

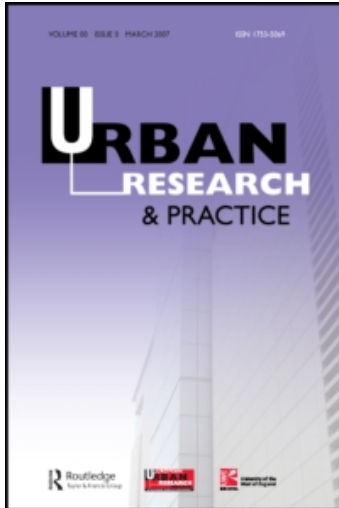
This article was downloaded by: [Geppert, Anna]

On: 28 December 2009

Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 917952934]

Publisher Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Urban Research & Practice

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t777186834>

Polycentricity: can we make it happen? From a concept to its implementation

Anna Geppert ^a

^a Institut d'Urbanisme et d'Aménagement de la Sorbonne, University of Paris-Sorbonne, Paris, France

Online publication date: 18 December 2009

To cite this Article Geppert, Anna(2009) 'Polycentricity: can we make it happen? From a concept to its implementation', Urban Research & Practice, 2: 3, 251 – 268

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/17535060903319145

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17535060903319145>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Polycentricity: can we make it happen? From a concept to its implementation

Anna Geppert*

Institut d'Urbanisme et d'Aménagement de la Sorbonne, University of Paris–Sorbonne, Paris, France

This article argues that between the adoption of the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP; 1999) and today, the concept of polycentricity has changed: the footprint of the French *aménagement du territoire*, characterized by the quest for a more harmonious distribution of population and growth, has faded, leaving room for a more differentiated approach aiming to 'make the best of territorial diversity' in a globalized, competitive environment. Its implementation remains in the hands of national and local stakeholders and ensuring their commitment calls for a reinvigoration of governance. France has undergone a similar change and is trying to implement a new policy to enhance polycentricism.

Keywords: polycentricity; metropolitanization; urban systems; governance; France; European spatial planning

Introduction

Since 1999, the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) has promoted the concept of polycentric development of the European territory driven by a well-balanced network of cities. The goal is not easy to reach, as at the same time, in the words of Sassen (1991) globalization favours the development of a small number of thick places. In reality there is considerable doubt whether European space is becoming more balanced: metropolitan areas strengthen, while small and middle-sized cities do not seem to catch up, in spite of public policies aimed at reducing territorial disparities. In addition, the two last enlargements have increased the challenge. Yet, in 2007, the European Ministers in charge of urban and regional development gathered at the informal ministerial meeting in Leipzig confirmed the priority to 'strengthen polycentric development and innovation through networking of city regions and cities' (European Union 2007, p. 4). However, the European Union has no legal competence in spatial planning and the process remains inter-governmental; in other words, national planning authorities are responsible for its interpretation and implementation. The question remains: can we make it happen, and how?

The present paper discusses the *sous-entendus* of the concept, arguing that its implicit meaning and implications in terms of policymaking have evolved between 1999 and 2007. In the ESDP, polycentricism was influenced by the French *aménagement du territoire*, an egalitarian approach aiming to redistribute population and growth through the whole territory. Progressively, we have moved away from this idea towards the objective of making

*Email: Anna.Geppert@paris-sorbonne.fr

better use of territorial diversity in a context of global competition. We thus come to 'territorial cohesion', where complementarity of spaces and territorial links becomes more important than the development of similar territorial assets. In terms of methodology, the success of bottom-up approaches and the shrinking of national budgets have led to an emphasis on 'governance', here understood as improved collaboration between the different stakeholders, including public-private partnerships. Here we will consider evidence, and the implications, from the French experience. In France, after a shift from top-down to bottom-up approaches, the government is now trying to build a new methodology. The experience highlights current trends, with their opportunities but also their limits. As a conclusion, we will seek to draw some lessons from this experience.

The concept of polycentricity: a change of paradigm from balancing development to making better use of territorial diversity

Although it is a suggestive concept, polycentricism remains somewhat ambivalent. My argument is that over the last decade its meaning has evolved from the quest for 'balanced' territorial development, as coined by the French *aménagement du territoire*, to an attempt to make the best of territorial diversity, enhancing the role of cities as drivers of territorial competitiveness.

As demonstrated by Faludi and Peyrony (2001), the ESDP bears a French footprint. The introduction of polycentricism in the ESDP was influenced by the conceptual background of French policies seeking to reduce disparities between Paris and the other parts of the French territory – the very question that gave birth to the French *aménagement du territoire* (spatial planning). In the France of the 1950s, the essay by Jean-François Gravier, 'Paris and the French Desert', introduced the assumption that the capital was hijacking the development of the whole country. The text was critical: 'since 1850, in all areas, the agglomeration of Paris has acted, not as a metropolis bringing vitality to its hinterland, but as a monopoly-trust devouring the national substance. . .' (Gravier 1947, p. 60). In consequence, the whole country suffered an 'internal haemorrhage', its vital resources being drained by the 'tentacles' of Paris. As a conclusion, Gravier recommended the relocation of population and industries out of Paris. In 1956, the French Minister responsible for planning (Eugène Claudius-Petit) implemented a policy of relocation of industries out of the capital region (*décentralisation industrielle*). On the one hand, the establishment of new industries in the territory of the région Ile-de-France was restricted by the scarcity of location permits (*agrément*). On the other hand, firms moving out from Paris were given grants (the PAT, *Prime à l'aménagement du territoire*) – a system which under Jacques Delors¹ influenced the regulations of European structural funds.

This view – the necessity to relocate growth from Paris to other parts of the country – dominated French planning for a generation. In 1962, Eugène Claudius-Petit decided to actively support French second-tier cities as a counterweight to Paris and thereby improve the overall balance of the French city-system. Two geographers, an academic (Michel Rochefort) and an executive state official (Jean Hautreux), carried out research on this 'core grid' (*l'armature urbaine*). They identified eight cities that would play this role: Lyon, Marseille, Lille, Nancy, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Nantes and Strasbourg (Hautreux and Rochefort 1963, 1964). A political decision confirmed this list of *métropoles d'équilibre* but extended the scope to their metropolitan areas, associating groups of cities in polycentric metropolises (Aix-Marseille, Lille-Roubaix-Tourcoing, Nancy-Metz-Thionville, Nantes-Saint-Nazaire and a few years later, Lyon-Saint-Etienne-Grenoble). In the 1970s, after a wave of protest from cities that had not been included, the list was enlarged to the

next tier of cities, ones that were less significant in terms of national position (Clermont-Ferrand, Dijon, Nice, Rennes, Rouen, Caen, Limoges, Montpellier), but providing the functions of regional centres.² In 1963, the newly established DATAR (Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale)³ was responsible both for the *décentralisation industrielle* and the policy of *métropoles d'équilibre*. The latter received important investments in their main transportation infrastructures, such as the Satolas Airport in Lyon, or higher education, such as the campus of Bordeaux–Pessac, at the time the largest in Europe. In the 1970s, an attempt to address the position of cities on lower tiers emerged; but this was stymied by the crisis of the 1970s and produced no significant effects.

