

Local authorities and NGOs Public Management facing new challenges

The number 4 of the year 2016-2017 of the review *Gestion et Management Public* is a VARIA number. Its aim is to improve the understanding of current issues of public management. It contributes to the advancement of knowledge through original conceptual approaches.

This issue presents research deals with themes which are linked with current issues facing public decision-makers. These articles question in an original way the issues of sustainable development, management and public values for local governments and NGOs.

The first three articles are part of a new public management context in which communities are looking for savings or betting efficiency in order to reduce public spending. These organizations face direct or indirect competition between territories in terms of economic or demographic attractiveness, and must respond to international environmental pressures with Agenda 21 or 2030 Agenda.

The first three articles show how public organizations use management tools that enable them to face these major challenges and allow them to perform. The notion of performance applied to public organizations is more complex than the notion of profit which measures the performance in the private sector. Public organizations

must answer to societal problems and needs. These specificities of the public organizations lead to distinguish two registers of performances of the public action:

- on the one hand, the “outputs” resulting from a combination of means and services delivered evaluated with the measures of efficiency and quality...
- on the other hand, the “results” or “impacts” (“outcomes”): the effects of public policies in terms of social changes are difficult to evaluate since they are often long-term and result from cross-impacts...

The article of **David CARASSUS**, **Marcel GUENOUN** and **Younes SAMALI**, entitled “*Looking for savings in local governments: what devices to what rationalities? More control or more steering?*”, analyses the ways of controlling local expenditures. The first solution to limit local expenditure is based on expenditure control. It includes short-term actions: decrease in operating expenses, deferral of investments, decrease in subsidies, and negotiation of prices with suppliers. The control mechanisms operate on the means and have for initiator the general direction, director of functions finances and human resources, and the elected in charge of finances. They act as “censors”, or “budget cutters”. These devices can result in cost-killing. The second way, called steering is based on the articulation of the short term and the medium-long term. It is

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guided by a depth analysis of public policies and the use of management tools (segmentation, roadmap, budget by policy, cost accounting, management dialog, service projects or CPOM, indicators / dashboards, activity report, satisfaction surveys / needs). Local authorities seek to reduce expenditures by comparing the social value created for the user and the cost of the service, by trade-offs in budget processes, and by restructuring local service provision with a better understanding of the user's needs and satisfaction. The results of the study show, that French local authorities are focused on a short-term control.

The article proposed by **Thérèse ALBERTINI**, **Delphine BERENI** and **Graziella LUISI** is entitled "***A Comparative Approach to Managerial Practices of Territorial Regional Brands***". It focuses on the creation of the territorial brand as a lever for the differentiation and promotion of the territorial development. The authors analyze the process of construction and implementation of a Regional Territorial Brand. The study highlights a participatory public approach which is in phase with the desire to have a territorial brand shared by all the actors, brand which promotes values, identity and image associated with this territory.

The article of **Lætitia GUERIN-SCHNEIDER** and **Marie TSANGA TABI**, is entitled "***Life Cycle Assessment, a new environmental assessment tool to support local authorities' public policies: What kind of appropriation by sewerage services?***". It analyses the effects of the implementation of the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) tool, an environmental assessment method, on public decision-making. The authors observe in the context of their intervention research that despite the fact that sustainable development is a key issue in the speeches of water management, there is a lack of environmental assessment tools within local authorities. The first contribution of LCA, seen as a management tool, is in terms of the managerial philosophy conveyed: its use encourages a multidimensional vision and "trans-territory" of environmental impacts in the actors. However, interpretation of LCA results remains difficult for non-specialists.

The article proposed by **David MANTES**, **Lubica HIKKEROVA** and **Jean-Michel SAHUT** is entitled "***Rethinking the humanitarian model: from efficiency to resilience***". It shows that the major crisis affecting humanitarian NGOs is leading to a refocusing on the principles of humanitarianism through the search

for the resilience of beneficiaries. The humanitarian sector, subject to the law of the market, has experienced a phenomenon of extreme competition, which has potentially impacted its main principles. As a result, there is a need to develop a new societal and economic model in order to achieve the full ethical realization of humanitarian aid. The study based on the semi-structured interviews of experts and beneficiaries of humanitarian aid, shows to what extent the current humanitarian standards (CHS, OECD guidelines...) help develop resilience among beneficiaries of the aid.