



FRANCE

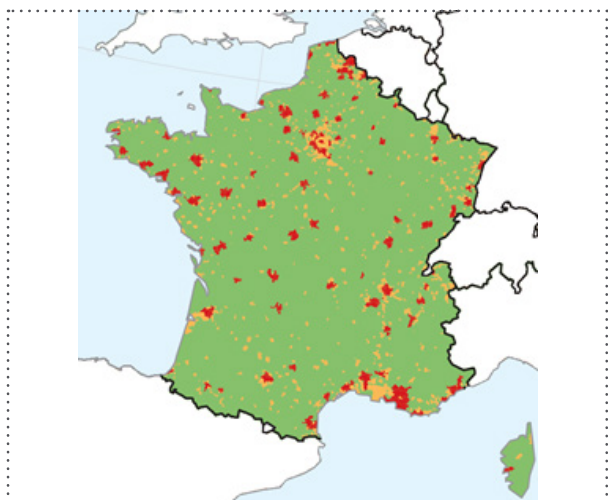
INSIGHT PAPER

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RURALITY (1)

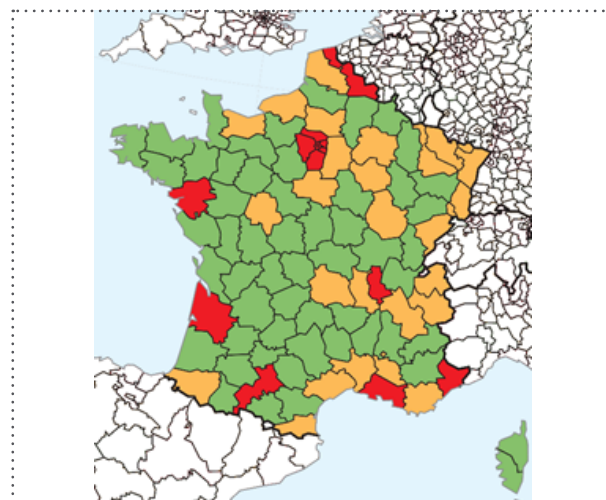
Degree of urbanisation for local administrative units level 2 (LAU2)



- Cities
- Towns and suburbs
- Rural Areas
- Data not available

Source: Eurostat, JRC and European Commission
Directorate-General for Regional Policy, May 2016

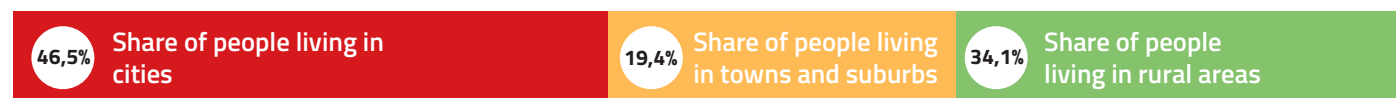
Urban-rural typology for NUTS level 3 regions



- **Predominantly urban regions**
(rural population is less than 20% of the total population)
- **Intermediate regions**
(rural population is between 20% and 50% of the total population)
- **Predominantly rural regions**
(rural population is 50% or more of the total population)
- **Data not available**

