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RESEARCH IN ECONOMICS AND RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Services for the populations: the relevance of the residential economy

In France, the increasing weight of jobs in services for the populations makes these service sectors an essential component of contemporary rural economics. Their development, which in the last decade asserted itself in the periurban municipalities and in predominantly rural areas, contributes significantly to the economic dynamics of the rural and periurban areas, with public services playing a central role. This rapid development has brought together the shops and services for the populations they serve; their accessibility, however, depends on the nature of the facilities and on their rationales of location.

A predominant business sector in numerous rural and periurban areas

Though it is difficult to define the activities directly pertaining to services for populations in the classifications of economic activities, they are of great significance. In 1999, they include more than 40% of non-farming jobs, in the strict sense of the word, that is to say comprising only shops, market services for private individuals and public services for Education, health and social action, and more than 60% of these same jobs if we add financial and real estate activities, administration and transportation to the previous list, that is to say if we only exclude services to enterprises (table 1).

On the scale of the "living basins" (see figure 1), their weight has become so significant that they dominate the economic activity of many rural and periurban areas. More than 55% of living basins may be considered as *highly residential*, in the sense that more than half of jobs correspond to so-called "residential jobs" (map 1). Sometimes linked to tourism development (in the mountainous or coastal basins as well as in a few tourist areas like the Morvan, Massif Central or Périgord), this residential economy may also be linked to a not insignificant industrial or agrifood activity: east of the Cherbourg/Marseille diagonal, the residential and industrial basins are numerous while those with a residential and agrifood orientation are mainly located to the west of the diagonal, with the exception of Provence-Alpes-Côte-d'Azur in the first case and Pays-de-Loire in the second. As for highly residential basins without any other predominance, they are characteristic of the Mediterranean coast and the South-West, while they have a strong foothold in Burgundy, Ile-de-France and Nord-pas-de-Calais.

Growth in periurban and rural employment mainly driven by public services

We are aware of the rural and periurban over-representation of industry and the urban over-representation of services to enterprises. Conversely, it is important to mention the absence of over- or under-representation of shops and services for private individuals, as their distribution does not vary much from that observed for non-farming jobs as a whole,

according to the four groups in French zoning into urban areas and rural employment areas (table 1). These jobs are a little more concentrated than the populations they serve: nearly 75% of jobs related to shops and services for private individuals are located in the urban centres while only 60% of the population lives there, the remaining 40% of the people, who live in periurban areas or in predominantly rural areas, find only 25% of jobs relating to the services they use in their living area. Of course, the jobs of the upper strata are those that are concentrated in urban areas, the others remaining close to consumers.

At present, particularly as far as public services are concerned, the role played by these jobs is at the heart of contemporary rural and periurban dynamics. They contribute to economic growth in the periurban communes in a decisive way and in predominantly rural areas in an intense way. The rapid growth in non-farming periurban jobs (+18% between 1990 and 1999) is significantly fuelled by growth in Education, health and social action (+43%) and to a lesser extent by the growth in shops (14%) and in services for private individuals (21%). In the predominantly rural areas, the same is true but to a lesser degree, with the exception of shops, the number of which is virtually stable, as in the urban centres. In the rural employment areas, the jobs in Education, health and social action have risen by 23% in 9 years, while those in services for private individuals only rose by 12%. The other municipalities in predominantly rural areas even have a higher growth rate of jobs in Education, health and social action (+34%), explaining the growth in non-farming jobs which is quicker in these municipalities (+9%) than in the rural employment zones (5%).

Non competitive facilities, particularly health facilities, closer than the others

Beyond its role in economic growth, this rapid spread of shops and services for private individuals has brought them closer to the rural and periurban populations. Measuring the inhabitants' average distance to the facilities and places of study and work, by taking into account the basins' endowment and the fluidity of traffic flow between municipalities, the accessibilities show the local potentials and constraints of daily mobility. On average, the inhabitants of the living basins live 16 minutes from shopping centres and facilities, an average which masks the differences due

to the nature of resources (competitive, non-competitive facilities, education, health or employment facilities) and to the rationales of location (table 2).

