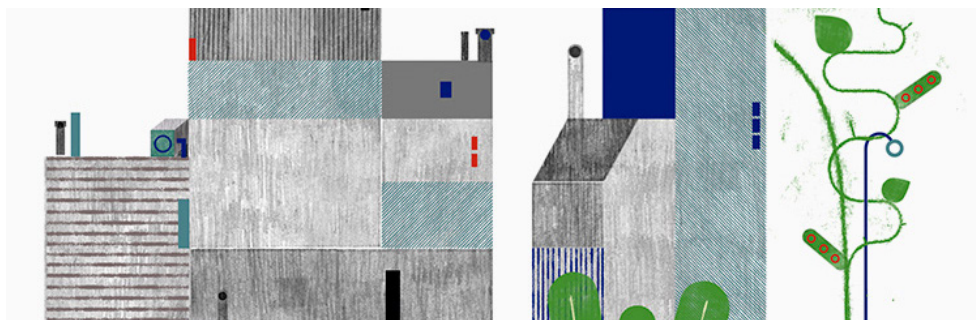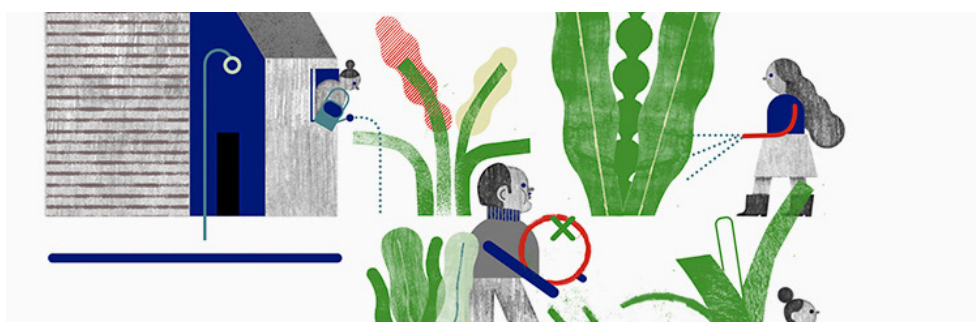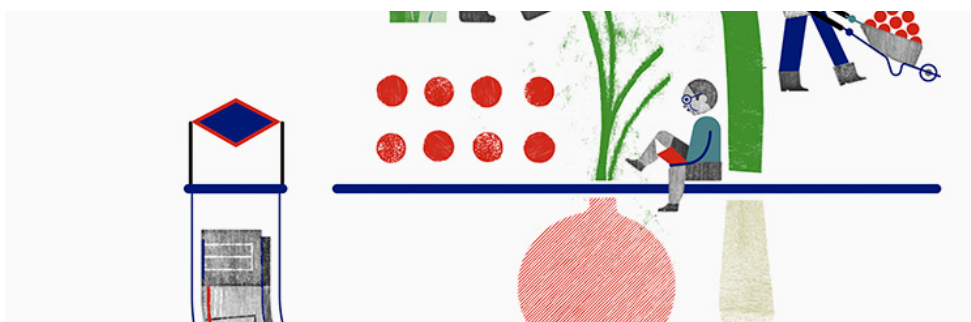# Inhabit!

Cohabit!

Rehabit!

The metamorphosis of habitats in response to the ecological and social emergency

42nd International Urban Workshop in Paris Region,

From 22 September to 04 October 2024

Context Document

les Ateliers
maîtrise d'œuvre urbaine

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Les ateliers de maîtrise d'oeuvre urbaine de Cergy-Pontoise

Les Ateliers de Cergy is a public interest association founded in 1982 at the initiative of the urban planners of the New Town of Cergy-Pontoise.

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- **Marilou Zapata,** Intern

Partners of Les Ateliers

I _Inhabiting the Paris Region and territory of Cergy-Pontoise

1. The Île-de-France
2. The Cergy-Pontoise agglomeration
3. Sites of interest

The Ile-de-France, région capitale

Paris, a world city

Paris is regarded as a "world-city", to quote Saskia Sassen. Indeed, it concentrates a number of core functions that make it a global metropolis. It is home to the headquarters of many of the world's most powerful multinationals, and is also one of the eading hubs of the global stock market. The area of La Défense accounts for 20% of the Île-de-France Region's GDP and is considered one of the world's leading business districts.

Paris is also an important political hub, being the capital of France (the world's 6th-largest power) and home to the offices of numerous international organizations. In addition, it boasts a high concentration of tertiary sector activities (40% of French executives) and a major research hub (59% of French researchers). Moreover, it serves as the heart of an extensive transportation network, making Paris one of the most accessible cities in the world, as well as an important international convention site.

That said, it is also a major international transportation hub. Along with New York, Tokyo and London, Paris is one of the four principal poles of the world's megalopolitan archipelago, the centre of international trade. It lies at the heart of one of Europe's and the world's most dynamic urban regions.

> "Located at the crossroads of European and global trade, the Île-de-France is France's leading economic region and one of the most dynamic in Europe. Comprising 8 departments, 1,295 communes and arrondissements, it is home to a population of 12.2 million (19% of the French metropolitan population) that is younger than the national average."

(IAU–IDF, Insee, CCI Paris–Île de France, 2018).

Hydrography and geography

The geography of the Île-de-France is characterized, in physical terms, by its location at the centre of a basin, the Paris Basin. This relatively flat basin is irrigated by a navigable river, the Seine, whose main tributaries converge directly within the region. The Île-de-France is irrigated by a dense network of rivers, with a cumulative length of roughly 4,000 km.

Territorial structure

France is divided administratively into 18 regions and 101 départements (counties). The Île-de-France is one of these 18 regions. Within the Île-de-France, the heart of the region is formed by the city of Paris, divided into 20 arrondissements. Paris also serves as a département.

The city is bordered by the Boulevard Périphérique (a ring road), which links it to the "Petite Couronne" (inner suburbs). The Petite Couronne is a zone consisting of the three départements bordering the city of Paris. Until late 1967, most of this area, together with Paris, formed the département of the Seine.

A region rich in history

The Paris Region developed in a rather haphazard fashion, as households began to use cars and as the development of the suburbs began. The phenomenon of suburbanization gained momentum in the 1960s, with the massive construction of detached single-family homes. By 1990, these accounted for up to 2/3 of all new construction. As a result, in 2012, ¼ of Paris Region households lived in a single-family home they owned, and 43% of couples with children lived in a detached home (compared with 28% in 1975).

The process of suburbanization was the result of several concurrent trends:
• The search for larger homes, outdoor spaces (especially gardens), privacy and peace and quiet;
• The desire to own a home, which is difficult in the city for modest or middle-class households;
• The desire to maintain rapid access to the city centre and employment centres, whether by car or public transport, and the development of which is a prerequisite for the viability of settling outside the dense city.

In 1960, the Plan d'Aménagement et d'Organisation Générale de la Région Parisienne (PADOG) was published. This plan aimed to overhaul the Paris Region's considerable shortfall in infrastructure, while at the same time limiting urban growth.

To offset the urban sprawl, the French government envisaged the creation of balanced metropolises or "villes-nouvelles" (new towns) as recommended in the 1965 SDAURP. There are five of these in the Paris Region, designed to balance housing and work. They are Cergy-Pontoise, Evry, Sénart, SaintQuentin-En-Yvelines and Marne-la-Vallée.

Household motorization and the arrival of the automobile led to the creation of the Boulevard Périphérique in 1973. This 35.04 km circular expressway runs around Paris, and includes the riverside roads.
The Region was created in 1972 under the name"Région Parisienne" and renamed "Région Île-de France" in 1976.

The region gained greater autonomy from the state following the Defferre laws (82), which decentralized power to the regions and gave them greater powers and autonomy. All this was accompanied by the creation of the Schéma Régional d'Île de France (SDRIF) in 1994, which provided broad guidelines for the planning and development of the Paris Region. This was revised and approved in 2013, adopting a long-term vision up to 2030, with major projects such as the2024 Olympic Games.

CARTOGRAPHIE THÉMATIQUE RÉGIONALE

LIMITES ADMINISTRATIVES

Départements, préfectures et sous-préfectures

Janvier 2010

Versailles — préfecture
Rambouillet • sous-préfecture

—— limite de la Région Île-de-France
—— limite de département
—— limite de commune

espace construit
espace boisé
autre espace
aéroport commercial
principaux cours d'eau

	départements	communes	surface km²
petite couronne	75 - Paris	20 arrondts	105
	92 - Hauts-de-Seine	36	176
	93 - Seine-Saint-Denis	40	236
	94 - Val-de-Marne	47	245
grande couronne	77 - Seine-et-Marne	514	5 915
	78 - Yvelines	262	2 284
	91 - Essonne	196	1 804
	95 - Val-d'Oise	185	1 246
	total Île-de-France	1 300	12 012

IAU
INSTITUT D'AMÉNAGEMENT ET D'URBANISME
ÎLE-DE-FRANCE

I.1
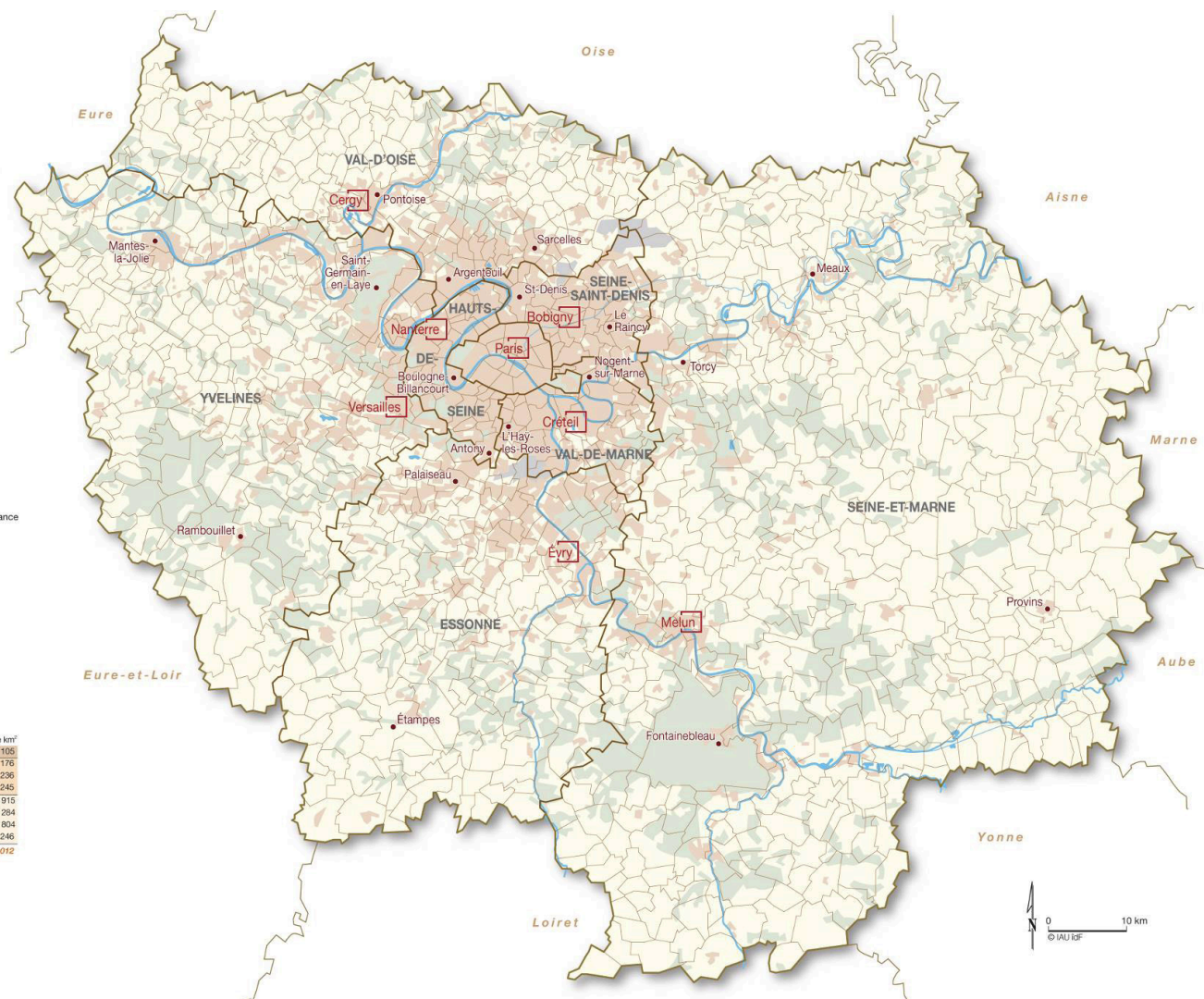
Diverse, historic landscapes

The Île-de-France is a region with a multitude of landscapes, whose great diversity is rooted in the region's history. In order to quantify this diversity, the region can be divided into three levels: the Pays, the Grandes Unités and the Petites Unités Paysagères.

The Pays is the most expansive: it corresponds to fairly large territories, which regularly spill over into the surrounding regions. Although the Pays does not correspond to any administrative division, it still has a certain notoriety and is the foundation of long-standing identities. Its dimensions are based on geography (geology, hydrology, etc.) and on the history of human activities, particularly agriculture. Brie, for example, is famous for its cheese of the same name

Then there are the "Unités Paysagères". These landscape units are defined as "[…] the basic unit for dividing up a territory in terms of its geomorphology, natural or built features, activities and relationships". These diverse landscape identities are also the result of a series of successive planning policies, such as the construction of the capital's major monuments, the arrival of the La Défense business district, the

Grands Ensembles and the Cité-Jardins, each a reflection of the politics of the time.

The Grands Ensembles, built in France between 1955 and 1985, were produced to alleviate the housing crisis and offer better living conditions. Initially designed for the middle classes, they eventually catered to a number of increasingly vulnerable social classes and became further impoverished.

Cité jardins (garden cities), a utopian urban form theorized in the 19th century by Ebenezer Howard, were designed with social and urban–nature concerns in mind. In France, cités jardins are basically social housing estates designed for a modest or even vulnerable population, with landscaped amenities..

The region's identity is also shaped by the major infrastructures that dot its landscape, such as transport and freight infrastructures and ports. The complexity of the Paris Region's landscape is the result of numerous strata of urbanization, creating urban, rural, agricultural and other landscapes. Inhabitants have also created these landscapes, through theirlife stories and their views of the area in which they live.

Urban layers of the Paris

- Isolated individual housing
- Village housing
- Uninterrupted housing estates
- Dispersed housing estates
- Heterogeneous individual housing
- Dispersed collective housing
- Low-rise old buildings (village styles)
- Mid-rise old buildings (town centre)
- High-rise old buildings (Haussmann)
- Recent urban buildings
- Recent urban high-rise buildings
- Heterogeneous low-rise buildings
- Heterogeneous mid-rise buildings
- Heterogeneous high-rise buildings
- Very heterogeneous buildings
- Skyscrapers
- Dispersed activity zones
- Facilities
- Airports
- Large properties
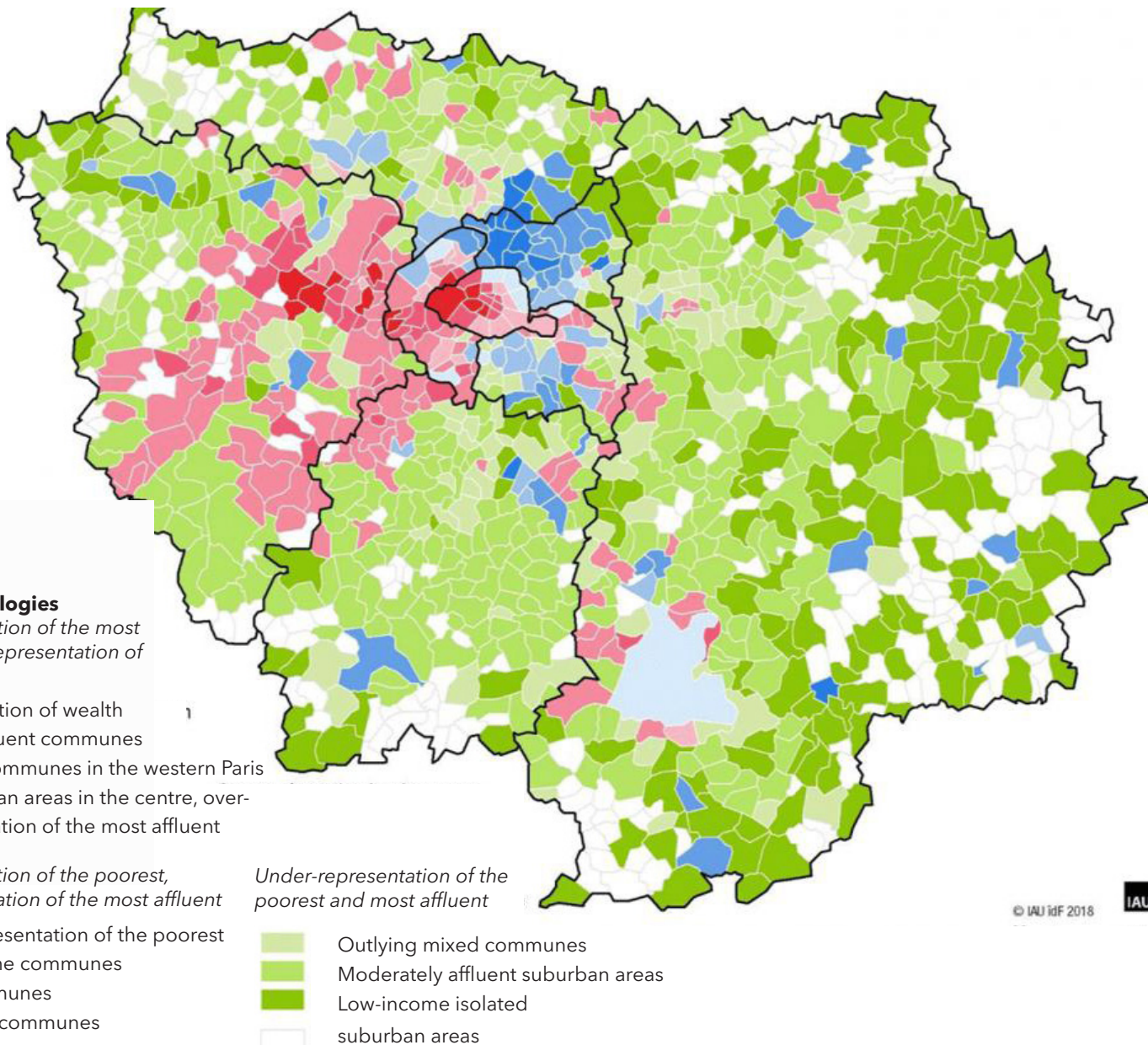- Building sites
- Open spaces

Socio-spatial inequalities

The Île-de-France Region is also one of the most unequal in terms of income. In 2018, 1.8 million people lived below the poverty line in the Île-deFrance. Other significant disparities can also be observed: average incomes vary by a factor of three depending on the commune. These inequalities are exacerbated by the extremely high living standards of the most affluent (the communes with inhabitants who earn the highest incomes in France are mostly in the Île-de-France).

Moreover, poverty tends to increase more in communes where it was already present, notably in those where unemployment, the number of tenants or the number of immigrants have increased the most.

This pattern is at the root of the spatial inequalities. The most vulnerable segments of the population are forced to move further away from amenities and public transport, reinforcing "pockets of poverty" and creating "neighbourhoods" of impoverishment. This is particularly the case in the working-class districts of Paris and in the communes close to Paris, where the phenomenon of gentrification can be observed

Furthermore, wealth-creating employment areas are not necessarily the richest territories. Some are actually in poor areas such as the Plaine Saint-Denis in Seine-Saint-Denis, which is home to a large number of corporate headquarters. However, employees tend not to live there. Instead, a high concentration of executives and high intellectual professions are found in areas such as Hauts-De-Seine.

Commune typologies
Over-representation of the most affluent, under-representation of the poorest

- Concentration of wealth
- Highly affluent communes
- Affluent communes in the western Paris
- Mixed urban areas in the centre, over-representation of the most affluent

Over-representation of the poorest, under-representation of the most affluent

- Over-representation of the poorest
- Low-income communes
- Poor communes
- Very poor communes

Under-representation of the poorest and most affluent

- Outlying mixed communes
- Moderately affluent suburban areas
- Low-income isolated
- suburban areas

© IAU idF 2018

# Post-World War II (1939–1945) and the construction boom

The end of the war was marked by massive destruction in France and a chronic housing shortage. To counter this, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Urban Planning was created (1944-1954). Its aim was to redevelop destroyed towns and cities, and to respond to the poor housing situation in a state of emergency.

The State drew up development and reconstruction plans for destroyed towns and cities, trying to overcome the material difficulties encountered during the reconstruction period. The state became a housing planner, intent on housing the whole of civil society, which was transforming from a rural and agricultural society to an urban and industrial one.

The central concern was to reduce the cost of production in order to provide housing for all. Added to this was the emergence of comfort standards (minimum standards that all new housing had to meet). The same applied to public facilities. This marked the start of mass production and the constuction of the "Grands Ensembles", with 270,000 homes built in 1954 and 300,000 in 1957.

The birth of the Fifth Republic in 1958 further reinforced this construction momentum, as did the redevelopment of old city centres.

This was known as "urban renewal" and involved the demolition of dilapidated city blocks, the reworking of the road network and the development of new blocks separating cars from pedestrians. As a result, the families living in precarious conditions in the old city centres began to move to the large housing estates on the outskirts. In the 1960s, the French government had to deal with a form of informal housing, notably shantytowns like the one in Nanterre (Hauts-de-Seine) .

Then, just as household car ownership was on the rise and policies to promote home ownership were encouraging the development of suburban housing, the Guichard Circular of 1973 put a stop to the production of the "Grands Ensembles". This marked the start of a new policy, that of the Villes Nouvelles (New Towns), comprehensive urban centres created at a distance from existing towns in order to curb the housing crisis. The law of 3 January 1977 introduced a number of changes, including the creation of: the APL (personalized housing assistance) to help a wide range of people pay their rent.
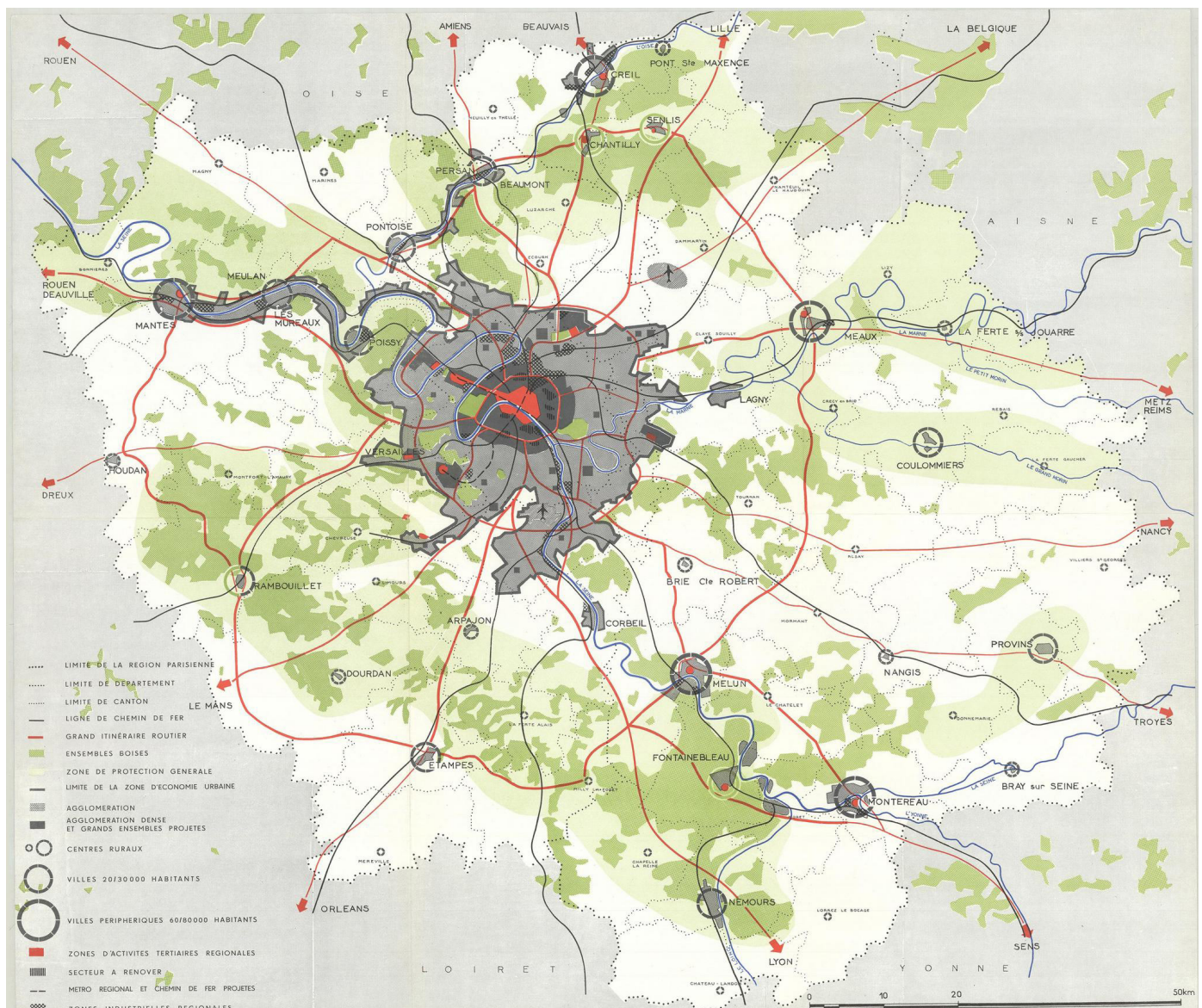
Plan d'aménagement et d'organisation génerale de la Région Parisienne (PADOG) Institut Paris Région, 1960
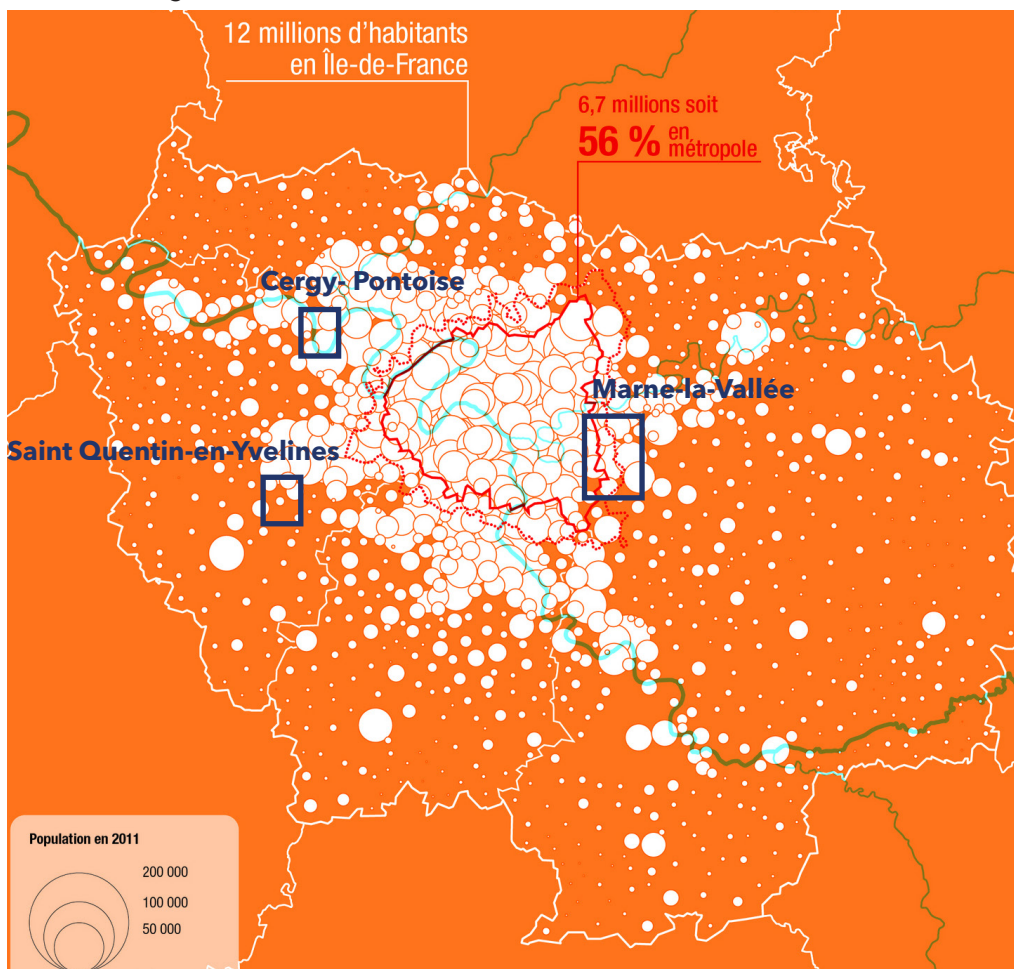
New towns, testaments to an era

Cergy-Pontoise is a new town. The building of new towns was initiated by Paul Delouvrier, who was appointed by President de Gaulle to oversee the Paris Region. A new entity was created to focus on urban planning and innovation, the Établissement Public d'Aménagement (EPA). Bernard Hirsch, an engineer from Pont et Chaussées, was appointed director of the Cergy-Pontoise site.

