

# **INFORMATION AND SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES: THE CONVERGENCE OF SHARED-TIME WORK AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

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## *Abstract:*

*The subject of this communication is to analyze points of similarities of using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Shared Time Work (STW), for a special category of firms, whose place seems to be more and more important: Small and Middle sized Enterprises (SMEs). After several particularities (apart from the size), we will remind their difficulties in Human Resources Management, especially about ICT, then the opportunity in the using of STW, for research teachers, professionals and media. We will present different legal shapes, then precise points of similarities between TIC and STW, and finally, results among different kinds of players in this one, in an exploring research.*

*Keywords: human resources management, information and communication technologies, shared time work, small and middle sized enterprises*

## **Introduction**

Many authors and journalists underline the dominate place of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the economy of France: 60% of employment, 53% of added value, 41% of investment, 30% of exportation for business with less than 250 people (Insee source in Savajol, 2003).

As others kinds of business, SME encounter some problems concerning Human Resource Management (HRM). The perspective positive aspects which foresee ICT in this area are not exempted from other more delicate consequences in others areas. These ones identify another practice which is relatively recent and unknown: Shared-Time Work (STW). It seems important to provide significant elements of information to this subject and thoroughly examine the similarities with the use of ICT.

After returning to the notion of SME and the specifications of their HRM, more particularly the use of ICT,

various forms of STW are presented, before examining converging points with the use of ICT. Finally, we show results among different kinds of players in STW, in an exploratory research.

## **The germ of the convergence between two specific phenomena concerning Human Resource Management in Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises**

### ***Some characteristic of Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises***

This “complex and diversified world” (Parlier, 2004) groups together hundred thousands of business under the “Small and Medium-sized Enterprises” expression on the criteria of the size, on the first place: less than 500 persons in France, less than 250 for Europe (turnover of less than 40 M€ and financial independence). Note that, for two decades, both in research and in teachings, university people have focused on middle-sized business

(more than 50) and on entrepreneurship (in most cases, the organiser is alone, or is helped by a few colleagues), this leaves the majority of SME insufficiently explored (Marchesnay, 2003).

However, some of the common characteristics of the small size business -management centralisation, weak specialization, simple or not very organized information systems, intuitive or not very formalized strategy (Grepme, 1994) for example - could be translated into different sides of proximity notion –respectively spatial proximity, hierarchical proximity, functional proximity and coordination of proximity, information systems of proximity and temporal proximity (Torres, 2000).

In any case, the major part of these characteristics allow to see the manager omnipresence, including HRM, reserved for huge structures knowing in SME a remarkable evolution, of which he is “the necessary way” (Duchéneaut, 1995).

### ***HRM in SME and ICT***

If traditionally, it hasn't priority at the eyes of this last, the HR post is familiar in several types of difficulties:

- Slight formalization of policies, procedures and practices of HRM ;
- Limited financial, material and human resources ;
- Global lack of expertise in HRM methods and techniques ;
- Strong centralization around the owner manager ;
- Negative attitudes and resistances to the changes on behalf of personnel and managers;
- Inadequate socio-economical and political procedures (d'Amboise, Garand, 1995).

And yet, this post is directly concerned to one of these relatively recent changes that constitute the use of ICT, in the way which testifies the works of many authors (Laval, 2000; Barthe, 2001; Guilloux et al, 2001; Matmati, 2001; Blanchot, Wacheux,

2003). However, these works are generally focussed on business in which staff is important. Because “if paradoxically many publications don't exist, maybe it isn't by lack of interest of the scientific community to study this subject, but because of difficulties of this apprehension, and of the complexity of the location of HRM in Small and Medium sized Enterprises” (Mahé de Boislandelle, 1993).

Moreover, the use of ICT and of the Internet by SME are significant, whereas generally less in comparison to larger business.

Even though the use of ICT overturns the HRM in SME in 3 sectors:

- application of the law to work ;
- competence management ;
- organisation and conditions of work (Carpentier, 2009).