Source: Eurostat, JRC, EFGS, REGIO-GIS, December 2016

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION



Source: Eurostat, 2017

GEOGRAPHY

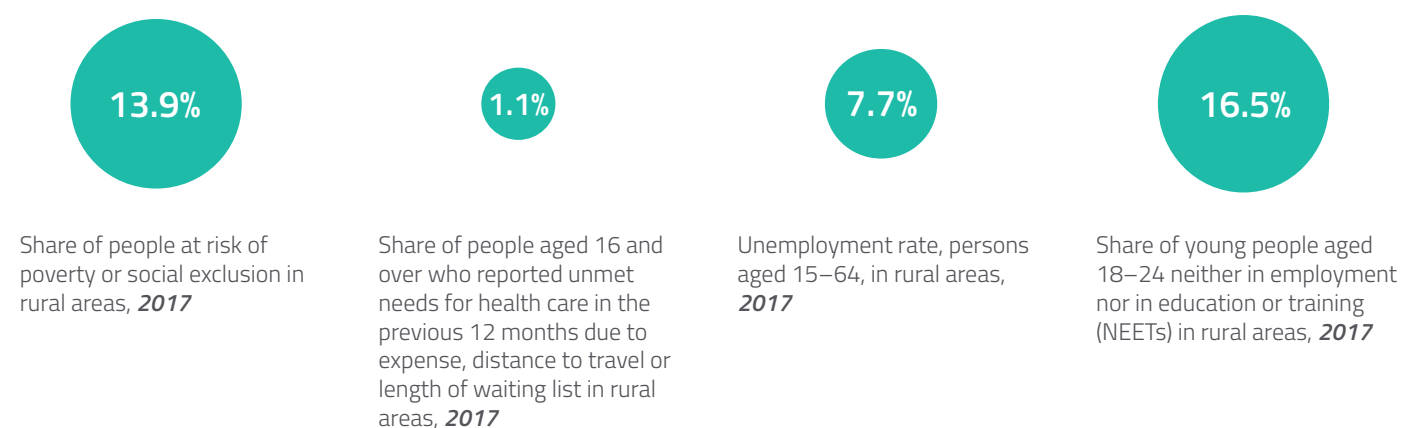
The vast majority of France's territory and population is situated in Western Europe and is called Metropolitan France, to distinguish it from the country's various overseas polities. It is bordered by the North Sea to the north, the English Channel to the northwest, the Atlantic Ocean to the west and the Mediterranean Sea to the southeast. Its land borders are with Belgium and Luxembourg to the northeast, Germany and Switzerland to the east, Italy and Monaco to the southeast, and Andorra and Spain to the south and southwest. With the exception of the northeast, most of France's land borders are roughly delineated by natural boundaries and geographic features: to the south and southeast, the Pyrenees and the Alps and the Jura, respectively, and to the east, the Rhine river.

France's key challenges are the high rate of unemployment, lack of competitiveness and sluggish economic growth.

Among the larger member states in Western Europe, France has a relatively large part of its population in rural areas, 34,1%. However there are large differences between regions. The Ile de France region, where Paris is situated, and to a lesser extent the coastal Provence-Alpes Côtes d'Azur are very urban regions. 10 out of the 22 former regions are very rural regions. The urban-rural criteria used here, is 10 000 inhabitants for a municipality (fewer inhabitants than this is considered rural, more is considered urban) which is different from the EUROSTAT criterium (*Dumont, 2016*).

The difference in poverty level between rural and urban regions is rather small compared to the situation in other countries.

RURALITY (2)



Source: Eurostat

NATIONAL POLICIES RELATING TO RURAL MOBILITY AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

There is no formal specific plan for rural mobility at national level, although in fact different authorities take care of different types of public transport.

There is furthermore a tendency of disengagement of the national state in all kind of matters, also in transport matters. This is also confirmed by the national law "NOTRe" ((loi sur la Nouvelle Organisation Territoriale de la République – law on the New Territorial Organisation of the Republic from 7-08-2015) that reorganises the countries governance. It transfers for example the national railways competence from national state to regions. Only high-speed trains remain a national competence.

The project foresees that these are coordinated by the Regions. The aim is to guarantee a minimum level of mobility to all people living on the French territory. Today, parts of France are not covered by a mobility organising authority. The project wants to facilitate car-pooling and foresees room for particular social interventions for certain target groups. The challenge to bring into practice this obligation will however be financial, as no particular financial means are foreseen in the actual law proposition. Some financial contributions could come from companies that can provide a 400 EUR free of tax intervention per employee per year to encourage sustainable mobility.



Photo from Envato

National law allocates all kinds of transport, besides high-speed trains, to lower levels of competence than the State and leaves freedom to those levels to organise transport. Apart from the national and regional level, mobility and transport competences are also at the level of the department and the municipalities. The latter are often organised in a community of municipalities (see institutional framework).

End of November 2018 a law project for the law organising mobility (LOM) has been proposed. A main objective is to better integrate the peripheral regions and to guarantee mobility to everyone. Therefore, the law project wants the whole of France covered by mobility organising authorities.

On the other hand, the law project foresees investments in infrastructure for local trains, for cycling and for roadworks in order to connect peripheral areas. **It is important to stress that this is only a project and not a law yet.**

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Transport is mainly organised by the transport departments at the regional and municipal level, if the municipality is a mobility organising authority (larger cities).

The region (=18 administrative regions) levy their own taxes and, in return, receive a decreasing part of their budget from the central government. They also have considerable budgets managed by a regional council (conseil régional) and they organise the inter urban and school transport.

The municipal level organises the “urban” transport, this means transport within its territory.

A region or group of municipalities can transfer its transport competence to a municipality.

Beside transport departments, also social departments provide resources for transport (taxi voucher). This social transport is organised by the municipality and financed by the department. The department is the administrative level between region and municipality. It can concern transport for jobless people, poor people, reduced mobility people. Also within the national healthcare, there is a small transport part to organise transport by ambulances.