Local health facilities are the most accessible ones: they are only five minutes away, that is to say an access time which is slightly lower than the commonest public services. Three-quarters of the better served living basins are 6 minutes away at most, and only 15 basins have an access time exceeding 15 minutes. But when hospital services are taken into account, the average access time to health services goes up to 19 minutes, with 75% of the basins less than 27 minutes, the 52 most distant pools being more than 45 minutes away, and 10 pools more than an hour away. In terms of accessibility, local health services are followed by non-competitive local facilities (except for education and health), the average distance being 6 minutes, with 75% of the pools located at 7 minutes at most. Shopping centres and competitive services come next with an average access time of 9 minutes.

Estimated through the commuting of working people and pupils, the accessibilities to workplaces and study places are 17 and 23 minutes respectively. The differential is 6 minutes for a quarter of the living basins for which the commuting times are the shortest and reach 10 minutes for the other three quarters for which accessibility is the best. Therefore, to go to school, children go further from home than their parents do to go to work. The geography of the school and training sectors and the possibilities of bypassing the “school sectors” (map showing which state schools belong to which geographical area) partly explain these differences. Accessibility to the closest educational facilities from the pupils’ home is only 14 minutes, that is to say a travel time 9 minutes less than the actual time and slightly shorter than that of working people. Pupils of 16-18 years old (i.e. secondary school pupils whose travel is not necessarily daily, particularly boarders) are responsible for the length of school distances. If we leave them out, the access time drops to 9 minutes with a distance below 11 minutes in 75% of the living basins.

The landscape and territorial organization of employment condition accessibilities

Though the geographical location of non-competitive services seems more regular than the others, the levels of accessibility to the facilities are relatively correlated (see maps 2a to 2d). The access times to the facilities contribute to qualifying the

living basins in terms of transport access or enclave. The improvement of the transport infrastructures may modify the distance by permitting quicker access to facilities. However, accessibility remains significantly determined by the road network capillarity and traffic conditions, which, leaving aside the phenomena of the traffic jams which are characteristic of towns, are chiefly determined by the twists, turns and slopes of the landscape. For example, with the exception of the home-to-work access time, the access time to the living basins increases for all categories of facilities with the average altitude of the towns concerned. On the regional scale, on a wide strip of territory including Champagne-Ardennes, Burgundy, Franche-Comté, Centre, Auvergne, Poitou-Charentes, Limousin, Aquitaine, Midi-Pyrénées and Corsica, where more than two thirds of the living basins show longer access times to the four categories of facilities than the national average, the drop in accessibility is quite clear. The low density of facilities and the difficult traffic conditions explain this situation. In Ile-de-France, Nord-pas-de-Calais and Alsace, most of the living basins have good accessibility (with the exception of the non-competitive facilities in the living basins in Ile-de-France). Elsewhere, one to two thirds of the living basins have better accessibility than the national average, with, however, a slight drop in school-bus services in the South-East of the country and more generally for all facilities in the Southern Alps.

The geography of accessibility to jobs is very different (see map 2e). Here, the combination of job concentration and the attraction of the big urban centers determine the spatial distribution of accessibilities. If, for 45% of the living basins, the commuting time of working people is higher than the average taken as a standard of the restricted rural group, it is the case of 80% of the basins when they are animated by a market town located in the periurban belt and of 72% in the multi-polar (table 3). The commuting time is 24 and 22 minutes, respectively.

On the other hand, when the living basins are centred around a small urban center or a rural employment area, where commuter traffic concerns more than one working person out of two, the proportion of the distant basins is lower: 21 and 23% of the basins respectively, with a commuting time of 20 minutes. Out of the other 546 basins, the market towns of which are located in another communes in the predominantly rural area, 236 show longer access times than the average, with a commuter access time equal to that of working people from the small urban centers or the rural employment centres.