The aim was to control the extremely rapid and uncontrolled expansion of the Paris Region towards its periphery that had been caused by a significant demographic growth and urban exodus: from one million inhabitants in 1830 to 10 million in 1970.

"The suburbs are spreading like oil slicks, traffic jams are making journeys longer and pollution is poisoning the atmosphere. As for housing, it's piling up to form walls of concrete and dormer windows. The only solution is to build new cities."

Des villes sont nées, La presse filmée françaize, 1973.Des villes sont nées, La presse filmée française, 1973.

The government decided to take inspiration from the British New Town model: to counter the traditional concentric model, new centres needed to be created that would provide all the functions necessary to city while being both autonomous and linked to Paris. This model emerged from the failure of the "grands ensembles": buildings with a high concentration of low-cost housing, in the form of low-rise or high-rise apartment blocks, built to meet an urgent need to rehouse populations. Although intended as a springboard to other types of housing, they actually trapped their occupants in a situation of immobilization: far from services and jobs, the population became precarious, ultimately being locked in their housing situation.

12 millions d'habitants en Île-de-France

6,7 millions soit **56 %** en métropole

Cergy-Pontoise

Marne-la-Vallée

Saint Quentin-en-Yvelines

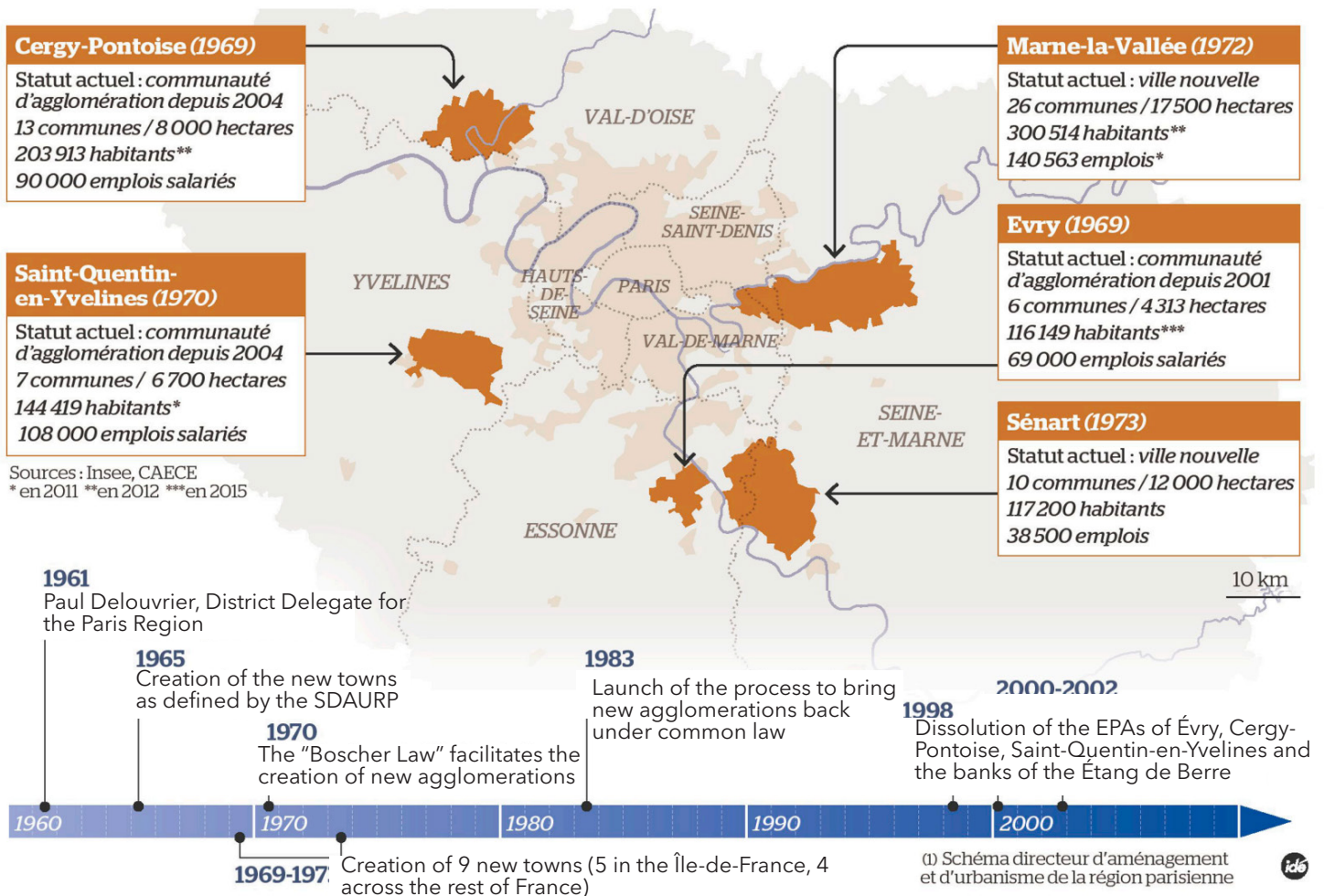Population en 2011

200 000
100 000
50 000

In the new towns, even the most precarious sections of the population were expected to benefit from all the functions of the city. There was also an environmental motivation to limit transport and pollution between Paris and the suburbs. In 1969, it was decided that five new towns would be built on the outskirts of Paris: Évry, Cergy-Pontoise, Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, Marne-la-Vallée and Melun-Sénart.

Fifty years on, these new towns have failed to stem the tide of Paris's expansion (12 million inhabitants today). Cergy has nevertheless managed to remain attractive as a place to live and work, even though people still frequently travel to Paris for leisure and services. Urban, architectural and landscape studies have made these towns more pleasant to live in than other Parisian suburbs.

The creation of a multifunctional town close to Paris meant, first and foremost, reigning in the real estate market, which was highly profitable yet under serious pressure (as much at the time of the new towns, as it is today): from the outset, land had to be set aside for industry, hospitals, leisure activities, and so on. When Cergy was built, there were 150,000 jobs in the agglomeration. For the first time, leisure facilities and parks were built before the need arose, before the population even arrived.

These towns were built over a period of thirty years (from the creation of the first new towns in 1965 to the 1990s, when construction slowed down). They have undergone major architectural and urban changes. The creation of a governance structure (the EPA) and a land management system has enabled these major projects to survive the passage of time, while also maintaining their objectives and integrity.
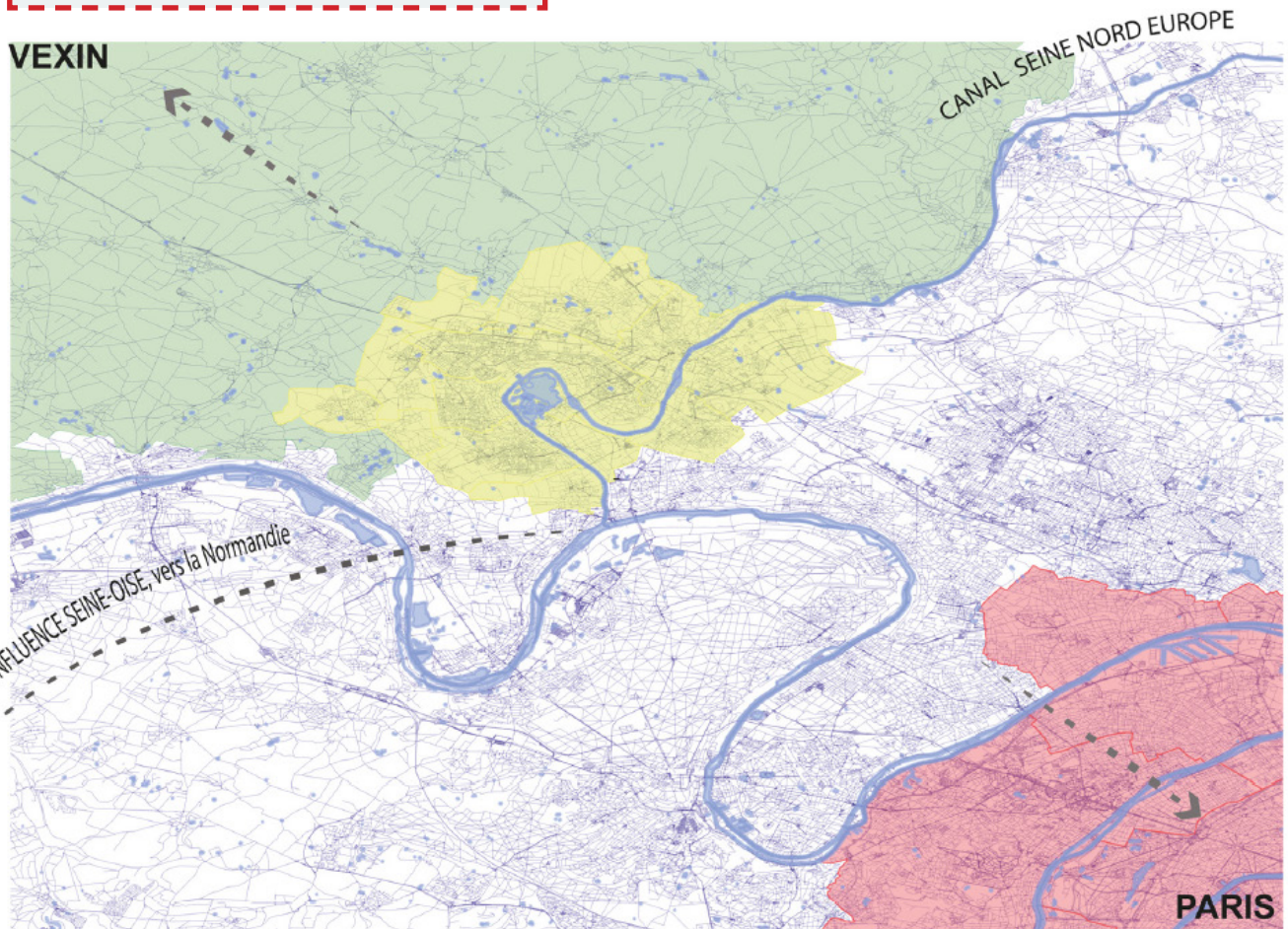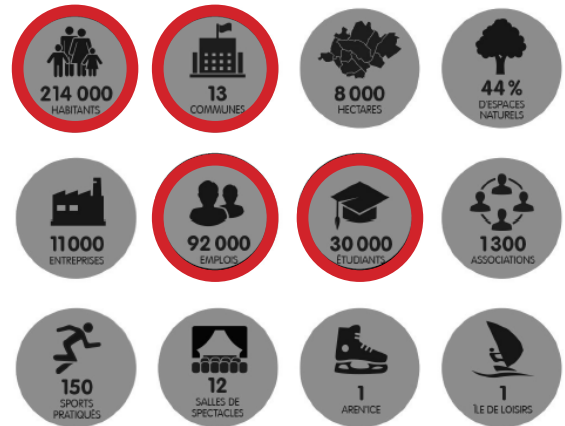

Cergy-Pontoise *(1969)*
Statut actuel : *communauté d'agglomération depuis 2004*
13 communes / 8 000 hectares
203 913 habitants**
90 000 emplois salariés

Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines *(1970)*
Statut actuel : *communauté d'agglomération depuis 2004*
7 communes / 6 700 hectares
144 419 habitants*
108 000 emplois salariés

Sources : Insee, CAECE
* en 2011 **en 2012 ***en 2015

Marne-la-Vallée *(1972)*
Statut actuel : *ville nouvelle*
26 communes / 17 500 hectares
300 514 habitants**
140 563 emplois*

Evry *(1969)*
Statut actuel : *communauté d'agglomération depuis 2001*
6 communes / 4 313 hectares
116 149 habitants***
69 000 emplois salariés

Sénart *(1973)*
Statut actuel : *ville nouvelle*
10 communes / 12 000 hectares
117 200 habitants
38 500 emplois

VAL-D'OISE
SEINE-SAINT-DENIS
YVELINES
HAUTS-DE-SEINE
PARIS
VAL-DE-MARNE
SEINE-ET-MARNE
ESSONNE

10 km

1961
Paul Delouvrier, District Delegate for the Paris Region

1965
Creation of the new towns as defined by the SDAURP

1970
The "Boscher Law" facilitates the creation of new agglomerations

1983
Launch of the process to bring new agglomerations back under common law

1998
Dissolution of the EPAs of Évry, Cergy-Pontoise, Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines and the banks of the Étang de Berre

2000-2002

1960   1970   1980   1990   2000

1969-197?
Creation of 9 new towns (5 in the Île-de-France, 4 across the rest of France)

(1) Schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région parisienne

idé

I.2 Cergy - Pontoise

Housing

The legacy of the "New Town" years:
- **88 428** homes, almost half of which were built in the **70**'s **and 80**'s
- Recent building activity remains strong
- **35%** social housing (SRU) **3** communes catching up, all with rates above **20%**
- **48%** homeowners and **23,3%** private tenants

Sources (INSEE RP2018)

Key figures

214 000 HABITANTS · 13 COMMUNES · 8 000 HECTARES · 44% D'ESPACES NATURELS · 11000 ENTREPRISES · 92 000 EMPLOIS · 30 000 ÉTUDIANTS · 1300 ASSOCIATIONS · 150 SPORTS PRATIQUÉS · 12 SALLES DE SPECTACLES · 1 AREN'ICE · 1 ÎLE DE LOISIRS

Un pôle urbain à l'autonomie relative

Cergy-Pontoise's status is quite atypical because its very creation was a bid to form a counter balance to Paris, autonomous in its development with its own balanced life force (housing, jobs and its own structures and facilities). The aim was autonomy but a strong connection to the capital, economically (to catch some of its growth and develop it) and geographically (as a gateway to the north it is included in the metropolitan project). The town has a peculiar position within the influential range of the metropolis but outside of the administration and various projects of the Greater Paris and also outside the Grand Paris Express project. Although Cergy-Pontoise has many strengths (tourism, food production, its university), its weaknesses cannot be overlooked: the rarity of available housing, the vulnerability of the terrain, the disparity of usage that don't necessarily coexist peacefully are urgent challenges. Furthermore the question of legibility of the site and its urban making arises and remain a challenge for the agglomeration as it was developed with different timescales and reasons in mind. Finally, as Cergy aims to develop its urban center and its university campus, could we imagine the integration of the river Oise in those new dynamics?

Strong landscape identity: The "boucle" of the River

The river bend of the Oise proved ideal for the creation of a new town, thanks to its amphitheatre shape in which it winds around a plain overlooked by wooded hillsides. It is what gives the territory its identity and administrative boundaries. This agglomeration of 13 communes, which has the same surface area as the city of Paris, was built entirely on agricultural land.

The agglomeration was developed into several large urban zones: the Éragny Plains, Cergy Préfecture, the Hautils hillside (with Courdimanche, Vauréal and Jouy le Moutiers), Menucourt and then Cergy Saint-Christophe in the 1980s. Cergy le Haut was added ten years later.

The topography of the terrain and the placement of the new town have created a disruption between recent urbanisation on the plateau and old villages at the bottom of the hills.

More recent urbanisation on the plateau

The newer urban core and the new town have mostly been constructed on plateaux, further upstream from the hillside. This created a distinct break between older and newer urbanisation, and life at the bottom of the hill and on the plateau. The greater part of the newer connected urbanisation has been built following the slope of the Oise, along the axis of the amphitheater.
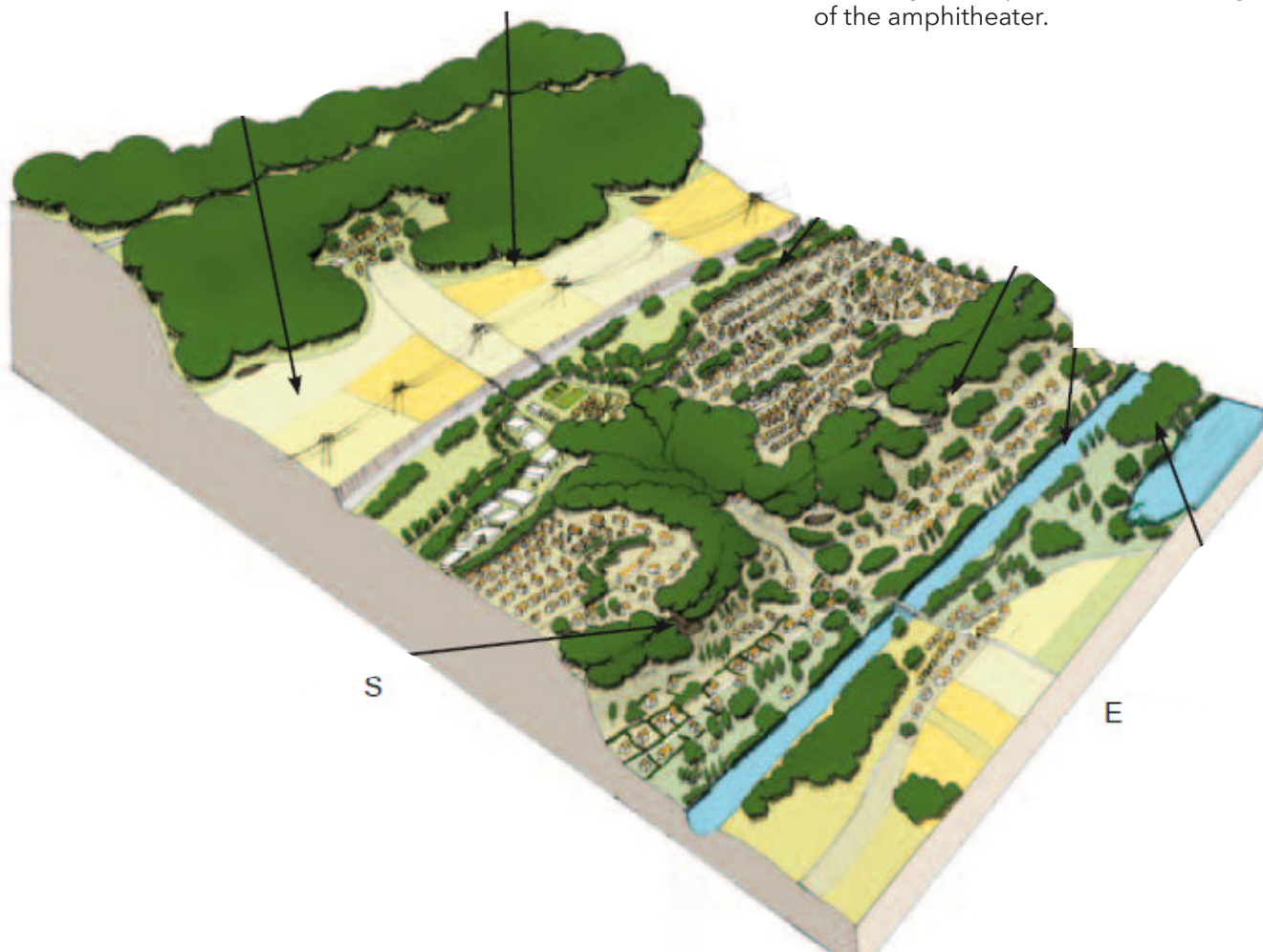
The wooded hillsides

After having been agricultural land for a long time, the hills are now mostly wooded. This means that when standing by the river Oise, the landscape is predominantly that of a forest and the new town and more recent urbanisation is barely visible.

Street-villages at the bottom of the hills

The villages along the winding river have a strong connection with the water, as most houses are built further away from the river bed, at the border of the former flood stage, so far enough from the risky plains and mostly at the bottom of the hills. These villages have a notable rural character, and are often composed of small hamlets where people mostly live in terrassed houses that are placed on one single axis. This type of grouped housing set-up are called 'street-villages'. Agricultural land and kitchen gardens are located in between street-villages, separating them from one another.

Photographie de la maquette de 90 m² de l'agglomération de Cergy-Pontoise
© Antoine Espinasseau

Cergy's four districts

The town of Cergy has three main centres. Cergy Préfecture was the first district to be built in the 1970s, followed by Cergy Saint-Christophe in the 1980s and Cergy le Haut in 1990. In this order, they are linked by a single backbone: the RER A.

Cergy Préfecture was designed according to a modern vision of town planning, with clearly defined functions: business/work/school/housing, linked by pedestrian paths and roadways. The town was built based onto two principles: the grid design and the concrete slab. To avoid the traffic jams of Paris, and because they had a lot of space, the town planners decided to separate car and pedestrian traffic.

A raised concrete slab was built to accommodate pedestrians, shops and building entrances, with the roadway beneath. A block in the grid consists of 600 houses, a school and a public space. Each block includes pedestrian walkways and is surrounded by a roadway. The shopping centre, an undeniable standard at the time, ensured the viability of shops in a town under construction and simplified their installation.

Cergy Saint-Christophe is divided by the railway line into two districts: the Axe Majeur and the Horloge. Each has a different morphology: the blocks are less dense to the north, in the Horloge district. An example of a later period, it was built with smaller blocks, postmodern architecture and an urban layout closer to that of a traditional town (aligned facades, well-tended public spaces, no concrete slab, etc. See Cergy Saint-Christophe).

This district has a number of assets, including a magnificent view over the Paris basin, thanks to its position on the River Oise. Much of its land was allocated to business and industry, including the landscaped area next to the Axe Majeur: the headquarters of Spie Batignolles, 50 hectares of which are currently unoccupied and whose future use is under debate. The district benefits from large green areas on the banks of the Oise. It is split by the RER into two districts, the Axe Majeur and the Horloge. At its centre is a massive market, the third largest in the Île-de-France in terms of attractiveness (i.e. size, revenue and number of visitors).

To "create the city", the town planners introduced new landmarks that would give the city its identity: the concrete slab's four towers, the giant clock of Cergy Saint-Christophe, the bell towers, etc., as well as a monumental artistic and landscaping installation: the **Axe Majeur**, a work by Dani Karavan. This landscaped axis is dotted with works of art (the 12 columns, the footbridge, the pyramids, etc.) and offers a panoramic view of Paris and its surroundings. The route ends with Ricardo Bofill's Crescent buildings, monumental post-modern dwellings.

The crescent shape was used again in **Cergy le Haut**, which was built 10 years later. Its urban planning is more traditional: streets with aligned facades. There is a clear division between blocks, with many courtyards and internal gardens. Much of the development was carried out by private developers in this part of the town.

Cergy Village, which existed long before these three other districts, was renovated with money from the new town. A marina was built there. Built in a neo-traditional, artificial and reassuring style of architecture, it tends to make us forget that this is the most recently developed part of the town.

Four emblematic towers were built on the concrete slab of Cergy Préfecture. Two were for offices: the 3M tower, now demolished, and the GRDM tower, which was converted into student accommodations. One was for public services (the prefecture), which boasts the symbolic shape of an inverted pyramid; and one for housing (the recently renovated Tour Bleue), innovative for its snail-shaped layout and plastic furniture.

La tour 3M

La tour Cergy préfécture

La tour bleue
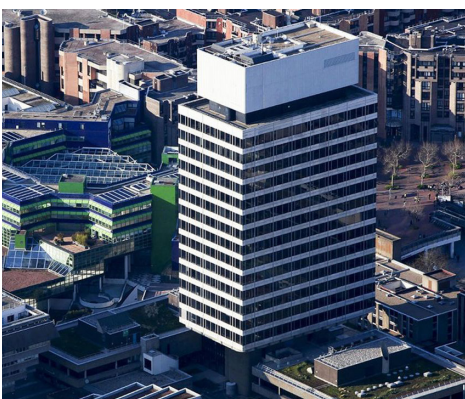
La tour GRDM
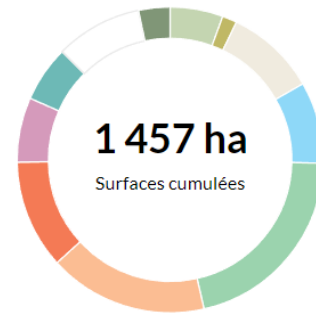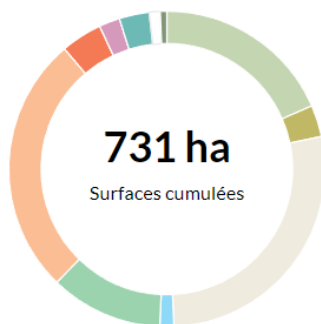
Land use in Cergy-Pontoise

Forests
Semi-natural areas
Agricultural land
Water
Artificial open spaces
Individual housing
Collective housing
Activity zones
Facilities
Transport
Quarries, landfills and construction sites
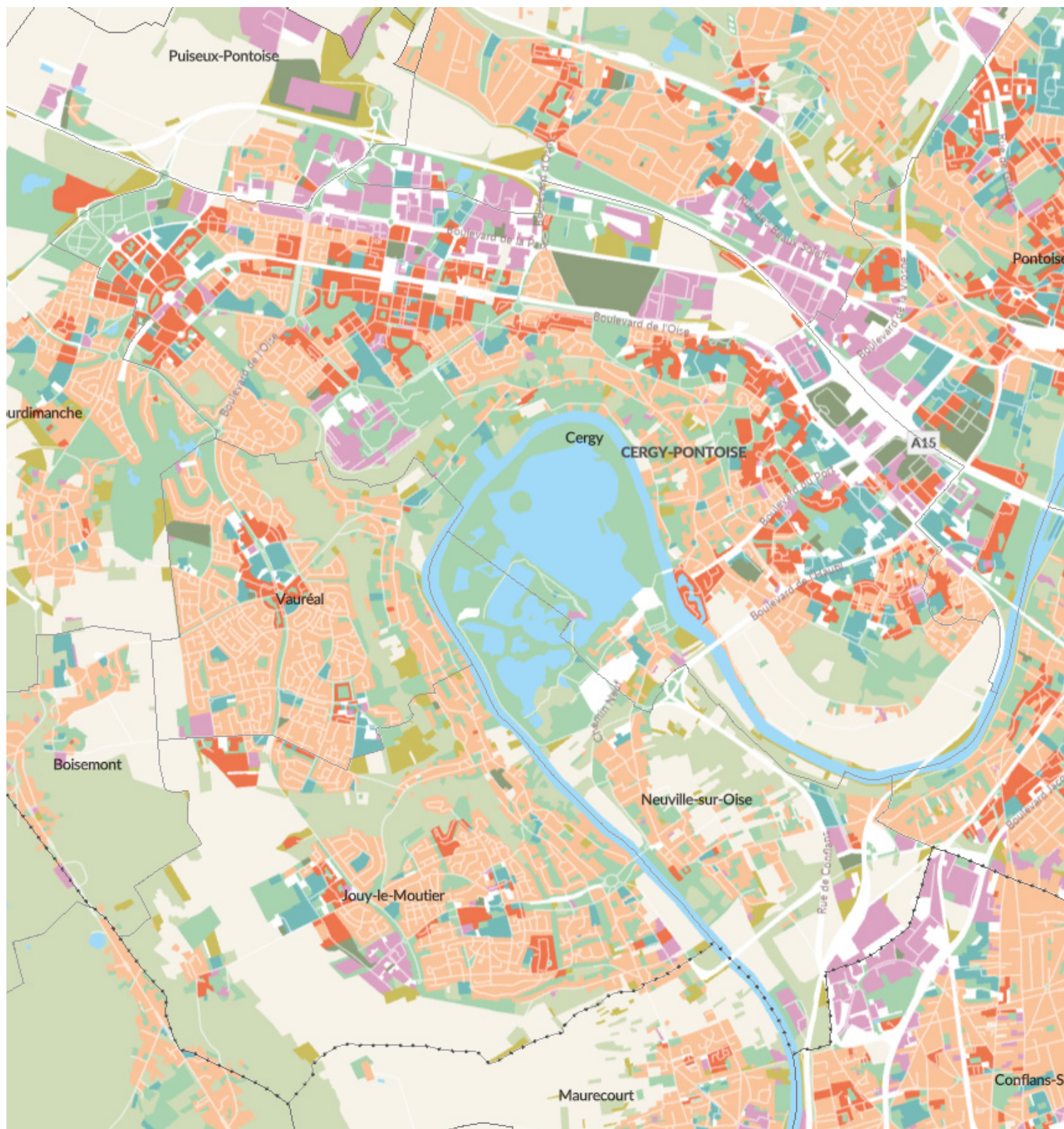
COMMUNE DE JOUY-LE-MOUTIER

731 ha
Surfaces cumulées

COMMUNE DE VAURÉAL

375 ha
Surfaces cumulées

COMMUNE DE CERGY

1 457 ha
Surfaces cumulées
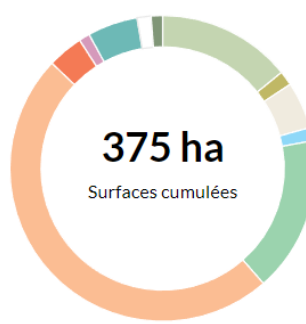
Reinhabiting Cergy-Pontoise, What projects for the new town?