Inspired by Christaller's Central Place Theory, the conceptual background of the policy of *métropoles d'équilibre* was that the ideal shape for an urban system was a well-balanced hierarchy of poles structuring interlocked areas of influence (Christaller 1933). France looked with admiration at the 'Rhineland-type' city-systems in Germany or the Netherlands (Julliard and Nonn 1976). Secondly, this conceptual background was strongly embedded in the egalitarian conception of the French Republic, 'single and indivisible' according to the preamble of the Constitution of 1958; bringing similar assets to all territories is a mirror of the equality of rights and duties of all French citizens.

Mutantis mutandis – the scale has changed and we are in the 1990s: the ESDP bears the same footprint. The subtitle points to its overall goal, *Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union*. In this conception, polycentric development is closely related to the idea of a harmonious distribution of population and growth. In merely two pages, the section dedicated to polycentric spatial development refers to (im)balance six times, always in combination with polycentric(ity). The diagnosis points out that:

The concept of polycentric development has to be pursued, to ensure regionally balanced development, because the EU is becoming fully integrated in the global economy. Pursuit of this concept will help to avoid further excessive economic and demographic concentration in the core area of the EU. The economic potential of all regions of the EU can only be utilized through the further development of a more polycentric European settlement structure. (ESDP 1999, p. 20)

As in the French approach, the dominance of the 'core area of the European Union'⁴ is considered a threat to Europe's (balanced) development; according to this view, a more even evolution of settlement patterns and of the distribution of economic activities appears a condition necessary to achieve the 'more balanced competitiveness of the European territory' sought in the preamble of the ESDP. Moreover, this effort needs to be supported by Community policies with a spatial impact.

Yet, from the very beginning, elaboration of the concept was problematic. At what scale should it be understood? At the European level, there is no political consensus over how to establish the boundaries between the 'core' and the peripheries. During the long elaboration of the ESDP (1989–1999), maps showing a spatial vision were so contested that finally they had to be withdrawn to allow the process to come to a conclusion (Faludi and Waterhout 2002). In the final text, the same concept goes from the European scale to the most local 'centre–periphery' configuration, urban–rural partnerships. In terms of implementation, as the European Union has no competence in spatial planning, the ESDP is 'no masterplan', according to the expression of Faludi (2002). The implementation of polycentricism remains the prerogative of member states; as a result, national policies vary.

En route, at the European level, priorities have been influenced by the Lisbon–Göteborg strategy. Although initially the strategy had no explicit territorial dimension, post-2005 it has become the key to all European policies (Geppert 2007). Lisbon is the answer to the major changes affecting the European social model. Firstly, ongoing demographic changes, population decline and ageing require a high level of employment in order to preserve our welfare systems (and in particular pensions). Secondly, globalization implies that Europe must set the pace in all the sectors where competition is intensifying; and, given the high cost of European labour force, the focus must be on sectors with high added value. For this purpose, we should make the best of the shift to a digital, knowledge-based economy prompted by new goods and services that appear to offer a powerful engine for growth, competitiveness and jobs. In consequence, the European Council defined the goal ‘to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion’ (European Council 2000, p. 2). The European Council of Göteborg added to this agenda a strategy for sustainable development, completing the Union’s political commitment to economic and social renewal by a third environmental dimension (European Council 2001).

At first the approach was not territorial: the implementation of the Lisbon strategy called for a series of structural reforms to be undertaken by the member states and monitored by the new Open Method of Coordination (OMC) and for the establishment of a European Area of Research and Innovation. However, in 2005 considering the failure to implement the strategy, the Kok report called for a new effort that included all stakeholders:

In this context, if we are to deliver the Lisbon goals of growth and employment then we must all take action. To achieve them will require everyone to engage. This means more delivery from the European institutions and Member States through greater political commitment, broader and deeper engagement of Europe’s citizens, and recognition that by working together Europe’s nations benefit all their citizens. (Kok 2004, p. 6).

At the European level, the Kok report recommended making use of all community policies to support the Lisbon strategy: cohesion policy is one of these. In this context, the Commission underlined the major role of a territorial approach: ‘The European Union will pursue its objectives of growth and jobs more successfully if all regions are able to play their part. Cities are particularly important in this context’ (CEC 2006, p. 4). They play a role both as a strategic location, home to growth and jobs, and as key stakeholders in a renewed governance: ‘To rise to the challenge of global competition, it will often be necessary for European cities to elaborate strategies co-ordinated at the level of agglomerations or urban networks in order to achieve critical mass’ (*ibid.*, p. 11).

The integration of the Lisbon strategy produced a direct effect on the 2007–2013 cohesion policy⁵ (Geppert 2008). At the same time, this renewed agenda led to a different understanding of the role of cities. In the context of globalization, their function as drivers of competitiveness is enhanced. Polycentricism appears more a context than a goal to achieve. In the Commission’s report on the contribution of cities to growth and jobs, there is one reference to polycentricity and it is presented as a fact: ‘Europe is characterized by a polycentric structure of small, medium-size and large towns. Many of them form metropolitan areas while many others constitute the only urban centre in the region’ (CEC 2006, p. 4). The text identifies two categories of cities, indicating different roles for each of them: metropolitan areas, implicitly expected to operate within the European arena; and smaller cities, closely related to their hinterland. Policy recommendations stress territorial

attractiveness, innovation, employment, infra-urban disparities, governance, etc. In this context, making the best use of territorial diversity appears more important than rebalancing settlement patterns.

In 2007, the Territorial Agenda of the European Union (TA) has retained polycentric development as its first territorial priority, confirming the initial choice of the ESDP. However, at the same time, the list of priorities has lengthened, giving more space to the issues of competitiveness (regional clusters) and sustainability (climate change). The Informal Ministerial Meeting on Territorial Cohesion and Regional Policy of Ponta Delgada (Azores) of November 2007 established the First Action Programme for the Implementation of the Territorial Agenda of the European Union (API). It focuses on a series of realistic goals, referring to polycentric development only once, when quoting the Territorial Agenda. The Marseille Ministerial meeting (25 November 2008) stretched issues related to sustainability: the implementation of the Leipzig charter for an integrated and sustainable urban development, the integration of the issue of climate change in urban development, and the use of the cohesion policy in favour of an integrated urban development. In the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, polycentricity is referred to only once, and then in relation to the concept of growth poles (CEC 2008).

This change of focus is accompanied by a change of method, concentrating attention on the mobilization of local stakeholders. In terms of implementation, such a change of method – actually a shift from top-down to bottom-up processes – has been experienced in France in the 1990s.

The French 1990s: the shift from top-down to bottom-up approaches

In the 1990s, despite 50 years of *aménagement du territoire*, the French urban system remains characterized by a wide gap between the capital (10 million inhabitants) and the next cities which, in a European context, appear both undersized and lacking economic functions (Cicille and Rozenblat 2003). The capital-region of Ile-de-France concentrates 19% of the French population and 33% of the national GDP. The concentration of highly qualified activities is even more intense: 40% of higher education and research, over 50% of the headquarters of large firms.