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Table 1 - Weight (1999) and dynamics of jobs (1990-1999) according to French zoning groups (ZAUER)

	Urban centres		Periurban communes		Rural employment areas		Other communes		Metropolitan France	
	N 99 (%)	Δ90/99 (%)	N 99 (%)	Δ90/99 (%)	N 99 (%)	Δ90/99 (%)	N 99 (%)	Δ90/99 (%)	N 99 (%)	Δ90/99 (%)
Mainly market services:	45.9	6.2	37.2	24.8	35.1	9.1	33.8	10.3	43.3	8.2
Shops	14.0	-1.2	13.7	14.4	14.0	2.4	12.0	1.0	13.8	0.8
Services for individuals	7.5	19.2	7.8	20.5	7.2	11.9	9.5	9.9	7.7	17.9
Financial and real estate activities	5.2	-13.2	1.7	-26.4	2.5	-24.9	1.7	-32.6	4.4	-15.1
Transports	4.7	2.0	4.9	37.6	3.2	11.9	3.6	25.5	4.6	7.1
Services to enterprises	14.4	19.3	9.0	67.1	8.2	40.7	6.9	48.5	12.8	24.0
Government services:	32.8	16.2	27.2	40.5	30.3	23.0	29.1	31.4	31.7	19.7
Education, Health, social action	19.9	16.2	18.7	42.8	21.3	23.2	19.6	33.5	19.8	20.4
Industry & Building	21.3	-17.0	35.6	-0.2	34.6	- 9.3	37.1	-4.5	25.1	-12.6
All non-farming jobs	100.0	2.9	100.0	17.9	100.0	5.3	100.0	9.1	100.0	5.1
Numbers (N)	16223	+466	2583	+392	1380	+70	1668	+140	21853	+1067

Source: INSEE. - RP 1990 & 1999 (at the workplace)

Table 2 – Accessibilities to facilities for living basins (access time in minutes)

Types of resources	average	Of the best served basins	
		25 %	75 %
Accessibility to facilities:			
-competitive	9	7	12
-non competitive	14	11	20
local facilities	6	4	7
-health	19	16	27
local facilities	5	3	6
-school facilities	14	11	20
Accessibility according to commuting:			
-home - school of pupils aged 7-18	23	20	30
Aged 15-18	9	7	11
-home - work (working people)	17	14	20
General accessibility	16	15	21