Densifying Cergy-Pontoise

Today, in this sparsely populated agglomeration, where expansion is no longer desirable, elected officials are planning to densify:

"Subject to precautions, a certain amount of densification of existing districts is logical and desirable; [...] the quality of life in Cergy must be shared and we must have the courage to say so. [...] we can't want to be a university town without offering housing for students. I'm in favour of a certain amount of densification [...] but it has to be prepared and explained"

Isabelle Massin, Mayor of Cergy from 1989 to 1996

This change of course is far from obvious in an area that has undergone extensive development since the new town was built. The city has never stopped growing, with 1,300 houses being built each year. Available land is now in very short supply. As a result, new buildings have to be grafted onto the existing fabric, while also developing renewable energy. The territory has identified plots that can be subdivided, vacant houses (800 houses) and those that can be renovated in order to meet building targets without increasing the built-up area. At present, 36% of homes are unoccupied. It would be possible to provide more housing by building the same amount.

The Communauté d'Agglomération is working on housing for different age groups (with the university campus development project) and social categories (encouraging home ownership in certain neighbourhoods and thinking about housing for the most vulnerable).

Market gardening along the Oise river bend, Bord d'Oise

The new PLH aims to address the imbalances in the area: social housing is becoming increasingly scarce, while demand is growing. The same imbalance exists in sales: there are no more starter homes. Price control is therefore essential to keep households in the area. The influx of students adds to the pressure on the property market.

A new town ahead of its time?

The new town seems to be more adaptable to today's challenges and even a pioneer in terms of ecological transition: "Cergy-Pontoise was built ahead of its time on the principles of sustainable development". The author was referring to the balance sought between programmes and social strata, the integration of natural spaces and peri-urban agriculture, the place given to public transport and even the anticipation of waste management and an urban heating system.

"Cergy can thus consolidate its position at the cutting edge of a transition that should not be limited to one or two eco-districts."

Current projects do not yet reflect a paradigm shift: the ice rink project completed in 2016, the shopping centre presently being expanded, the recent urbanization of 57 hectares of housing, sports and leisure facilities on the Plaine des Linandes, etc.

There is indeed a desire to densify, to strengthen town centres, to "create a centre".

"Nothing is more imprecise than the concept of density: in square metres, in inhabitants, in employment? By plot, by district, by city? Measured or perceived? Density or height?"

LEGER, Jean-Michel. Cergy Ygrec: Tableaux actuels d'une ville nouvelle. Éditions Créaphis, 2019, p.130.

How can Cergy maintain its status as a unique landscape town in France while continuing to grow and maintain its centralities? If densification were to undermine the landscape quality of the site, would it become less desirable to live in Cergy?

Ongoing projects, however, do not reflect a paradigm shift. The ZACs (zones intended for development) are almost all located on agricultural land. Such land is becoming increasingly rare in Cergy-Pontoise, even though the ambition of the new town was to affirm agricultural activity and work on its links with the city. These projects mainly concern housing.

Construction area in Cergy Pontoise, the ZAC (zone intended for development)

ZAC Sainte Apolline et Moulin à Vent
1500 homes
Cultural center
Farmland

ZAC Des Linandes
Eco-district with 1,500 homes
Ice rink
22,000 m² of shops, leisure facilities, restaurants and a hotel
Farmland

ZAC Bois d'Aton
300 homes
Farmland

ZAC Chaussée puiseux
Warehouses and logistics centres
Farmland

ZAC Des Bossus
Eco-district
School and 2,600 homes
Former barracks

ZAC Liesse 2
900 homes
Business park
School complex-
Farmland

Le périmètre de la ZAC

ZAC La pièce d'Alçon
Eco-district
400 homes
Farmland

ZAC de l'Hautiloise
300 homes
Farmland

ZAC de coeur de ville
520 homes
Retirement home
Urban renewal

Zac neuville université
Office
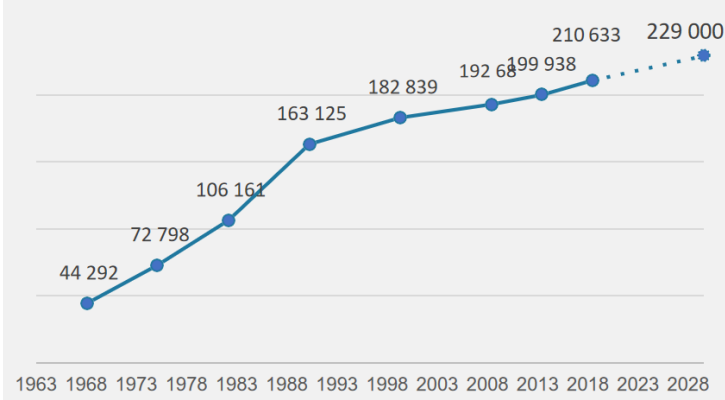Business premises
IUT
Farmland / woodland

Grand Centre project
3,000 new homes
3,000 additional jobs
Upgrading the campus
Expansion of the shopping centre
Refurbishment of the concrete slab
Renovation of the RER station
16 ha of landscaped land
Urban renewal

Current demographic challenges
A territory of transit, but not of settlement
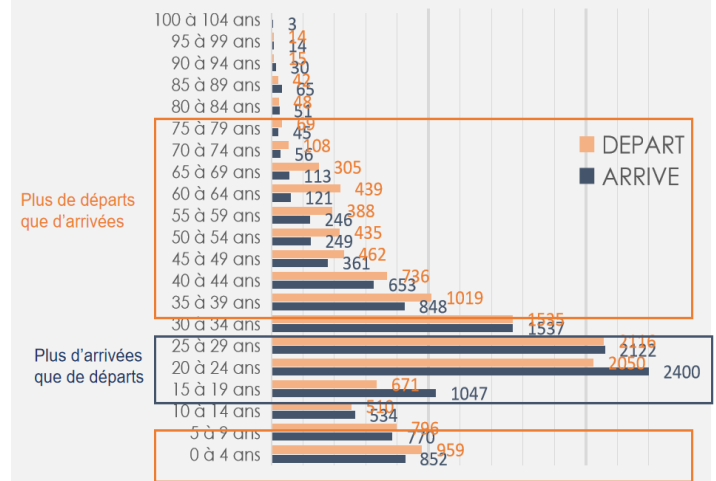
Demographic growth

Overall population trends within the CACP

229 000
210 633
199 938
192 68 / 199 938
182 839
163 125
106 161
72 798
44 292

1963 1968 1973 1978 1983 1988 1993 1998 2003 2008 2013 2018 2023 2028

Source : INSEE, Recensement de la population 2018 + *Projection : calculée en tenant compte du « Point Mort » ainsi que des projets de construction pour le prochain PLH*

A staging post for households in the middle of their residential trajectory and with intermediary resources

Arrivals and departures by age

Age	DEPART	ARRIVE
100 à 104 ans	3	
95 à 99 ans	14	
90 à 94 ans	30	
85 à 89 ans	41	
80 à 84 ans	48 / 51	
75 à 79 ans	49	
70 à 74 ans	108 / 56	
65 à 69 ans	305 / 113	
60 à 64 ans	439 / 121	
55 à 59 ans	388 / 246	
50 à 54 ans	435 / 249	
45 à 49 ans	462 / 361	
40 à 44 ans	736 / 653	
35 à 39 ans	1019 / 848	
30 à 34 ans	1535 / 1537	
25 à 29 ans	2122 / 2125	
20 à 24 ans	2050 / 2400	
15 à 19 ans	671 / 1047	
10 à 14 ans	510 / 534	
5 à 9 ans	796 / 770	
0 à 4 ans	959 / 852	

Plus de départs que d'arrivées
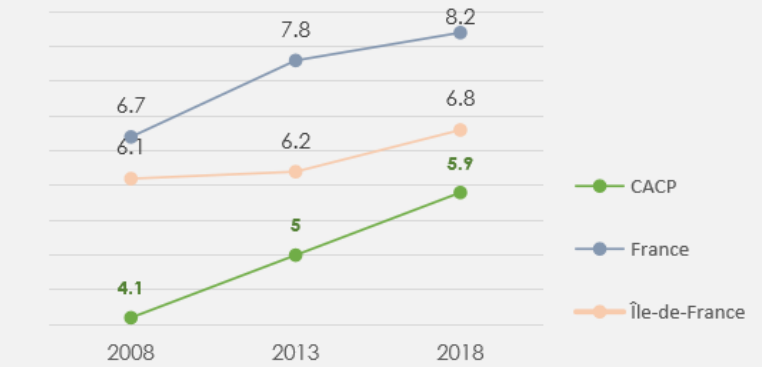
Plus d'arrivées que de départs

Source: Insee, Recensement de la population 2018

Over-occupation of social rental housing; under-occupation of private housing

Breakdown of over-occupation and under-occupation by occupancy status

Suroccupation: 13%, 29%, 51%, 7%

Sous-occupation: 74%, 15%, 2%, 9%

- ■ Parc en propriété
- ■ Parc locatif privé
- ■ Parc locatif social
- ■ Logés gratuitement
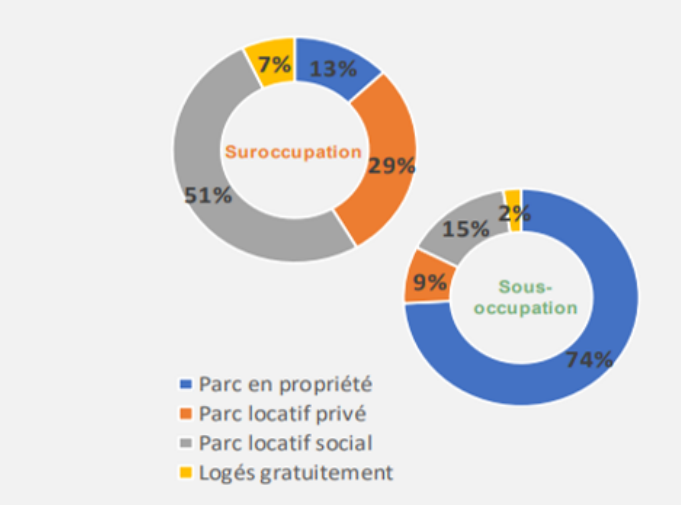
Evolution of the proportion of vacant housing (overall)

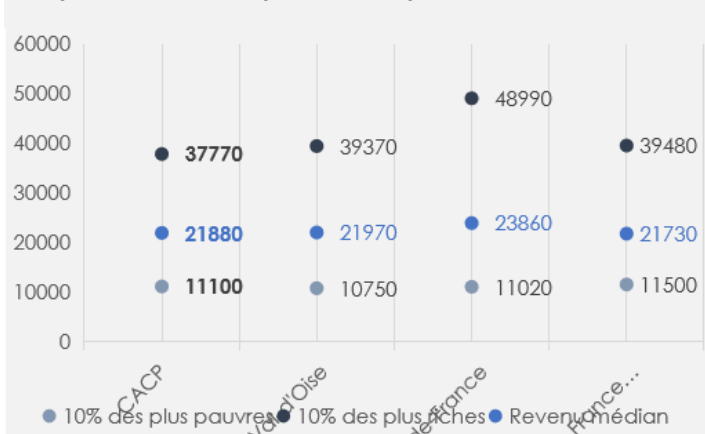|	2008	2013	2018
France	6.7	7.8	8.2
Île-de-France	6.1	6.2	6.8
CACP	4.1	5	5.9

- ● CACP
- ● France
- ● Île-de-France

Source : INSEE 2018

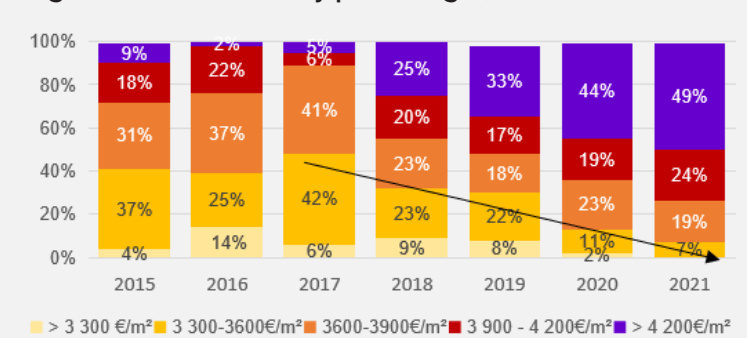**800** permanently vacant units in the private housing market, representing a potential volume to be mobilized

A discrepancy between financial capacity and the prices commanded by the new private

Disposable income per consumption unit in euros

	CACP	Val-d'Oise	Île-de-France	France...
10% des plus riches	37770	39370	48990	39480
Revenu médian	21880	21970	23860	21730
10% des plus pauvres	11100	10750	11020	11500

- ● 10% des plus pauvres
- ● 10% des plus riches
- ● Revenu médian

Source : INSEE, Recensement de la population 2018

Segmentation of sales by price range (%)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
> 4 200€/m²	9%	2%	5%	25%	33%	44%	49%
3 900 - 4 200€/m²	18%	22%	6%	20%	17%	19%	24%
3600-3900€/m²	31%	37%	41%	23%	18%	23%	19%
3 300-3600€/m²	37%	25%	42%	23%	22%	11%	7%
> 3 300 €/m²	4%	14%	6%	9%	8%	2%	

■ > 3 300 €/m² ■ 3 300-3600€/m² ■ 3600-3900€/m² ■ 3 900 - 4 200€/m² ■ > 4 200€/m²

**Source :** collectes et traitements Adéquation – MAJ a partir 2018

Consequence: supply accessible to non-institutional investors who pass homeowner costs onto rents

Unequal building dynamics between towns, a housing stock lacking in energy renovations
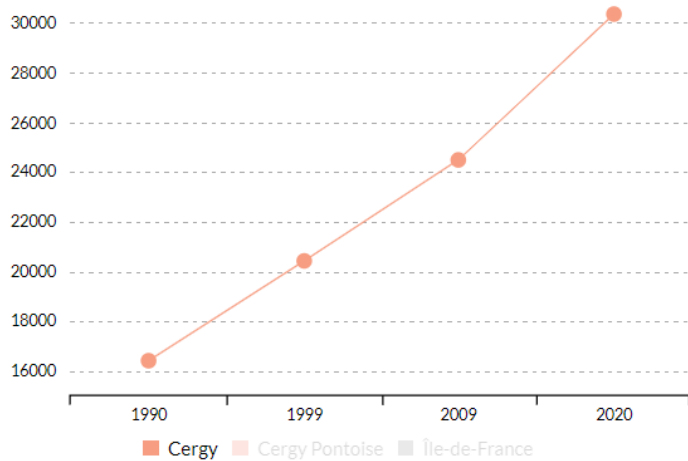
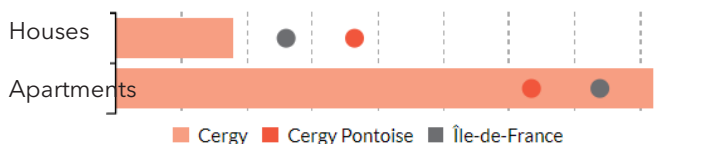## Average annual construction rate

Donnée cartographiée :
Taux de construction annuel moyen 2019-2021

- Plus de 2,5%
- De 2,1% à 2,5%
- De1,6% à 2%
- De 1,1% à 1,5%
- De 0,5% à 1%
- 0,5% et moins
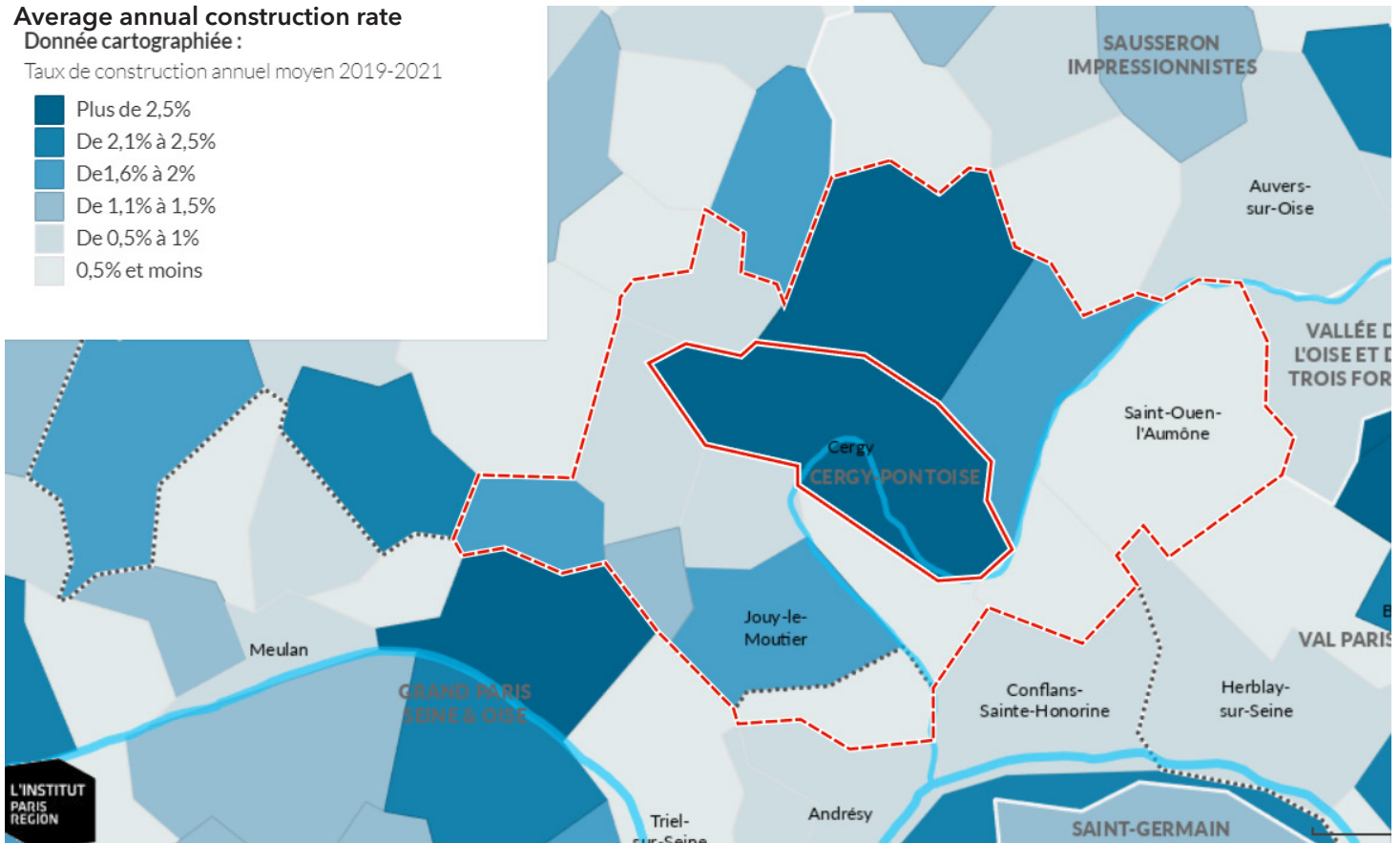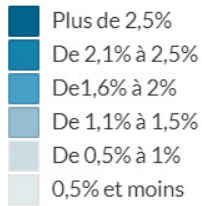
Evolution of the number of housing units

Cergy ● Cergy Pontoise ● Île-de-France

Types of housing

Houses
Apartments

Cergy ● Cergy Pontoise ● Île-de-France

Les parts de logements collectifs et individuels sont calculées en ne considérant que les logements de type "appartement" (collectif) et "maison" (individuel), c'est-à-dire en excluant tous les autres types de logements au sens du recensement (logement-foyer, chambre d'hôtel, habitation de fortune et pièce indépendante).

Housing categories (in %)

Principal residences
Occasional residences
Vacant housing units

Cergy ● Cergy Pontoise ● Île-de-France
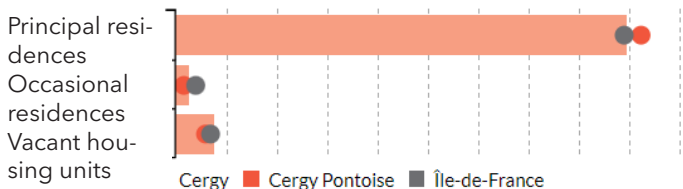
Number of apartment buildings with an energy diagnostic

Cergy-Pontoise	Val d'Oise	Yvelines	Région
128	612 | 869	6957

The energy performance of apartment buildings

Cergy-Pontoise ■ Val d'Oise ■ Yvelines ■ Région
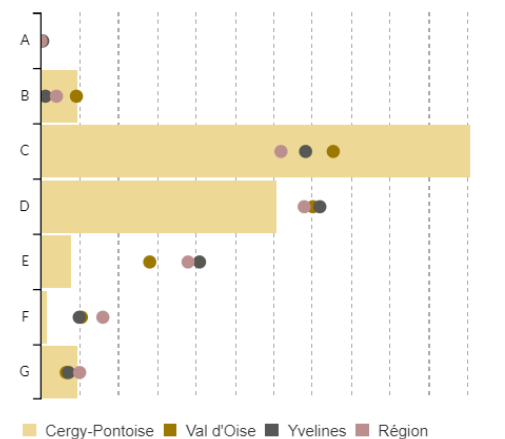
Number of housing units in renovated condominiums

Cergy-Pontoise ■ Val d'Oise ■ Yvelines ■ Région
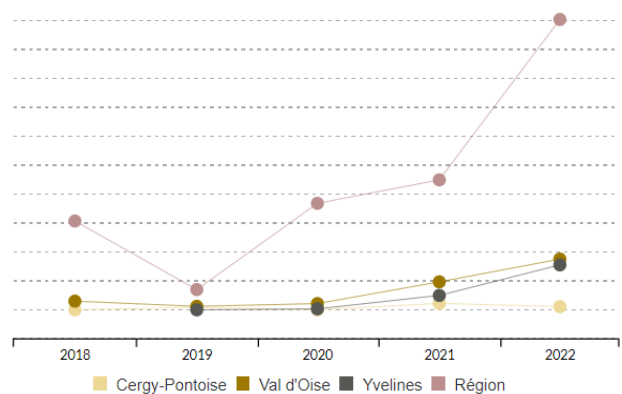
1.3 Zone of interest

Cergy Saint-Christophe

The district is composed of several sub-districts: la Belle Épine, le Verger, les Genottes, la Sébille, les Terrasses, la Bastide, le Gros Caillou, le Chat Perché, la Lanterne and Axe Majeur.

Most of the district was built in the 1980s, after Cergy Préfecture. The Cergy Saint-Christophe station was inaugurated in 1985.
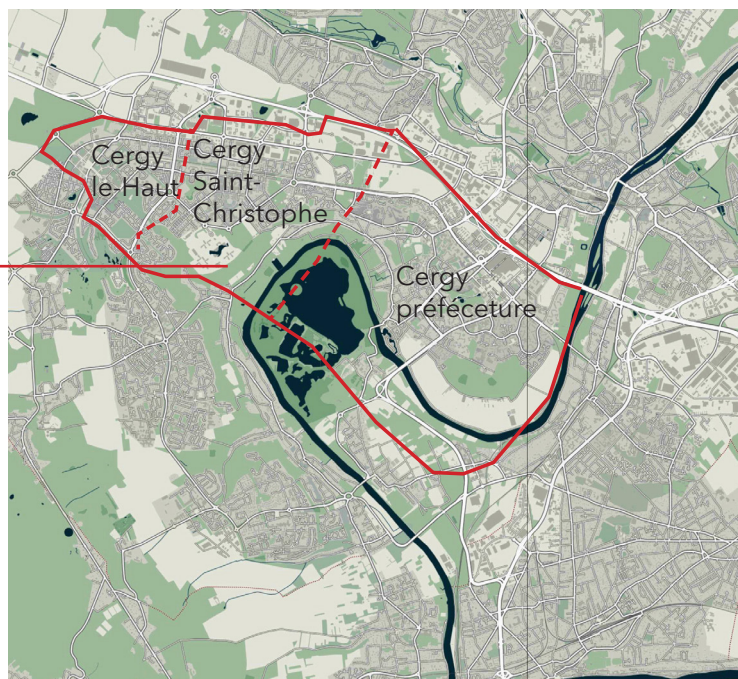
POLITIQUE DE LA VILLE ET RENOUVELLEMENT URBAIN

The zones
Facilities and administrative boundaries

○ Educational facilities
◎ Network of Priority Education schools

• Childcare
• Education–Primary schools
• Education–Secondary schools
• Education–Higher education

• Health–Local Services
• Health–Intermediary reach
• Health–Regional or higher reach

• Sport–Local services
• Sport–Intermediary reach
• Sport–Regional or higher reach

• Culture–Local services
• Culture–Intermediary reach
• Culture– Regional or higher-reach

Living conditions and urban renewal

NPNRU / QPV

█ Of regional interest

█ Of national interest

█ Not affected by urban renewal

Cergy Saint-Christophe is a priority district for the city, and is the subject of a local and national renewal policy.

Cergy Saint-Christophe, questioning modernism

This district is larger than its predecessors, with 14,000 housing units: 9,000 in the Cergy Préfecture, 4,000 in Eragny and 10,000 on the Hautils hillside. It was intended to be the new centre of Cergy, thanks to its central geographic location. However, this district is mainly residential (due to the high demand for housing) and is surrounded by business parks; it will never be as attractive as the well-equipped district of Cergy Préfecture.
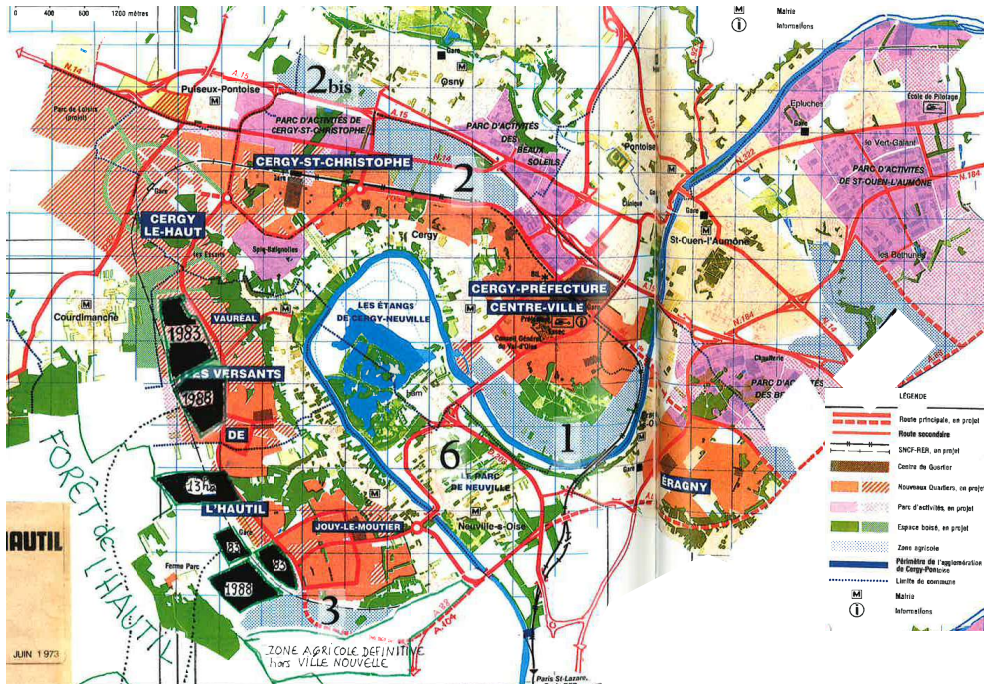
Fifteen years after the start of this experiment, architecture and urban planning have evolved. In the 1970s, the hope was to change the way we live through a very strong, modern urbanism. But this utopianism was challenged in the 1980s. The virtues of the traditional city were recognized and urban planning became more relaxed. At the time, there were fewer people to house (due to the economic crisis): the new district would thus be less dense and more varied, with an equal proportion of individual and collective housing, rented accommodation and home ownership.