School transport of pupils with disabilities is the only transport competence remaining at the department level from 1/9/17.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The LOTI (Loi Orientation des Transports Intérieurs) of 30/12/82 is the basis for the organisation of French public transport.

More recently, the NOTRe law (2015) (law on the Republics territorial organisation) and the Loi GrandGuillaume (30/12/16) adapted this framework. The NOTRe law reorganised the competences of different administrative levels in another way. Transport becomes mainly a regional competence with some exceptions (see under administrative and organizational framework).

The loi GrandGuillaume organises the VTC (Véhicules de Transport avec Chauffeur – vehicles with a driver). Following that law, people working for Uber or other platforms need to have a specific license, “la carte professionnelle VTC”.

There is a law on Mobility in preparation, the LOM law. It is expected to be voted on during 2019. As far as is known today (November 2018), there will be an obligation for the AOT (transport organizing authority-the region) to organize also local transport in areas with no public transport today and municipalities could become AOM, without the obligation of organizing regular bus services. So, they could take care of carpooling services for example.

It makes a difference between **urban and interurban transport**. “Urban” transport is all the transport organised within the limits of a municipality (or group of municipalities – communauté de communes). Although a bit counterintuitive, a rural municipality can therefore organise “urban (in the sense of the law)” transport within the limits of its territory. However, in most cases, it won’t do so as organising public transport is very expensive. The interurban transport is then public transport crossing territories of different municipalities.

The combination of LOTI and NOTRe law attribute urban transport to municipalities and interurban transport to regions.

- There is however no obligation to organise public transport for “simple” municipalities or a group of municipalities (communauté de communes).
- Larger urban areas counting more than 50.000 inhabitants (called “communauté urbaine, communauté d’agglomération, communauté métropolitaine depending on their size) are obliged to organise public transport.
- Urban areas of more than 100.000 inhabitants also need to present an urban mobility plan (plan de déplacement urbain). This plan needs also to fix modal share objectives.

ORGANISATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Regions are responsible for organising public transport. Municipalities have the faculty to organise transport and mobility on their territory, which is called 'urban transport'. This is done respectively via an AOT or an AOM (Transport or Mobility organising authority).

The AOT is part of the regional administration.

- The AOT has competences limited to non-urban transport, bus as well as rail transport. Interurban services can be regular public services, on demand services, private services (ex. a company or association organises transport for its employees or members) or occasional public services).

any form of public transport except for interurban transport if an interurban bus service crosses their village. In urban areas, today, most of the financing is based on the transport payment paid by companies with more than ten employees and this makes it difficult to finance PT in rural areas.

Different AOM's can work together in a "syndicat mixte de transport" on certain topics like the coordination of their services and pricing, the introduction of an information system for users, etc. This cooperation structure can also be completed by a user committee representing trade unions, users, and persons with disabilities.



Photo from Envato

- An AOT finances and defines the interurban public transport network and its tarification. It can manage the PT operations itself ("régie en droit public français"), or it can contract a private company ("delegation de service public") to manage the service within the service limits defined by the fixed budget envelope fixed by the AOT.
- The region builds a regional transport plan and sets the rules to ensure intermodality. (communities of) municipalities can provide their opinion on the transport plan before adoption of the plan.

Municipal social services can organise social transport for people having no car or living in other kinds of deprived conditions.

There are a huge number of PT operating companies in France. Large operators like Transdev, Keolis etc. have a large part of the market. There remain however still a lot of smaller operators. Municipalities are in some cases also operator themselves. **Most of the time operation is therefore private.**

The AOM is part of the municipal administration.

- The AOM has similar competences as an AOT. It has furthermore also similar competences concerning mobility. It can therefore also organise or facilitate initiatives like car sharing, carpooling, cycling promotion, for example. The AOM is obliged to organise public transport.
- A municipality can constitute an AOM, on its own or with a grouping of municipalities. If it does so it is obliged to organise public transport.
- Rural areas not falling under an AOM (28% of the population = 25000 municipalities) will not have

Integration of shared-mobility services: Shared bicycle schemes are operated in a lot of large French cities. Also car sharing exists in cities. With budget cuts for the regional and local entities, the regional and local entities are also looking for alternative solutions to classic public transport. Carpooling initiatives are well established and getting more popular. Also pedelecs are getting more and more popular. It is however often too early to estimate real impacts of it. Also experiments with long term bicycle hire are popular. City shared bicycle schemes are too expensive for other small cities and towns.