This monocentric urban system is inherited from a 1000-year-old tradition of political centralization. At the very end of the tenth century, Hugues Capet, first king of a new dynasty, established Paris as the capital of his kingdom. At the time it was a small city compared with Lyon, Bordeaux or Reims.⁶ The exceptional growth of Paris paralleled the emergence of strong central powers and the extension of the domain of the French kings. The city concentrated high-ranking officials, saw the foundation of the first French university (Sorbonne in 1257), and so on. It was another 400 years until, during the fourteenth century, Paris became the largest city in France; but by the end of monarchy, its pre-eminence was well established. The French revolution and the administrative work of Napoleon I intensified French centralization. During the 'Night of 4 August 1789', the local rights of cities and provinces were abolished along with the privileges of the nobility. The state representative in the newly instituted *département*, the *préfet*, became the legal guardian of all municipal decisions – a system that lasted until the devolution reform of 1982.⁷

In this context, the policy of *métropoles d'équilibre* (1964) was implemented through a top-down method. Masterplans prepared by organizations under the control of the DATAR (Organismes Régionaux d'Etudes et d'Aménagement, OREAM) had to be confirmed by the Council of Ministers before implementation. Local stakeholders, public as well as private, had no influence on the ambitious visions contained in the masterplans and

did not participate in their implementation. Finally, the notion of ‘metropolitan area’, imposed by the state, did not prove adequate to overcome historical rivalries when they existed (e.g. between Aix-en-Provence and Marseille, or Nancy and Metz). Also, its achievements have been ambivalent. Structural investments have been forthcoming; some proved successful (e.g. the airport of Lyon–Satolas) while others remain underused (e.g. the airport of Bordeaux–Mérignac). A sound knowledge of these metropolitan spaces has been produced by the OREAM. Even though there was no administrative or legal status for the *métropoles d’équilibre*, the word has entered our vocabulary and remains an important ‘marker’ in debates. However, the policy has also been questioned as technocratic. Moreover, of the ambitious visions contained in the masterplans, little has come to fruition. The originator of the policy, Michel Rochefort, admits to two errors. One is the assumption that enhancing the higher functions of these cities would automatically increase their regional influence; such an approach ignored the cultural inheritance, social trends and political forces at work in the territories. Another mistake was to apply the ‘same recipe’ to all cities, without taking into account their different potentials (Cohen 2002).

Both limits – the lack of an approach matching the specific character of places and the weak involvement of local stakeholders – are an integral part of the top-down method. After devolution, the French government was willing to reverse the process and stimulate a bottom-up development dynamic. In 1990, DATAR launched a call inviting French cities to establish voluntary collaborative networks: the *réseaux de villes*. At the time, the work on the ESDP was beginning in the European arena and, for the first time, the rationale and the objectives of the newly implemented policy were presented in a European context, proposing that cities are the key to the European integration of French regions (Brunet 1989).

This time, the state sought only to act as a catalyst, providing recognition (delivered by DATAR) and modest financial support for the preliminary studies. Methodologically, no guidelines or suggestions were proposed regarding the size of the cities, the nature of the collaboration, or its organization. A book edited by DATAR brought to the debate foreign examples (e.g. the Randstad, Emilia–Romagna and Venetia, Bade–Wurtemberg, the Rhine–Main conurbation). Rather than function as a ‘handbook’, it aimed to offer examples of good practice (DATAR 1991). Some 20 *réseaux de villes* were established, bringing together cities of all sizes in quite heterogeneous groups. A few of them engaged in enduring collaboration. A good example is the ‘Triangle’, an alliance of three middle-sized cities of eastern France in peripheral position in their regions. They actively promote development, establishing relations with relevant local economic milieux. However, most groupings allowed their activity to decline when it became clear that there would be no financial support from the state. To date, most networks remain informal; have small – if any – common budgets; and their actions are limited to consensual fields, such as tourism. Finally, the elaboration of a common spatial vision – not to mention a strategic plan – never featured on their agendas (Geppert 1996).

An important obstacle may be found in the failures of governance of the *réseaux de villes*. The five principles of good governance identified by the European Commission (CEC 2001) are present only in a watered-down form. Participation and openness are weak. The main stakeholders remain the cities and their representatives. By contrast there has been little involvement of other tiers of local government, social and economic actors are largely absent, and citizen participation is underdeveloped. Moreover, the business of the networks is confidential and subject to the dictates of political or personal decisions. Accountability and coherence are difficult to achieve in these very loose frameworks, with

an unstable balance of roles, often lacking political leadership. A characteristic and prevalent feeling among municipal staff involved was that affairs were left to them, with little support from the mayors who did not consider the issue a priority. With action programmes decided (and sometimes abandoned) according to opportunities rather than in relation to explicit strategies or clear objectives, and seldom evaluated, the result is that effectiveness has been low.

Despite these limitations, the experience of the *réseaux de villes* can be seen as a learning process, especially in the context of the recent devolution. The municipalities involved, their elected representatives and even, to a larger extent, their staff have built up a new culture of operation (Geppert 1995). In retrospect, the establishment of collaborative arrangements appeared useful; such is the case of six networks⁸ that became the core of groups presenting successful bids to the call for *coopérations métropolitaines*. Yet the accumulation of local incentives did not bring about a coherent development perspective at the national level. In 1993–1994, during the preparation of a new planning law, the French government initiated a broad public consultation exercise. Among various topics, the question of the French urban core grid (the shape of city-systems, the evolution and the role of French cities) was on the agenda. Central government prepared an introductory book containing the state's vision of 'France in 2015', testing the possibility of establishing a national development perspective (DATAR 1993).

The book argues that France is exposed to a risk of fragmentation. Only a strong grid of interdependent and interlinked urban systems will preserve territorial cohesion (Figure 1). The emphasis on relations that should invigorate the urban system appears innovative, yet the substance of these relations is not very explicit. The spatial vision remains strongly influenced by Christaller. Regional subsystems of cities are divided into three groups, according to their importance, each level being assigned a specific rôle. At the top of the hierarchy, former *métropoles d'équilibre* are the core of large city-systems (*systèmes urbains en zone de métropolisation*, light grey in Figure 1). For DATAR, they are the interface with the international/European scene. The intermediate level consists of medium-sized cities in areas located far from the metropolitan cores (*systèmes urbains en zone de polarisation multiple*, dark grey). Numerous *réseaux de villes* are present in this group. DATAR advocates that they enhance internal synergies in order to reach the critical mass that each of them taken separately lacks. The basic level is composed of small and middle-sized cities containing rural areas (*systèmes urbains en zone à dominante rurale*, small rings). DATAR emphasizes the need to develop their function of an interface between their hinterland and 'more structured urban systems'.

The outcomes of the consultation process were summarized in a second report (DATAR 1994). As the typology contained in the earlier report was questioned, the attempt to define a hierarchy of urban centres was watered down. The government established a draft National Spatial Development Perspective (Schéma National d'Aménagement et de Développement du Territoire, SNADT). After a parliamentary vote, the document should have become the guideline for state's policies. However, due to the lack of consensus, the would-be bill never reached Parliament and today France still has no national spatial development perspective.