There was also a trend to reconsider the large-scale subdivisions of the modern era, in favour of smaller building plots to encourage a mix of programming and social development within the same neighbourhood. Postmodernism is a return to the importance of public spaces (a remnant of modern, functional urbanism): in Cergy Saint-Christophe, the town began with the design of squares, esplanades and streets. Traffic routes were to be simplified: they would no longer be subdivided to make them smaller and easier to cross. Buildings were to be aligned with the street, forming small densities of shops, with a maximum height of 18 metres. The boundaries between city and countryside were to be asserted and reworked, while generously integrating landscaped areas. Parks were to be created upstream: those of Saint-Christophe, Le Verger and Parc Ouest.

Once these defining elements were established, an architectural competition for "city buildings" was launched in 1978, an echo of the "town house" competition of Jouy-le-Moutier. Like the original competition, the aim was to find a more familiar and accessible style, based on regional or foreign references. Architects were expected to change the image of the apartment building and incorporate the comforts of individual housing. Architecture became postmodern: more complex and diversified, and inspired by regional architecture. The ideal of modern "architectural purity" was finally abandoned.
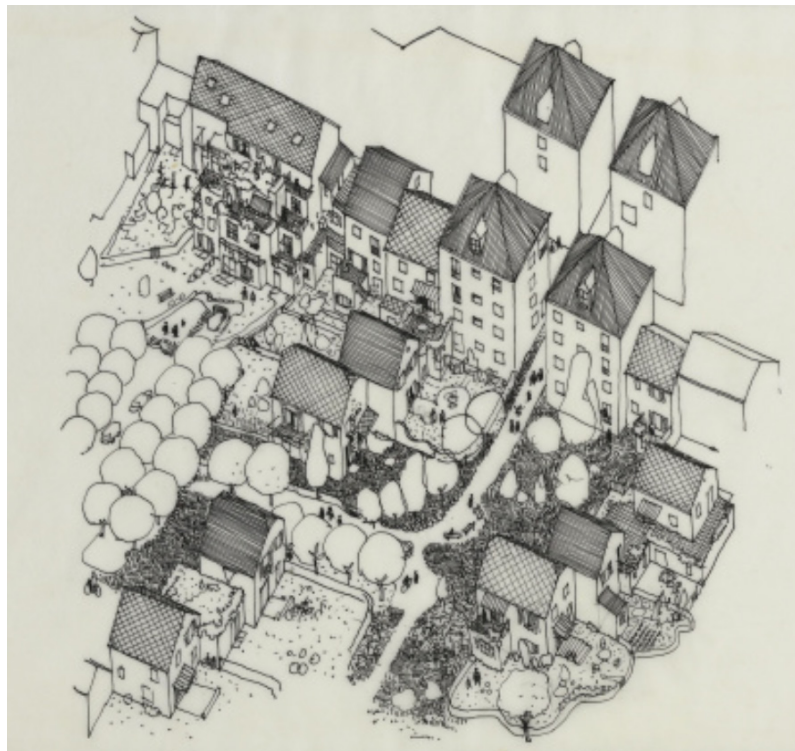
City building competition, Puizeux, Cergy-Pontoise: Axonometry to the south of the collectives
1 August 1978
Photo: (C) Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Georges Meguerditchian

1970-1980

VOLUMES « CUBISTES »
ARCHITECTURE par
PANNEAUX
LA FORME EST DICTÉE
PAR LA FONCTION

LE BLOC SE DÉCOMPOSE
(TERRASSES-JARDINS)
LES COULEURS DOMINENT

LES FORMES S'INCLINENT
LES TOITURES RÉAPPARAÎSSENT

LES SYSTÈMES CONSTRUCTIFS
SONT MIXTES : TRADITIONNELS
et PRÉFABRICATION
LÉGÈRE

MAISONS de VILLE
RETOUR des FORMES TRADITIONNELLES
ASSOCIÉES à de NOUVEAUX MODERNISMES

1970-1980
- "Cubist" architecture by panels
- Form dictated by function
- The block is deconstructed (gardens-terraces)
- Colours dominate
- Shapes tilt
- Roofs reappear
- Mixed construction systems: traditional and light prefabrication
- Town house
- Return to traditional forms combined with new modernisms

1980-1990
- City buildings
- Closed blocks aligned with the street
- Study of identifying features: columns, mouldings, balusters
- Ordinary architecture of individual detached houses on small plots: expressions (true or false) of well-being
- City buildings "in the style of" large villas
- Various shapes and sizes–various fantasies

1980-1990

IMMEUBLES de VILLE
ÎLOTS FERMÉS à
l'ALIGNEMENT
SUR RUE

RECHERCHE de SIGNES
d'IDENTIFICATIONS :
COLONNES, MOULURES, BALUSTRES

ARCHITECTURE ORDINAIRE de
MAISONS INDIVIDUELLES isolées
sur PETITES PARCELLES .
EXPRESSION (vraie ou faussée)
du « BIEN ÊTRE »

IMMEUBLES de VILLE « à la Manière de »..
GROSSES VILLAS
FORMES et DIMENSIONS VARIÉES – FANTAISIES DIVERSES :
LANTERNAUX, ARCADES, MODÉNATURES, BAIES.....

1990-1999

ARCHITECTURE RÉGIONALISTE
CONTINUITÉ avec le VILLAGE
PRÉSENCE de l'EAU

ARCHITECTURE URBAINE « FAMILIÈRE »
la TECHNIQUE est au service de l'ESTHÉTIQUE
ARCHITECTURALE : RÉRÉRENCES PARISIENNES

ou CITÉ JARDIN

EXPRESSION SCULPTURALE

ou TECHNOLOGIQUE

1990-1999
- Continuity of regional architecture with the village
- Presence of water
- "Familiar" urban architecture
- Technique at the service of architectural aesthetics: Parisian references or "garden cities"
- Sculptural or technological expressions

Cergy Saint-Christophe: Between diversity and insecurity

The dream of a mixed and harmonious

The population that has come to live in this new city is very diverse: sixty different nationalities have been counted. The majority are technicians, manual workers or managers who have come with their families and young children. To launch the town, it was decided to include a high proportion of social housing (33% and up to 85% in some areas). It was a rare situation, with no history and no established city centre: these pioneers had to 'create the city'. The population was exceptionally young: a school was built for every 600 inhabitants. Today, the département is still very young, with 42% of the population under the age of 30.

The developers' dream was to create a mixed city where people of different origins and social classes could mix and mingle. Because of its geographical location, the aim was to attract wealthy families who wanted a greener environment, as well as families who could not afford to live in Paris and immigrant communities. The latter played a crucial role in the new town: at the time, the country's economic boom meant that two-thirds of the workforce on building sites had to be recruited from abroad. At the same time, the construction of housing for the workers failed to keep pace, and shanty towns began to emerge on the outskirts of Paris.

In Cergy, the workers and their families were initially housed in temporary mobile homes and then, for the vast majority, in social housing. The long-term settlement of the workers and their families was facilitated and anticipated. At the same time, the EPA pursued a policy of relocating families living in very precarious conditions (such as those living in the shantytowns of Argenteuil, who were relocated to Croix-Petit).

LA RÉSIDENCE DU PARC
77 appartements, 3, 4, 5 pièces
12 maisons individuelles 4 pièces duplex

Financement PAP
Possibilités APL prêt 1 % patronal
et prêts divers

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Avenue du Centaure
maisons individuelles
de 4 et 5 pièces
avec jardin privatif
prestations soignées
Possibilité de Prêt P.A.P.
de la Caisse de Prêts et de l'A.P.L.
Vente «Clés en Mains»
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RÉSIDENCE MANSART
à Cergy Saint-Christophe
Pavillons de 5 et 6 pièces
sur terrains de 148 à 225 m²

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Livraison immédiate

Sur place : les lundi et vendredi de 14 h à 19 h
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Tél. : 271.57.59

Promoteur : SA d'HLM
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94300 VINCENNES
Tél. : 374.11.52

A district born out of a period of financial crisis

Even before it was built, the announcement that the new Cergy Saint-Christophe district would contain a large proportion of social housing drew criticism from local residents. The district's reputation has always been a problem for the city's image.

Built in the late 1970s during the housing crisis, the developers were forced to sell quickly, without taking into account the social balance of the neighbourhoods that the EPA wanted. The social crisis worsened: after the oil crisis and changes in France's rental policy, families found themselves unable to pay their rent, buildings fell into disrepair, the richest people moved out and the area gradually became socially segregated.

Today, Cergy Saint-Christophe is experiencing a rise in crime linked to underemployment. Around fifty different nationalities live in this district alone, making it a diverse area with many different communities. Cultural initiatives such as the Voix Liées festival, which celebrates the diversity of cultures, and the frequent neighbourhood meals demonstrate the desire to be part of a group, a neighbourhood. Despite the dense network of associations, sociologist Hélène Bonvalot is worried about the future of the district, which is becoming poorer and where she sees a tendency to withdraw and isolate.

Finding a balance

The Communauté d'Agglomération has 9 priority districts (known as QPVs), where the social situation of residents requires assistance from the State. The largest of these is in Cergy Préfecture: Axe Majeur–Horloge. With 9,000 residents, it is home to 15% of Cergy's population. The population has been steadily falling into poverty over the last 10 years. The population is extremely young, with very high unemployment and school drop-out rates. What's more, the housing stock, which dates back to the new town project, is falling into disrepair. In addition to this district, which is in serious difficulty, there is the more recent Sébille district, which is an extension of the RER axis and is exclusively residential.

These two districts are part of the new National Programme for Urban Regeneration (NPNRU). In 2015, it was decided that a renovation project around the Cergy Saint-Christophe train station, was to be launched. The project would cover housing, public spaces and the station itself.

Three objectives were announced: to simplify traffic flows, to renovate housing around the station and to build new housing to renew the supply and encourage home ownership. The same went for shops: "The project includes a commercial dimension, both to meet the needs of existing residents and (above all) to meet the needs of future residents". NPRU. Today, the mayor wants to change the market's image, make it cleaner and safer, and reduce visual and noise pollution. The mayor also wants to diversify and reduce the number of stalls.

Today, the railway tracks have been renovated and the market has been replaced by a fountain to create a real square. Rue Mondétour now precedes the Crescent, followed by the Axe Majeur.

Axe Majeur-Horloge
(9 000 inhabitants)

- **82%** of housing is social housing
- **34%** poverty rate
- The under-25s represent **48%** of the population
- **18.5%** of young people aged **16-25** are not enrolled in school or are unemployed4
- median annual income is **11 000** €
- **20** % of the working-age population is unemployed
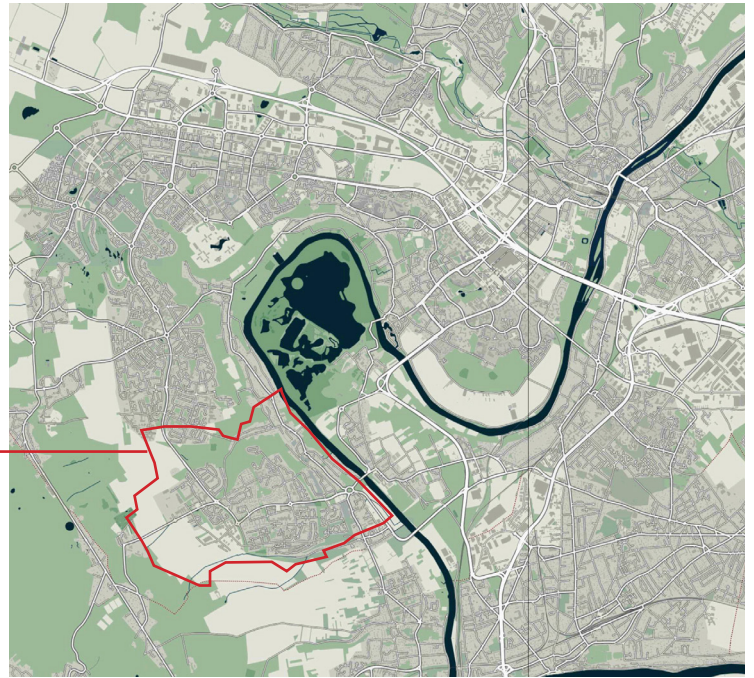- **88%** of homes were built between **1976** and **1988**

La Sébille
(1 100 inhabitants)

- **35%** of the working-age population is unemployed
- median annual income is **12 000** €
- **51%** of the 16-64 age group are employed

Jouy-le-Moutier

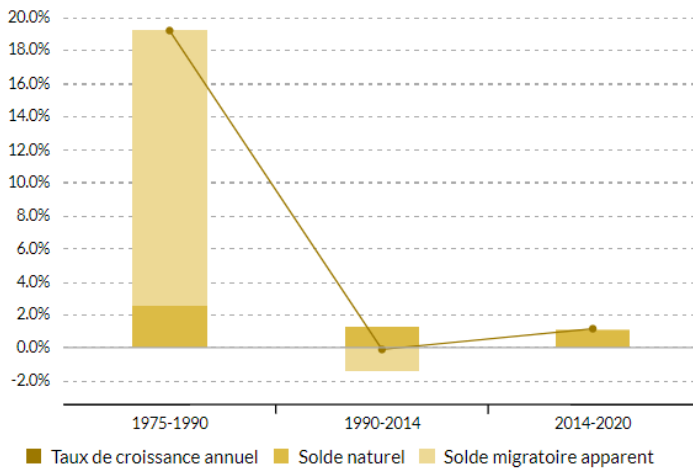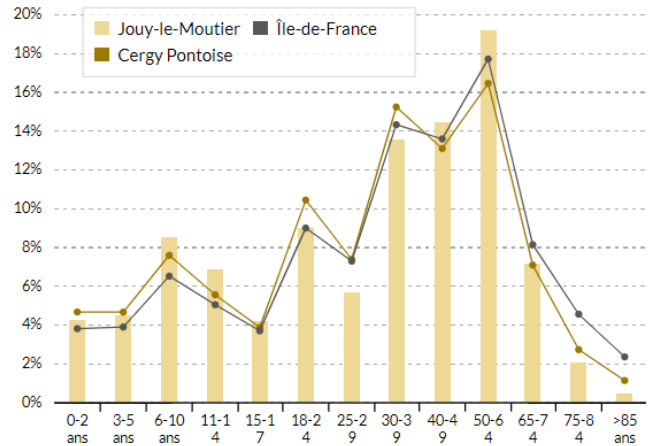## Number of inhabitants in 2020

17 225

Jouy-le-Moutier	Cergy Pontoise	Île-de-France
17 225	213 763	12 271 795

• Demographic trends in the commune

■ Taux de croissance annuel ■ Solde naturel ■ Solde migratoire apparent

Densité de population en 2020 (hab/km²)   **2355**

Jouy-le-Moutier	Cergy Pontoise	Île-de-France
2355	2456	1025

• Population density in 2020 (inhab/km2)

1975   1990   2020

Population by age group in 2020

Indice de concentration de l'emploi en 2020   **0,4**

Jouy-le-Moutier	Cergy Pontoise	Île-de-France
0,4	0,99	1,05

• Employment concentration index


1999   2009   2020
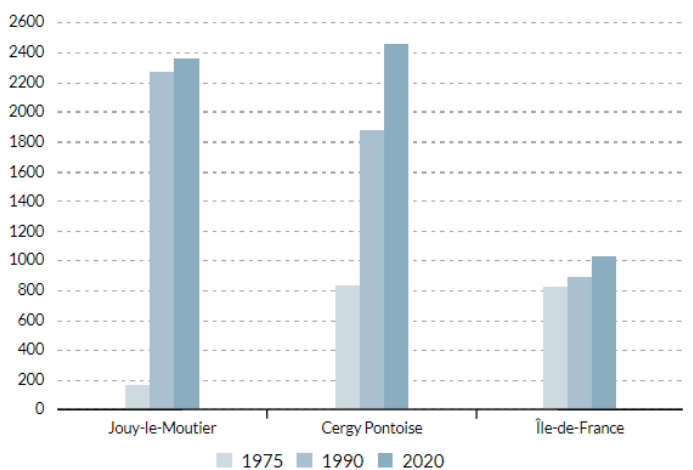
# Jouy-le-Moutier, the history of a new town

The first residents of the new town arrived in 1976, after which the town experienced spectacular growth: from a village of 930 inhabitants in the 1960s to a municipality of 17,700 in the 1990s, a 20-fold increase in population. Then the pace of construction slowed and the link with the village became tighter. Alain Safarti, the architect of the new town, declared in 1982: "Let's wait a few more years and the place will emerge with its charm and a real social imagination".

It was difficult for the EPA team to find the right urban form to build on this site due to its remarkable landscape: the first plan was abandoned in 1972. Finally, the team of specialists agreed on a set of urban principles. The town planners set out to combine the advantages of a suburban lifestyle with the atmosphere of a small town. To build the blocks, the EPA launched the "Maison de ville" (town house) competition, proposing an innovative typology: "town" because it benefits from local amenities, and "house" because the building is independent. The parcels of land which were to accommodate these housing developments were linked by secondary pedestrian networks and by a continuous woodland area extending from the Bois de la Vallée.

**Promoting the site's through landscape design**
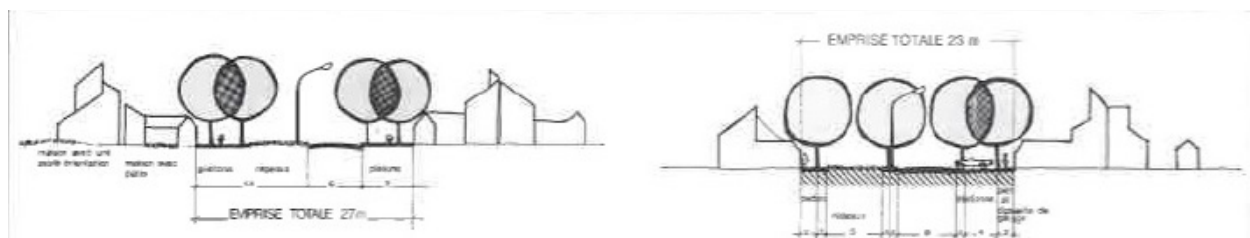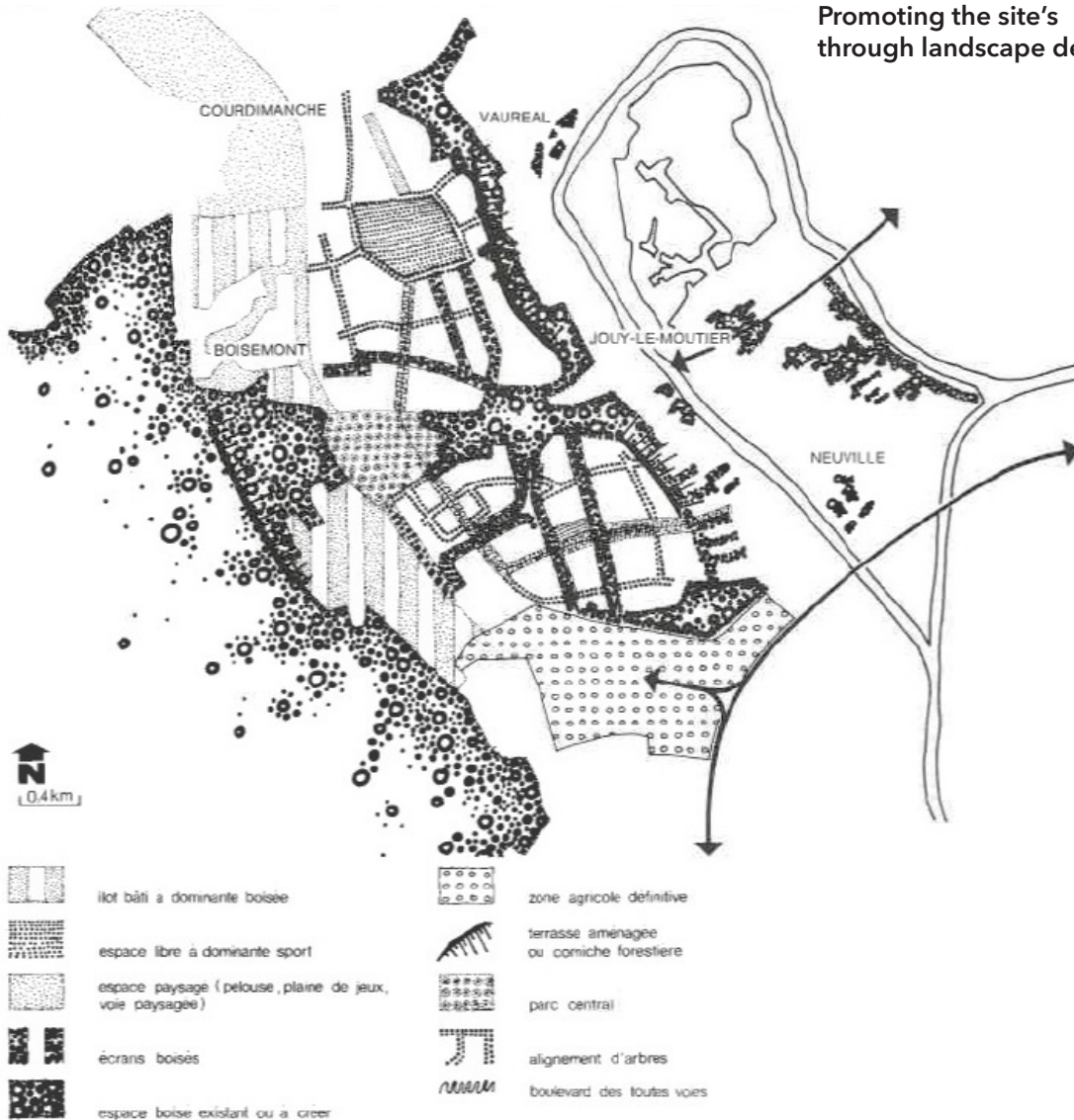
This is known as "bocage urbanism". The plan took up the existing agricultural parcel layout, retaining "open" spaces so that they could become sports or leisure areas. To ensure that the roads were not overlooked, the EPA proposed improving the woodland in the centre and along the roadsides. To preserve the spatial qualities of the villages, gardens were to be private and unobstructed. Particular attention was paid to the town's skyline: the bell tower marked the horizon and the roofs were sloping and irregular.
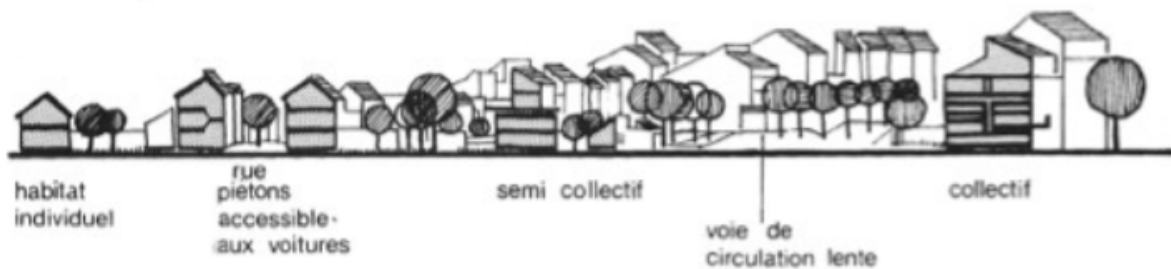
The aim was to create a specific type of density: tall houses (as in town centres) and small blocks of apartments (up to 4 storeys) with more "enclosed" areas and rhythmic roof slopes. This in-between approach was based on the observation that the suburbs of housing estates were too dispersed and repetitive, leading to a feeling of boredom.

It was therefore decided to vary the buildings and styles by "sector", with an average density of 30 housing units per hectare. The overt reference to a traditional village marked a desire to find a common language between residents and developers. This was a major change in attitude compared to the construction of Cergy, with its assertively modern architecture.
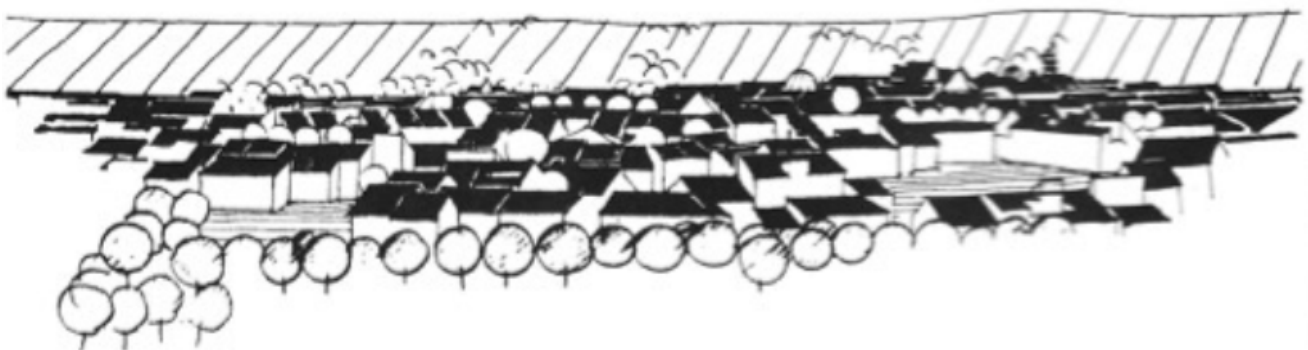
The "Maison de ville" competition was launched in 1976: 2,000 homes were to be built, grouped into 19 blocks (defined by the elements mentioned above).

Jouy-le-Moutier, the Vignes Blanches participative housing district

Several famous architects took part in the "Maison de ville" competition, including Lucien Kroll. He was commissioned to build a block of 150 houses called Les Vignes Blanches. He made an unprecedented choice: the future inhabitants would be involved in the design. To this end, he provided them with a model of the block in which the forms could be moved, glued, cut and so on. He wanted to start by thinking about how they were going to use it.

He hoped to move away from the standardization of modern construction towards an ecological and organic vision of the living space. For him, architecture should be different every time, depending on the personalities and places it encounters. He wanted to retain the imperfections of the residents' drawings because he saw chance and clumsiness as the only way to give these new towns built on concrete slabs a "soul". So he deliberately kept mistakes in materials, surprising orientations and discrepancies.

At a time when the villagers were strongly opposed to the new town, and when it was being built out of the way and with no connection to the village, Lucien Kroll tried to bring them and the "pioneers" together to envisage a link with the town. The new residents, whom he contacted via lists, showed little interest.

Throughout this innovative project, he was to experience many disappointments: the residents proved too well-behaved for his liking, and the developers' unwillingness to compromise severely hampered the project (restrictions on materials, limitations on common areas, removal of shops, simplification of forms, etc.). Many members of the residents' team left, but others took over the designs of their predecessors.

Lucien Kroll's approach aimed not at assembling a group under an ideological banner, but to bring people together "from everywhere", in an "ordinary" neighbourhood, so that this method could be reproduced to build the city.

