

Les cotisations sociales 1970-2008 : trajectoires non-discrétionnaires et impulsions discrétionnaires

Réginald SAVAGE
Conseiller général des Finances

ABSTRACT

Compulsory social security contributions levied by public administrations (PA) are an essential source of funding for public expenditure. With the passing years, their relative share in the economy experienced important changes, as well for structural or nondiscretionary reasons relating to lasting changes in the relative weights of the – principally wage – tax bases, as for reasons of discretionary budgetary and tax policy. This article aims at quantifying, as accurately as possible and in a long term perspective, the respective impact of these nondiscretionary (the so-called composition effects) and discretionary elements. For that purpose, an essential distinction will be made between the system applicable to *statutory* civil servants, who must not be mistaken for PA's employees, and the general social security scheme for employees which among others also applies to *contractual* civil servants.

This will give a better idea of the cumulative impact of the discretionary increases in social security contributions which were realised over the period 1982-1988 as part of a budgetary consolidation and structural refinancing of the social security system, and on the contrary, the high budgetary costs of the cumulated reductions of social security contributions (in the broad sense) realised since 1993 in order to support the employment policy. It notably appears that these reductions realised since 1993, wage subsidies included, have neutralised almost half of the important discretionary increase (2.8 % of the GDP) realised in 1982-1988.

Keywords: social contributions, tax policy, structure effects, discretionary impulses

JEL Classification Code: H22, H27, H30