After the publication of the ESDP, DATAR integrated polycentricism into its forecasting (DATAR 2000). However, the search for consensus resulted in somewhat sweeping statements. The plea for polycentricity is expressed in several scenarios. In a 'neo-liberal scattered archipelago', development is limited to a few areas driven by metropolises. In a 'locally differentiated' scenario expressing the result of policies driven by local authorities only, there are winners and losers. A 'renewed centralization' scenario suggests that the

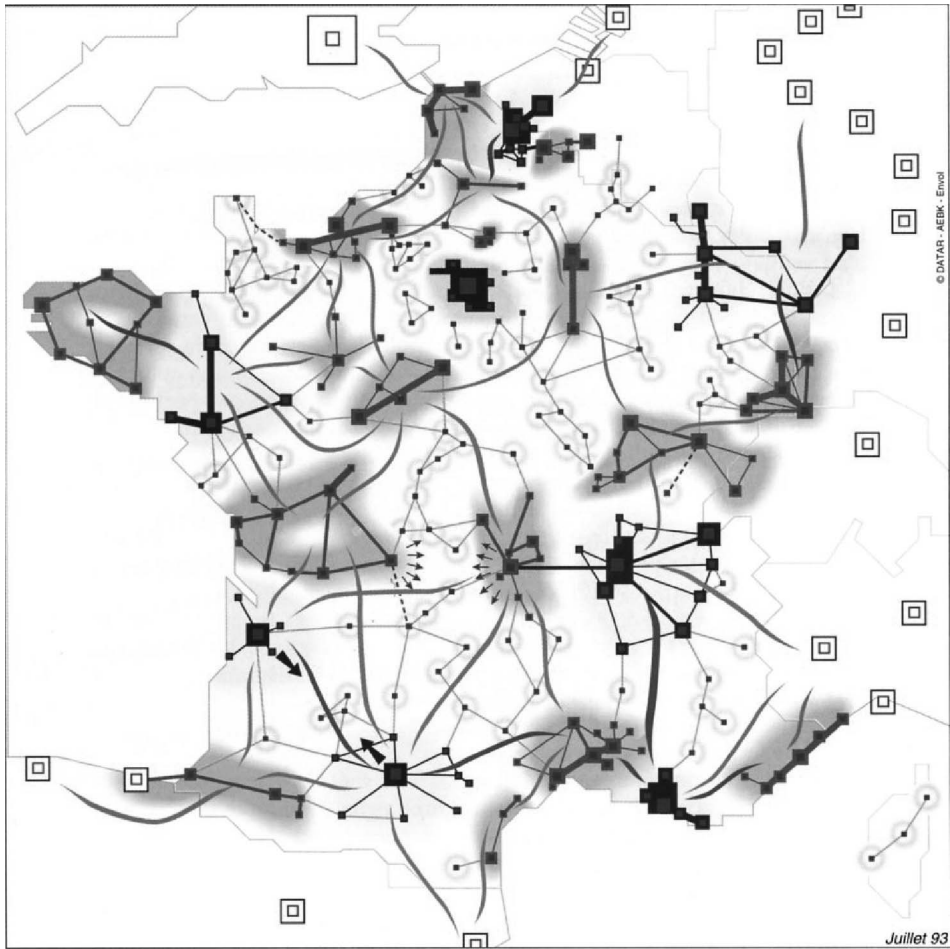


Figure 1. A would-be national spatial development perspective (DATAR 1993, p. 52).

country might still be exclusively dominated by Paris while other regions are overlooked. Finally, the polycentric scenario (*scénario polycentrique maillé*) shows a web of multiple poles that distribute development across the entire territory. Meanwhile, the politically embarrassing question of urban hierarchy has been pushed to one side. The map no longer shows city types, representing them according to their population; the difference between big and small ones is tempered by an old map-maker's trick.⁹ Similarly, no regional diversity is expressed (Figure 2).

The polycentric scenario has been accepted by all stakeholders, and thus entered into mainstream discourse. It can be seen as the first step in a learning process. Nevertheless, the real test comes when actual spatial strategies are developed and choices have to be made that come into conflict with diverging interests and visions. The French experience from the 1990s shows the difficulty of establishing consensus on the differentiated roles of cities. It also shows that 'management through discourse' is not sufficient. The state's discourse, relying on bottom-up engagement only, was not enough to initiate a dynamic process leading to the implementation of more polycentric development patterns. The next

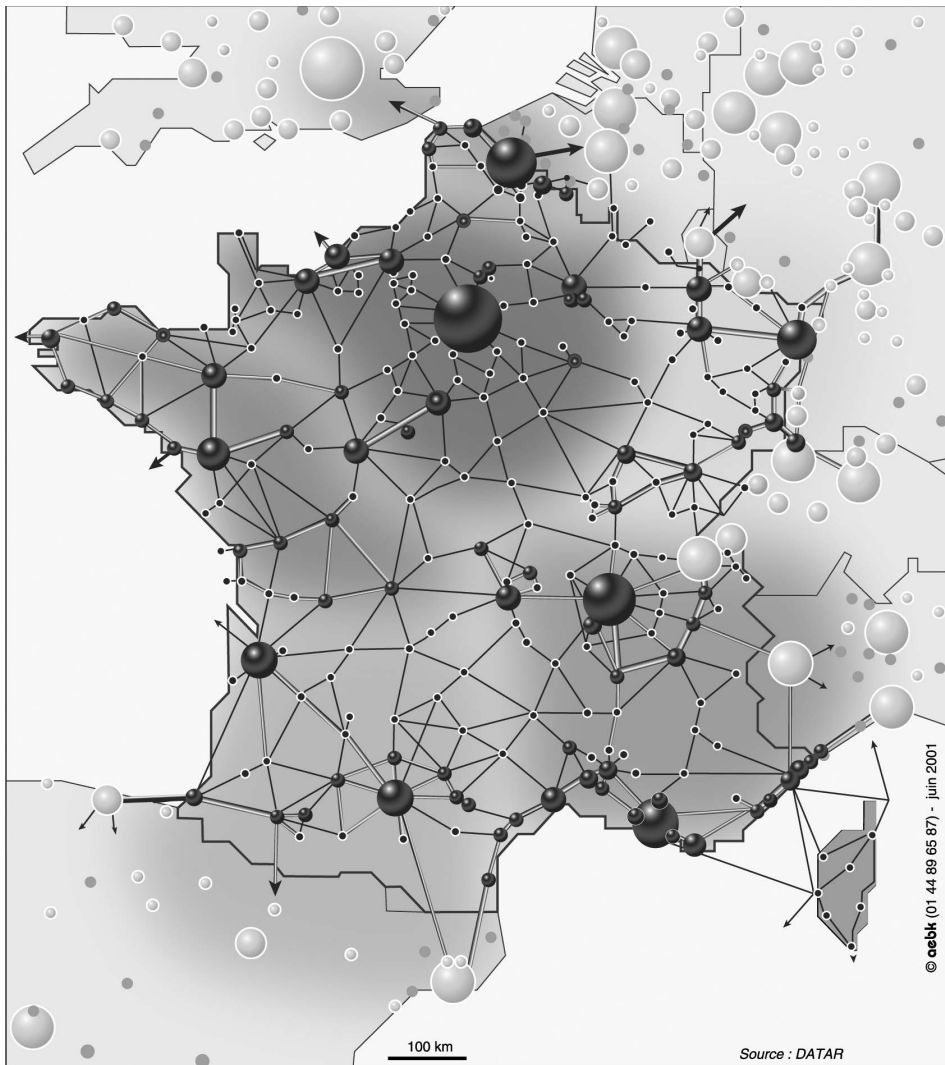


Figure 2. The consensual scenario of polycentric development for 'France in 2020' (DATAR 2000, p. 67).

attempt sought to correct this lack of guidance and support from the state – without reverting to top-down methods.

France in the 2000s: implementing polycentric development through partnerships

Based on an analysis led by the DATAR (DATAR 2003), the CIADT of 18 December 2003¹⁰ issued a new call for cooperation focused on the issue of metropolitanization (*appel à coopérations métropolitaines*). Voluntary city-groups were invited to establish a common strategy for the development of their international dimension (DATAR 2004). From 23 applicants, 15 collaborative networks were chosen. In a first phase (2005–2006), they set out a 'metropolitan project' with financial support from the state (a grant of €200,000 per project). Implementation was to take place through a mechanism known as

the 'Contrats de Projets Etat-Régions 2007–2013' (CPER). Coordinated with the calendar of the European Union, these programmes cover the main part of investment policies jointly financed by the state and by relevant local authorities.

