

**WORKING CONDITIONS: WHICH DEFINITION?**  
**THE WORKING HYPOTHESIS OF THE GENERAL INDEPENDENT FEDERATION OF CIVIL SERVANTS (FGAF)**

Source: « *White paper on the working conditions of the civil servants and public agents* »,  
Hervé Garlet et José Razafindranaly, 2014, ISBN : 978-2-9549157-0-8

**I – PROPOSAL FOR A DEFINITION**

**Proposed definition:** Working conditions are combining the respective **contributions** of:

- « decent work »
  - « quality of life in the workplace » and of
  - a « fair, constructive and **responsible** social dialogue»,
- within the **framework** of a continuous improvement process of a number of parameters (organizational, normative, ethical, managerial, technical, material and human) that influence the satisfaction that can be found daily by people in their workplace in order to contribute to the personal fulfilment and self - realization of the worker.

« I. Working **conditions refers to all the parameters** :

- organizational,
- normative,
- ethical,
- managerial,
- technical,
- material and
- human,

which influence the satisfaction found daily by workers in their workplace in order to contribute to the:

- fulfilment and
- self - realization of these persons.

II. The **identification of these parameters stems from the analysis conducted simultaneously on** :

- the environment of the work,
- the organization of the work and
- the content of the work,

and on the consequences of work on :

- the health and
- personal and social life of these persons.

III. The ***improvement of these working conditions forms a continuous process which*** :

- starting from a shared vision and conception of work,
- aims at impacting in a concerted and coordinated manner on the factors affecting these different parameters.

## **B – « MACRO » APPROACH TO WORKING CONDITIONS**

The « **MACRO** » approach is a procedure of global analysis that can be used at the level of a country, a sector or a line of business. It combines the respective contributions of:

- « decent work »
- « quality of life in the workplace » and of
- a « fair, constructive and **responsible** social dialogue»,

### ***I. « Decent work » as it has been designed with the studies of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)***

It allows every person to get a job in conditions of :

1. Freedom,
2. Fairness,
3. Safety and
4. Dignity.

It consists of a dozen essential elements which correspond to the four strategic pillars of decent work:

1. Full productive employment,
2. Rights at work,
3. Social protection and
4. Promotion of social dialogue.

### ***II. « Quality of life in the workplace », as it has been designed by the National Interprofessional Agreement (NIA) of June 19<sup>th</sup> 2013 (article 1).***

Quality of life at work, can be conceived as a feeling of well-being at work, perceived:

- collectively as well as

- individually, and

Which includes :

1. « *Atmosphere*,
2. *Corporate culture*,
3. ***Interest of the work***,
4. *Working conditions*,
5. *The feeling of involvement*,
6. *The degree of autonomy and accountability*,
7. *Equality*,
8. *Room for error granted to every individual*,
9. *Recognition for the work carried out and*
10. *Praise for this work* » (Art. 1 of NIA)

### **III. A high-quality social dialogue including all possible forms (formal and informal)**

#### C –« MESO » & « MICRO » APPROACHES TO WORKING CONDITIONS

The « MICRO » approach is a procedure of analysis centered on an **agent at his working post in one of the elementary units of work** (management, administration or production services) of the organizational structure that employs him / her. This « *close to the field* » approach brings to light the immediate and direct working conditions of this worker.

The « MESO » approach tackles the working conditions that result from the organizational production structure (hospital, high school, city hall, local police service,...) overseeing the working unit where the agent is posted and where he works.

These working conditions can be regrouped into 4 big components:

1. An immaterial component,
2. A material component,
3. A relational component,
4. A social and societal component.

To these four components can be added an institutional one which directs and determines them, and which includes the activities of policymakers and the Parliament (the preparation of Laws and regulations, tax and budget decisions, control and assessment of the implementation of norms).

	<b>IMMATERIAL COMPONENT</b>	<b>MATERIAL COMPONENT</b>	<b>RELATIONAL COMPONENT</b>	<b>SOCIAL AND SOCIETAL COMPONENT</b>
<p><b>« MESO » approach:</b> the one of the organizational production structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missions, structure and management of the affiliated entity.</li> <li>• Doctrines and rules of action (Quality, salaries, health and safety at work).</li> <li>• Methods and working procedures (qualification policy: recruitment and qualification).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy of workplaces : localization (neighborhood, streets), premises, buildings, other places (cars, buses, trains, planes,...)</li> <li>• Equipment policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal partners</li> <li>• external partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Users, clients</li> <li>• General public, citizens</li> <li>• Taxpayers</li> </ul>
<p><b>« MICRO » approach:</b> the one of the WORKER and of his/her close and direct working environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of the management and of the immediate hierarchy.</li> <li>• Qualification : recruitment and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplace</li> <li>• Equipments (material and materials)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate colleagues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate beneficiaries of the work.</li> <li>• Private sphere : relatives, friends...</li> </ul>