### ***HRM in SME and Shared Time Work***

In the same way, the SME are mainly concerned by another recent phenomenon which presents comparative characteristics. In fact, Shared Time Work refers to new forms of work organisation; it applies to bringing competence to the small and middle companies and can practise under many legal statuses.

This phenomenon, otherwise abundantly presented by the press in the first half of 90's<sup>1</sup> and which has experienced for the last years a certain renewal<sup>2</sup>, for lack to be presented under all appearances<sup>3</sup>, has evenly taken charge off by certain authors. It's “the original way [...] for the managers to work in shared time or loan managers of big business” (Duchéneaut, 1995). They “offer an adapted opportunity to constraints of SME. [...] as well the birth of the projects by developing managers, for the well being of SMEs”. In this way form plans of developing managers...(Fourcade and Marchesnay, 1997).

“This solution is due to social demands of specified managers who

don't do research as a full time job and the companies which have neither means nor enough tasks to fill" (Mahé de Boislandelle and Nebenhaus, 1995).

The human resources practitioners are evenly put down to:

- in 1993, ANDCP (Association Nationale des Directeurs et Cadres de la fonction Personnel) created OTP (Observatoire du Temps Partagé) "to constitute a structure of studies, information, advice and promotion, dedicated to those who work at shared-time and destined to manage concrete actions"<sup>4</sup>, such as those in published documents (Andcp/Otp, 1994 and 1995);

- The review "Personnel" published a dozen articles over the same period (and many others since then);

- The subject was largely evoked by a colloquium in Genoa with transalpine practitioners taking into account the dense tissue of Italian SMEs (Seltzer, 2004);

- A case was done in July 1993, after 1400 HRM by the OTP. "Shared-Time Work is considered as a real human wealth brought to the company, and is favourable when changing careers in various business" (Provost, 94);

- It must be noted that reattaching spontaneously Shared-Time Work to the age over 45 years (74%) in this case is found 11 years late, in the actual practice and the development of ideas for the seniors (Andcp/Inergie, 2005), which was underlined by others (Vilette, 2004).

The triple interest focussed by the media, practitioners and teaching-researching, to this phenomena brings us to present different legal shapes, before returning to this points of convergence with the use of ICT.

### **Shared Time Work**

"Shared Time Work" (which could be called STW below) has been used since 1985. However, there is no legal definition today. Following few attempts

(Casaux, 1992; Lagarrigue, 1994; Lagrevol, 1997; Gibus, 2001; Vilette, 2003a), we propose this definition = Shared Time Work is the simultaneous and/or successive practise of few perennial activities with professional vocation.

This definition groups together different legal frameworks for STW.

Some of them exclude the only activity = multi waging, pluriactivity, employers group and the last one, STW company.

Some others offer the possibility to practise it = three like wage earner (external secondment, temping agency, wage portage), one like independent (we globalize this status without distinction of juridical from).

Regarding the lack of knowledge of this diversity, including in specialized press (cf. N°3 above) it seems important to develop every legal framework.

### ***Multi waging***

The multi-employers salaried are titled of many part-time work contracts. For all of them, it inscribes to a subordinate relation with every employer. These employers enjoy at his regard of power of watching, direction and checking. The multi-employers salaried has an obligation of means with his employer (obligation to do everything to reach objectives which are given to him), and know them an interference power in his work. This state of subordination is defined by salaried insertion in an organized service: working hours, work place, direction, graduate... (Gauthier, Dorin, 1997).

Except for some particularities (Andcp/Otp, 1994), multi-employers salaried have advantages recognized at full-time salaried: age, training, financial advantages, election of staff representative...

### ***Pluriactivity***

Legally, this notion is wider than the precedent because it can include

non salaried activities too. We can recommend its remarkable analyse by Casaux (1992).

