under specific conditions.



difficulties and uncertainties led to a demand for instruments of control provided by an expert's knowledge of scholarly evaluation. On one hand, the demand of the placement counsellors is a way of dividing their responsibility in the process of eligibility and reducing the pressure of the strength of the institution. On the other hand their demand meets the logic of activation policies, by helping them to have a better knowledge of the beneficiaries in order to implement a case-to-case social intervention, as well as to perform a better control. In this sense, they did not question the paradoxes underlying both the control and definition of their professional role. In return, their demand was taken seriously by the administrative level. The person in charge of the integration measures of the office of unemployment defended the project on an upper administrative level. The project found a great welcome and it was asked that not only the young people qualified as "at odds", but that all the young unqualified people registering at the unemployment insurance have to be tested on their scholarly level. The difficulties and uncertainties in the categorization of the unemployed and unqualified young people led to the 2008 implementation of the Evascol measure, an acronym for the scholar evaluation. The evaluation must therefore help the placement counsellors to make a decision about the eligibility of the unqualified and unemployed young beneficiaries.

### ***b. Implementation of Evascol: The normalization of the "unqualified" criteria***

As a consequence of the lack of instruments to evaluate the scholarly knowledge, and the difficulties and uncertainties emerging for the placement counsellors, the process of identifying an applicant's scholar level to help determine his/her eligibility is then primarily taken by use of Evascol. Whereas the placement counsellors get to keep the role of final decision maker, they can take it based on an expert report.

Evascol has existed since September 2008, and as a service provider for unemployment insurance its aim is, *"offering to the young people without professional training, and who are unemployed, a tool of evaluation of their scholarly knowledge and their aptitudes. It is about determining if young people, who are often at odds, are ready to undertake a qualification process and have the capacity to do so. The aim is to put them back on a vocational process and to improve their employability"* (*Information orientation Jeunes sans formation*). Psychologist-guidance counsellors carry on the work of evaluation through different steps and with various instruments, including scholar evaluations and aptitudes tests developed by psychological science, which are traditionally used in vocational guidance. The measure lasts one month and is organized by individual interviews and collective test sessions.

If the entire measure is organized around the evaluation of the scholar level and intellectual aptitude, the core of it is to link the results with the professional project of the young unemployed, and as the responsible person at the office of vocational guidance explains it: *"We always make the evaluation in relation to a project, nevertheless. The evaluation is standardized, it is three aspects: the French exam, the mathematics exam and the aptitude tests. These tests are the same for everybody, but we are going to balance the results, we are going to discuss them in relation to the professional project. Since the persons who are working with Evascol are psychologist-guidance counsellors, and are by definition specialists of professional projects, I would find it pity that they don't do a bit of reflexion around the professional project with the young unemployed. They know him, they created an alliance with him, and they are in a good posture/position to do it."*<sup>8</sup> Without question, this stake is at the centre of the various interactions between the young unemployed and the psychologist-guidance counsellors. Firstly, during the collective information session, they insist on the importance of having a professional project and asking the young beneficiaries to write at least two professions they would like to be trained for on the registration form. Then, when the young person attends his/her first individual meeting with one of the psychologist-guidance

<sup>8</sup> Interview with the person responsible for Evascol at the office of vocational guidance, November 26, 2010

counsellors, the exchange focuses on the different personal aspects of the life of the young individual such as his/her family, state of health, scholar background and concrete professional project. The aim of collecting this information is to give them some perspective in relation to the young people's professional projects. For example, at every interaction I assisted when the psychologist-guidance counsellors asked questions about the state of the applicant's health; they systematically explained that it assures the placement counsellors that there is no medical counter-indications with the professional project, for example with allergies.

The evaluation of the professional projects can also be found in the ways that the results of the mathematics and French exams are calculated and presented to the young persons. After the three sessions of tests, the results are presented during another face-to-face meeting. For the objective of distinguishing Evascol from traditional scholarly evaluations, and to provide a clear view on the actual competencies of the young people, the results are calculated on a scale of 100%. To get a result or score of 100% means that the young beneficiary reached the level of expected knowledge at the end of compulsory schooling. Calculating the results this way allows for the linking of them directly with the professional project of the young unemployed. The results indicated in percentage the gap between the current state of scholarly knowledge of the young person and the minimum expected for starting the apprenticeship of his/her choice. Regarding this gap, the guidance counsellor can evaluate if any of the professional projects of the young person are realistic and feasible with regard to the time constraints of the unemployment insurance.