Compared with the policy of *métropoles d'équilibre*, the conceptual background has changed. After 50 years of dominance, the assumption that the development of Paris is prejudicial to the rest of the country has been abandoned. In the scientific community, this has been strongly contested by sociologists (Provost 1999), economists (Rousseau 1998) and geographers (Marchand 2001, Lévy 2005). At the same time, the argument has weakened among policymakers.¹¹ Celebrating 40 years of DATAR, President Jacques Chirac stated (13 February 2003) that 'to invert economical trends, we must not oppose one territory to another. The Parisian region, the big agglomerations, middle-sized cities, rural areas: all territories have a role to play in the new dynamics which we must now initiate'.

At the national level, having a world city – one of the four European Alpha world cities according to the GaWC roaster (Beaverstock *et al.* 1999) – is now considered an opportunity. The challenge, for the next tier of cities, is no longer to counterbalance Paris, but to enter into metropolitanization, defined as 'the urban translation of globalization' (Lacour and Puissant 1999, p. 74). The process is selective: while many cities grow and sprawl, only a few develop an international dimension, together with an exceptional degree of competitiveness and attractiveness (Geppert 2009). Also, the dynamic is to a large extent self-driven (Ascher 1995). Inhabitants are attracted by 'places of hyper-choice' offering multiple, although often virtual, opportunities (Jaillet 2005). Firms looking for a highly qualified labour force, all the opportunities of a FIRE economy¹², worldwide accessibility, R&D facilities, etc, agglomerate in a few locations. The consequence is the development of an 'archipelago economy' with a few insiders, players in the global network, and numerous overlooked places (Veltz 1996).

According to international and French league tables, only Lyon has this international dimension, while other French metropolises may at best be considered 'in the offing' (CES 2003). A key issue in this debate is the quantitative factor. For some authors, metropolitanization cannot happen in cities that have not reached a critical mass (Lévy 2005). For others, although size is an asset, qualitative aspects such as the capacity to participate in international networks come first (Veltz 2002). Based on this second view, the call for proposals was open to any group of cities able to demonstrate a population of at least 500,000 inhabitants and one agglomeration above 200,000. The underlying rationale was to support the emergence of city-regions, including cities of all dimensions and eventually their rural partners (Geppert 2005).

The call elicited a considerable response. In total 23 groups responded, including all French cities above 500,000 inhabitants and also two-thirds of the cities above 100,000. However, their spatial configuration varied considerably (Figure 3). Some coincide with city-regions in the sense of Scott (2002). They may be polarized by a single city (Nice, Toulon, Toulouse) or present multinuclear structures (Lille, Aix-Marseille, Côte d'Opale). However, other groupings could not be seen as city-regions, even potential ones. Their functional urban areas (light grey in the background of the map) are separated by large rural spaces and they do not have close economic relations (Loire-Bretagne). The selection committee accepted all applications with a cross-border dimension and was flexible with regard to territorial relevance, giving priority to other considerations. The application lead by Bordeaux, a former *métropole d'équilibre*, was rejected proving that the presence of a major French city was not itself sufficient¹³ to guarantee inclusion (Geppert 2006).

What was more important was the capacity to collaborate with various partners. Firstly, the call required the presence not only of communes (municipalities) but also of

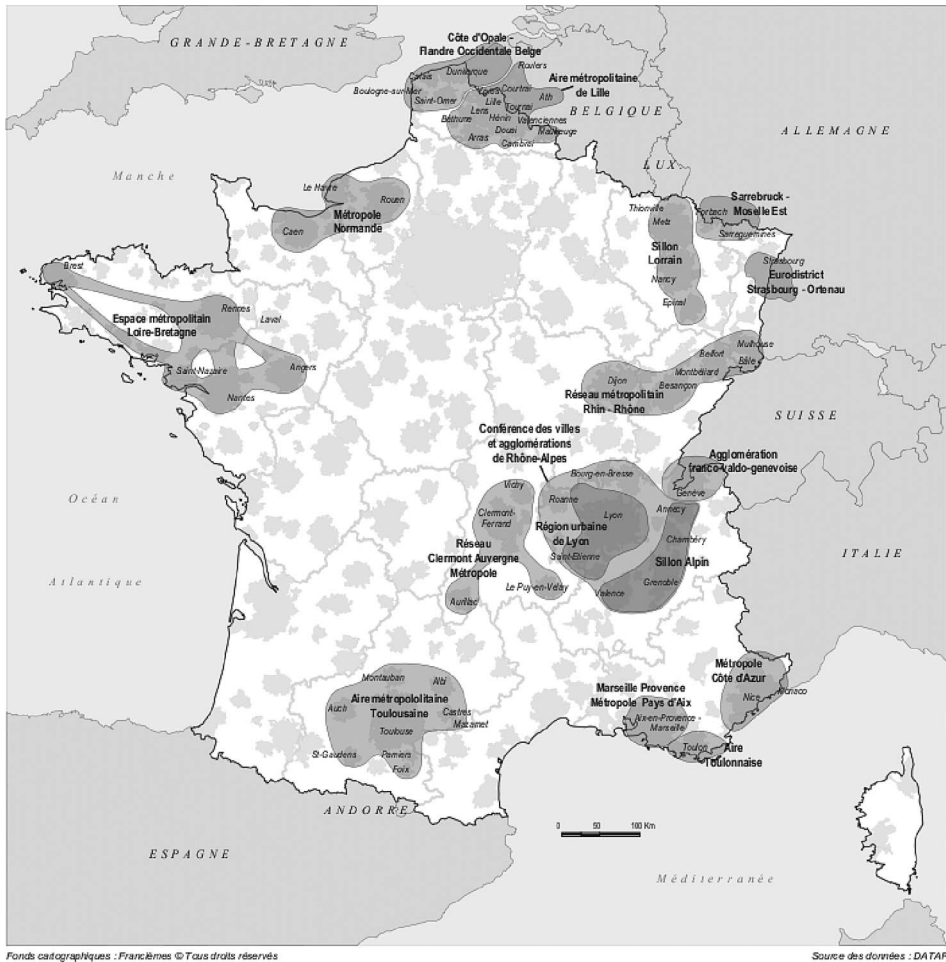


Figure 3. The laureates of the ‘call for metropolitan cooperation’ (DATAR 2005).

agglomerations represented by the *établissements publics de coopération intercommunale* (EPCI).¹⁴ Secondly, an expression of support from the president of the *région* and from the state representative (the *préfet*) was required. Finally, the participation of private organizations was welcome, and indeed economic sectors were well represented in all the proposals. Paradoxically, the presence of public or formerly public companies (such as the SNCF, the French railway company) remained modest.

Applicants were asked to describe the governance pattern foreseen for their future collaboration. Given the large size of the territories targeted by the call and the complexity of French administrative levels, the goal was not the creation of new legal entities. However, applicants had to show how they intended to manage the relations between public actors at different levels and between public and private actors. The proposals built on a threefold organizational form:

- A political body, gathering the mayors and presidents of EPCI, retains decision-making power;

- A technical team, composed of civil servants from the municipalities and experts, holds executive functions;
- A large council, including other public partners and so-called ‘civil society’ actors (representatives of the inhabitants, the economical milieux, etc.) functions as an advisor.