However, in the work place, this term means more the addition of salaried and non salaried activities: “86 % of pluriactive associate payment by salary and non-payment by salary” (Benoit, Gerbault, 1999). So, we can contest this assertion = “This form is generally applied only at a transition title, because it’s not very efficient fiscally and socially” (Lagrevol, 1997). Indeed, even its complexities, the pluriactivity is practiced for a long time in the mountainous areas, and seasonal economical sectors (tourism, agriculture, construction...) for thousands of people, and in a perennial way (Péripl, 2002).

### ***Employers group***

In France, it was established by the law in January 1985, 25 in order to allow small- and medium-sized businesses and industries to group together and to employ labour which they wouldn’t be able to recruit by themselves, because of workload and financial insufficient means.

Employees who are salaried of an employers group (non profit association) are at the disposal of members of this group.

This mechanism was created during the rise of multiactivity and shared-time work (Lab’ho, 2000). However, “Human resource management is a very complex activity to establish in SME. The employers group in an answer to many different kinds of needs, among those we can find the “needs of competences in shared-time” (Biche et all, 2000).

In front of the complexity of the multi-wage earning and the pluriactivity, “the employers group is seen as a palliative solution”. An employee “will benefit from an only employer, therefore a salary as well as a work contract, which is obligatorily written.” (Lagrevol, 1997).

### ***Shared-time work company***

Six years after the failure of the law proposition by senator Jourdain concerning the new status of the shared time worker, a new French law (8/2/2005) in favour of SME has created a new mechanism in order to enable the disposal of qualified workers to companies which can not recruit themselves because of their size or their limited means.

As in the case of temporary work, triangular relations would be established between the person who is handed over, the Shared-Time Work Company (STWC) and the customer company. A first employment contract will be signed between the STWC and the person who is handed over. A second disposal business contract will be concluded between the STWC and the customer company.

“Regarding the stake, we could expect from the legislator an ambitious text which is the conclusion of a real reflection about the notion of shared-time, and which determines in a real way relationship between the reference employer (STWC) and the second employer (customer company). As a consequence, this determines a real status for the employees who are recruited in order to be handed over; thus shared-time work is not associated to the lack of job security.” (Fadeuilhe, 2005)

Nevertheless, this STWC seems to be a melting pot between many other forms already existing (employers group, temping work, wage portage...) and doesn’t bring any significant advances, but rather feeds the blurred present.

### ***External secondment***

In this case, like the two previous ones, the shared-time worker has legally one employer employee’s status. However, this one (generally a big company) will second him in a small company (rarely in many) during a limited period, to share his skills (Brusa,

1999). The secondment could operate full time or part time, in accordance with our shared-time job definition's proposition, even if the second case fits more to this spirit.

The work contract which links the employee to his original company exists already. The company should reintegrate him at the end of the disregard. We recommend being more precise concerning the methods in a draft contract.

### ***Wage portage***

Considering that it concerns approximately 15000 persons working for 100 to 150 companies, we should mention this status, in spite of all juridical limits that it presents.

"Wage portage is a person services activity, giving them a juridical framework, permitting them to work independently with an employee status." (Gibus, 2001)

3 partners are in touch: the consultant, the customer company and the portage company which is the intermediary.

The consultant signs an adherence contract with the portage company, which permits him to be part of skills network of this one. Then he must prospect and find by himself a mission in a customer company. He has to negotiate all the aspects of the mission: time period, content, amount...

When the mission is found by the consultant, a work-contract corresponding to these aspects is signed between the consultant and the portage company.

The contract of mission can be signed between the customer enterprise and the portage company. Few companies want this contract to be tripartite, which means that it is signed as well by the consultant. In return of the provision of this service with the customer company, the portage enterprise invoices this one in form of honoraries and pays back the invoice

amount, deducted commission rate, in form of salary and social taxes.

"These [job] creations correspond to the needs of the companies, worried to get expert skills with a part time and in a flexible way without hiring. This reality brings out today by media, politics, researchers, practitioners, as being an evolution of the post-industrial society." (Parez-Cloarec, Le Berre, 2005)

However, this flattering presentation doesn't mask juridical limits on a lot of points: motive of recourse, renewal or succession of fix term contracts, link of subordination, work supplies provision, salaries payment...