The evaluation of the appropriateness of the professional project based on the scholar evaluation is at the core of the final report handed to the placement counsellors. The evaluation and recommendations made are mainly based on the results of the different tests. The report is comprised of four pages, with three of them reporting in detail the results of the French-, mathematics- and aptitude tests. As previously underlined, the guidance counsellor collected different types of information on the young person concerning his/her personal life, family and social and material background, though they rarely make reference to personal information given during the first face-to-face interview and do not use them in their recommendations. Instead, the recommendations are always based on the results of the evaluations they have passed, primarily the scholar-related ones, with very few references made to the results of the intellectual aptitude tests.

Here is an example of a conclusion found in a final report: *"Mrs. Perez would like to undertake an apprenticeship as a beautician, socio-educative assistant or hotel employee. The results of her Evascol tests are in and underneath the average. The project of socio-educative assistant currently seems hardly conceivable. The training for a beautician or the initial training of a hotel employee is less demanding and seems to us to be more suitable. However, it would be important that Melanie upgrade her writing production, as well as her skills in mathematics. Melanie is a smiling and punctual young girl. We wish her a lot of success in her formation."*<sup>9</sup>

Looking for the difference with the norm has the aim of evaluating the different professional projects of the applicant, and recommends the one that tends to be the more feasible and realistic in relation to the results of her math and French exams. The recommendation given to Melanie and the personal counsellors is focused on her scholar results and how to upgrade them to have a better chance to succeed in her apprenticeship, in addition to giving her the best possible chance for success. Following Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 2007), Evascol is a tool to adjust the subjective professional ambitions of the young people concerning their objective conditions of success.

At this point, we must emphasize that neither the process of adjustment of the professional project nor the use of tests are new techniques, but part of the job for psychologist-guidance counsellors. What is probably new here is to use them to the benefit of the unemployment policy and to extract them from the general apparatus of vocational guidance. Furthermore, by

<sup>9</sup> Evascol's extract from final report no. 4, January 2011.

measuring and quantifying the level of unqualification, Evascol participates in what Hacking (2004a; 2004b) calls the normalization of the unqualified's criteria, which is comprised of two dimensions: the search measurable and quantitative norms, as well as calculating their average and the distribution of the difference to the norm.

Before the implementation of Evascol, the unqualified young were mostly defined by not having finished professional training, by non-linear trajectories and by difficulties at school. Even if these aspects are related to the assessment regarding the scholar and professional background, they were not quantified. To the contrary, when focusing on the results of scholar evaluations and on the gap separating the young people in Evascol to the average expected knowledge at the end of compulsory school, Evascol transforms the different aspects of unqualification in quantities, number and percentage, by focusing on the lack of scholarly knowledge. This is mainly made possible by the evaluations, the way that the results are constructed and by leaving out all the other elements discussed in the first individual interview. The final report is only constructed around the results of the different evaluations, and does not include other dimensions of the professional project evaluation discussed during the first interaction, in which personal and social elements came up.

The advantage with the scholar evaluation is that they are already constituted with a measurable and quantitative norm. In every scholar scale, we have an average that allows for the distribution of the totality of the pupils in terms of this average. However, based on the same logic and with the same tools of evaluation, Evascol evaluates a specific element, i.e. the degree of unqualification of the young unemployed and unqualified people. Evaluating the results of the tests through the use of a percentage allows for a comparison of the gap separating the scholarly knowledge of the young to the expected scholarly knowledge at the end of compulsory school. For example, achieving a result of 69% on the French test means that 31% of knowledge has not been acquired. The latter refers to some specific lack of detailed in the report that need to be improved to assure the applicant of a successful professional integration. A second element that must be underscored here is that of the scale of evaluation of 100%. Nevertheless, 100% does not mean having the best mark or being a brilliant student compared to a classical scholar scale, which classifies the totality of the pupils of the class from the best to the worst. In Evascol, achieving a result of 100% on the evaluations is what is normally expected at the end of compulsory school for all the young people. In other words, if they get 100% on one or the other evaluation, they will be at the average. As a result, in Evascol, the young people are compared with themselves and not with other young people. Indeed, this way of calculating performance, even before the young people take the various tests, is a representation of them as being under the average of the general population of young people, which helps in identifying this population group as a specific group that holds risks pertaining to their degree of being unqualified for the success of their professional integration. On top of that, quantifying the results objectivizes the lack of scholarly knowledge. They are therefore constructed as a group apart that carry some important scholarly deficiencies, which constitute a risk factor for succeeding in their professional integration.