"When a few people enter a room, they position themselves in relation to each other according to their character type: near the door to escape, along the walls, near the window, towards the centre, with their backs to others, in the corners, and even some in the back row to see without being seen... This animalistic way of positioning oneself creates the shape of a group in its space and is what has produced villages, towns and ancient cities. We rediscovered it by chance, by letting things happen, because it can't be invented or provoked."

KROLL, Lucien, "Un quartier banal, Les Vignes Blanches à Cergy-Pontoise", Composition urbaine, Les annales de la recherche urbaine n°3, 1986, p72.

Jouy-le-Moutier, an urban centrality under debate

The town has many facets: it is made up of seven neighbourhoods with distinct identities and several centres (around the village church, the Buzacques shops and the Eguerets roundabout). The latter two are the subject of a redevelopment plan. Commenting on the town he helped to build, Bertrand Warnier said: "We failed in the centre". He describes a town centre of roundabouts, focused on shopping and disconnected from the needs of the village.

The Eguerets district, whose centrality the town council wants to reassert, lies at the crossroads of two boulevards and two pedestrian streets. It boasts a variety of remarkable architectural styles. The district has two bell towers, a shopping centre, 200 homes (of which around forty are collective housing) and a facilities hub. The area is characterized by streets with low buildings that integrate shops at the ground floor.
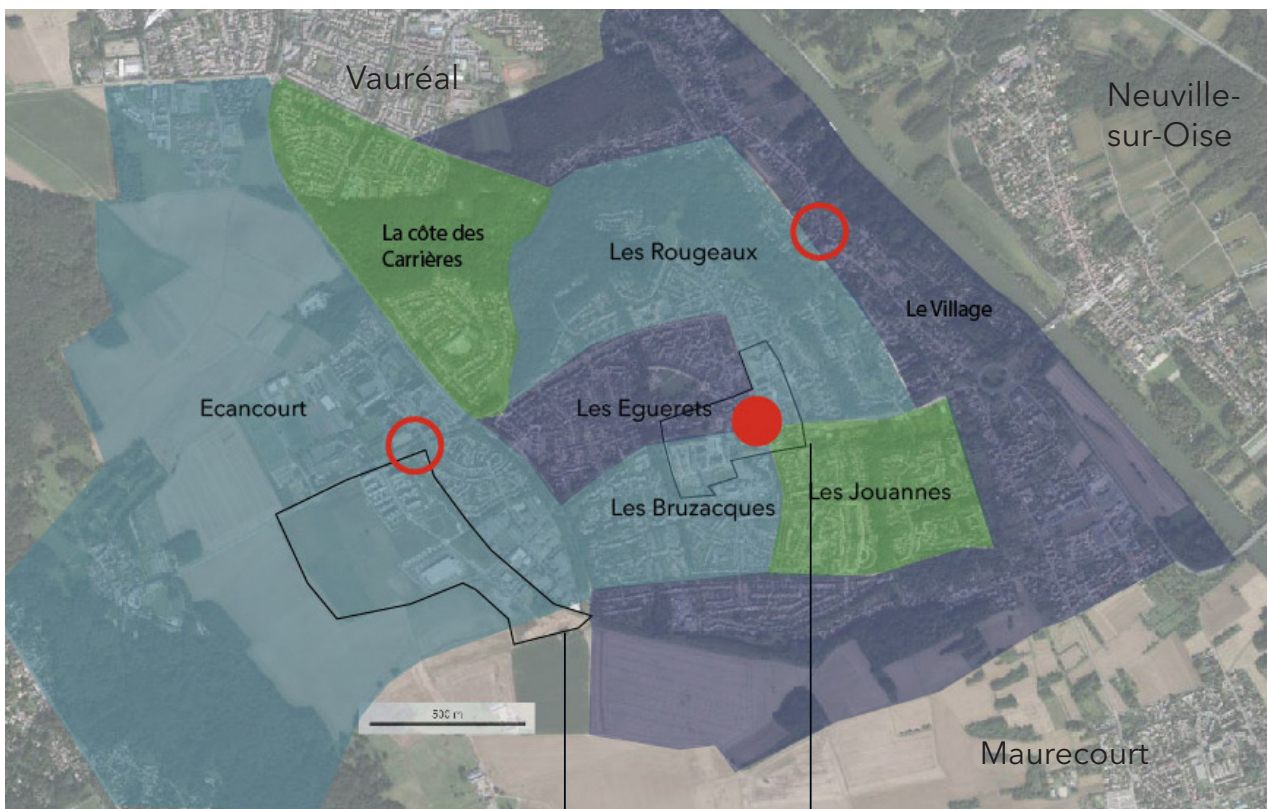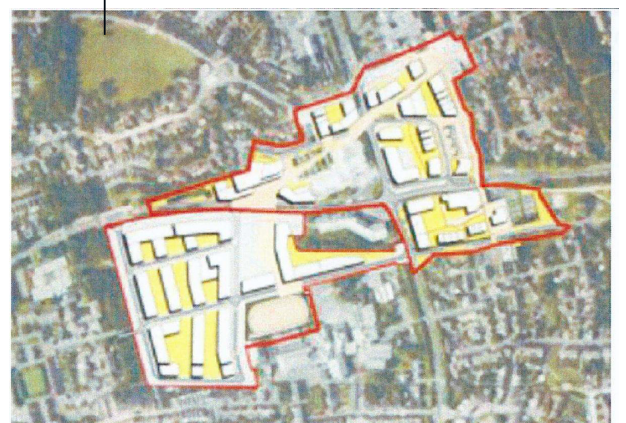

	ZAC		Centralités secondaires		Nouveau Centre

Zac des Barboeufs

ZAC des Hautils Oise

A collaborative project

The Hautils Oise ZAC (Eguerets district) will provide 173 homes (22% of which will be social housing) and 1,000m² of shops and services. The project will be supported by the new "Place du bien-être" built in 2019. The city is hoping for a new demographic boom, for which its current housing stock does not allow: the current supply is extremely uniform (suburban) and unsuited to current demand.

Residents were consulted on various aspects of the project, including landscaping, architecture, the treatment of boundaries, the design and use of public spaces, and shops and services. The response was quite favourable.

For the Jocassiens (inhabitants of Jouy-le-Moutier), it was essential to preserve the tranquillity of the town and the small scale of the buildings. They were asked to choose a style from pictures of buildings, and they chose familiar and reassuring forms, either because they were reminiscent of another typology (detached house, chalet...) or because they mimicked the surrounding towns. The inhabitants were keen to develop convivial spaces, open up ground floors and encourage soft mobility. Vegetation and cleanliness were also important. When asked about services and shops, the group worried about keeping them in the area (having already been affected by the loss of doctors).

This consultation process committed the city in rather vague terms "to not impose its own single approach, to vary materials and forms, to integrate with the environment…", the extent of which is difficult to measure.
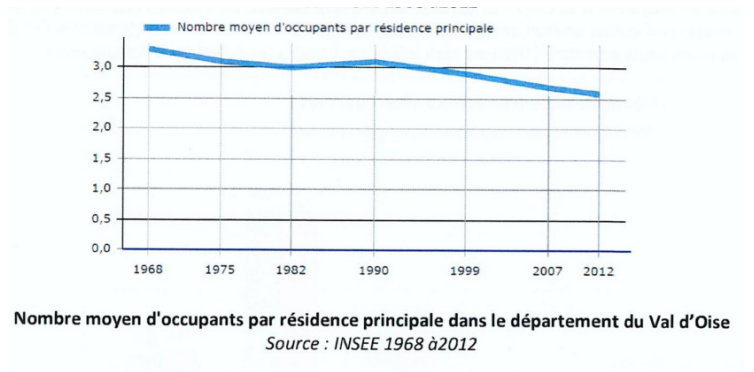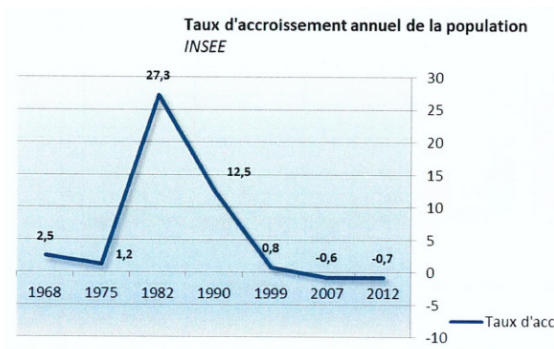

Jouy-le-Moutier, place du Bien-être amménagée en 2019

Building when a population is in decline: The case of Jouy-le-Moutier

Jouy-le-Moutier's demographic situation is typical of the agglomeration. Its population is ageing slightly, yet is still very young (23% of the population is under 14 years old and 43% under 30 years old). Since the extremely rapid growth experienced between 1973 and 1990 (when 92% of the existing housing was built), the population has been steadily decreasing.

Nonetheless, the city has declared its intention to build 233 houses a year. This decision seems paradoxical: the city is building more while its population is declining. This demographic decline is due to changing lifestyles and a generational imbalance. The changing geometry of households is part of the explanation: although the housing stock has remained stable since 1990, there are fewer inhabitants.

Taux d'accroissement annuel de la population
INSEE

Nombre moyen d'occupants par résidence principale dans le département du Val d'Oise
Source : INSEE 1968 à 2012

Taux de logements vacants						
1968	1975	1982	1990	1999	2007	2012
3.4%	10.4%	20.9%	3.0%	3.3%	2.3%	2.8%

In fact, the rate of "de-cohabitation" (the breakdown of households into smaller units) is on the increase. Like everywhere else in France since 1976, this is due to more young people leaving home, the increase in single-parent families and the ageing of the population. In Jouy-le-Moutier, this trend is much less pronounced than in the rest of the country, as the town mainly consists of young households with children.

While the population was growing (between 1976 and 1990), many houses were empty: there was still an available supply of housing. Today, the vacancy rate is too low to allow for population turnover in the commune. In fact, to allow the population to remain stable or to increase, it is necessary to build "too much". It is estimated that 6% of vacant housing is needed to provide for population mobility.

To maintain the current population, the local urban development plan for Jouy-le-Moutier estimates that 1,347 homes will need to be built by 2030. To meet the needs of the more dispersed configuration of households, 800 new homes will have to be built, of which 6% will be vacant (i.e. 280 homes) and 396 will have to be renovated (to replace homes that have fallen into disrepair or have been converted into offices or commercial premises). To achieve this, the town must increase the density of its urban fabric by 10% (i.e. 570 homes in the existing fabric) through urban renewal projects (with numerous demolitions and reconstructions), while continuing to extend its perimeter into the agricultural plain to the west (see Jouy-le-Moutier, an urban centrality under debate). In the long term, the town believes that the existing large houses will soon be available to accommodate new families.
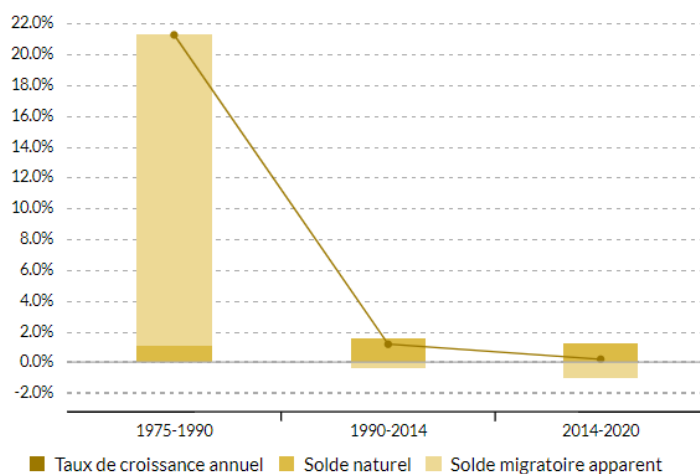
I.3 Zone of interest
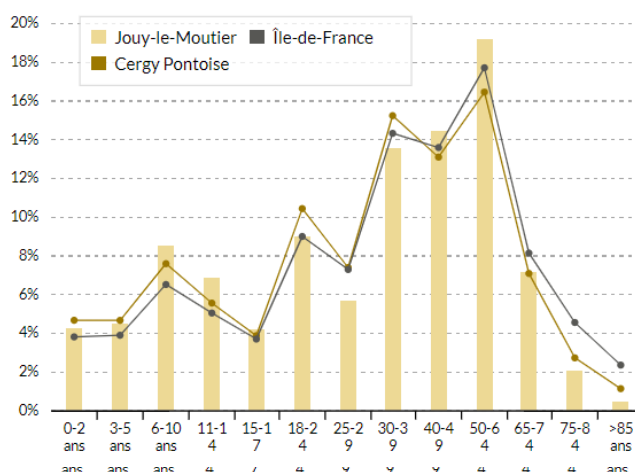
Vauréal

Number of inhabitants in 2020

16020

Vauréal	Cergy Pontoise	Île-de-France
16020	213763	12271795

Demographic trends in the commune

Legend:
- Taux de croissance annuel
- Solde naturel
- Solde migratoire apparent

Population by age group in 2020

Legend:
- Jouy-le-Moutier
- Île-de-France
- Cergy Pontoise

Age groups: 0-2 ans, 3-5 ans, 6-10 ans, 11-14, 15-17, 18-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-64, 65-74, 75-84, >85 ans

Densité de population en 2020 (hab/km²)

4654

Cergy	Cergy Pontoise	Île-de-France
4654	2456	1025

Indice de concentration de l'emploi en 2020

0,27

Vauréal	Cergy Pontoise	Île-de-France
0,27	0,99	1,05

Population density in 2020 (inhab/km2)

Legend: 1975, 1990, 2020

Employment concentration index

Legend: 1999, 2009, 2020
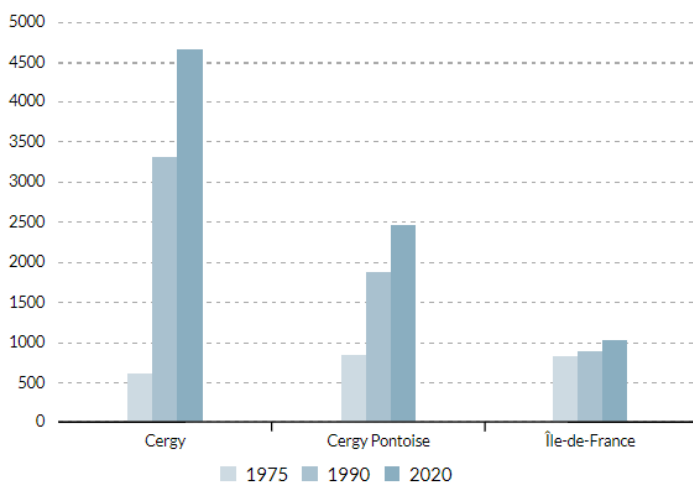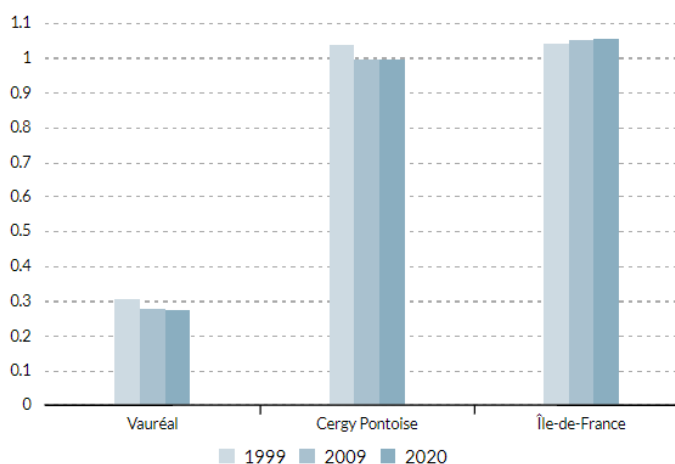
Vauréal, in defence of its inhabited and cultivated land

A former hamlet of Jouy-le-Moutier, Vauréal takes its name from the parish of Lieu-Vauréal. Built in the 13th century and reconstructed in the 16th century, the magnificent Gothic building now marks the identity of this village on the banks of the Oise. The place names of the new town are a reminder of its agricultural history: "rue l'Abreuvoir", "rue des Moissons", etc. Thanks to the south-westerly exposure of the Oise valley, Vauréal was once the home of vineyards. Faced with stiff competition from the south of France, farmers turned to fruit, vegetables and grains.

The new town was not a natural choice for the villagers of the Oise. Revolts broke out as soon as the construction of Cergy began (in 1967), then again when the "pioneers" arrived on their farmland.

The Val d'Oise Gazette looked back at what happened:

> "This uprising of the twentieth century reached its climax in the first half of 1967. On the plain, bulldozers and tractors faced each other without incident. The prefecture's building site took on the appearance of an entrenched camp. Tents were erected, barricades formed and for 108 days the farmers showed their determination.""

The inhabitants of Vauréal, who lived mainly by working the land, were strongly opposed to urbanization. In 1977, the EPA's plans for the ZAC des Toupets (2,000 houses) were poorly received. The elected representatives of Jouy-le-Moutier and Courdimanche felt that the residents and elected representatives had not been consulted about this metamorphosis of their town. L'Etincelle, Vauréal's local newspaper, echoed their arguments:

> "At a time when violence is used as a pretext for various decisions, there is a painful form of violence whose consequences are incalculable, but which is not being addressed. It is perpetuated in the name of the public good. What public good? And for whom? Is it not violence to evict farmers from the Hautil plateau without offering them land of equal value? Isn't it violence to impose a completely different way of life on a population?"

They criticized the EPA for artificializing the land, for having a "backward-looking" and "technocratic" vision, and the State for backing out of its projects. After several years of negotiations and the resignation of the mayor of Vauréal, 600 houses were finally built in Les Toupets in 1982. This was the start of a spectacular demographic boom: by 1990, the population had increased by 1,770%.

When the pioneers arrived, a different kind of solidarity took hold: "We realized that it was really humans, families, who were coming here". As for the new comforts of life for the newcomers, "people were very touched, there was already a school, it was a detached house, a garden…". Today, according to INSEE, only 6 farmers live in Vauréal.
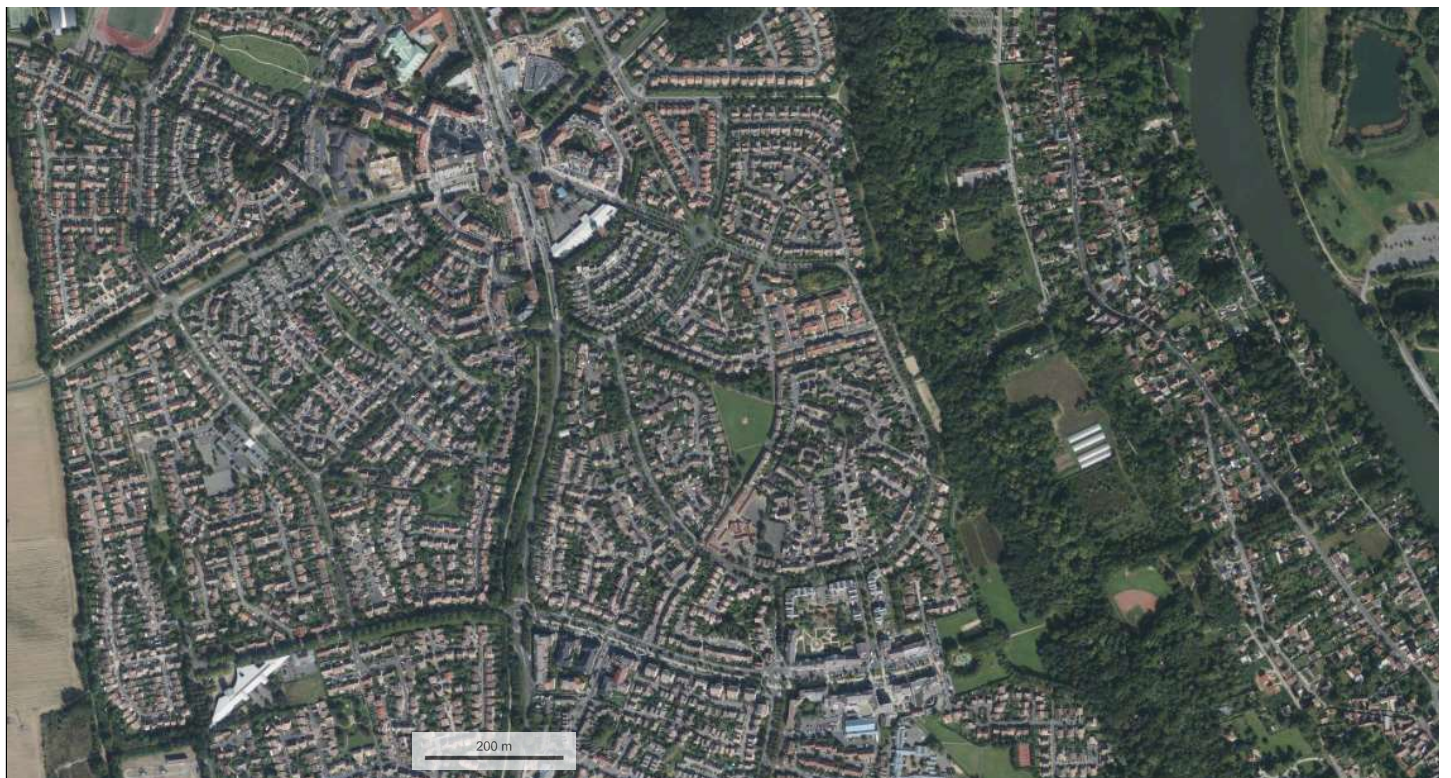

Construction of Cergy-Pontoise

Vauréal in 1960

Vauréal today

A House for All in Vauréal, "A Brick for Everyone!"

In 1978, when the social and festive life of the village was centred on the banks of the river, a group of residents decided to build a meeting place: the Maison pour Tous. The village couldn't afford to build it, so the inhabitants had to rely on their own resources. To mobilize people, the group relied on the local newspaper:

""All this is possible if you want it and if you participate, because we will need you to build this Maison Pour Tous within what is, despite everything, a limited financial framework. We are therefore appealing to everyone's goodwill to help us.".""[1]

1L'Etincelle, December 1977, Issue 3

"For five weeks now, a number of us have been meeting regularly on Saturdays and Sundays, and sometimes during the week, to build the Maison pour Tous. [...] After the euphoria of the initial phase, and in particular the demolition, we had to get through a more thankless period [...] and the young people have started to take up the torch. [...] We invite you to take part in the "A Brick for Everyone!" action, which aims to show that everyone is involved, even if only symbolically."[1]

1L'Etincelle, 1982, numéro5

After five years of construction, almost entirely carried out by the villagers, the town witnessed the birth of this shared open space. At the same time, behind the hill, a completely different story was taking shape: the new town of Vauréal.

Vauréal, a new town in need of redevelopment

Vauréal has a morphology that is characteristic of the suburbs of Cergy. It is made up of two distinct parts: the old town on the banks of the Oise and the new town on a plateau separated by a wooded hillside. The first is made up of detached houses from different periods, but built using the same materials: limestone and lime plaster, which gives the houses their characteristic ochre colour. The second concentrates all the town's functions and most of its population. To the west, the city is bordered by an agricultural plain.

In reality, it is made up of eight districts and three central hubs: the historic village centre, the Bussies shopping district, the old Toupets town centre and the new Croix-Lieu town centre. The main principles typical of new towns can be found in Vauréal: a hierarchical flow of traffic with wooded main roads and secondary pedestrian links.
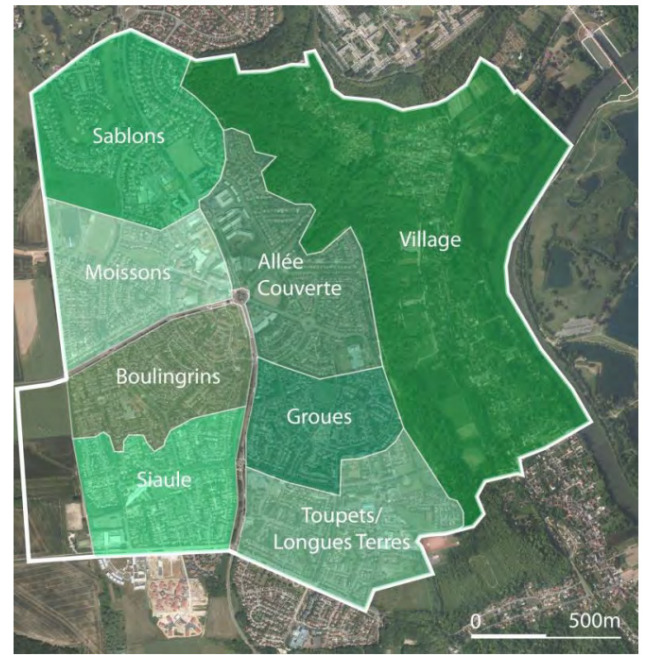
Les quartiers de Vauréal. Source: Agence Neue

LA ZAC DES TOUPETS

Vauréal undertook the creation of a town centre in Croix-Lieu to bring people together and to bridge the gap between the village and the new town. As for the Toupets district, it was displaced by the development of the city to the east on the agricultural plains. Today, it is at the centre of social problems: the population is extremely precarious, the shops are dilapidated and residents complain of squatting. Shops are run down and public spaces are underused.

In 2005, the city launched an urban regeneration programme with the aim of promoting a mixed community, linking shops, improving green spaces and providing smaller houses that better reflect the composition of households. The shopping centre was demolished to distribute the shops along the street Mail Mendès France, and the public squares and the Agora social centre were renovated.
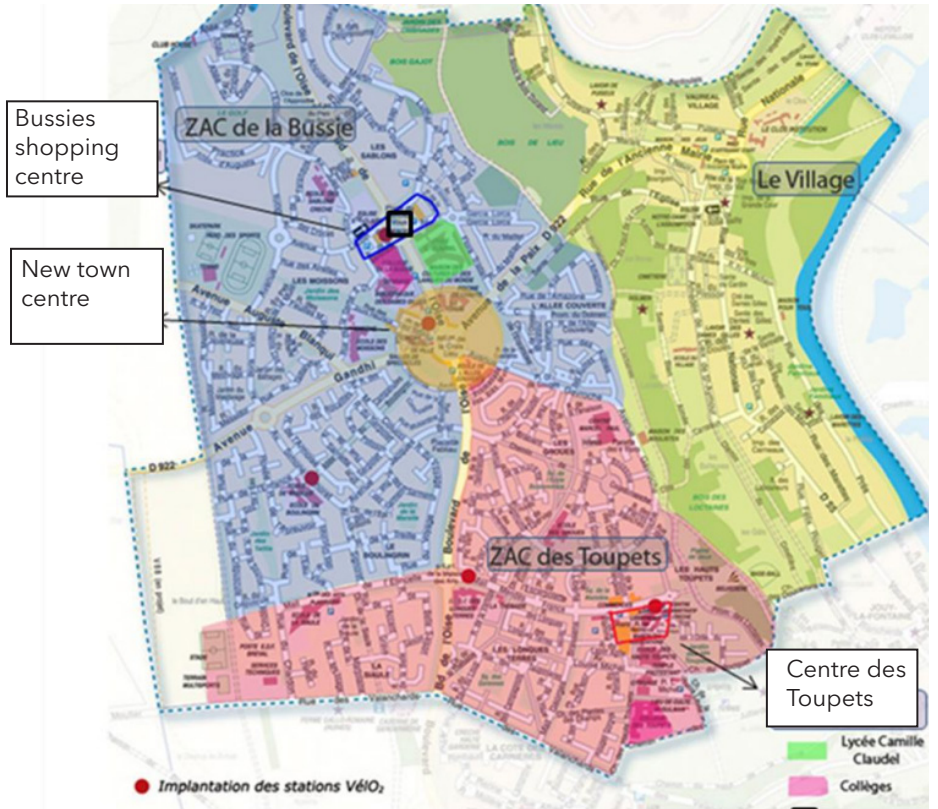

Destroyed covered market   Former town hall

Densification at the back of the plots

Division of gardens at the heart of the blocks

Commercial kiosk

Bussie Vauréal shopping centre (centre) and Lycée Camille Claudel (right)

Bussies shopping centre

New town centre

Centre des Toupets

The ZAC Croix-Lieu in the centre of the town allows for greater density (with buildings up to 6 storeys high) in what is predominantly a suburban town. The new town hall, inaugurated in 2007, showcases the town's modern, accessible character and provides a counterbalance to the historic village centre. A number of constraints were imposed to preserve the spirit of the bocage town planning inherited from the creation of the new town: heterogeneous forms, diverse views and large green spaces. The ZAC was completed in 2015, covering an area of 6.5 hectares, with the construction of 1,000 homes, 5,500m² of shops, a town hall, public spaces and various facilities.