No particular financial support to mobility services in rural areas is available. The urban transport (transport in the municipal area is financed by a tax on the salary mass of workers of companies larger than 10 persons ("versement transport"). The tax is generated and allocated by municipalities with more than 10 000 inhabitants. In general, public transport is financed by the tax on salaries (1/3), by ticket sales (1/3) and by the collective (municipality).

The targeted mobility services are dispersed across multiple funding sources and multiple delivery parties. Regions, Departments, municipalities, can subsidise some kind of social transport services. The example of the lien-plus initiative illustrates this - www.lien-plus.fr. This is a not for profit organisation which proposes and organises transport services to join training and workplaces.

Social services are financed by departments (and municipalities) and are not the responsibility of the transport or mobility organising authority (AOM, AOT).



School transport is organised and financed by the region.

As a consequence, very often, the AOM and AOT do not care about vulnerable people (jobless, poor, ...).

One general envelope from national level to regional and municipal level: there is no dedicated national subsidy for transport. Regions and municipalities spend their money as they feel is best for their citizens. The local salary tax dedicated to transport is the exception.

OTHER INFORMATION

Due to recent reorganisations at the administrative landscape (loi NOTRe - 2015), there are serious incentives for municipalities or communities of municipalities to increase the scale of their operations. Some communities increase from for example from 10 to 150 entities. One of the consequences of this enlargement is that urban communities get more mixed with the inclusion of several more rural municipalities. This makes the organisation of public transport more complicated for those as they are also confronted to organising it in less urbanised and rural zones.

In France, many rural municipalities try to attract local services like a doctor, a bakery, a grocery shop and café by paying the facility's investments (infrastructure etc.). Also travelling merchants (for example hairdressers) are getting more popular and the national level promotes service centers in village centers to avoid journeys for for example administrative issues.

Restrictions/freedoms within the framework relevant to local mobility services: a clearer framework will be provided within the future law organising mobility.



A law organising mobility (LOM) is in preparation and expected to be voted. This law will cause changes in the organisation of mobility in rural areas for two reasons.

- It could allow private persons to provide occasional remunerated transport services in rural areas with no or very limited access to public transport. Today this is not allowed, although some volunteer and informal services are operational.
- It will encourage shared mobility by clarifying the notion of "sharing costs" and by making carpooling data more transparent.

Rural localities are in general not interested in organising public transport (regular service or on demand service) as it is very expensive. Therefore they are not interested in becoming an AOM (mobility organising authority). The consequence of this is however that they are not able to organise carpooling, car sharing or another mobility initiative although they would like to do so. Maybe the new LOM law will make this possible.

Community-led and/or innovate forms of mobility service community led services are not possible. Innovative forms of mobility can be possible. In France all kinds of carpooling are well developed.

Information provision: most cities and agglomerations try to provide a comprehensive journey planner, however, it's always difficult to do better than commercial platforms like "Google".

The main targeted mobility services concern:

- School transport (region)
- Transport for professional training (municipality with financial resources from department)
- Social transport, mainly people in need of a wheel chair or people with no access to a car. This is facultatively organised by municipalities and or not for profit organisations financed by municipalities for example going to market, to city for administrative matters etc.
- Demand responsive transport (mobility or transport organising authority) DRT is getting less popular however as it is expensive.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND MINISTRIES ADDRESSING RURAL AREAS

TITLE	ROLE
Regions	Organising mobility at regional level, inter urban transport and intermodality issues
Municipalities	Organising mobility at municipal level
AGIR	Association pour la Gestion Indépendante des Réseaux de transport Public (association of Independent managers of public transport networks)
GART	Groupeement des autorités responsables de transport (union of transport and mobility organising authorities)
UTP	Union des transport publics et ferroviaires (union of public transport providers)
CEREMA	Centre d'études et d'expertise sur les risques, l'environnement, la mobilité et l'aménagement (public agency working on mobilité and planning issues)

LINKS TO WEBSITES

- www.taxi-vtc.eu/vtc-kesako - provides details on the difference between taxi and VTC (vehicules with a driver)
- <https://droitdupartage.com/2018/05/22/loi-dorientation-sur-les-mobilites-lom-ce-qui-nous-reserve-ce-projet-de-loi>
- www.maire-info.com/urbanisme-habitat-logement/transports/25-000-communes-sont-hors-dune-autorite-organisatrice-de-la-mobilite-article-21653
- www.latribune.fr/economie/france/ce-que-contient-le-projet-de-loi-d-orientation-des-mobilites-796501.html

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