As Hacking put it, classifications are made by institutions (Hacking, 2005) using scientific knowledge. Evascol normalizes the criteria of being unqualified mainly based on tools and instruments by measuring the gap from scholarly expectations at the end of compulsory school, as well as intellectual aptitude. These tools and instruments, which are defined as being scientific, allow for a precise understanding of the needs of the young people to succeed in their professional integration, as well as the inherent risks they possess which could prevent them to succeed. On top of this element, Evascol integrates the way of calculating the results/risk factors for the professional integration from a perspective of social intervention. The report is transmitted to the placement counsellor, but also to the semester of motivation counsellors, with the aim of working precisely on the risk factors identified by Evascol. In this way, the social intervention conceived in the context of the unemployment insurance must determine high-risk elements and work on reducing them, which could lead in terms of quantification to an unsuccessful professional integration: unsuccessful for both the young persons and the

logic of rationalization of activation policies. Evascol is therefore an apparatus that integrates a scale of tools and instruments that allow for measuring the risks of failure of the professional project of the young persons, and determining their capacities in succeeding in professional integration, within the same process, considerations regarding the interest of rationalization of unemployment insurance and social intervention.

***c. Effects of the normalization of the « unqualified » criteria on the classification and on its object of intervention***

Through an interaction between different elements, the ways of determining eligibility are focused on attempting to have an exact knowledge of the scholarly level constructed by the gap between the average knowledge expected at the end of compulsory school and the risks involved with the professional integration of the young unemployed. In this sense, it became one of the principle criteria for the definition of the category of unemployed and unqualified young people. In other words, the administrative criteria are then completed by a criterion constructed on the determination of the risks and needs in terms of scholarly knowledge. The transformation of the content of the category therefore has effects on the front line agents, on the nature of the social intervention and on the young people under certain aspects. First, I will underscore the ways it affects the work of the psychologist-guidance counsellors and their professional identity. Second, I will discuss how the nature of the social intervention is redefined by the normalization of the criterion of “unqualified”. Third and last, I will make some remarks about the lack of effects the aforementioned transformation has on the young people classified this way and how we can understand it.

Based on my empirical data, the first noticeable effects mainly affect the nature of the work of the psychologist-guidance counsellors and their professional identity.

By reducing their work to the phase of scholarly and psychological evaluation, the nature of the work of the psychologist-guidance counsellors changes in relation to different aspects.

Testing and evaluating are not new aspects of their job, but they consider them as tools for the construction of their intervention and not the ultimate aim. On the contrary, by introducing psychologist-guidance counsellors and scholar evaluations into the logic of activation policies and as criteria for eligibility, evaluating becomes the central point of their intervention. The psychologist-guidance counsellors take on the role of gatekeepers by making recommendations on the possibility of success for the professional integration of the young people. In other words, the decision taken by the personal counsellors about the process of professional integration of the young unemployed depends to a great degree on the final report made by the psychologists-guidance counsellors. One strategy carried out by the psychologist-guidance counsellors to escape their role of gatekeeper is to rarely make a recommendation that could lead the young person to be excluded from the unemployment insurance. When they have not identified what they conceived as an insurmountable difficulty, such as not mastering French, they will not advise the applicant to take any path except that of the semester of motivation. This advice is always attended with recommendations of scholarly adjustments, as well as revising the professional project downward. Hence, there are very few bad recommendations and exclusion of insurance rights, even when the results of the exams are bad in relation to the scale of evaluation. On the excerpt below, we see that the construction and sentences are formulated in a very positive way, while the results are said to be under the average of the results of the young people of Evascol: *“The project of Karim to undertake an apprenticeship of building cleaner or of retail manager seems from our point of view to be realistic and feasible as long as he opts for an elementary training, that is to say a cleaning agent or retail manager. It will, however, be necessary that he invests himself in an upgrade in French and mathematics because his knowledge from compulsory school is hardly sufficient.”*<sup>10</sup> The clemency that they demonstrate in their recommendations can be interpreted as a practice of