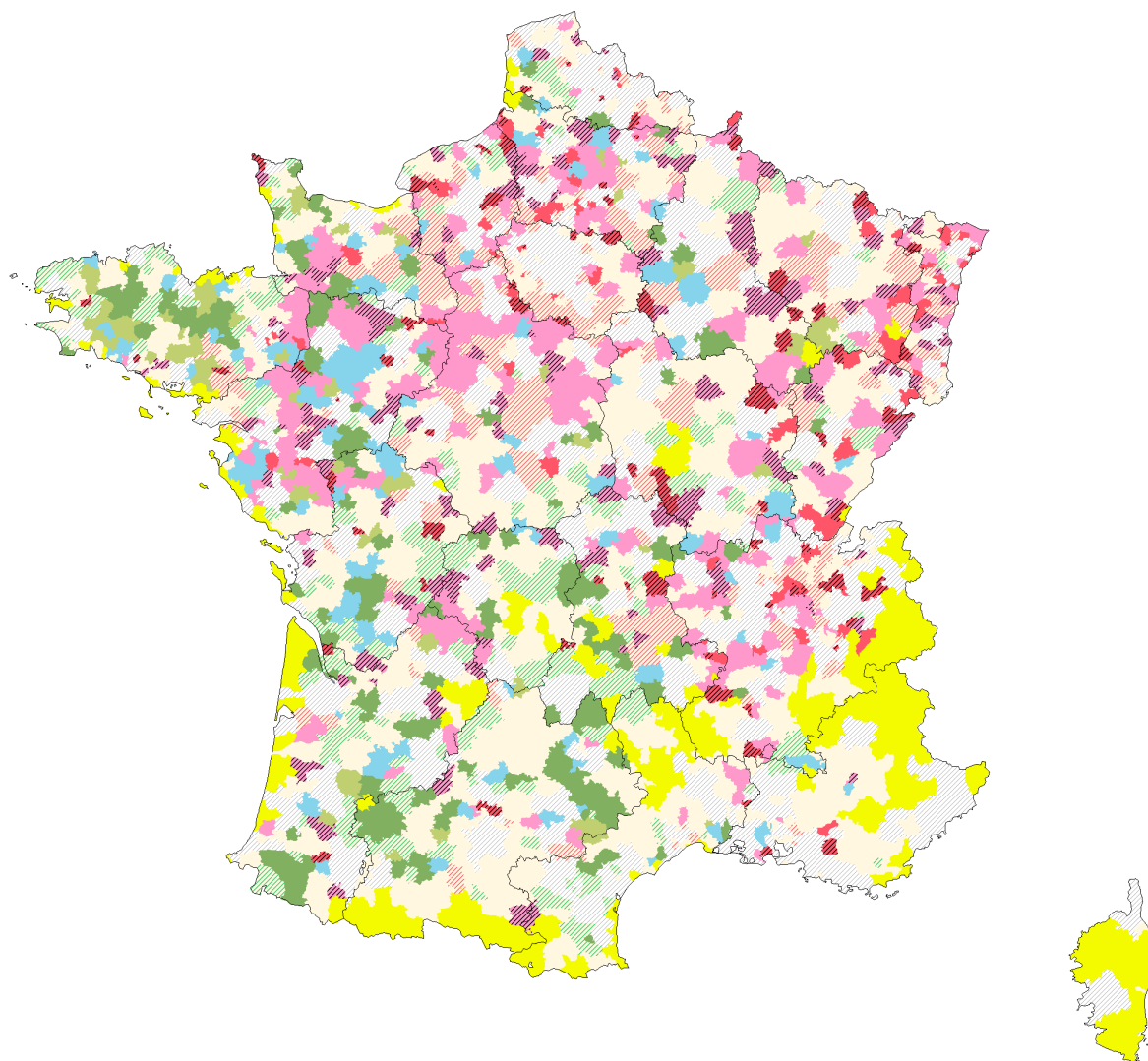
Source: according to INSEE, IFEN, INRA, SCEES (2003)

Table 3 –Living basins where commuting time to place of work and study is higher than 17 minutes (national average)

	Share (%)	Commuting time (minutes)
Basins in the restricted rural group	45.0	22
Centred around urban hubs of less than 30,000 inhabitants	21.3	20
centred around a municipality of a monopolar belt	80.1	24
centred around multipolarized municipalities	71.8	22
Centred around rural employment hubs	23.0	20
centred around other municipalities in the rural area	43.2	20

Source: according to INSEE, IFEN, INRA, SCEES (French Institute of Statistics) (2003)

Map 1 – Economic orientation of the living basins



	Name of the category	Rules of classification ⁽¹⁾	Number of living basins
	Highly residential and tourist oriented areas	$E_R > 1/2$; $T \geq 1.5$	192
	Highly residential and industrial areas	$E_R > 1/2$; $T < 1.5$; $E_I > E_A$; $E_I > 1/3$	154
	Highly residential and agrifood-oriented areas	$E_R > 1/2$; $T < 1.5$; $E_A \geq E_I$; $E_A > 1/6$	167
	Highly residential and without industrial or agrifood predominance	Autres cas où $E_R > 1/2$ & $T < 1.5$	464
	Farming agrifood areas	$E_R \leq 1/2$; $E_A \geq E_I$; $E_A > 1/6$; $Agr/AA > 1/2$	137
	Food agrifood areas	$E_R \leq 1/2$; $E_A \geq E_I$; $E_A > 1/6$; $Agr/AA < 1/2$	51
	Very mono-specialised industrial areas	$E_I \geq 1/2$; $Pid \geq 1/2$	90
	Non mono-specialised very industrial areas	$E_I \geq 1/2$; $Pid < 1/2$	78
	Fairly industrial and mono-specialised areas	$E_R \leq 1/2$; $E_I > E_A$; $1/3 \leq E_I < 1/2$; $Pid \geq 1/2$	118
	Non mono-specialised and fairly industrial areas	$E_R \leq 1/2$; $E_I > E_A$; $1/3 \leq E_I < 1/2$; $Pid < 1/2$	202
	"Diversified" areas	Other cases when $E_R \leq 1/2$	92
	TOTAL		1745