Putting to one side the comprehensive metropolitan masterplans and heavy investments of the 1960s, candidates were required to elaborate strategic projects (*projets métropolitains*) focusing on five selected topics considered as ‘drivers’ of metropolitanization:

- Economic development (e.g. creation of business districts or logistical platforms of European interest, land availability, international benchmarking);
- Strategic employment (highly qualified, in strategic activity sectors);
- International accessibility (access to infrastructures, international connections);
- Research and higher education (research centres, ‘digital universities’, clusters);
- Arts and culture (museum renovation, creation of large entertainment facilities).

The projects are quite comprehensive. Some networks included additional topics: public health (a timely issue, as the reorganization of hospital services was expected) and environment. Last but not least, some groups, building on long-standing collaboration, have addressed the field of land-use planning (Motte 2005, 2007). Some have decided to elaborate a masterplan (Schéma de Cohérence Territoriale, SCOT) covering the whole of the metropolitan area. Today, the masterplan of Strasbourg (SCOTERS) has been completed, while that of Toulon is still a work in progress. Larger city-regions, such as Aix-Marseille, Lyon and Toulouse have engaged the coordination and common monitoring of their masterplans (Inter-SCOT).

Implementation has been slow and, at first sight, the balance-sheet may seem disappointing. Firstly, it soon became clear that the state would not provide important investment, as the country’s deficit was above the Maastricht criteria and other policies had a greater priority – although sometimes these were relevant to the metropolitan projects, but were awarded through an independent process (e.g. the cluster policy). After the state withdrew, investment programmes contracted and the policy lost its visibility. Most action programmes initially focused on one or two main themes, directed at issues of local interest rather than the international dimension of the projects. While somewhat limited compared to the initial ambitions, the adjustment demonstrates the desire of partners to move forward, building on issues they can influence (APERAU/DIACT 2006, Touche 2006). Secondly, upcoming elections (national in 2007, municipal in 2008) distracted political stakeholders from long-term goals with low electoral payback. Some networks became dormant, and one, the *métropole Normande*, even shut down the non-profit association that was its supporting structure after a conflict between the newly elected mayors.

Despite the delays, collaborations continue. Transborder networks are establishing European Groups of Territorial Cooperation (EGCT), partly in the hope of obtaining financial support from the European Union for their projects and partly to solve the administrative complexity of collaboration while others are in the offing (Eurodistricts of Strasbourg–Ortenau and Sarrebruck–Moselle–Est) and others are created (EGCT Côte d’Opale–Flandre Occidentale). The Lille area is twofold: its core (Eurométropole Lille–Kortrijk–Tournai) is historically the first EGCT in Europe, while the larger perimeter of the metropolitan cooperation itself leans back on a non-profit association.

Currently, post-elections, most networks have been revived. One motivation may be territorial lobbying. Clermont–Auvergne is battling to attract to its territory the future TGV Paris–Lyon-bis line. Toulouse was supported by its network in the 2008 competition for European capital of culture. Recently, responding to the Balladur report which recommended the creation of 11 metropolises with a specific status,¹⁵ mayors from the Sillon Lorrain addressed the French President and Prime Minister, asserting a ‘right to experimentation’ as the ‘first multipolar metropolis in France’ (Balladur 2009). Another rationale is the promotion of large territories: the agglomeration Franco–Valdo–Genevoise has established a strategy to use its territorial potential to attract NGO meetings. Loire–Bretagne has evaluated its global territorial attractiveness. Both Sillon Lorrain, in a tough post-industrial context, and the successful Lyon, organize periodic meetings with economic actors where new strategies emerge and deals are made. Stakeholders are becoming aware of common economic interests – a field which, for a long time, was characterized only by competition. Finally, established routines become customary – such as meetings of the advisory councils, editing a newsletter. As territorial identities are built, using the name of the large territory becomes a habit and a reference point.

Conclusion

The evolution from balancing spatial development to making the best of territorial diversity calls for implementation through a ‘polycentric process’ (Faludi 2004) where cities and regions take the lead, enhancing their territorial capital. In this context, governance – the second priority of the Territorial Agenda (2007) – plays an important role. The French experience demonstrates the capacity of flexible and project-driven governance systems to rally stakeholders from public and private spheres, and thus to improve both vertical and horizontal cooperation, the latter being a major challenge (ESPON 2.3.2, 2007). Similar experiences have taken place in other member states, while national planning systems are experiencing devolution of competences from central to local authorities. With regard to this evolution, the French experience may illuminate the factors of success and obstacles to partnership and the debate on the role of the state. These final remarks address the possible use of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to support the process.

Firstly, in a society where competences are shared, the opposition between purely top-down and bottom-up approaches are replaced by a search for partnerships in which all actors are constantly involved in ongoing cooperation and dialogue. Some factors proved more efficient than others in support of this process:

- Good communication is more important than the establishment of new institutional entities. In France, as in other countries, there are discrepancies between territorial realities and administrative boundaries. France has chosen to begin by the mobilization of informal bodies (political, technical and open to the civil society¹⁶), without changing the institutional setting. In a second step, local authorities themselves established legal entities according to their needs.
- A careful definition of common challenges and threats, and of each partner’s costs and benefits, is necessary prior to the development of action plans. In the case of *coopérations métropolitaines*, two years were dedicated to the elaboration of projects. Some groupings even decided to extend this delay. As a consequence, the process was solid enough to continue although grants waned, because stakeholders had based their project on sound investigations and convictions.

- The ‘time factor’ plays an important role. Groupings which had the benefit of previous experiences – the successful, but also the less successful ones – obviously were better prepared to participate in the exercise. They were more advanced in two ‘slow’ processes: institutional learning and the building of territorial identities.

Secondly, the continuing engagement of the central level remains necessary. While national governments are no longer directly or exclusively in charge of spatial planning and the ongoing financial crisis does not offer conditions conducive to ambitious investment programmes, the French experience of the 1990s (*réseaux de ville*) has shown that when government acts only as a catalyst, implementation does not follow. Additional roles expected from national authorities are:

- Technical and methodological support. In France, DATAR/DIACT ensured the availability of national experts, an exchange platform where groupings could share their experiences. Offered ‘on demand’, these features were used and appreciated by local authorities.
- An evaluation of national public policies and the transparent management of policy changes. In France, the lack of information when national policies vanished has diminished the ‘capital of trust’ of local stakeholders. The bridge between long-term objectives and short-term actions should be explicit, especially when a shortage of resources implies a reduction of action programmes – are we postponing or giving up the overall objective? In the context of public–private partnerships, this becomes even more important, as rationales and time schedules of the different players involved are more distant.
- A strategic view at the national level. In the French case, the lack of a national spatial development perspective remains problematic. On the one hand, the state’s position seems unclear to other actors, which impedes dialogue. On the other hand, coordination between the State’s sectoral policies is not ensured.
- Similarly, at the community level, the ESDP was intended to ‘serve as a policy framework for the Member States, their regions and local authorities and the European Commission in their own respective spheres of responsibility’. For the latter, it should ‘help to improve the co-ordination of Community policies’ (ESDP 1999, pp. 1, 18). Indeed, the 2007–2013 cohesion policy has developed an urban dimension that may support polycentrism. However, according to DG Regio, National Strategic Reference Frameworks and Operational Programs seldom address this issue, whereas under Convergence or Competitiveness objectives, actions include the development of networks of cities and the creation of links between the economically strong cities and other urban areas. As in the French example, they might also refer to questions of metropolitan governance or urban–rural linkages (CEC – DG Regio 2008). It is now up to national and local stakeholders to make the best of this opportunity.