<sup>10</sup> Evascol's extract from final report no. 9, February 2011.

resistance towards the new role they must play, which thus transforms the nature of their work (Goffman, 1968; Lagroye & Offerlé, 2011). By contrast, even if the quality of the report has been praised by all the various agents taking part in the process of professional integration of the young unemployed, the clemency of their recommendations has been underscored many times by professionals in the semester of motivation.

By principally producing evaluations for unemployment insurance, the professional identity of the psychologist-guidance counsellors is also affected. First, the component of carrying out a social intervention based on a voluntary basis is central for them. Producing an intervention for the unemployment insurance changes this principle, which is at the core of their professional identity. The fact that the evaluation is firstly made for the unemployment insurance account and not for the young persons is witnessed by the fact that every young unemployed person has to go through Evascol. As professionals, they also do not have as much liberty in the way they construct the social intervention when this element is also an important element of their professional identity. Consequently, it was very difficult for the head of the Evascol office to find some of his psychologist-guidance employees who accepted working for Evascol. *“Evascol does not have a good reputation because we are working for a tierce, and there are all these questions of deontology and if the young person doesn't want to take the evaluation, and if he is punished, it is not going at all. And the idea to make an evaluation, to have an activity which is very standardized and centred on the evaluation, it is not what interested the psychologist-guidance counsellors the most because what they like is to have the liberty to guide the person, to define the number of interviews which suits them, and to elaborate projects with the person choosing the tool they want adapted to the situation, therefore an approach much more individual and in general, they like that. The idea then to have to propose standardized tests, scholar tests, there are many of them that would not like to work for Evascol.”*<sup>11</sup> These criticisms made by some of the psychologist-guidance counsellors materialize themselves through a resistance in transmitting the files of young people who they have previously followed to their colleagues working with Evascol. Caught between the criticisms and resistance of his colleagues, as well as the expectations of the unemployment office, one of the psychologist-guidance counsellors described his role as that of a “dream wrecker”, defining his job as being primarily administrative and deprecating himself as only being good at doing an evaluation that could easily be made by a student. In his words, working with Evascol lowers the competencies of the psychologist-guidance counsellors.<sup>12</sup>

Considering these criticisms, exactly who are these psychologist-guidance counsellors who decide to work with Evascol. As a matter of fact, though maybe not surprisingly, the five psychologist-guidance counsellors working with Evascol present some similarities when looking at their position in the labour market. For the first phase of the implementation of Evascol, concerning the two psychologist-guidance counsellors who were hired, one was unemployed and the other one was on an unstable labour contract. For them, Evascol represents an opportunity to work in a profession they were qualified for in the office of vocational guidance and under good labour conditions (indeterminate contract, job security). The three other psychologist-guidance counsellors, who started to work with Evascol a few months later when support was needed to reinforce the team, have just finished their master's in psychological orientation. In a context in which jobs and fairly good work conditions are becoming increasingly rare, particularly for new entrants, the office of vocational guidance is one of the main places employing psychological counsellors that offers good working conditions. It also presents a chance to obtain a long-term job in the field they are qualified for. In this sense, the office of vocational guidance is a kind of “grail” and Evascol a way to enter it. Due to the specific economic context and the position of the new entrants, they do not criticize Evascol as much as some of their older colleagues, and do not find it as denaturalization of their identity. On

<sup>11</sup> Interview with the person responsible for Evascol at the office of vocational guidance, November 26, 2010

<sup>12</sup> Interview with psychologist-guidance counsellors (1) 10.02.2010.



top of that, the new generation presents a specific interest in working with or for the “young at odds”.