### ***Jobs and activities cooperative***

Jobs and activities cooperative (CEA in French language) appeared in 1995. It is a particular form of cooperative society of production (this one found its origin in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Besides, this status corresponded to several situations, like "cooperatives of graduate of upper teaching, closer than the groups existing in liberal professions" (Demoustier, 1980).

CEA "set up an economic, legal and social framework which can welcome, accompany and accommodate every kind of economic project. They follow an objective of collective and jointly development of activities in subscribing to logic of insertion by the economy." (Thomas, 2005)

CEA assume an individual and collective accompaniment of the project bearer and a wage earner status. These salaried entrepreneurs can carry on several activities, more often for many customers. We have found the notion of shared-time again.

"They constitute a real alternative to the classical process of the company creation and work research all offering a new way of work (the salaried entrepreneur status). They complete the

other mechanisms which give them specificity, especially in comparison of the portage society.” (Charles Pauvers, Schieb-Bienfait, 2005).

### **Shared-Time Worker as independent**

Shared-Time Worker as independent is on the border between multiwager and independent consultant.

With a big job experience in enterprises and various solved problems, independent Shared-Time Worker has the same expert valuation in his skills than a consultant.

But his provisions of services are very operational, like an internal specialist.

And they are not reduced to one-off actions, but have a long-lasting calling (Andcp/Otp, 1995).

## **Return on the convergence of ICT and STW in HRM of SME**

### **Theoretical aspects**

Like we said before, the use of ICT and the STW's resort touches HRM in SME in 3 fields at least: labour law, skills management and work organisation.

### **Labour law**

The ICT resort like Internet, Intranet or telework (which is wider than homework) does modifications in labour law. Ray (2001) brings to the fore its importance on more points:

- modalities of subordination develop with the teleavailability of the salaried employee, the development of homework and distance control ;
- the execution of the work contract develops as soon as recruitment, then with training, employability, working time respect in comparison with test-time, work wealth and security, and even contentious ;
- work relationships are also concerned, by the staff representatives' consultation before ICT implementation

and with their use by them, as during industrial dispute.

More than large firms, SME don't accept juridical constraints in addition they are often without internal skills about labour law.

The second part of this communication has given a brief survey of the STW forms variety and legal subtleties of its implementation. Furthermore, the labour law apply for SME which uses STW, only in the first juridical form (multi waging), indeed the second (pluriactivity). In fact, in the other cases, the SME will deal with another structure, according to commercial law, which is more familiar because it must manage its relationship with its environment (customers, suppliers.....).

### **Skills management**

From an inquiry in which SME were widely represented, Bellier (2002) brings to the fore the ICT influence on skills: for the whole people interrogated, "ICT are lived such as a source of stronger requirement, as necessity to be more skilled"[...]”The excess from ICT was introduced such as an internal demand for the employee”.

It's possible to interrogate oneself about this observation whereas “after few years of use and in spite of an irreversible development, the balance seems rather mitigated.” (Demissy, 2003) It's without doubt, more right in the context of SME, regarding one of HRM difficulties already mentioned, about change (§ 1.2).

Besides, professionals of this function confess a deficit of personal skills about ICT, and insufficient gratitude of their role in introduction of these ones (Chrétien et al, 2004). Moreover, if there is a progressive networking of skills, “the computerization of skills management looks like an empty dish for the moment”. (Coulon, Mercier, 2001)

Yet professionals of HRM should be the first actors of skills management. Besides, it's why they will use this

original tool of recruitment which is the STW (Vilette, 2006a). Indeed, the deficit of skills in the SME is probably bigger and more sensible, considering the effect of enlargement (Mahé de Boislandelle, 1993), but also harder to fill because of other HRM difficulties (this time concerning formalisation, resources and expertise).