Acknowledgments

This article draws on the programme funded by DIACT and organized in collaboration with the APERAU (Association pour la Promotion de l’Enseignement et de la Recherche en Aménagement et Urbanisme), Evaluation de l’appel à coopération métropolitaine, dispositif d’accompagnement national. The author is also grateful to DIACT and to Anne Bailly, AEBK, for permission to reproduce the figures.

Notes

1. During his presidency of the European Commission, Jacques Delors gave regional policy a new and vital dynamic, twice negotiating substantial increases in its budget. In the broader budgetary reforms of the European Union, he formalized the main principles governing the management of the structural funds, with some inspiration from the French PAT, in particular zoning spaces eligible for grants.
2. In this paper, 'region' is understood in a broad sense, while *région* designates the local government. France has 26 *régions* – firstly administrative units, they have been granted the status of local government since the devolution of 1982. Geographical regions are larger.
3. DATAR, for *Délégation à l'Aménagement du Territoire et à l'Action Régionale*, is the first, and still best-known, name of the institution. Together with its missions, its name was changed in January 2006 and it became DIACT, for *Délégation Interministérielle à l'Aménagement et à la Compétitivité des Territoires*. In this paper, we will name it according to the period: 'DATAR' from 1963 to 2005, 'DIACT' since 2006.
4. The 'pentagon' defined by the metropolises of London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Hamburg.
5. In regions eligible for the objective 'convergence' (former objective 1, with a GDP/capita below 75% of the EU average), 60% of the grants support the Lisbon strategy. In regions eligible for the objective 'regional competitiveness and employment' (former objectives 2 and 3), 75% of the grants support the Lisbon strategy. In the latter, zoning is suppressed, which favours cities. Until 2006, urban areas tended to be excluded from mainstream community funds as their average GDP per capita usually exceeded the threshold. Community initiative programs such as Urban and Interreg had no zoning.
6. Province Capitals of Roman Gallia, throughout the Middle Ages they remained archiepiscopal dioceses, while Paris was under the authority of the archbishop of Sens.
7. Initiated by a series of laws named *les lois Defferre* in 1982–1983, the process is ongoing in France, with a reform of the French constitution in 2003, *la loi relative aux libertés et responsabilités locales* in August 2004. The debate remains active in a country, pitting the partners of a strong central state (*jacobins*) against the defenders of local autonomy (*girondins*).
8. Normandie Métropole (Caen–Rouen–Le Havre), Conférence des villes-centres des Grandes agglomérations de Rhône–Alpes (Lyon, with the cities of the whole region), Côte d'Opale (a string of cities along the Channel), RAPHAEL (Lille, together with the cities from its basin), Sillon Lorrain (Metz–Nancy–Epinal–Thionville), Rhin sud (Territoire de Belfort, Montbéliard, Colmar, Mulhouse, Héricourt).
9. The population is represented by pseudospheres. Their radius is proportional to the cube root of the population (instead of the square root). But the convention is tricky: biologically, on a flat representation we perceive the surface of the circles and not the volumes of the would-be spheres, so the final message is a distortion of reality.
10. The CIAT, *Comité Interministériel pour l'Aménagement du Territoire*, designates a decisional meeting associating all ministers concerned with planning. Convoked by the Prime Minister, it is held irregularly – up to three per year – and dedicated to current issues. In 1999, the name became CIADT (adding D for *durable* [sustainable]). Since 2006, as the DATAR has become DIACT, the name is DIACT, for *Comité Interministériel d'Aménagement et de Compétitivité des Territoires*.
11. A good example is provided by the Association of Cities 'within one hour's distance from Paris', a lobbying body that emerged during the 1990s, building on the anti-capital discourse. In the late 1990s, it changed its position and also its name, becoming the 'Association of the Cities of the Great Parisian Basin'.
12. A FIRE economy is an economy based primarily on the sectors of Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE).
13. However, the application of the Association of the Cities of the Great Parisian Basin was considered not relevant due to its lack of territorial potential. The case was extreme, as it covers a ring of cities at 150 km distance from Paris.
14. Inherited from the medieval parishes, the 36,000 French municipalities are fragmented. Urban agglomerations (in the sense of continuously built areas) include from a few to 396 municipalities in the case of the agglomeration of Paris. To address common questions, municipalities create legal entities, the *Etablissements Publics de Coopération Intercommunale* (EPCI), which receive delegation for some competences. France has some 3000 EPCIs.

15. Lyon, Lille, Marseille, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Nantes, Nice, Strasbourg, Rouen, Toulon, Rennes.
16. A civil society is 'a 'third sector', distinct from government and business. In this view, civil society refers essentially to the so-called "intermediary institutions" such as professional associations, religious groups, labor unions, citizen advocacy organizations, that give voice to various sectors of society and enrich public participation, in democracies'. cf. website of Civil Society International. <http://www.civilsociety-international.org/whatisCS.htm> [Accessed 2 November 2009]

References

- API, 2007. First action programme for the implementation of the territorial agenda of the European Union – agreed at the occasion of the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Territorial Cohesion and Regional Policy of Ponta Delgada (Azores), 22–25 November.
- APERAU/DIACT, 2006. *Evaluation de l'appel à coopération métropolitaine, dispositif d'accompagnement national, coordonné par AS. Touche*, Paris: DIACT.
- Ascher, F., 1995. *Metapolis ou l'avenir des villes* [Metapolis or the future of cities]. Paris: Odile Jacob.
- Balladur, E., 2009. *Comité pour la réforme des collectivités locales: 'Il est temps de décider'*. Report to the President of the Republic. Paris: La Documentation française/Fayard.
- Beaverstock, J.V., Smith R.G., and Taylor P.J., 1999. A roster of world cities. *Cities* 16 (6), 445–458.
- Brunet R. and GIP Reclus, 1989. *Les villes européennes* [European cities]. Paris: La Documentation française.
- CEC – DG Regio, 2008. *Fostering the urban dimension: analysis of the operational programmes co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (2007–2013)*. Working document of the Commission of the European Communities Directorate-General for Regional Policy. Brussels: CEC – DG Regio.
- CEC, 1999. *European Spatial Development Perspective: towards balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the European Union*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Available from: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/som_en.htm [Accessed 20 September 2009].
- CEC, 2001. *European governance: a White Paper*. COM (2001) 428 final. Brussels: European Commission.
- CEC, 2006. *Cohesion policy and cities: the urban contribution to growth and jobs in the regions*. Communication from the Commission to the Council and Parliament, Brussels, 13 July. COM(2006) 385 final. Brussels: European Commission.
- CEC, 2008. *Green Paper on territorial cohesion: turning territorial diversity into strength*. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, 6 October. COM(2008) 616 final. Brussels: European Commission.
- CES, 2003. *Métropoles et structuration du territoire*. Avis 9 April. Brussels: European Commission.
- Christaller, W., 1933. *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland*. Jena: Gustav Fischer.
- Cicille, P. and Rozenblat, C. 2003. *Les villes européennes: analyse comparative* [A comparative study of European cities]. Paris: La Documentation française.
- Cohen, J., 2002. *Métropoles d'équilibre* [Counterweight metropolises]. In: Michel Rochefort, ed. *Strates*, en ligne, n° Hors-série 2002: Parcours dans la recherche urbaine: un géographe engagé Available from: <http://strates.revues.org/document556.html> [Accessed 16 August 2008].
- DATAR, 1991. *En Europe, des villes en réseaux* [Networking cities in Europe]. Paris: La Documentation française.
- DATAR, 1993. *Débat national pour l'aménagement du territoire – document introductif* [National debate on spatial planning – introductory report]. Paris: La Documentation française.
- DATAR, 1994. *Débat national pour l'aménagement du territoire – document d'étape* [National debate on spatial planning – intermediate report]. Paris: La Documentation française.
- DATAR, 2000. *Aménager la France de 2020: mettre les territoires en mouvement* [Preparing 2020 France: setting territories in motion]. Paris: La Documentation française.