A second effect that could be identified is that of the normalization of the unqualified criteria on social intervention.<sup>13</sup> We have already highlighted how the scholar evaluation became central in determining the eligibility of the young unemployed and unqualified people. In redefining the borders of the category, the object of the social intervention also changes. By focusing on the risks and needs of the young people in terms of scholarly deficiencies, the object of the intervention is therefore primarily focused on this aspect. Since the 1980s, social policies towards youth have considered professional integration as the main objective. Most of the contemporary social interventions conducted aim at having an effect more on individual behaviours and dispositions than on socio-economic structures (Dubois, 2009b). These social interventions are analysed by authors as being a process of socialization that attempts to more or less normalize the individual in relation to his/her different global aspects, with the aim of reducing the gap in the norms (Beaud, 1999; Coutant, 2008; Zunigo, 2008). This is not to say that the function of normalization has disappeared, but instead that it is now articulated with an evaluation of the inherent risks that young people possess<sup>14</sup> (Quirion, 2006). Indeed, with the apparatus of Evascol, the object of intervention is constructed and limited to the scholarly deficiencies. However, the latter are considered either as punctual manifestations of a lack of attention or concentration during the school career, or as more definitive cognitive deficiencies. The results of the mathematics-, French- and aptitude tests allow for determining what the factor is in terms of a lack of scholarly knowledge. This point was presented as a way of caring for the young “at odds” and precisely going over the irrevocable scholar verdict. As the person responsible for Evascol at the vocational guidance office argues, *“The scholar level is good but it is not sufficient, because we know very well that young people who present important deficiencies in French and mathematics due to the main fact that they were not keen about school, they didn’t study much, didn’t attend the lessons, they have very bad scholar results, while they potentially have the capacities to reach the expected level. That’s why for me, it was necessary not only to take into account the scholar knowledge, but also the competencies, the intellectual potential, if you want. It is the combination of the two aspects that gives us a good idea of the capacities for learning. Of course there are factors other than the intelligence and scholar level that will play a role in succeeding in training: the methods of learning, there are factors linked to the family and to situations of dependency; I mean there are many factors that influence on success or not, but for questions of simplicity we cut back on a systematically base at the evaluation of the capacities of learning on these two aspects.”*<sup>15</sup>

In this way, by using scientific instruments and knowledge, Evascol objectivizes and reduces the difficulties of the young people to one aspect that becomes both the explicative- and principal risk factor. Indeed, even if the responsible person recognizes other risk factors, they are not taking into account to “questions of simplicity”. Disconnecting from the social context and isolating one specific aspect, social intervention focuses on compensating for scholarly deficiencies. As emphasized in the extract below, scholarly deficiencies are therefore considered as being remediable in function to the evaluation of the learning capacity of young people. The identification of the risks inherent in young people is more important than understanding the social context in which they live. In other words, a social intervention on the socio-economic level will not be successful if the young people have inherent difficulties that first need to be identified and treated.

<sup>13</sup>This analysis is in large part influenced by the work of Bastien Quirion, who found very similar mechanisms and processes with therapeutic interventions in the Canadian penal system (Quirion, 2006).

<sup>14</sup>Bastien Quirion showed how the therapeutic finality in the penal system reinvents itself through a model of intervention that mixes the actuarial logic of the evaluation of risks with a more traditional clinical intervention relating to the normalization of the individual (Quirion, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Interview with the person responsible for Evascol at the office of vocational guidance, November 26, 2010