All this was done in a very colourful neo-traditional style, a pastiche that began in Marne-la-Vallée and Plessis Robinson. It incorporated various elements of earlier architecture (Greek pediments, half-timbering, arcades, etc.) and ornamentation: the interior layout and construction methods remained standardized. Valued by elected officials for its familiarity, colour and apparent prestige, which helped to attract wealthy residents and break with the image of the suburbs, it was copied almost identically in many towns of the Paris Region.

Vauréal, a young town?

This town of 16,000 inhabitants has an unusual demography: 45% of the population is under 30, making it the second youngest town in France. Does this young population have an impact on the way the town is built?

From the outset, the aim of the new town was to rethink the role of young people through sport and culture. This ambition has been partially achieved: although the development of culture is debatable, the agglomeration is extremely well equipped in terms of swimming pools, sports grounds and libraries. In fact, when the new town was extended to Vauréal, the EPA wanted to attract teenagers and young adults by offering dance bars, sports facilities and green spaces.

The idea that a young population is a source of dynamism for the city seems to be less widely shared today. Residents complain of friction between young people from different neighbourhoods, reflecting Vauréal's pronounced socio-spatial segregation and the expression of a sense of belonging to a territory. The suburban fabric of the city offers few common spaces and public areas, favouring a lifestyle centred on the individual home. The PLU's desire to limit "points of attachment" and reinforce the boundaries between private and public seems to be the result of a distrust of young people. As young adults, they need to find their bearings in the city in order to assert themselves.

Nowadays, leisure activities are guided by social centres. The places where people meet are mainly dedicated to sports, which makes it difficult for young girls and teenagers to find their place. The number of children in Vauréal is not decreasing, as there is a wide choice of schools. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep young adults in the area once they reach adulthood.

More and more people in Vauréal are over sixty: they are the "pioneer" generation, most of whom arrived in the 1980s as young couples with children. Nevertheless, the ageing of the population remains very low compared to the national average.

Although a number of factors suggest that the city is becoming less attractive to young people, it remains so for a large proportion of the population. Residents interviewed by the city during the redevelopment of the city centre (see Vauréal, a new town in need of redevelopment) describe a village atmosphere, warm neighbourly relations and say they are very satisfied with the quality of life.

Bussies shopping district

Residential district

Vauréal village

Agora social centre

Vauréal town centre

Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, history and plans

At the confluence of the Seine and the Oise

The town developed along the banks of the Seine, in particular on the right bank where the river meets the Oise. Its urban development also extends to the left bank. The lower part of the city is periodically flooded, although not catastrophically. At this confluence, the rivers meet but do not mix: the warmer and less muddy Seine will take several more kilometres to mix with the Oise.

Unlike the other sites studied, Conflans-Sainte-Honorine is not part of the Cergy-Pontoise agglomeration. This older town is in the Yvelines département. However, regardless of the administrative boundaries, there are many interactions between these areas, and even a form of complementarity.
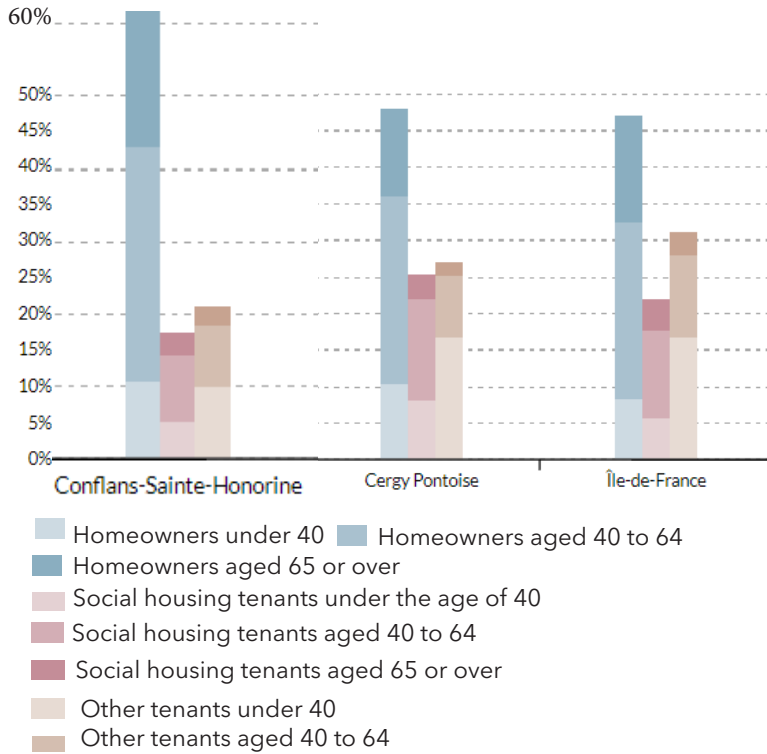

Through the ages

During the Renaissance, the city was rebuilt around its hunting grounds and castle. Then its port grew in importance and it became a "bridge town" between Paris and Rouen. The town has a rich maritime history: it was the port of departure for foodstuffs produced in the Val d'Oise and destined for the city of Paris. The banks of the Oise then became a holiday destination for Parisians, thanks to the arrival of the railway and the development of leisure and tourist facilities.

Industry then moved to the water's edge, with the town turning its back on the rivers and instead developing around the key routes for transporting goods. During the Second World War, Conflans-Sainte-Honorine was on the line of defence for the city of Paris and its bridges were destroyed several times. Then the automobile led the urban expansion with the massive development of suburban housing. The RER line is now its main link to the Paris agglomeration.
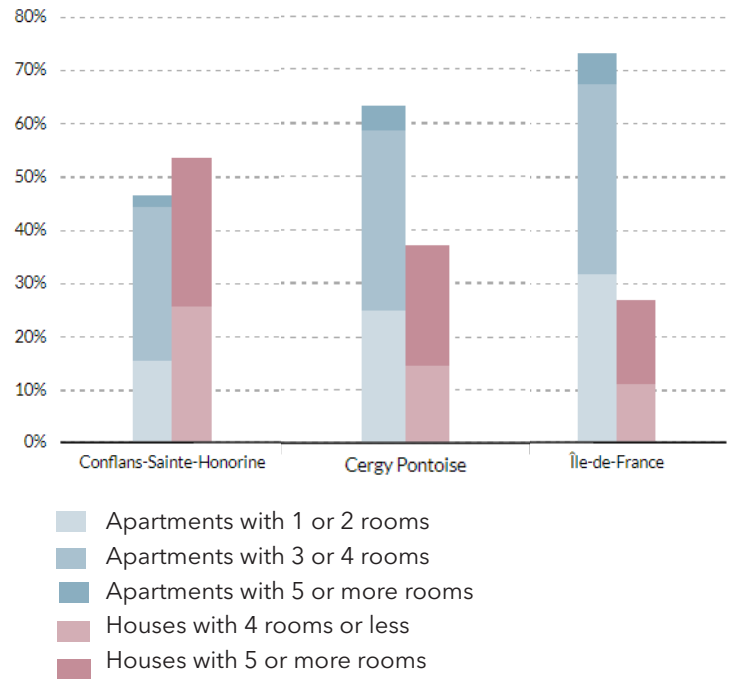
A housing stock dominated by very large homes for first-time homeowners

• OCCUPANCY STATUS BY AGE GROUP IN 2020

Legend:
- Homeowners under 40
- Homeowners aged 40 to 64
- Homeowners aged 65 or over
- Social housing tenants under the age of 40
- Social housing tenants aged 40 to 64
- Social housing tenants aged 65 or over
- Other tenants under 40
- Other tenants aged 40 to 64

The rate of construction is much lower than in Cergy (in relation to the existing housing stock). The standard of living is higher and there is a high proportion of homeowners. As in the other sites studied, there are very few second homes or occasional residences (0.8%), but a significant proportion of vacant properties (7.1% of the stock).

TYPES OF HOUSING AND NUMBER OF HOUSES

Legend:
- Apartments with 1 or 2 rooms
- Apartments with 3 or 4 rooms
- Apartments with 5 or more rooms
- Houses with 4 rooms or less
- Houses with 5 or more rooms

The town is quite densely populated (compared to the départemental and regional averages), like most towns in Cergy-Pontoise, but much less than Paris. The town experienced a period of growth late in its history (from 1995 to 2015), which is now levelling off. The existing housing stock is also very large, with a predominance of 4 and 5-room houses.
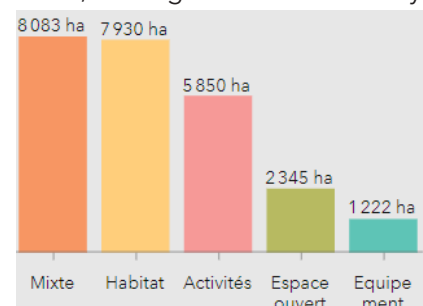
Des projets d'aménagements disséminés
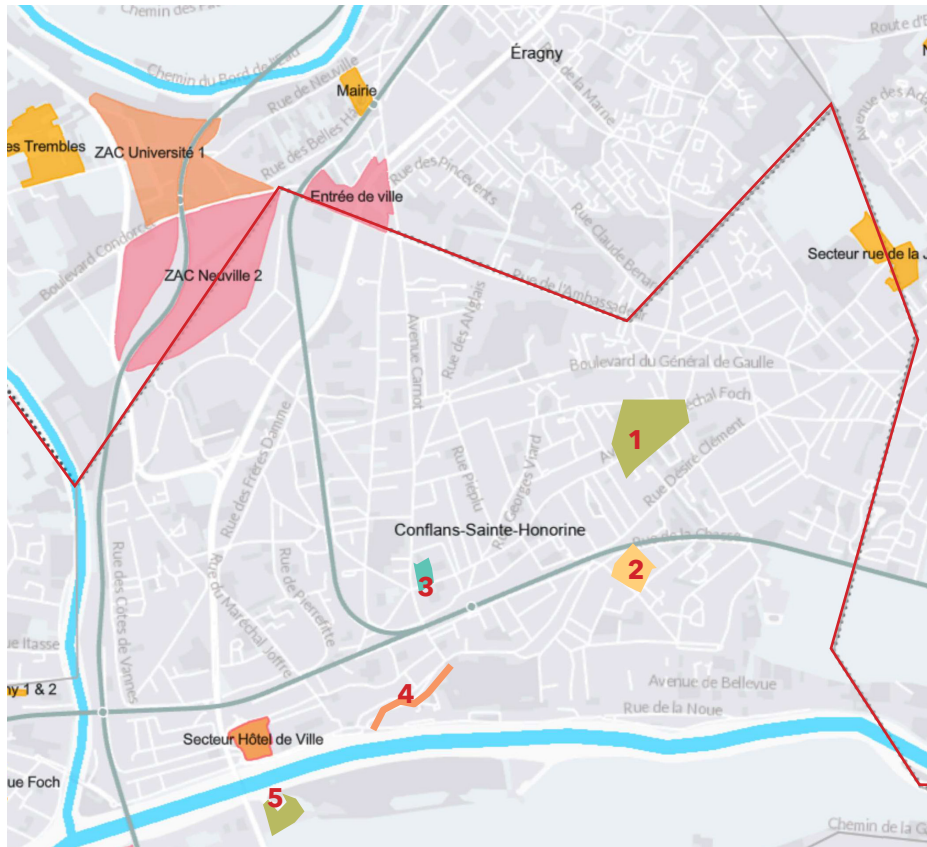
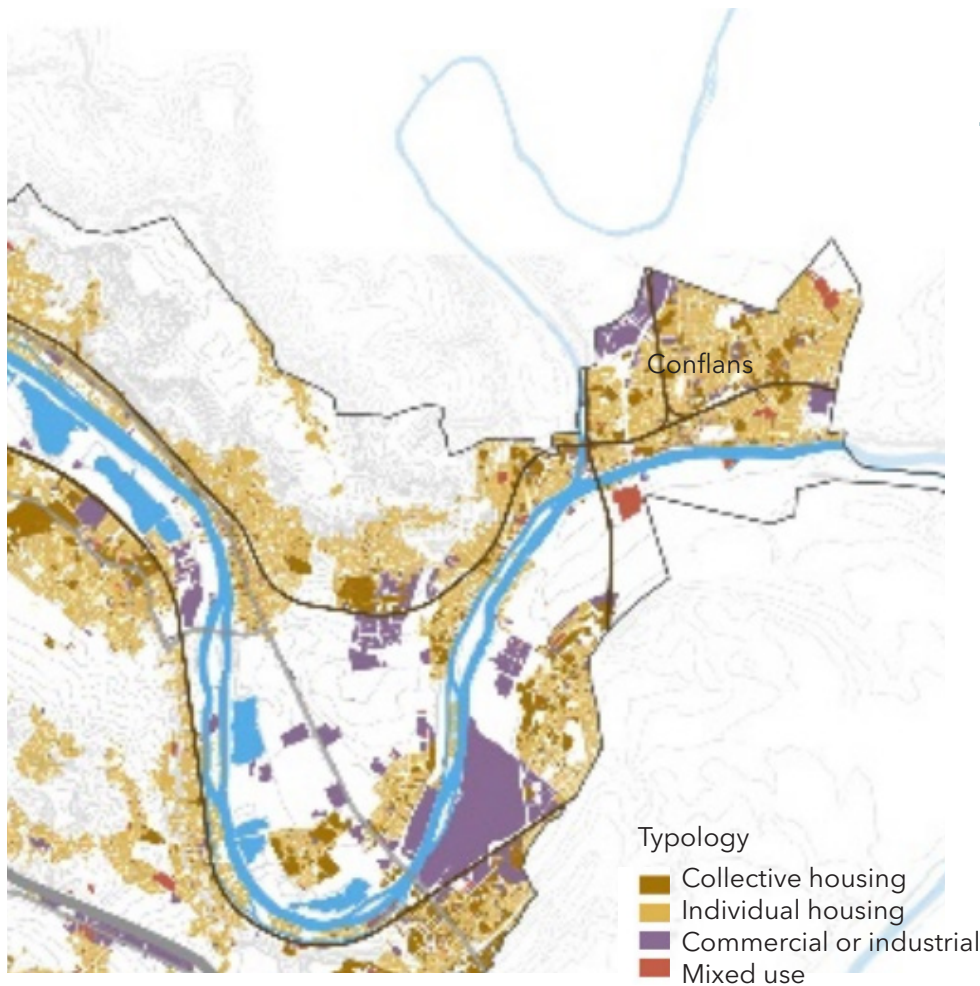Project hectares according to the dominant programme in the Île-de-France

Scattered development projects

1. Development of public spaces in the district of Chennevières, creation of a square and landscaping of streets.

2. Renovation of the Paul Brard district. Criticized for its lack of security, the mayor wants to give the district a new face by making it denser and diversifying the housing stock. This new density has not been well received by residents, who are staying put, worried about the loss in their home values. 51 houses will be demolished (the Arche building), 88 will be renovated and 111 will be built.

3. Construction of the Maréchal Foch gymnasium.

4. Renovation of rue Maurice Bertaux: town centre street, widening of pavements and strengthening of the commercial offer, reduction of traffic speed.

5. Enhancement of the Île de Devant's natural areas, making them accessible by boat.

Mixte 8 083 ha · Habitat 7 930 ha · Activités 5 850 ha · Espace ouvert 2 345 ha · Equipement 1 222 ha

Urban fabric and architecture

The city is the result of the many periods through which it has passed: today it has a very varied urban fabric. Most of the housing is detached and not very dense, with terraced houses and scattered housing estates. There are, however, a few high-rise apartment blocks whose layout and modern architecture break with the existing plot pattern. The village streets in the centre border the Seine, a legacy of the time when the city was concentrated between the river and the railway line. It then expands to the north, with factories, new housing estates and new residential suburbs that replaced the remaining farmland. The Yvelines has a rich heritage of farms, châteaux and religious buildings.

Conflans

Typology

- Collective housing
- Individual housing
- Commercial or industrial
- Mixed use

Dense urban layer of city centres

Traditionally built layer of villages and town centres

Suburban faubourg layer

Collective urban layer on open land

Individual housing layer

Mixed use layer

Industrial, business and commercial

Aerial view of Conflans-Sainte-Honorine 2020

Aerial view of Conflans-Sainte-Honorine 1945

1949 1999 2003 2008 2012 2018

2 – A sensitive, local approach

1. Artistic views of Cergy-Pontoise
2. Perspectives of inhabitants

I.1 Regards artistiques de Cergy

A "real city"

Innovative and resolutely modern, the construction of Cergy Préfecture raised serious concerns about the kind of life it would create. What would be its relationship with nature? How would it be appropriated? Many thought that it would be impossible to give an identity to a modern city whose architecture was dominated by functionality and efficiency. Today, however, it is precisely this modernism and postmodernism that makes the city so unique and gives it its identity.

Annie Ernaux, winner of the 2022 Nobel Prize in Literature, lives in Cergy and has written many books about the new town. Her descriptions help us to understand its very special atmosphere.

"On sunny days like today, the edges of the buildings reach for the sky, the glass panels glow. I've lived in the New Town for twelve years and I don't know what it looks like. I can't describe it either, because I don't know where it begins and where it ends, as I'm always driving through it. All I can say is that I went to the Leclerc shopping centre (or Les 3 Fontaines, Franprix des Linandes, etc.), got back on the motorway and the sky was purple behind the Marcouville towers. No description, no history. Just moments, encounters. Ethnotext."

Journal du dehors, Gallimard, Folio, pp. 64-65

"The shopping centre has become the most familiar place at the end of this century, just as the church once was. At Caroll's, Froggy's, Lacoste's, people are looking for something to help them live, a respite from time and death."

La Vie extérieure, Gallimard, Folio, p. 127

"[…] the dream of my childhood, of my youth, was to go to Paris. […] Paris, the great dream, from which I am now thirty kilometres away as the crow flies, but still outside. And I don't want to go there anymore. It's as if I've found my place in this New Town of Cergy, the place where I feel at home. When I first arrived, I never thought I'd stay here for so long – it seemed unfathomable, for my future or my children's future…"

Annie Ernaux, Le Vrai Lieu, entretiens avec Michelle Porte, Gallimard, 2014, p. 14

A city in the telling

New towns are analysed, calculated and assessed on a regular basis. They are asked to be everything: a base of employment, an avant-garde centre, a place to relax, a land reserve… Why aren't other towns asked to be multi-functional?

The creation of this new town was a historic, epic event. Its story is that of how a project was entrusted to a handful of young professionals who had to innovate and find new ways of living in the Paris Region. It is also the story of the need to give meaning to a city that had just been built. For its planners, Cergy was an adventure that they love to recount, with its twists and turns, its chronology and side stories. It's a romantic, theoretical vision, sometimes far removed from the concrete, material reality of its inhabitants. But it was indeed an adventure, that of the conquest of a new territory.

As the Paris Region was expanding like wildfire, General de Gaulle is said to have told Bernard Hirsch: "The Paris Region is a mess, put it in order". It's a statement that has been repeated and distorted over and over again. At the time, Cergy and the new towns were the only way to cure this disease, this "cancer" of the Paris Region. They were the salvation, the necessity, the myth. "Cergy must be one of the 5 new towns to save the capital from suffocation and paralysis". According to Bernard Hirsch's own words, Cergy would be: "a city like no other" and "a city made for the people of tomorrow".

At the time of its construction, many people wrote about the town in personal terms, contributing to its mythology. "A city that grows too fast, like a human being, runs the risk of being subjected to internal upheavals and violence. It is searching for an identity" [Le Monde, 18 May 1984].

A territory to conquer

Images and covers of Cergys Magazine
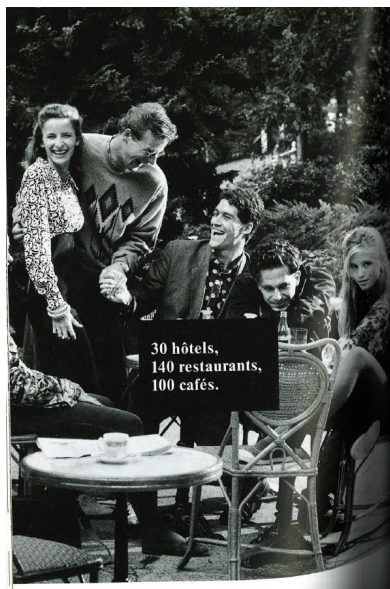
The original inhabitants were deeply involved in the experiment. The city had to be "made" through associations, meetings and events. The developers wanted to know how they would react, how they would take ownership and how the people they called "pioneers" would live in a new land that had just been built and developed.

One of the earliest inhabitants recounts:

"We felt like animals under a microscope".

He describes the first meetings with the inhabitants, led by the EPA and its "Famille et Cités" association that was created to liaise with them, as well as the numerous site studies carried out by students of urban planning and architecture.

"We wanted to be the first on the ground, to see from our windows the construction sites opening up and the city growing, to endure the mud and isolation, to see the mistakes from day to day and correct them without delay. We wanted every town planner to have no hesitation in checking any detail, however small, on site before finalizing a project. We also wanted all the people involved in the new town, and first and foremost the actual inhabitants, to have someone on the spot to inform them, to guide them through the process and, above all, to listen to their grievances and complaints".

Bernard Hirsch, 1990, in a diary published by his wife after his death in 1988.

To attract the first inhabitants, the state relies on an advertising campaign, making the apologia of a modern, dynamic, green way of life where everything is possible: a territory to conquer.

An inhabited city

Cergy has been the subject of films, books and numerous studies. As a result, the town has acquired a mythical image. But this story is best known to those interested in urban theory.

Haven't we lost sight of the city as it is experienced? A city that is not just the product of urban planning, but one that is built with the people who live there? Are the people of Cergy-Pontoise, who live in a very concrete reality, to be found in this romanticized Cergy? The children who have to be taken to school, the shopping, the unexpected encounters, the transgressions, the families who have split up, who live there by choice, by default, by chance?

"The dream remains anchored in the drawings of Bernard Hirsch's map, while the real concrete city gains its independence. […] It becomes emancipated. It is also fading, a little. It is moving forward in a rickety manner, and its pavements are becoming more and more dilapidated. […] Now it's the inhabitants who are taking over the city. […] They don't see the city from above, they tread on it with the soles of their trainers". Gaetane Martinot, Parcours en ville nouvelle, 2023, p. 73

"It's funny in Cergy because you can't walk for 10 minutes without coming across a park or a small field of vegetation. With my colleagues, there are 5 of us, but I have the impression that we all have 5 different ways of getting to Les 3 Fontaines".

Anonymous, Gaetane Martinot, Parcours en ville nouvelle, 2023, p107-108

In 2023, Gaetane Martinot published Parcours en ville nouvelle, a collection of eyewitness accounts and a contemporary interpretation of Cergy. In it, she describes a city fragmented by the separation of traffic flows and different ground levels, in which it is difficult to find one's way and to move around (especially on foot). She explains that the inhabitants have their own routes and that there are many paths cutting through the grass and shortcuts.

"It's true that the Préfecture has a bit of a 'yes, it's dirty' image. But in Saint Christophe, beyond the dirtiness, people think it sucks".

Anonymous, Gaetane Martinot, Parcours en ville nouvelle, 2023, p 65
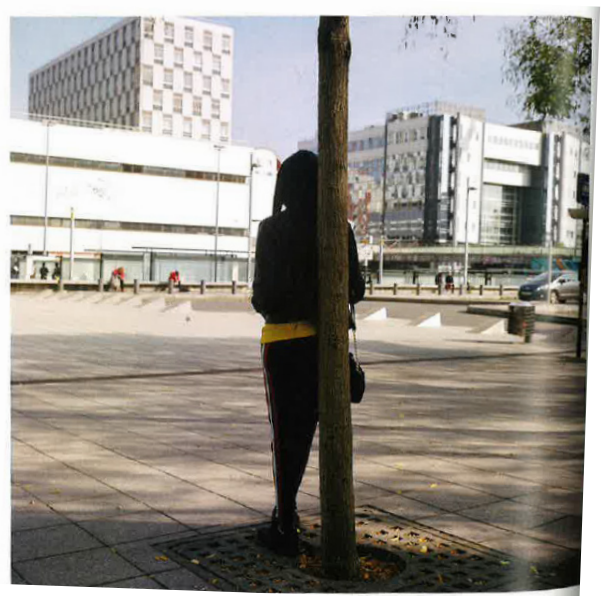
Marilou Zapata (an intern at Les Ateliers) and I (Pauline Simone) went out to meet local residents, sometimes in pairs and sometimes alone. We asked them about their life in Cergy-Pontoise, using a questionnaire we had prepared beforehand.

Vauréal plage

Summer day, intense heat. On a grassy area overlooking the river Oise, known as "Le Belvédère", various games and activities have been set up: a volleyball net, a hook-a-duck stand, a refreshment bar… The site is mainly used by families with young children. Most holidaymakers sit on the benches and tables around the refreshment area, which sells cans of soft drinks and Senegalese cakes. There are a few deckchairs by the volleyball court and children playing in the sand. A giant water fight is about to begin, with about thirty children ready to pounce on their friends with overflowing cups. People seemed quite willing to answer our questions, many of them sitting around, enjoying the sunshine.

An elderly Senegalese woman, wearing a red veil and traditional dress, sits on the edge of a sandpit.

"I am going back to my country soon. I worked for years as a cleaner in Cergy Préfecture, and now I'm retired. I've been living in Vauréal, in the Planchart district, since 2007.

I now live alone in my house as my 4 children have left. I love my house. My oldest child helps me pay the rent. Although I travel a lot and spend long periods in Senegal, I don't want to give up my home.

I lived in Cergy Saint-Christophe from 1986 until 2008. When my husband left for Senegal, we had to sell the house. Cergy Saint-Christophe has changed a lot! They destroyed the post office… I know everyone, and I mean everyone, in Saint-Christophe! All my friends are in Saint-Christophe! I do everything in Saint-Christophe, the market, my friends…

I don't know anyone in Vauréal, the people are calm, it's quiet. I'm not looking for trouble. Right now I'm making pastels for an association that sends money to orphans in Senegal. It's [in cooperation] with the town of Vauréal.

Yes, yes, it's easy to get around, I know it well. The bus number 48, the RER… To go to the Auchan store in Cergy Préfecture. I'm attached to Cergy Saint-Christophe."

"I work for the town of Vauréal, in the participatory democracy and urban priority zones. I lived in Courdimanche until last year, when I moved to Gisors, and now I'm back in Vauréal. My parents and I lived in Courdimanche, first in a detached house and then in an apartment. My parents moved there because my father worked in Menucourt and they liked it.

It's a good alternative for living comfortably and working nearby. We were the first to live there when the ZAC started. There were several phases of construction, we lived through a lot of the work and it was finished in 2022. I also worked in Courdimanche. I know the conurbation very well!

I go to other areas, to Eragny if I really have to. Sometimes I go for a walk in Pontoise because it's beautiful. I never go to Conflans, except for the cinema, which is less accessible. Otherwise I go to the 12 Colonnes, the UGC and the Coulée Verte. For a long time, I used to do sports in Courdimanche and go to the Menucourt community centre.

I mainly drive to work, as it would take me twice as long to get there by public transport. The transport service isn't bad, but the self-service bikes are a flop! I've never seen anyone using them!

My social circle has followed my schooling: for primary school I only went to Courdimanche, then my secondary school was in Cergy, a huge school with 2,000 students from all over the conurbation! Nowadays, most of my friends are from Vauréal and Jouy-le-Moutier. During my studies, I used to go from Courdimanche to Saint-Germain-en-Laye every day.

The good thing about the conurbation is that it remains on a human scale, so I never feel lost. There are cities like Vauréal that are very focused on green spaces and ecology. It's very concentrated, with a lot of shops around the shopping centre Les 3 Fontaines. There are lots of events, it's very active, but there aren't many bars for students.

What's missing are better cycle paths. And maybe more interaction between the cities, like if they were to hold joint events."

Taissa, 28, a resident of Jouy-le-Moutier, sits on a deckchair at Vauréal Plage with her children beside her.