Moreover, about this last point, if the average threshold of staff for the appearance of a full-time HR specialist (which is the traditional practice in France, whatever the past office and the level of responsibility) have been divided by 2 (passing from 200 to 100 employees) in 20 years, this threshold seems towards the forceful implementation of French CE and CHSCT (Vilette, 2003b) i.e. 50 persons. However, for cost and workload reasons, this post creation (even non salaried) will be preferentially in part-time, even shared-time. Moreover, besides practice of us or two of asked actors in our exploratory research, the development of this means of work for HRM seems to be affirmed.

### **Work organisation**

From the same inquiry, Josserand (2002) underlines the fact that companies don't use much ICT to make apply decisions or to estimate individual results afterwards. On the other hand, they make exchanges easier between hierarchical levels, they further a more transverse work and better coordination, and they make possible to shared-better information.

On the contrary, if the ICT modifies external and internal firm borders (Kalika, 2000) it affects also the work ones, because they create tension fields, particularly in SME (Beaujolin, Dufau, 2001).

Otherwise, the various ICT enforcements have initiated the development of new forms of organisations (Matmati, 2003). Some people speak of virtual organisation whereas it would be more appropriate to

speak of dematerialised organisations (Livian, 2005).

STW is also identified as a new employment and organisation way to work (Lagrevol, 1997). It can use other forms mentioned above, such as remote work (Matmati, 2003). In spite of the traditional way of working him evocates, remote work is analysed according to a continuum (Cocula and Frédy-Planchot, 2001):

- use of occasional manner in a fixed office in a company;
- office reserved within the company, in a 'hotel' kind of way;
- mobility with an obligation to return within the company (without an office) at regular dates;
- homework with mobility to the exterior;
- distance salaried workers having full mobility (being present with clients, suppliers...).

This can suggest several comments:

- each point of the continuum needs adapted skills, especially the last one, which refers to the 'nomadism' problems (Isaac, 2004) ;
- two points can be added: the electronic 'off shore' work (grouping salaried abroad on repetitive operations to far distance companies) and remote services (electronic surveillance, remote maintenance, telecomputing) (Livian, 2005).

• These various ways correspond to a general movement of subcontracting and activity relocation, which refers to the internalisation versus externalisation problematic. At his one is confronted HRM within SME (Mahé de Boislandelle, Nebenhaus, 1995). It is within this context that the authors spoke from STW ;

- Perhaps this one corresponds to 8<sup>th</sup> point which could be expressed in this way: regular and part-time use of a fixed place (which doesn't necessarily have to be an office; for example, in training) for each activity, and at home.

**An exploratory research on Shared-Time Work and Information and communication Technologies**

We met participants of Shared-Time Work, in order to appreciate the use of ICT in this special context.

**Methodology of research**

We resorted to a qualitative exploratory research. We tried to obtain a triangulation of facts, by interviews with :

- users for needs of their business (either employers or customers);
- intermediary managers promoting and/or applying STW;
- shared time workers.

The setting up of the 1<sup>st</sup> sub-sample (called users) is explained by searching diversity of points of view. It takes different frameworks of STW (multi waging, EG, CEA) and economic sectors (building trade, computing, health) into account.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> one (mediators) follows the same logic about frameworks of STW

and size of firms (staff from 10 to 300 persons). That wasn't the same situation for the 1<sup>st</sup> sub-sample, with only very small enterprises.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> one (workers) respects this diversity about the 3 criteria: frameworks of STW (independent, EG, CEA), trades (HR, finance-management, organization-quality) and staff of firms in which they work (from 2 to 350 employees).

On the other hand, for reasons of proximity and personal social network, our sample doesn't show a geographic diversity, with only participants in the Rhone-Alps French region.

Otherwise, we partly used the "snowball" method: for instance, after we identified and interviewed the 3<sup>rd</sup> worker, we asked her to put us in touch with her mediator (coordinator of EG) and one of her customers (co-manager of analysis laboratory).

The table below synthesises the main information concerning the 10 sample participants.