These new tools used in unemployment insurance contribute to giving a new representation of the young people who are both unemployed and unqualified. By transforming the qualities that describe the young people “at odds” through the use of a percentage, thus signifying the gap that separated them from the norm, but also evaluating to what extent this gap can be filled in, this tool falls within the imperatives for the control and integration of the activation policies. Their strength lies precisely in their pretention to a mathematical objectivity missing from the social intervention. The mixing of the point of view of the psychologists’ evaluation with the logic of the activation policies works to operate a kind of division of the individual. Whereas the psychologist-guidance counsellors and social intervention each had their own point of view, the introduction of the evaluation on the capacity of learning within the logic of the activation policies, divided the individual into different risk factors, with each of them having their own essence. For each risk factor identified by the evaluation, there is a specific action targeted around the reduction of the risks of succeeding in the professional integration, in addition to predicting the best chances of success by crossing the professional project and the results of the evaluation. By focusing on scholarly competencies and intellectual aptitudes, young people are no longer thought of as an individual evolving in a more general social context. The social intervention not only considers the young beneficiaries in terms of their deficit of integration, but focuses on identifying the risk factors that represent a threat for professional integration. Regarding what Hacking discussed *about human kind*, reducing the young people to an evaluation and prediction of their capacities of learning produces a “kind of human”, about whom we think we can have an exact knowledge and take the best actions likely to help them (Hacking, 1995).

A last effect we would like to underscore more directly concerns the young people. One element at the core of Evascol is the evaluation of the appropriateness of the professional project for the unemployed and unqualified young people. During the restitution of the results as well as the recommendations written in the final reports, the professional aspirations of the young people are systematically lowered. Indeed, when the young people have different professional projects, the one with the lower demands is recommended by the psychologist-guidance counsellors. They also systematically orient the young people towards the most elementary training in the profession “chosen”, which then delivers the certification at the bottom of the scholarly hierarchy. Most of the young people accept the lowering of their professional aspirations,<sup>16</sup> as they do not contest the verdict of the evaluation and the recommendations made in the report by the psychologist-guidance counsellors.

When they register at the unemployment insurance and come to Evascol, they already have a long career of disillusionment. Firstly, they did not do very well during compulsory school and had bad results in their exams, being in the lower sections, they have already been confronted with the limitations of their ambitions. Secondly, after the end of compulsory school, many of them had a period where they were out of any institutional or professional settings recognized by the institutions. In other words, they were “at odds”. Drawing on Paul Willis’ study, we can make the hypothesis that this phase considered as a disengagement by the institutions, is also a strategy of the young people to cope with the disillusion of their expectations and accept their social destiny, much like the strategies of disturbances made up by the “working class kids” at school attempting to accept their working class jobs (Willis, 1977). Because of this, by the time they start to work with Evascol most of the work of accepting their social destiny has already been made, hence the lowering of their aspirations is less of a problem for them. Since they must sign the report before it is sent to the placement counsellors, this practice can be seen as a way of ensuring that the young individual has accepted the recommendations made about his/her professional project, and is therefore ready to be taken in by the apparatus of integration offered by the unemployment insurance. If he/she refuses to

<sup>16</sup>In the all interactions I assisted with, there was only one girl who challenged the recommendations and did not accept them and did not come back to collect and sign her report, thus taking the risk of being excluded from the unemployment insurance.

sign or to take the Evascol evaluations, the placement counsellor will then tell the applicant that the unemployment insurance cannot help them, as Evascol is required for all the young people who are unemployed and unqualified.

Consequently, Evascol also takes on the role of evaluating the degree of acceptance of the young people of their objective conditions for the possibilities of professional integration.

## Conclusion

This paper discussed the process implementation of a new activation measure towards unemployed and unqualified young people. It showed how its implementation reveals the difficulties faced by placement counsellors in categorizing young unemployed people confronting themselves with their heterogeneity. The difficulties encountered by the placement counsellors focused on the definition of the “unqualified” criteria, thereby producing the implementation of a specific activation measure to evaluate the scholarly knowledge and psychological aptitude of the unemployed and unqualified young people. Based on Hacking’s concept of the *looping effect*, analysing the mechanism of transformation of the criteria and defining the “unqualified” through the implementation of a new activation measure yields insight into understanding the process of categorization, as well as its effects. Indeed, two main effects can be emphasized. First, the nature of the work of psychologist guidance counsellors is transformed by being introduced in activation policies such as the unemployment insurance. They lose some part of their autonomy by being submitted to the logic of activation policies, which hurts their professional identity in being defined by helping and orienting young people on a voluntary basis. In this perspective, we can ask ourselves to what extent the discretionary power of street agent bureaucrats is even more accurate within activation policies (Buffat, 2010). The different professionals in charge of implementing the unemployment policy in Switzerland become more and more dependent on each other, as well as on the continuing existence of the unemployment insurance. They participate in implementing activation policies by monitoring the beneficiaries, in addition to being monitored by the activation logic on the legal- and administrative level (Serre, 2009). In other words, the implementation of the Evascol measure proceeded to a reinforcement of the activation of the young unemployed by new procedures of control and professional reintegration, as well as by introducing the work of guidance counsellors through a process of activation. Indeed, their work is submitted to the control and efficiency of the logic of the unemployment insurance system.

