

What centralities outside metropolises? The future development of small European cities as a key issue for territorial equity

International Conference
Lamballe (Côtes d'Armor, France), March 22nd and 23rd 2018

Organization: The scientific interest group "Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence in Rennes", the scientific interest group "Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de Rennes" (IAUR), the research laboratory ESO Rennes, the Chair "Territoires et Mutations de l'Action Publique" of Sciences Po Rennes, with the support of the Western Institute of Law and Europe (IODE) from the University of Rennes 1 and the city of Lamballe.

"Metropolization" can be defined as an economic and demographic polarization process rendered even more powerful in France since the setting up of official *Métropoles* by the so-called MAPTAM law in 2014 whose objective is to support "the affirmation of the metropolises". As a result, this spatial concentration dynamics seems to marginalize the areas located outside the perimeter of these new cooperation arenas. Many cities are too distant to benefit from any metropolitan spillover effects. Of course the future of these non-metropolitan areas is not an exclusively French issue. Everywhere in the European Union, their fate depends increasingly on EU policies with a territorial impact (CAP, competition, cohesion, transport). Consequently the future development of small European cities has become an issue of territorial equity throughout the European Union. This issue clearly requires the attention of politicians and stakeholders involved in local urban development. The cities described as small towns or as a regional centers in a European context can be viewed as medium-sized cities within their national territory. Even defined in this broad sense, small European cities have been relatively little studied by scientific research, which has mainly focused on the top levels of the urban hierarchy, thus neglecting the dynamics of rural areas distant from metropolises. Therefore, this conference aims to address four issues regarding non-metropolitan centralities, in France and in the EU.

1. What polarities for the countryside?

The development of small urban centers is heterogeneous in space and time: how have these polarities evolved? How is one to measure their dynamics? What conclusions can be drawn? How do they participate in globalization? What about their role in economic, environmental and social innovations? Can the effects of these changes be anticipated? Could prospective scenarios be of any assistance?

Keywords: spatial diagnosis - past and future paths - demography - shrinking cities - accessibility - competitiveness - production systems - regeneration - energy and ecological changes - challenges – foresight.

2. What development strategies?

Faced with mixed patterns of urban changes, public and private actors tend to implement counter-acting or accompanying strategies. What about local initiatives? How far are they successful? What about regional and national spatial or sector-based development policies? To what extent is this redeployment of public action effective?

Keywords: local, regional and national strategies - endogenous development - innovation - public policies - local authorities - State.

3. Any cohesion? EU policies



The future of non-metropolitan centralities is increasingly dependent on European policies. How far is the EU concerned about small and medium-sized cities? What are the impact of EU policies on the economic, social and territorial cohesion of non-metropolitan areas? How is one to assess their possible leverage effect?

Keywords: European Union - cohesion policy - SGEI - CAP Pillar 2 - competition policy - transport policy - inland peripheries - polycentrism - territorial cooperation – EU territorial agenda.

4. What territorial governance?

The new delineations and enhanced competences devolved to the local authorities cannot but shake up territorial modes of governance. How should solidarity between territorial neighbors be organized? How to manage enlarged, widespread cooperation areas? All in all, how should areas remaining outside the new, official cooperation metropolitan areas be governed ?

Keywords: inter-municipality cooperation - proximity - solidarity - taxation - sociability - local democracy – politics - LAGs.

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Paper proposals should include a title and a 1-2-page summary (in French, English or German). Presentations will be given in French and Powerpoint files possibly in English. Selected papers will be published in a thematic issue of a classified journal of geography (French or foreign), possibly in French, English or German.

Project timeline :

- Dead-line for paper submission: November 27, 2017
- Result of the selection by the Committees: December 18, 2017

Key information:

- registration fee: 80 euros
- Each proposal must include: 1) author identification data (first name, surname, position, institution, e-mail address); 2) the title of the paper; 3) a 1-2 page summary;
- Submission of proposals should be sent to: helene.rannou@univ-rennes1.fr by 27 November 2017