**Table 1**

**Characteristics of interviewees**

Type of interviewee	Status of interviewee	Form of STW	Sector/trade	Strength
User 1	General manager	CEA <sup>5</sup>	Building trade	7 employees
User 2	Manager of LLC	Multi waging	Computing	6 employees
User 3	Co-manager of LLC	EG <sup>6</sup>	Health	17 employees
Mediator 1	Coordinator	EG		10 employees
Mediator 2	General manager	CEA		51 employees
Mediator 3	President of CTP <sup>7</sup>	Rather multi waging		300 members
Worker 1	Manager of LLC	Independent	HR	Up to 350 employees
Worker 2	Salaried entrepreneur	CEA	Finance-management	2-50 employees
Worker 3	Employee	EG	Organization-quality	7-17 employees
Worker 4	Manager of LLC	Independent	HR	2-120 employees

We had half-managerial focused interviews (Romelaer, 2005), during 1 to 1.75 hours. Main themes of the

interviewer guide were first the difficulties encountered with recruitment – the HR concept which is naturally



associated with STW (Vilette, 2006a) –, the reasons for use of STW and the pertinence of this answer to these difficulties. Use of ICT wasn't spontaneously mentioned by any of the interviewees.

Collected information gave rise to a half-formatted analysis of content (content of speech for a half-managerial interview) because a part of themes was fixed before the interview, but it's possible to discover news subjects during the analysis (Romelaer, 2005), as use of ICT. The aims of analysis of the content are to reduce information in order to categorize and to make the connection between the 2 pieces of information, before ending in a description or an explanation (Wacheux, 1996).

### **Contrasted results**

Seeing that use of ICT wasn't one of initial themes of the interviewer guide, it's necessary to specify that volume of collected information about it is naturally modest.

Moreover, it seems pertinent to be prudent with the opinion of some interviewees (especially in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sub-sample):

- CTP only promotes STW. So, its president doesn't take part in the collaboration between the worker and the user ;

- CEA and EG are only legally employers of workers (who mainly spend their time with users). Legitimately, the opinion of the managers can only concern residual time in their organization.

For these 2 mediators, it must be noted that concerning ICT, if we take examples mentioned by Mathonnet, Seval (2003), respective equipments are limited: neither Intranet and Extranet, nor mobile phones and e-trade, Internet reserved access for permanent employees of both organizations. Only e-mail would be used between employer and worker.

So main results turn on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sub-samples, and will be illustrated by a few verbatim.

### **Users of STW among SME put ICT to weak use**

For our 3 users of STW, only Internet is present (except specific applications in computing business). This lack in small and very small sized firms (according to the Mahé de Boislandelle typology, 1998) is confirmed by another example in medium-sized business (80 employees) which welcomed one of our students. In the study to implement HRIS, the first conclusions only spoke about 2 applications: planning and payroll management.

In our research, only the worker 1 collaborates with a business which has a more elaborate HRIS because of its strength : personal administration software, which is common to the group (we can speak about SMOrganization) and small units about skills and training (*"Du coup, on développe des tableaux sur Excel à côté"*). The influence is significant in his daily job of HR manager. To be more precise, the origin of this STW is unusual: the firm was his former employer. The staff cuts leads to put the previous worker on short shifts, which allows to work with other companies.

This result corroborates others researches. In Carpentier study (2009), "these SME mainly used Internet and ERP.[...] Sometimes they experimented about groupware, knowledge management or virtual reality. They had more or less computerized and formalized IS, especially in HR: software can be used for payroll management or employees administration for instance."

Another study about use of ICT in SME (Gadille, Iribarne, 2004) is convergent: training activities (which depends on HR development) has the last rank (4%); it translates the weakness of this function in SME.

On the other hand, as we already said, our research hasn't especially concerned ICT and STW in SME. So we haven't information enough to precise the impact of ICT on strategy of SME in our sample (Vacher, 2003).