The second effect that has been underscored is on the nature of social intervention. By identifying the inherent risks possessed by the young unemployed and unqualified people, the social intervention then becomes focused on some specific aspects of the individual.

By considering the individual through a cumuli of deficiencies and risk factors, the social intervention focuses on separately treating these aspects. Social factors contributing to the difficulties of certain individuals are hidden by the focus put on the inherent risk factors young people possess. Traditionally, a social intervention has the aim to transform the individual in his/her totality by reducing the gap separating them from the norms. This objective has not disappeared, but before undertaking this process it is necessary to ensure oneself that the young people do possess the competencies of learning to engage themselves in a process of professional integration. It is also a way of responsabilizing young people by recognizing their competencies and pointing out what they should improve and in what domain they should invest themselves to help succeed in their professional integration.

By insufflating a sense of normal and abnormal through the evaluation process of scholarly and psychological aptitude, it is possible to say that the traditional division between the good and the bad is being transformed. If this moral aspect, stronger in the 19th century and decreasing within social welfare, has always inhabited the selection of beneficiaries in social policy, we can therefore form the hypothesis that within the transformation of social welfare this division is being transformed. As has been mentioned, the activation policies have been implemented through the reinforcement of the control of abuse and the promotion

of professional reintegration, thereby defining the beneficiary as an active and responsible citizen. In this sense, to select beneficiaries there is not only a need to determine their level of morality, but also to what extent they will be able to invest themselves in a process of accountability. Following Hacking, human sciences are looking for an exact knowledge on human beings. If statistics have participated in helping to construct the category of unemployment in social welfare policies, psychology might participate, articulated with statistical knowledge, in transforming the sense and content of the unemployed category by introducing a differentiation between normal and abnormal and by identifying the inherent risks potential beneficiaries possess.

Statistics permit the extraction of the moral aspect and individual responsibility for unemployment by relating it to a macro social and economic transformation, as well as having profound effects on the life of the unemployed and helping to model social welfare. In the context of profound social and economic transformations, and in addition to the challenge of the legitimization of social welfare, new knowledge regarding beneficiaries is needed. In other words, this does not exclude statistical knowledge of unemployment, but is articulated with medical and psychological knowledge in order to obtain a more precise knowledge of the unemployed and to ensure that they deserve to be taken into the charge of social compensation services. As a consequence of this, the nature of risk is changing. Considering them as being collective in social welfare, activation policies first consider it as individual by relying on specific knowledge of “human kind”. The right to social rights depends more on the identification of inherent risks and personal capacities than on the difficulties they can encounter regarding the social and economic conditions of life.