"I live in Jouy-le-Moutier with my husband and three children. We live in a detached house. We came here in 2018; my husband's family is here. We really came here for the family. It's good here for the children.

I'm no stranger to Jouy-le-Moutier, Cergy le Haut, Cergy Saint-Christophe… I also go to Cergy Préfecture for the shops. They have all their activities here, my children; they all do sports in Jouy-le-Moutier. There's everything for kids here!

Yes, I know my way around, I'm always in the car. Public transport is very slow. I work in Paris, so I take the RER and the bus to work.

All my friends are in the neighbourhood! I mostly know people from Vauréal and Jouy-le-Moutier. My family lives in Vauréal and I moved here when I was 15.

What I like about Jouy-le-Moutier… What I like is that there's no racism, there's a real sense of togetherness in Jouy-le-Moutier and Vauréal, and that's very important to me. There are all kinds of communities!

There's nothing negative about it to me.
Yes, things are changing… There's a lot of building in the towns. All they do is build! The two towns (JLM and Vauréal) are really thinking more and more about children. It's great! I'm very happy here.

I don't think I'll move. There's a lot of green, so maybe we could develop more for cycling or mountain biking. As for the shops, I think there's everything, I don't find anything really lacking."
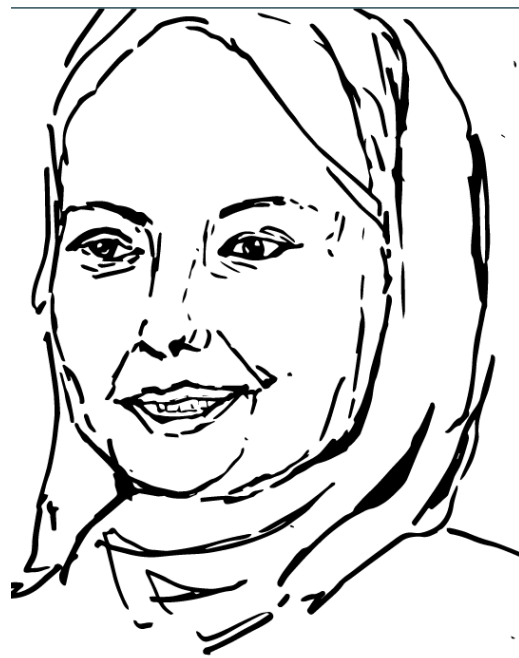
Market in Cergy Saint-Christophe

The stalls are spread across the square and the whole of Rue de l'Abondance. The weather is nice and people are crowded around the stalls, so it's hard to catch anyone's attention. I try to stand back a little, at the level of the few terraces, but no one seems very interested in talking with me. Then I come across a woman sitting alone. She hesitates at first, tells me she has nothing to say, then finally agrees.

She is a woman in her fifties, sitting on a ledge next to a clothes stall, in a purple abaya with shopping bags.

"I'm very happy here. My children are grown up and gone. It's very clean, the building is clean. There's nature everywhere, it's clean.

My husband has died and I have five children. I'm near Cergy le Haut, you know, at the end of Rue de la Mosquée, near the secondary school.

I used to live in an HLM in Oignies, so we came here to buy. The apartment is nice, we've got a balcony and we're near the park.

I'm alone, I don't see anyone. Of course I did when my children were at school, but now I'm on my own and I don't have any friends.

My daughter goes to high school in Cergy le Haut, it's clean, it's quiet, it's nice. There's nature everywhere, it's better than Paris. Otherwise, I go to the Cergy Préfecture shopping centre and, when the weather is nice, to the Parc des Étangs.

No, there's nothing lacking here, there's everything for children, leisure activities, swimming pool… everything. It's clean, it's quiet, there are no fights. Before it was dirtier, now it's better."

At the home of Elia and Nael

We're at 64 Rue des Coteaux in Jouy-le-Moutier, in the Vaux Labours district. In "le BK (the lower district)", as Nael calls it. Elia doesn't know the name. They live in this detached house with their parents. Their parents used to live with Nael in an apartment in Hauts-de-Seine (92) before moving to Jouy-le-Moutier.

Elia (18) and Nael (22), two brothers living in Jouy-le-Moutier, interviewed together.

Why did your parents come here?

(both): To have a garden, a house in a residential area… for us, really. Because it's not too far from Paris yet not too urban. We know the neighbourhood well, Jouy but also the rest of the conurbation.

(Nael): I don't need a GPS in the conurbation. We go to Cergy, to Pontoise, but also to Vauréal, where Elia's friends are. We go to other towns to play football in their stadiums, especially St-Ouen-l'Aumône. We know a lot of places in the conurbation because we went to the private high school Notre Dame de la Compassion in Pontoise, where not many students live in Jouy-le-Moutier or Vauréal. We were almost the only ones!

(both): The rec centre, the Axe Majeur – it's got style! The Axe Majeur is a great place to hang out. The Maradas sports complex is incredible, you can play football and it's always busy. We often spend time wandering about there.

Getting around is simple. Buses are easy during the school year, in the mornings and evenings for the start and end of school, so it's OK. But outside those times it's more complicated. There are 1 or 2 buses an hour… But it's OK, it's not like we're in the countryside. By bike, you can cover the whole conurbation in 30 minutes. There are lots of cycle paths!

(Nael): You still have to ride on the road a lot if there aren't any cycle paths.

(both): The landmarks would be the Préf, all the train stations, the bus stops. There's the golf course near Cergy le Haut. We play sports here! 7 years of football in JLM, swimming and judo in Jouy, basketball in Jouy.

We're very close to the neighbours around us (in the adjoining houses); they're like family, even the ones across the road and the houses further away. Our social circle is pretty much all over the conurbation.

What we love here is the neighbourhood, the local football stadium, the greenery everywhere. But it's a commuter town, so it's quiet and there's not much going on. The air is fresher than in Paris, it's breathable. We like the house, it's well located, it has everything you need, there's nothing missing, we have a garden…

What might be missing is more public transport, like a train station. There's a lack of activities; there are restaurants, but not many. If you don't do sports, you don't meet many people, so there needs to be a place where people can meet.

(Nael): Yes, for me I feel like I'm part of Jouy.

(Elia): I'm attached to the conurbation, but not necessarily to Jouy in particular, but I really like it.

(Nael): For me it's more a nostalgic attachment to the house, because I grew up here. Our parents want to move when they retire. You mean continue living later on in Jouy? Absolutely not! In the conurbation maybe…

(Elia): I don't want to spend my life in the conurbation, there's not enough to do.

(Nael): Yeah, but still, if you have a family here, it's great!

Île-de-Loisirs

The recreation area is huge and can be reached by bus and then across a stretch of open land. Small yellow signs indicate the activities, which vary between an amusement park and a fairground. There are different areas: at the entrance, the bouncy castles are on the right, the carousels on the other side, then a succession of open areas with lawns and playgrounds. At the other end, there is an entrance fee for the beach and water games. I stayed in the first area. In front of the games there are (mostly) women watching their children play. They're more likely to respond to my questions than the large, excited groups in the other areas.

A woman in her forties, blue jacket, straight hair and modest make-up. She's watching her son and her friend's son play mini golf.

"I live in Port Cergy. There are three of us at home. With my son and my husband, we've lived in a detached house for five years.

I grew up in Cergy, then I lived abroad and came back. I had work opportunities here. If I'd had the choice, I would have picked other, better towns!

It's not so bad, there are green areas, but there are better places. There are countries where people are more open-minded, but France is lagging behind.

Yes, I know Cergy Préfecture well, the port… I go to Les 3 Fontaines and the train station. I'd rather live in another city or country.

I go to the gym in Les 3 Fontaines, which suits me fine. Otherwise I'm often in Paris, I work in Paris. So I use public transport.

Yes, the neighbourhood is quiet, there's a good atmosphere, but everyone is older. The recreation centre is good for families. I think there should be more buses, the station has been under renovation for years. It used to be cleaner.

No, I have no ties here, apart from my family. I could easily move somewhere else."

Christine and her friend Nadine are sitting on a bench opposite a carousel with their two little dogs.

Christine:

"Oh no, I don't like Cergy! It's ugly, it's dirty, I don't go there. That's why they built the new town, to turn it into a dormitory. They only build universities because they make money. I live alone, yes, in an apartment. It's in Port Cergy, you know, near the shops and cafés, near the Taverne. Oh no, I never go to the rest of Cergy, I don't go to the shopping centre anymore. It's too big with all the new shops.

I used to work for EDF in Pontoise, now I'm retired. Now we have two associations in Pontoise. I lived in Pontoise for a long time and came back here in 1973. There was only the town hall and the rest was just fields. It used to be the countryside!

Nowadays I'm mainly in Pontoise, but I prefer the Val-de-Marne, it's lovely. Pontoise is nice, it's older. There are big houses, the people aren't the same, it's nice in Pontoise. Cergy is a new town, it's ugly. Do you really work in Cergy? But you like Cergy?

I set my GPS to come straight here, I don't know Cergy. When I came to the Port in 1986, it wasn't that big. In Cergy, it's mainly universities; they did that to make it a dormitory town. Now they're only building universities. You should go and interview young people, students. There isn't even a hospital.

It's a dormitory. There's still the village of Cergy, but more and more shops are leaving, there's nothing there.

Oh no, I travel by car! Luckily! I'm not from Cergy. Yes, my place is nice, the Port, but you should interview people from Cergy.

Nadine:

"I live in Courdimanche, in new Courdimanche, not in the village.

I've been here for 8 years. I used to live in the south of France, but I came here to be closer to my grandchildren.

(Christine): Your house is new, it's nice! It's in the countryside!

(Nadine): I like it, I'm across from the Collège Sainte Appoline. I like it, it's lively, there are young people. I live alone in the house, for my grandchildren, when they come to visit me.

I know the area well, there are shops nearby. I go to Cergy le Haut to do my shopping, to Port Cergy to see my girlfriend *laughs*. Sometimes I go to Puiseaux, to Saint-Christophe, it's well served. I mostly get around by car.

Oh, the neighbours, we know each other from afar, it's hello–goodbye. Courdimanche is not quiet, it's lively, that's what I like about it. It's the new part of town that is like this.

Oh no, I'm fine, I don't need anything. I go to the forest and the recreation area. I'm not particularly attached to the city, it's mainly family ties. I'm happy in my house."

In Cergy with Michel

Michel is one of Cergy-Pontoise's pioneers, having moved to the new town's first district in 1974. He now lives with his partner near the village of Cergy, in the Cellettes district. He is an economist and town planner by profession, and has worked for the Établissement Public d'Aménagement de la Ville Nouvelle de Cergy-Pontoise. He is now retired.

Why did you choose to live in Cergy?

When my wife and I returned from abroad, we found a job in Cergy and naturally settled here. However, apart from the proximity to our workplace, it was the experience of the birth of the new town, the era of the pioneers, and above all to be part of this urban adventure on the side of the inhabitants, that attracted and interested us. I've always been passionate about urban planning and development, which happens to also be my job.

Do you feel you know your neighbourhood?

I think so… because I've watched it being built, I've known it since it was just an idea.

What is your relationship with your neighbours?

In the Maradas, back in the early days, there was a lot of mutual support. It was a small block of apartments and we knew our neighbours very well. The newness of the neighbourhood and the nascent city made it easier to socialize. Then the city, like all cities, found its state of normality. I live in a block of 20 apartments where everyone knows each other. Socializing is easy and frequent.

Is your social circle concentrated in the city where you live?

For me, it's the city, yes, but more so the conurbation. I play an active role in a number of associations in the conurbation, such as the Axe Majeur association, the Maison Anne et Gérard Philippe association and others. I take advantage of my time as an active retiree to follow the activities of several associations in the conurbation. What interests me is the metropolitan aspect, perhaps it's a professional bias…

Michel explains that he takes advantage of the wide range of cultural activities on offer in the conurbation. He visits the various theatres in the conurbation as well as the Utopia cinema in Saint-Ouen-l'Aumône. He also goes for walks in the recreational park not far from his home.

As for shopping, we are on the edge of Cergy Village, so we benefit from the local shops. But we're also close to the city centre, and I often take the RER to get to Paris, so I'm often at the Cergy Préfecture station. Despite the never-ending construction sites…

Most of my trips to the station are on Velo 2. But I also walk or take the bus. The conurbation has a very good bus network.

Do you find it easy to get around the conurbation?

Yes, because we have an efficient bus network and because of all the RER services to the two main stations, Cergy Préfecture and Pontoise. It's a shame that we've never been able to create an easy link between the two, apart from the number 45 bus. But the transport network serves the facilities in the conurbation; and the hospital, for example, is very well served by bus.

And how do you get around personally?

Apart from going to the station, it's true that I mainly use my car to get around the conurbation. We're in the outer suburbs, and outside the bus network you still have to use your car. We're not in the inner suburbs or in Paris. In addition, we can't forget that the population of Cergy is ageing. So, although active transport should be encouraged, it's becoming less and less accessible to the population.

Michel owns his 5-room house, which he was able to add an extra room to in the 1980s.

What I like about my house is the space and our garden. I like the architecture of this house, with its high ceilings and mezzanine, so it's a space that suits me and that I like. But it's a two-storey house and as you get older you realize that it would be nice to be on one level. That's a disadvantage. I feel I've made my home my own.

I don't feel any particular shortcomings or frustrations in relation to where I live. I have the advantage and the privilege of being satisfied in this respect. One of the advantages of Cergy-Pontoise is the cost. When I bought here in the 80s, I wouldn't have had the same space in Paris or the inner suburbs.

What do you like most about it?

One of the main advantages is for the children. They can move around relatively freely, so there is a sense of security between parents and children in terms of their movements. They can go to school. Children can be left outside to play on their own. That's why there are so many schools, sports facilities, community centres and so on. That's what makes the city so rich.
The urban fabric here is very special, not very dense and with a lot of green space compared to the inner suburbs.

Yes, I'm very attached to it. I defend Cergy. My attachment is also defined by my contribution to the construction of the town. I really think that Cergy-Pontoise is one of the most successful new towns. There are certainly some failures and real problems to solve, but I like living here.

Here are the questions we asked the residents:

-Where exactly do you live (town and district)?

-What is the composition of your household, including ages?

-How long have you lived here?

-Where did you live before? Why did you move here?

-What has changed since you moved here? (Family composition, workplace, neighbourhood relations, local atmosphere, environment…)

-Would you say that you know your [Commune] / your neighbourhood / the surrounding area well?

-Do you have any places that you visit often? Favourite places?

-Apart from activities linked to your place of residence (commute), do you frequent the town?

-If so, do you visit any other towns/neighbourhoods other than your own?

-Do you find it easy to find your way around the [town/neighbourhood/conurbation]?

-Do you take part in local activities (associations, sports, community centres)?

-Would you say that your social circle is made up largely of people from your [Commune] / neighbourhood / conurbation? -Do you know your neighbours?

-What do you particularly like about Cergy: (focus on the services and special features of Cergy compared with other towns) [town/neighbourhood/conurbation]

-What do you find most lacking? [town/neighbourhood/conurbation]

- What does it changed since you leave here ?

- Are you attached to Cergy / Vauréal / JLM?

-Have you ever thought of moving?

-What would you like to see developed in Cergy-Pontoise in the future?

3 _Inhabiting today – Glossary

1. Inhabit
2. Cohabit
3. Reinhabit

Must we build more?

Today, the consensus seems to be that there is a massive need for new housing in France. But an agreement on the figures has proven difficult: **estimates vary from 250, 000** to **1 million new homes per year.** The situation is complex and there is no single answer.
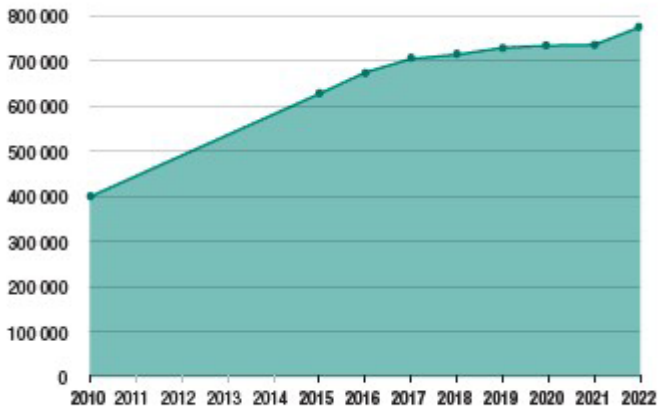
The size of homes no longer matches the needs of households, which are getting smaller (with one- and two-person households dominating), making it difficult to distribute them within the existing housing stock. Many houses remain under-occupied or empty because they are too large. **The model of the family home** – owner-occupied homes with stable households – needs to be reviewed: **the composition of households** is changing and the family is less central.

Yet France is the country that builds the most homes per capita in Europe. The problem also stems from the **geographical distribution of construction**: in a country where rural areas are far less well equipped than urban areas, **40%** of the new housing produced is located in only **1%** of cities. So, by favouring areas that are already active**, the phenomenon of metropolization is accentuated.** Not building in rural areas accelerates the abandonment of small towns. In rural areas, **60%** of communes have only **1** to **4** new homes per year, which is not enough to maintain populations.
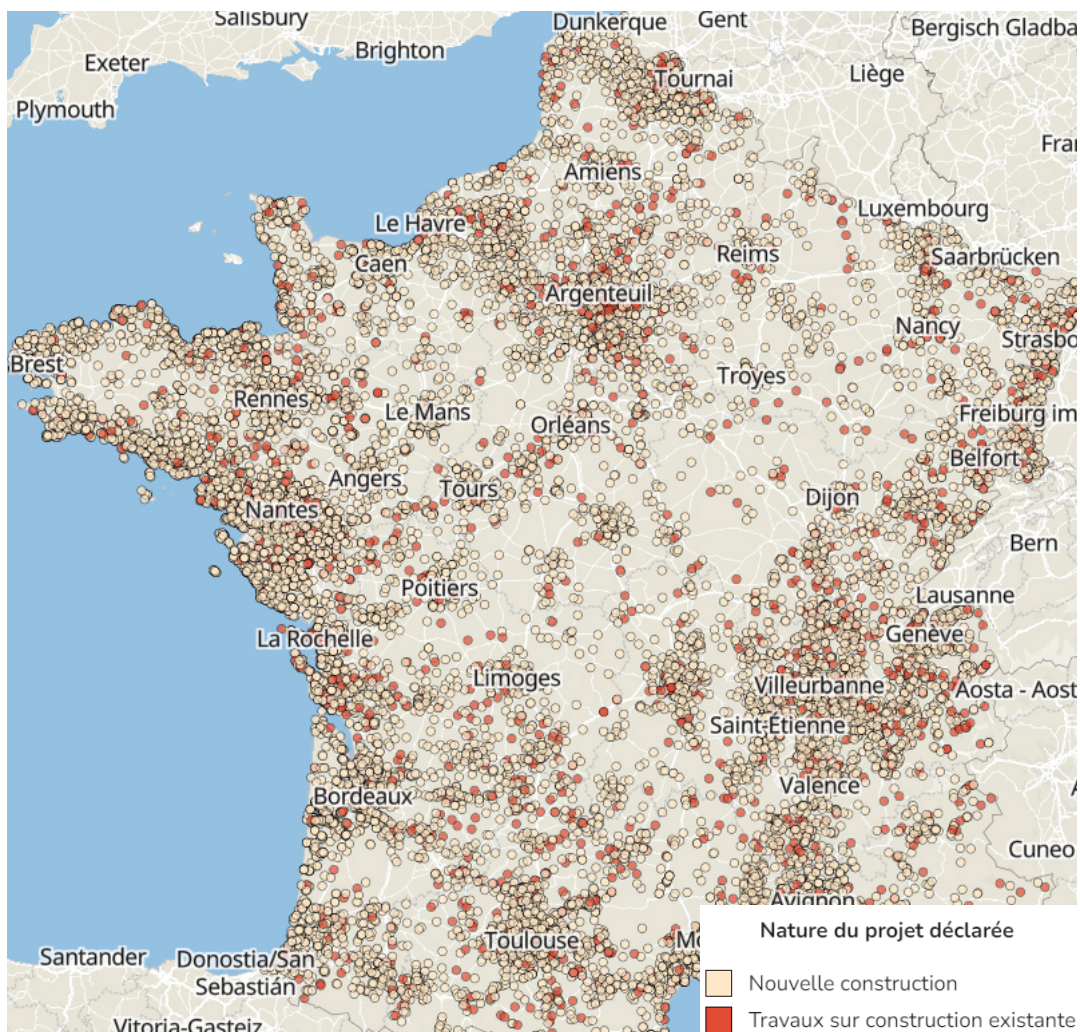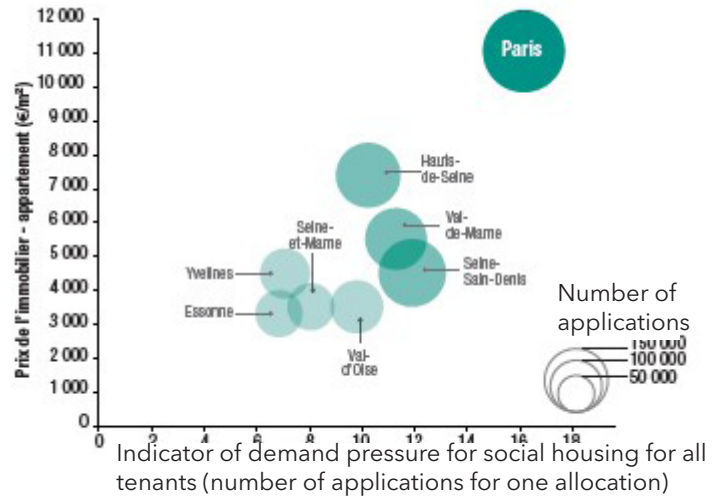
Map of building and renovation permits in France

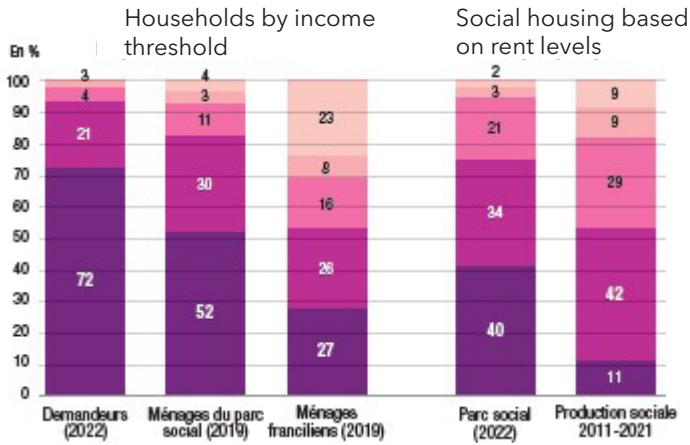## The number of applicants has almost doubled since 2010.

Demand and pressure are all the greater when property prices are high.

Prix de l'immobilier – appartement (€/m²)

Paris

Hauts-de-Seine

Val-de-Marne

Seine-et-Marne

Seine-Saint-Denis

Yvelines

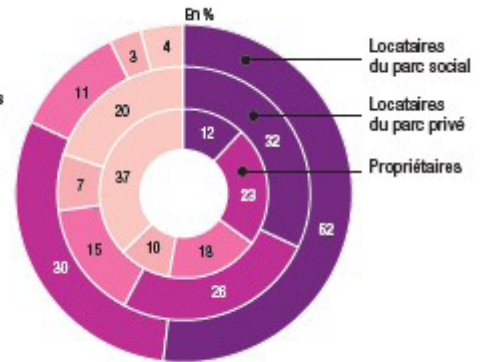Essonne

Val-d'Oise

Number of applications
150 000
100 000
50 000

Indicator of demand pressure for social housing for all tenants (number of applications for one allocation)

Low-income applicants…

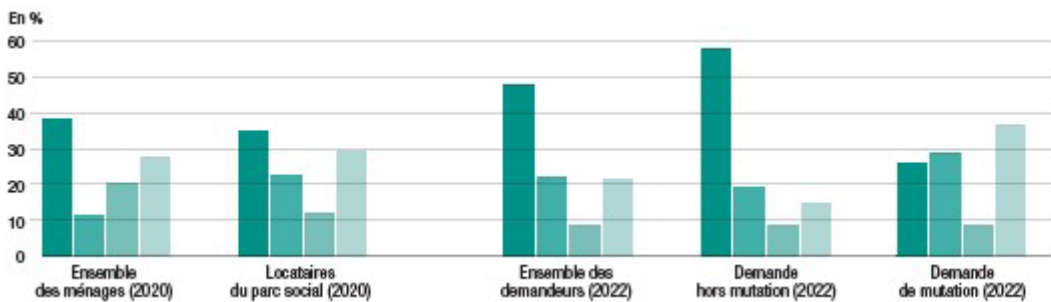Households by income threshold

Social housing based on rent levels

En %

	Demandeurs (2022)	Ménages du parc social (2019)	Ménages franciliens (2019)	Parc social (2022)	Production sociale 2011-2021
	3	4	2		9
	4	3	23	3	9
	21	11	8	21	29
		30	16	34	
	72		26		42
		52	27	40	11

Plafonds de ressources ou de loyers pratiqués
- ≤ PLAI
- > PLAI et ≤ PLUS
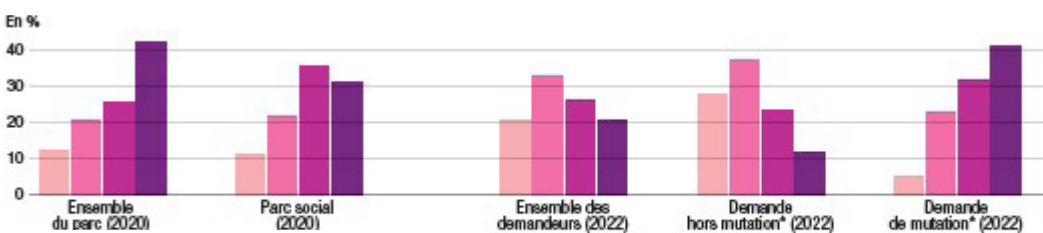- > PLUS et ≤ PLS
- > PLS et ≤ PLI
- > PLI

En %

Locataires du parc social

Locataires du parc privé

Propriétaires

A majority of single people…

En %

| | Ensemble des ménages (2020) | Locataires du parc social (2020) | Ensemble des demandeurs (2022) | Demande hors mutation (2022) | Demande de mutation (2022) |

Type of household
- Single-person
- Single-parent family
- Couple without children
- Couple with children

in a housing stock reserved for families

En %

| | Ensemble du parc (2020) | Parc social (2020) | Ensemble des demandeurs (2022) | Demande hors mutation* (2022) | Demande de mutation* (2022) |

Type of housing stock
- T1
- T2
- T3
- T4 ou plus

*This is the number of rooms desired for a home.

INHABITING starts with housing

> "Whether we like it or not, from the most intimate inside to the most visible outside, it's hard to hide behind walls that often reveal what we don't always want to say or show".

Is the size of a home a guarantee of quality?

Having a space of one's own is essential for the fulfilment, health and development of every individual. It has been shown that a child who does not have his or her own room **is ten times more likely to fail at school**. If there are more people than there is space in a home, or if a 7-year-old child does not have his or her own room, the home is considered "**overcrowded**" by INSEE (the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies). Overcrowding was one of the causes of excess mortality during the COVID crisis in Seine-Saint-Denis.
Recognized by the courts as a **health problem**, space in the home is an important argument in obtaining custody of a child.

Conversely, extra empty space is perceived as a luxury, a comfort, a margin of possibility.

Collective housing in France represents **one of the smallest percentages in Europe**. The surface area of apartments tends to shrink because the price per m² discourages households that are becoming poorer and poorer.

The relationship between m² and house prices is very complex: it depends on location (proximity to services, parks, transport, etc.), land pressure and whether the land is enclosed or suitable for building. Price differentials by location reveal major inequalities across France: a studio apartment in Paris can be worth as much as a five-bedroom house in the countryside.

How does this tightening housing market work? What can be done to ensure the quality of new housing?

Kitchen

The idea that the kitchen should be **optimal** and **minimal** is a legacy of modernity. One of the earliest examples is attributed to the German Bauhaus School of Architecture, which designed a 6.27 m² kitchen with ergonomics and efficiency in mind. Later, the French architect Le Corbusier designed kitchens that were 4.7 m² in size for his housing units. The modern kitchen was designed to be **open**, to communicate with the other rooms.