For the choice of investment in ICT (Boutary, 2003), the manager, whose skills are often limited about this subject, reacts also here in term of proximity (§ 1.1). He uses his relational networking, which may limit him in decision-making. He usually has no formal strategy – rather strategic intuition for SME (Grepme, 1994) –. If a specialized external (and even internal) interlocutor is concerned, he could bring only answers to technical problems. About HR to increase the value of ICT investments, he has resources in skills at his disposal, which are sufficient for the management of computing material, but deteriorated to use ICT network, and missing for the development of new uses (Gadille, Iribarne, 2004).

About this point, for the same reasons as previously, we didn't collect information which confirms the analysis of the 2 last authors. We can think it intuitively, by our perception only.

### ***Use of ICT is integrated by Shared-Time Workers***

We first have to note that every worker (1 and 4 as managers of LLC, 2 and 3 individually) has his own material (computer, mobile phone) for mainly professional reasons.

Then, another study about 30 SME (Beaujolin, Dufau, 2001) mentioned 3 points of view to analyze the evolution of work (evolution of jobs and skills, evolution of autonomy versus control, evolution of task-force) linked to the use of ICT.

Here, our results refute the ones of this study: beyond the weakness of this use for the sample users, if "first qualifications and skills are changed by the ICT introduction in most of professional environments", our 4 workers have integrated ICT in their job

for a long time ("*je vais changer de téléphone mobile pour être joignable plus facilement*", "*Je vais m'équiper d'un Palm pour mieux organiser mon temps de travail*"). It's linked in part with their level of qualification, of responsibility, and their career.

Furthermore these points probably reduce their controlled autonomy while factory hand often mention this tension between autonomy and prescription, and express the need for operational translation concerning goals, and points of reference to guide action. This reduction is probably highlighted by STW: it is a part-time control and dependence (financially for instance) is weaker because of others activities ("*Le temps partagé rend le pouvoir au salarié.[...] Les cadres à temps partagé ne sont plus serviles : ils retrouvent leur liberté, leur dignité*").

Finally STW touches also the 3<sup>rd</sup> point of view: "to work together with these tools, needs to know each other, which is easier by working together, even without ICT". It's chronologically limited by STW; "network tools aren't enough to develop cooperative work", even in the CEA (Vilette, 2006b): "corporate identity is more difficult to estimate than in a classical cooperative".

### **Conclusions**

There are some similarities between ICT and TTP in their impact on HRM in SME. But if the ICT literature is in abundance, the lack about STW justifies the interest to have realised an inquiry with various STW parties.

Its scope is limited by many characteristics, especially:

- the sample is clearly not representative, because of the way to interviewees (personal networking), their number, the lack of some forms of STW (pluriactivity, external secondment, salaried portage for instance) and others organizations than Enterprises (administrations, associations...), strength of business

and even geographic origin (various development according to the area) ;

- this inquiry wasn't specific to the convergence between ICT and STW, which can explain modest results.

Our research could be also enlarged, in order to understand better:

- why STW doesn't expand with SME whose needs can be answered;

- why STW doesn't enjoy a boom equal to SME needs it can answer, because of managers (reservations about availability, confidentiality, originality...) and workers (personal abilities, motivation...);

- what are the forms of mobilization of these ones and their working and employment conditions.

ICT can take a main place there.

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<sup>1</sup> 49 articles drawn up by Lagrevol (1997, p. 86-88)

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Entreprises et carrières, Courrier Cadres, Management, Personnel (Vilette, 2003b)

<sup>3</sup> An article (Donas, 2005) only mentioned « the 2 forms of Shared Time Work (multi waging and employers group) ». We will present 6 others kinds.

<sup>4</sup> Yearbook 2003 of ANDCP

<sup>5</sup> Coopérative d'Emplois et d'Activités/Jobs and Activities Cooperative

<sup>6</sup> Employers Group

<sup>7</sup> Compétences en Temps Partagé/ Shared Time Skills : local association promoting shared time

<sup>8</sup> Pôle d'Echanges, de Ressources et d'Information sur la Pluriactivité, devenu depuis Centre de Ressources Interrégional Alpin sur la Pluriactivité et la Saisonnalité