## Bibliography

- Beaud, S. (1999). Un cas de sauvetage social: Histoire d’une «jeune précaire» racontée par un conseiller de mission locale. *Travail et Emploi*, 80.
- Bourdieu, P. (2007). *La Misère du monde*. Paris: Seuil.
- Buffat, A. (2010). Categorizing at the Street-Level: The Case of Swiss Unemployment Policy Implementation. *Paper presented at the ECPR joint sessions of workshops*.
- Coton, C., & Proteau, L. (2012). *Les paradoxes de l’écriture. Sociologie des écrits professionnels dans les institutions d’encadrement* (Le sens social.). Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.
- Coutant, I. (2008). Insertion socio-professionnelle et éducation morale de jeunes délinquants. In G. Mauger, J.-L. Moreno Pestano, & M. Rocca i Escoda (Eds.), *Normes, déviances, insertions*. Genève: Seismo.
- Demazière, D. (1992). *Le chômage en crise?: La négociation des identités des chômeurs de longue durée*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de Lille.
- Dubois, V. (2007). Etat social actif et contrôle des chômeurs: un tournant rigoriste entre tendances européennes et logiques nationales. *Politique européenne*, (1), 73–95.
- Dubois, V. (2009a). Towards a critical policy ethnography: Lessons from fieldwork on welfare control in France. *Critical Policy Studies*, 3(2), 221–239.
- Dubois, V. (2009b). Le paradoxe du contrôleur. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 178(3), 28.
- Dubois, V. (2010). *La vie au guichet. Relation administrative et traitement de la misère* (Economica.). Paris: coll. Etudes politiques.
- Evans, T., & Harris, J. (2004). Street-level bureaucracy, social work and the (exaggerated) death of discretion. *British journal of social work*.
- Ferreira, C., & Frauenfelder, A. (2007). «Y en a qui abusent...» Identifier, gérer et expertiser des ayants droit de la politique sociale. *Carnets de bord*, (13), 3–6.
- Gautié, J. (2002). De l’invention du chômage à sa déconstruction. *Genèses*, (1), 60–76.
- Goffman, E. (1968). *Asiles. Études sur la condition sociale des malades mentaux*. Paris: Minuit.

- Hacking, I. (1995). The looping effects of human kinds. *Causal cognition: A multidisciplinary approach*, 351–383.
- Hacking, I. (1999). *The Social Construction of What?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hacking, I. (2004a). *Façonner les gens*. Cours au Collège de France. Retrieved from [http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/historique/ian\\_hacking.htm#lp=../historique/ian\\_hacking.html](http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/historique/ian_hacking.htm#lp=../historique/ian_hacking.html)
- Hacking, I. (2004b). *Normalisation. L' "épidémie d'obésité"*. Cours au Collège de France. Retrieved from [http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/historique/ian\\_hacking.htm#lp=../historique/ian\\_hacking.html](http://www.college-de-france.fr/site/historique/ian_hacking.htm#lp=../historique/ian_hacking.html)
- *Information orientation Jeunes sans formation*. Etat de Genève. Retrieved November 2012, from [http://www.ge.ch/information\\_orientation/jeunes\\_sans\\_formation/orientation.asp](http://www.ge.ch/information_orientation/jeunes_sans_formation/orientation.asp)
- Lagroye, J., & Offerlé, M. (2011). *Sociologie de l'institution*.
- Lipsky, M. (2010). *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Morgen, S. (2001). The Agency of Welfare Workers: Negotiating Devolution, Privatization, and the Meaning of Self-Sufficiency. *American Anthropologist*.
- Perret, V. (2007). *Les cantons suisses face au chômage. Fédéralisme et politiques de l'emploi*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Quirion, B. (2006). Traiter les délinquants ou contrôler les conduites: le dispositif thérapeutique à l'ère de la nouvelle pénologie. *Criminologie*, 39(2), 137–164.
- Salais, R., Baverez, N., & Reynaud, B. (1986). *L'invention du chômage: histoire et transformations d'une catégorie en France des années 1890 aux années 1980*. Presses Universitaires de France - PUF.
- Serre, D. (2009), *Les coulisses de l'Etat social. Enquête sur les signalements d'enfant en danger*. Paris: Raisons d'agir, coll. " Cours et travaux".
- Topalov, C. (1994). *Naissance du chômeur, 1880 - 1910*. Paris: Albin Michel.
- Valli, M., Martin, H., & Hertz, E. (2002). Le « feeling » des agents de l'État providence. *Ethnologie française*, 90(2), 221. doi:10.3917/ethn.022.0221
- Weber, F. (2007). Préface. In «*Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques*», *Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques*. Paris: PUF, coll. Quadrige.
- Willis, P. E. (1977). *Learning to labour*. Saxon House.
- Yanow, D. (2003). *Constructing "Race" and "Ethnicity" in America: Category-making in Public Policy and Administration* (M.E Sharpe Editions.). New York: Armonk.
- Zunigo, X. (2008). L' "apprentissage des possibles professionnels: Logiques et effets sociaux (des missions locales pour l'emploi des jeunes). *Sociétés contemporaines*, 2 (70).