(1) ER = Share of the "residential" jobs in the basins (retail outlets, Market services for private individuals and public facilities, Building, Transport of passengers, Financial and real estate activities)

EA = Share of the number of "agrifood jobs" (Agriculture and agrifood industries)

EI = Share of the "industrial jobs" in the broad sense (all sectors including Industries except for Agrifood industry and market services to enterprises)

T = Hotel capacity/Size of the resident population (number of beds for tourists / residents)

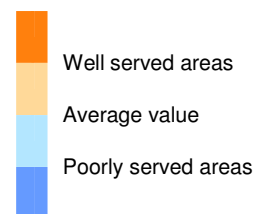
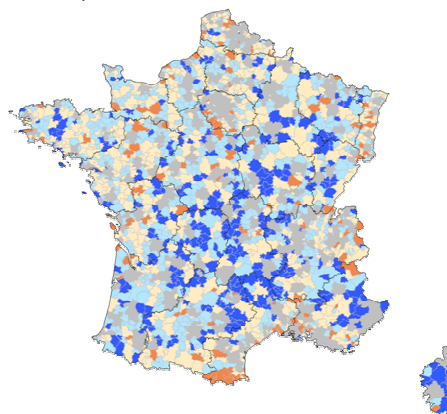
Agr/AA = Share of farming jobs in the "agrifood" jobs

Pid = Weight of the biggest industrial sector (NES 36) among the industrial sectors (strict sense and except for agrifood industries)

Maps 2 - Accessibilities to shops and services

Map 2a – accessibility to competitive services

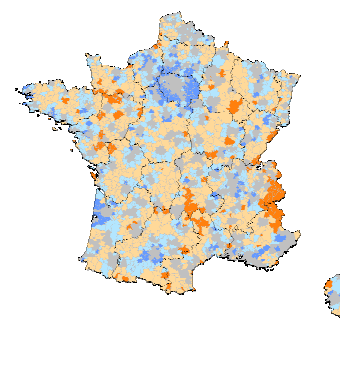
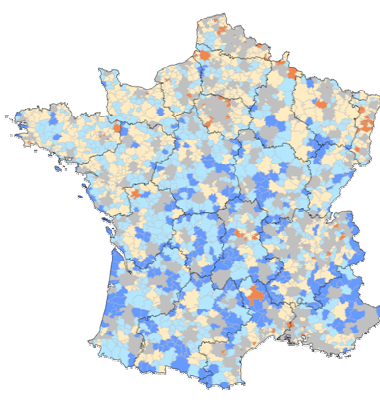
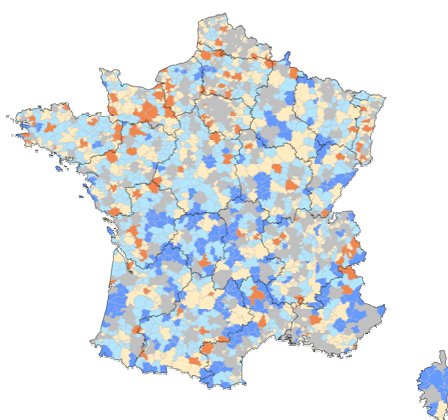
Map 2b – accessibility to non competitive services