- DATAR, 2003. *Pour un rayonnement européen des métropoles françaises: éléments de diagnostic et orientations* [Comforting the European appeal of French metropolises: analysis and orientations]. Paris: La Documentation française.
- DATAR, 2004. *Pour un rayonnement européen des métropoles françaises: appel à coopération* [For the purpose of a European radiation of French metropolises: call for cooperation]. Paris: DATAR.
- DATAR, 2005. Official map produced for the press release of the results of the final selection. Available for public use on the website of DIACT: http://www.diact.gouv.fr/fr_1/amenagement_du_territoire_655/metropoles_216/ [Accessed 2 November 2009].
- ESPON 2.3.2., 2007. *Governance of territorial and urban policies from EU to local level*. Final report from the project Espon 2.3.2., Part 1: Governance – summary. Available from: www.espon.eu [Accessed 20 September 2009].
- European Council, 2000. Presidency conclusions, Lisbon European Council, 23 and 24 March.
- European Council, 2001. Presidency conclusions, Göteborg European Council, 15 and 16 June.
- European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), 1999. *Towards balanced and sustainable development of the territory of the EU*. Luxembourg: CEC.
- European Union, 2007. *Territorial agenda of the European Union: towards a more competitive and sustainable europe of diverse regions*. Agreed at the occasion of the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion, 24–25 May. Available from: http://www.bmvbs.de/Anlage/original_1005295/Territorial-Agenda-of-the-European-Union-Agreed-on-25-May-2007-accessible.pdf [Accessed 20 September 2009].
- Faludi, A., 2004. *Territorial cohesion: a polycentric process for a polycentric Europe*. GAP – Research Team Governance and Places, Working Paper 2004/03, University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands.
- Faludi, A. and Peyrony J., 2001. The French pioneering role. *Regulatory Competition and Cooperation in European Spatial Planning* 27 (4), 253–262.
- Faludi, A. and Waterhout, B. 2002. *The making of the European Spatial Development Perspective: no masterplan*. London: Routledge.
- Geppert, A., 1995. Inter-cities networking in Champagne–Ardenne (France). In: T. Marszal, ed. *Planning and socio-economic development*. Lodz: Lodz University Press, 124–135.
- Geppert, A., 1996. *Réseaux urbains et aménagement du territoire en Champagne–Ardenne* [City-networks and planning, case of Champagne–Ardenne]. Ph D thesis. Université de Reims–Champagne–Ardenne, Reims.
- Geppert, A., 2005. En quête de métropoles [Looking for metropolises]. *Pouvoirs locaux* 65 (2), 3–8.
- Geppert, A., 2006. Les coopérations métropolitaines: un décryptage [Metropolitan cooperations deciphered]. *Urbanisme* 18, 44–46.
- Geppert, A., 2007. Economie de la connaissance et territoire(s) en Europe [European territories facing the knowledge economy]. *Pouvoirs locaux* 72 (1), 52–57.
- Geppert, A., 2008. La politique de cohésion 2007–2013, instrument de la spatialisation de la stratégie de Lisbonne [The 2007–2013 cohesion policy of the European Union, as a spatialisation of the Lisbon strategy]. In A. Geppert, ed. *La Champagne–Ardenne et la Picardie face aux enjeux de l'attractivité et de la compétitivité des territoires* [Facing the issues of territorial competitiveness and attractiveness: the case of the regions of Champagne–Ardenne and Picardie]. Reims: Presses Universitaires de Reims, 113–120.
- Geppert, A., 2009. Attractivité en absence de métropolisation: le problème des villes moyennes [Territorial attractiveness out of metropolitanization areas: the problem of middle-sized cities]. In: P. Ingallina, ed. *L'attractivité des territoires: regards croisés*. Research report conducted for the PUCA. Paris: MEEDDAT, 121–124.
- Gravier, J.-F., 1947. *Paris et le désert français* [Paris and the French desert]. Paris: Le Portulan.
- Hautreux, J. and Rochefort, M., 1963. *Le niveau supérieur de l'armature urbaine française* [The upper layer of the French urban grid]. Paris: CGPEP [Ministry of Construction].
- Hautreux, J. and Rochefort, M., 1964. *La fonction régionale dans l'armature urbaine française* [The regional function in the French urban grid]. Paris: CGPEP [Ministry of Construction].
- Jaillet, 2005. Oral intervention, congress of the association of French Planning Agencies (Fédération Nationale des Agences d'Urbanisme, FNAU). Related in: 2006. *Métropoles en question, métropoles en action*. *Urbanisme* 28, 24.
- Julliard, E. and Nonn, H., 1976. *Espaces et régions en Europe occidentale: structures et dimensions de régions en Europe occidentale* [Space and regions in Western Europe]. Paris: CNRS.

- Kok, W., 2004. *Facing the challenge: the Lisbon strategy for growth and employment*. Report from the High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Lacour, C. and Puissant, S., eds., 1999. *La métropolisation, croissance, diversité, fractures* [Metropolitanization, growth, diversity, ruptures]. Paris: Economica.
- Leipzig Charter, 2007. Leipzig Charter on sustainable European cities. Agreed at the occasion of the Informal Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development and Territorial Cohesion, 24–25 May.
- Lévy, J., 2005. La ville, un bien situé dans la mondialisation [The city, a good in globalization]. *Technicités*, 97 (23 October), 46–48.
- Marchand, B., 2001. La haine de la ville: Paris et le désert français de Jean-François Gravier [Hatred of the city: Paris and the French desert]. *L'Information Géographique* 65, 234–253.
- Motte, A., 2005. Les projets métropolitains (2002–2005). *Pouvoirs Locaux* 67 (4), 21–26.
- Motte, A., ed., 2007. *Les agglomérations françaises face aux défis métropolitains*. Paris: Economica.
- Provost, I., 1999. *Paris et le désert français: histoire d'un mythe* [Paris and the French desert: history of a myth]. Ph D sociology thesis, Université d'Evry.
- Rousseau, M.-P., 1998. *La productivité des grandes villes* [Productivity of big cities]. Paris: Economica.
- Sassen, S., 1991. *The global city*. New York, London, Tokyo: Princeton University Press.
- Scott, A., 2002. *Global city-regions: trends, theory, policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Touche, A.S., 2006. *Le pari des métropoles, aménagement du territoire et métropolisation au prisme de l'appel à coopération métropolitaine*. MSc thesis, Université Pierre Mendès-France, Institut d'Urbanisme de Grenoble.
- Veltz, P., 1996. *Mondialisation, villes et territoires: une économie d'archipel* [Globalization, cities and territories: an archipelago economy]. 1st ed. Paris: PUF.
- Veltz, P., 2002. *Des lieux et des liens: politique du territoire à l'heure de la mondialisation* [Places and links: territorial policies in times of globalization]. La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'Aube.