Map 2c – accessibility to health services

Map 2d – accessibility of pupils to schools

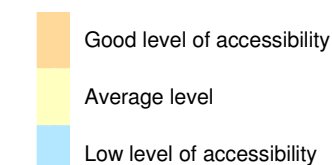
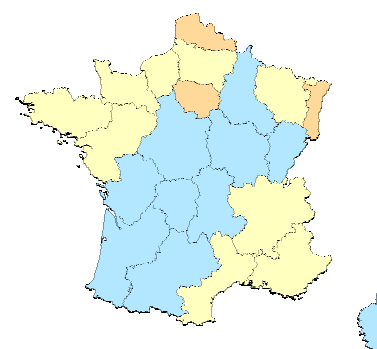
Map 2e – Accessibility of working people to their place of work



3 - Regional disparities in accessibilities

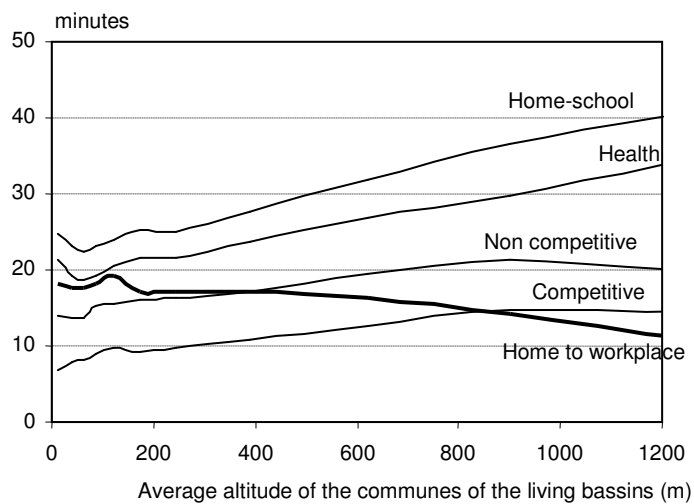
Regions	Number of basins	Distribution of the living pools with a percentage of access time of (%)			
		competitive services higher than 9 minutes	To non competitive services higher than 14 minutes	health services higher than 19 minutes	Home-school distance higher than 23 minutes
ILE-DE-FRANCE	61	34.4	41.0	32.8	21.3
NORD-PAS-DE-CALAIS	60	33.3	30.0	28.3	13.3
ALSACE	54	42.6	31.5	37.0	20.4
LORRAIN	70	50.0	64.3	60.0	44.3
RHONE-ALPES	159	52.2	61.0	57.9	61.0
LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON	92	43.5	35.9	65.2	55.4
PROVENCE-ALPES-CÔTE D'AZUR	75	40.0	45.3	46.7	60.0
PICARDIE	82	58.5	54.9	50.0	36.6
HAUTE-NORMANDIE	57	45.6	59.6	57.9	36.8
BASSE-NORMANDIE	74	36.5	58.1	43.2	52.7
PAYS DE LA LOIRE	128	46.1	55.5	64.8	54.7
BRETAGNE	134	31.3	60.4	56.7	51.5
CHAMPAGNE-ARDENNE	42	66.7	64.3	73.8	59.5
CENTRE	101	59.4	75.2	76.2	82.2
BOURGOGNE	74	70.3	75.7	63.5	77.0
FRANCHE-COMTE	45	66.7	71.1	75.6	73.3
POITOU-CHARENTES	82	61.0	56.1	69.5	81.7
AQUITAINE	107	57.0	70.1	69.2	77.6
MIDI-PYRENEES	123	67.5	69.1	74.0	80.5
LIMOUSIN	43	79.1	83.7	88.4	88.4
AUVERGNE	68	75.0	75.0	72.1	69.1
CORSE	14	92.9	85.7	85.7	92.9
France	1745	52.5	59.5	60.8	59.0

Map 3 –Regional level of accessibility



Source: INSEE, IFEN, INRA, SCEES, 2003

Figure 1 – Accessibilities to categories of services according to the town altitude



Source: according to INSEE. IFEN. INRA. SCEES, 2003

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