It has therefore opened itself up and shrunken, merged with the living room until its has now gradually becoming a **corner**. Several factors have led to this change: standards for people with reduced mobility (which make partitioning more difficult) and the increase in the price per square metre. The model is moving away its promise of flexibility: from a kitchen that can be opened or closed, it is now becoming a fixed corner.

This optimization is dressed in a feminist idea: the kitchen shouldn't contribute to the exclusion of women from the living room (because it is still women who do most of the cooking). **But what about the quality and the space offered to them?**

Cusine de l'Unité d'habitation, le Corbusier, Centre pompidou

Balcony or garden

Access to an outdoor space emerged as an important issue of **well-being** during the COVID crisis. It is also a **strong social marke**r:

"From one end of the social scale to the other, the proportion of households living in a home with an outdoor green space doubles from 36% for non-working households to 71% for managerial and professional households" .
(Anne Lambert, Fanny Bugela, Logement: comment la crise sanitaire amplifie les fractures, 7 April 2020).

The same distribution between social classes can be observed for other criteria: the quality of the view outside and the quality of the noise environment.

Bedrooms, like kitchens, have also become smaller over time. The specific constraints related to them mean that a minimum size must be maintained: a bed or a wheelchair needs to be able to fit inside. Today, however, 30% of French bedrooms cannot accommodate a double bed.
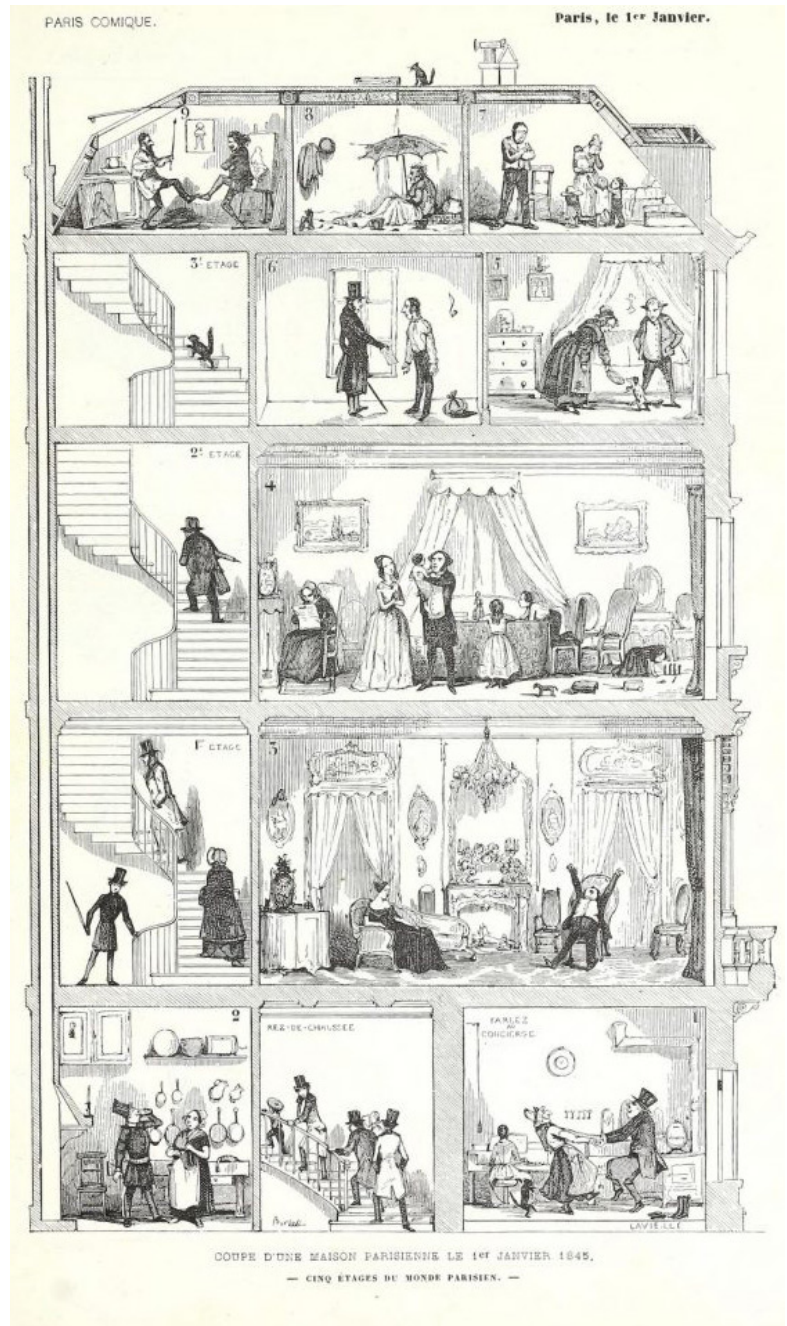
Ceiling height

The situation is paradoxical: while the population has grown by 10 cm in 30 years, the height of ceilings has fallen by 20 cm!

There are many reasons for this: housing **insulation** is now much thicker in floors and ceilings. To meet the constraints of town **planning regulations** (which set maximum building heights), builders sometimes reduce the height of units to make room for more floors.

An increasing number of terraced and green roofs require greater roof thickness. To compensate for this, builders reduce the number of storeys.

This loss of space is often countered by another argument: less ceiling height means less volume to heat and therefore less energy consumption. But the larger the volume, the more air is circulated and the better the air quality. This makes a significant difference in temperature during the summer.

Haussmann-style buildings, constructed in the 19th century, dominate Paris. It is a model based on an accepted **social hierarchy**: for each floor, the height of the ceiling, the presence or absence of a balcony and the level of ornamentation define the social class that lives there.

INHABITING means finding your place in the property market

The homeowner

Owning your own home is socially and politically encouraged in France. The ideology surrounding households, that of settling down as a family and owning your own home, is still dominant. The goal of acquiring land, a piece of soil, is a legacy of the country's long agricultural tradition. In France, **60% of the population are homeowners**. This situation is also advantageous for the government, which has less responsibility and greater profitability when housing is privately owned.

Behind the term "homeowner", however, lies a w**ide range of situations**: **20%** are first-time buyers who have not finished paying for their homes and therefore share ownership with the bank. Only two-thirds live in their home and the remaining third are landlords (renting out their home to others).

Numerous measures have been taken to facilitate access to home ownership. There is also tax support for owners who rent out their homes, as this enables the government to have new homes on the market managed by private individuals. At the same time, there is a lot of support for access to rental and social housing.

Home ownership is a marker of generational inequality. The baby boomer generation, born between **1946** and **1964**, had easy access to property thanks to comfortable salaries that enabled them to repay a loan at a time when it was easier to climb the social ladder. Today, young people face more difficulties: jobs are more precarious, life is more expensive and inheritances are rarer.

This situation is also due to a **concentration of ownership**. Multi-home owners represent ¼ of all households, and they alone own **68%** of privately-owned homes. "Maxi-home owners" are owners of at least five homes. They make up **3.5%** of the population, and today they alone own **50%** of all properties.

Who owns rental property in France?

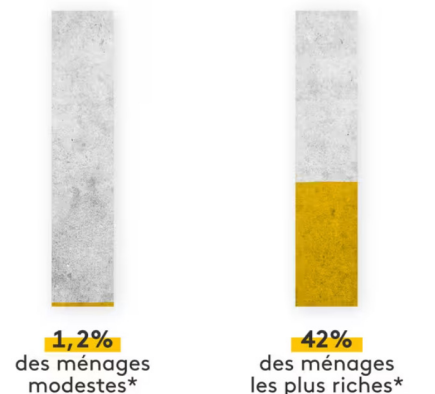**3,5% des ménages** possèdent **50% du parc locatif**

source : INSEE

franceinfo:

Percentage of homes owned by maxi-home owners in Paris

10%   80%

Source : INSEE

franceinfo:

Who are the maxi-home owners?

1,2%
des ménages
modestes*

42%
des ménages
les plus riches*

The tenant

Forty percent of the French are renters. Some of these **40%** are both tenants and owners. Is it really easier to be a tenant than a landlord? Renting can also be very restrictive: some landlords require the tenant to be able to pay 3 times the rent for a deposit (whereas the bank does not even require this).

In the end, the amount paid per month for the same apartment is more or less the same for tenants and landlords. **The big difference is that the latter will have full use of the property and will only be paying the loan temporarily.**

The rules around renting are complex and tenants are both protected and vulnerable. Preparing an application for a rental agreement is a barrier for disadvantaged households. The allocation of rental properties is one of the areas where discrimination is most common, particularly against single mothers, people of colour or people with disabilities. Tenants can be evicted if they are unable to pay (although evictions are rare because they are difficult to justify and are prohibited during the winter months, aka the "winter truce"). Nevertheless, there are **6,600** evictions each year.

The BRS homeowner

There are other statuses that make it possible to avoid this duality (tenant/owner), such as the BRS (Bail Réel Solidaire), **which separates ownership of the land from ownership of the physical structure.**

The land is sold to a landlord, while the walls (the house) are bought by another household for around **35%** less. As with social housing, this initiative is aimed at **households with insufficient resources.** Today, two thirds of the French population could apply for social housing or a BRS.

Housing acquired under a BRS can only be resold or transferred to a person who also meets the criteria. The price is then fixed so that there is no added value (the sale price is the same as the purchase price, indexed to inflation). In addition, there is a fee of **3** euros per month for the use of the property. **This means that the homeowner can neither capitalize on the property nor rent it out.**

As many people still see property as a financial investment or a benefit for the future, this format has very little appeal. **This model does not seek to lower prices; instead it facilitates access to housing, regulates, accommodates, but does not enrich.**

The HLM tenant

LHLM (Habitats à Loyer Modéré) are rented homes that are accessible **depending on household income and location** (according to property costs by sector). Contrary to popular belief, this programme is not just for the most disadvantaged households: **70%** of French people are eligible! But there aren't enough houses to go around, so they are only allocated to households in financial difficulty who are still able to pay the required rent.

There are currently **2.2 million people waiting for social housing in France,** including **1.5 million** who have been waiting more than a year for their first social housing allocation.

The original aim of the HLM programme was to act as a stepping stone: households living in good conditions and at low cost were thought to be able to improve their economic situation and move on to conventional housing. However, many residents of HLMs **remain for the rest of their lives**.

This is despite the fact that the conditions for eligibility must be met for the entire duration of their stay. If the resident's salary increases too much, he or she must pay an additional rent per square metre. After two years, if their standard of living is deemed sufficient, they must move out. If so few of them manage to leave their HLM, it's also because there is a **lack of intermediate accommodation** (i.e. those that are cheaper than traditional rental accommodations).
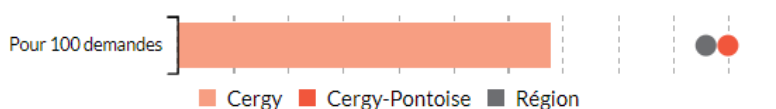
Number of approvals given by the government to build social housing

37 000 : besoins annuels*

36 000 (2016) 30 000 (2017) 28 800 (2018) 28 600 (2019) 21 000 (2020)
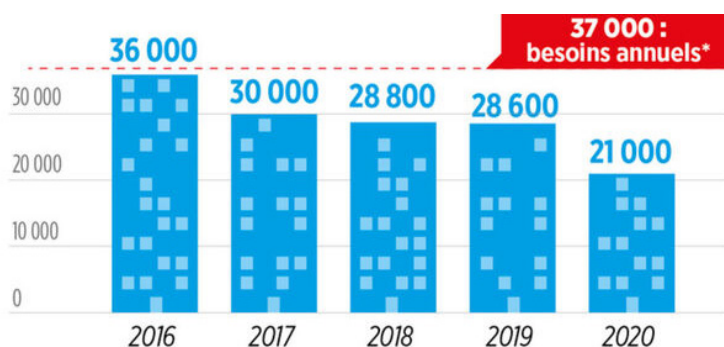
* SELON LE SCHÉMA RÉGIONAL DE L'HABITAT.
SOURCE : AORIF (ASSOCIATION DES BAILLEURS SOCIAUX D'IDF). LP/INFOGRAPHIE. 23/12/2020.

Allocation of social housing

Pour 100 demandes

Cergy   Cergy-Pontoise   Région

In Cergy, the average number of social housing units allocated per 100 applications is 6.8.

Airbnb rentals

This famous platform was born in Silicon Valley. The initial idea was to **offer temporary accommodations** for rent, for tourist purposes only.

The initiative quickly took off thanks to a **double advantage:** the owner can rent for a shorter period at a higher rate than with traditional rental methods (monthly), while not having to declare the property as a seasonal rental for tax purposes. Tourists pay less than in a hotel, enjoy less impersonal accommodations and more flexible conditions

The idea seems ecological: instead of building tourist facilities, you fill temporarily empty accommodations. The initiative is so profitable that more and more properties are being bought for this purpose. Furnishings have become increasingly standardized, and unoccupied accommodations (sometimes an entire street or building) have once again **become like hotels.**

Today, Airbnb is driving up property prices in tourist areas and contributing to the shortage of rentals.

The consequences of this business can be felt in entire neighbourhoods and in businesses (empty for half the year). Currently, **many cities are fighting Airbnb** and trying to contain the phenomenon: they count the number of properties and require them to be at least minimally occupied, but the company has no shortage of resources to get around these limits. Its economic model is indeed advantageous: the company does not own the rented property and does not have to maintain or manage it.
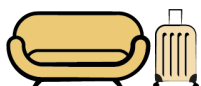
A number of factors contribute to the shortage…
the "passoires thermiques" (housing with poor insulation and low energy efficiency)

In the Île-de-France, 55% of the private rental housing stock, i.e. 1,354,000 units, suffers from poor energy efficiency.
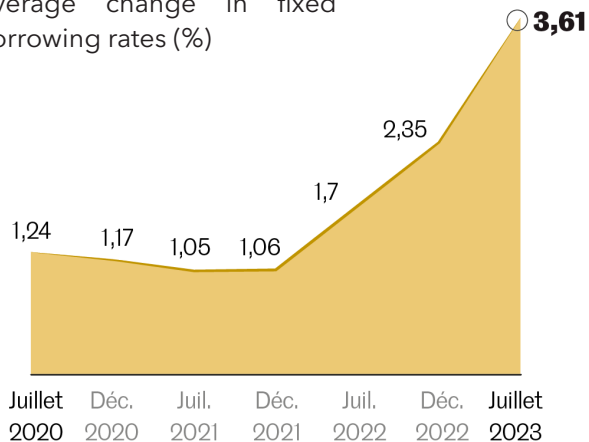
Seasonal rentals

At the end of 2021, there were more than 800,000 seasonal rentals in France, an increase of 18% compared to the previous year.

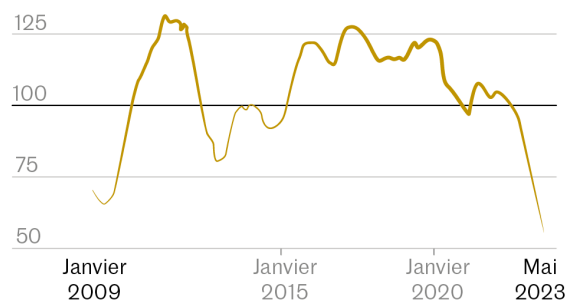**… whereas tenants are finding it increasingly difficult to buy their own home**

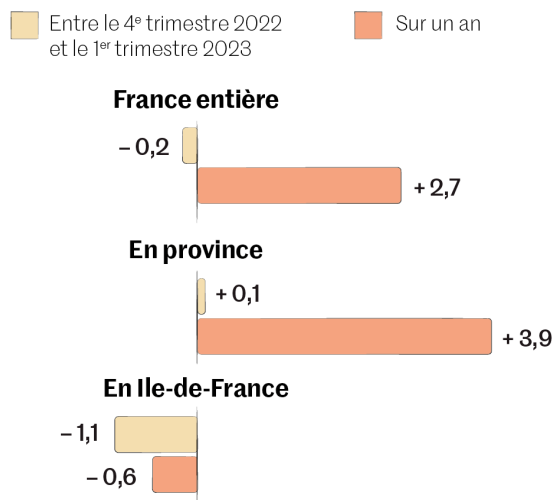**Rising borrowing rates**
Average change in fixed borrowing rates (%)

○ **3,61**

2,35

1,7

1,24   1,17   1,05   1,06

| Juillet 2020 | Déc. 2020 | Juil. 2021 | Déc. 2021 | Juil. 2022 | Déc. 2022 | Juillet 2023 |

Drop in loans granted
Number of loans granted, rolling annual level, base 100: 2020 average

125

100

75

50

| Janvier 2009 | Janvier 2015 | Janvier 2020 | Mai 2023 |

Little or no fall in prices
Change in the price index for existing properties (%)

▢ Entre le 4ᵉ trimestre 2022 et le 1ᵉʳ trimestre 2023   ▢ Sur un an

France entière
− 0,2
+ 2,7

En province
+ 0,1
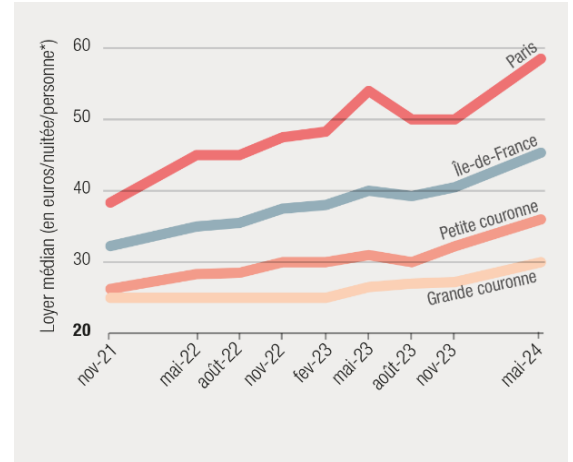+ 3,9

En Ile-de-France
− 1,1
− 0,6

Infographie : *Le Monde*
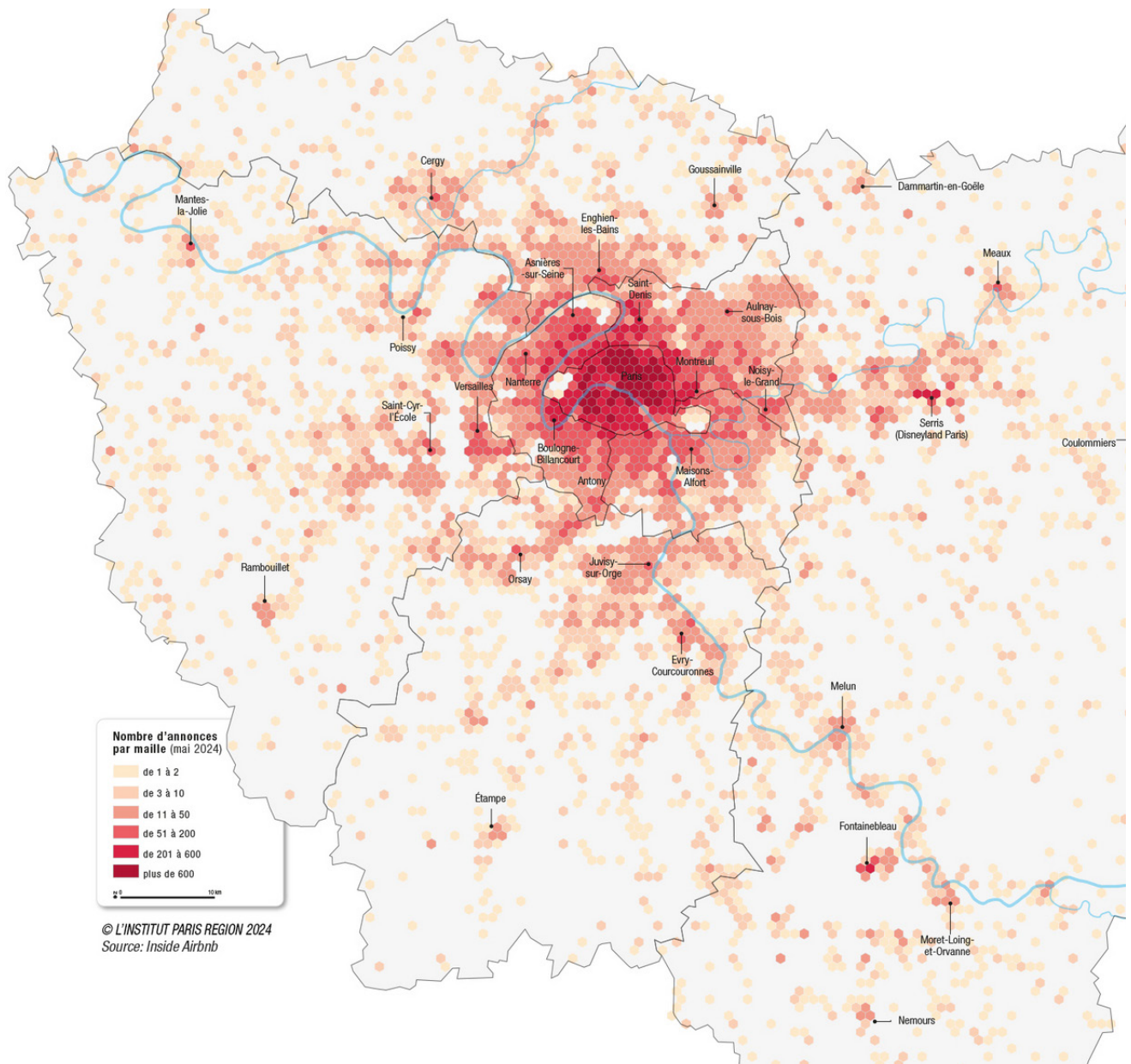
Airbnb and olympics games
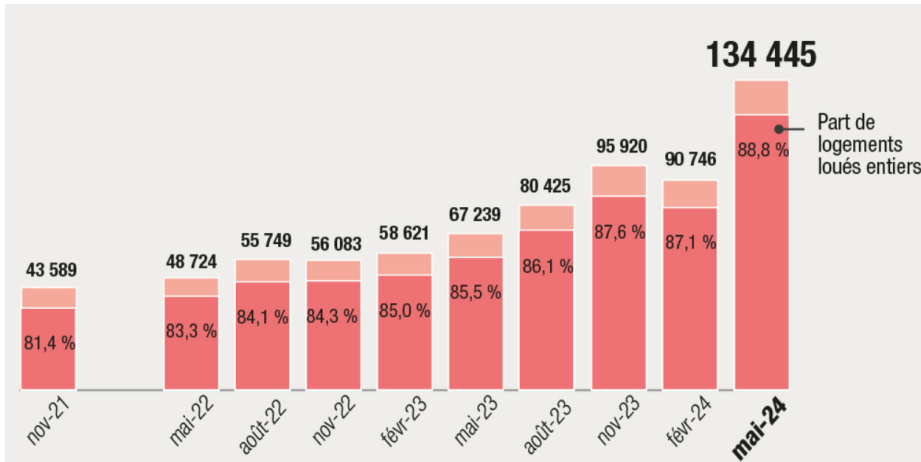
Change in the number of active listings on Airbnb

Change in median rents displayed in Airbnb

Based on data extracted from the Airbnb website, the Institut Paris Région has produced a map showing the number of properties rented out on a seasonal basis. In the run-up to the Olympic Games, there was an explosion in the number of holiday rentals, both in Paris and throughout the Paris Region. But will the increase in the number of listings seen in the run-up to the Olympics lead to a permanent migration of some of the housing stock to annual seasonal rentals?

Nombre d'annonces
par maille (mai 2024)

- de 1 à 2
- de 3 à 10
- de 11 à 50
- de 51 à 200
- de 201 à 600
- plus de 600

© L'INSTITUT PARIS REGION 2024
Source: Inside Airbnb

I.3 INHABITING means fitting into the existing built and economic fabric
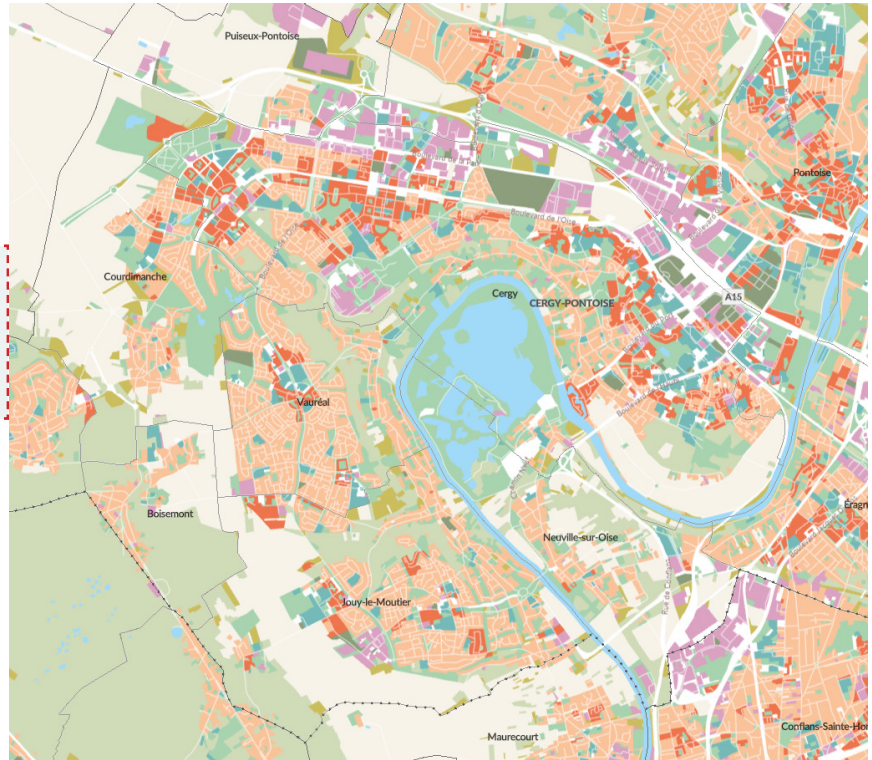
The land

All land belongs to someone (whether an individual or a legal entity) and has rules governing its development and use.

> "Buying a plot of land means becoming part of an existing, more or less dense fabric, with the obligation to respect the landscape, neighbours (if any), the rights of others and, quite simply, the law"
>
> SABBAH Catherine, *En finir avec les idées fausses sur l'habitat*, Editions de l'Atelier, p43.

There are many regulations governing building in France. They are summarized in the SCOT (Schema de Cohérence Territoriale) and STRADDET (Schema Régional d'Aménagement, de Développement Durable et d'Égalité des Territoires).

LÉGENDE

Tissus urbains
Tissus Urbains Franciliens (2017)
- Habitat individuel isolé
- Habitat villageois
- Lotissements continus
- Lotissements discontinus
- Habitat individuel hétérogène
- Habitat collectif discontinu
- Immeuble ancien bas (type bourg)
- Immeuble ancien moyen (type centre-ville et faubourg)
- Immeuble ancien haut (type Haussmanien et assimilé)
- Immeuble urbain récent
- Immeuble urbain haut récent
- Immeuble bas hétérogène
- Immeuble moyen hétérogène
- Immeuble haut hétérogène
- Immeuble très hétérogène
- Immeuble de grande hauteur
- Activités discontinues
- Équipements
- Aéroports
- Grandes propriétés
- Chantiers
- Espaces ouverts

New or existing?

Living in a new home costs 15-20% more for the same square footage, although the space is smaller.

There is also less storage space, lower ceilings, less light (there is virtually no natural light in halls, staircases and bathrooms) and fewer communal areas. On the other hand, insulation is much better in new homes (and therefore bills are cheaper), as is ventilation. The **rise in construction costs** is due to increasingly expensive heavy machinery and new materials.

A developer sets the price of the land on which to build based **on the cost of construction and the price of existing older homes**. In cities where there is a high demand for housing, the value of existing properties rises to match that of new properties (as in Bordeaux). However, if the population falls, the reverse is true: the disparity widens as existing property becomes less valuable.

Supply and demand

Property is a unique asset that does not follow the standard supply-and-demand relationship.

If there is a "supply shock", i.e. suddenly a large number of homes are built, you might expect their value to fall. This is the case in areas where there is little competition between buyers. **But the communes where the most new houses are being built (the 1%) are also the ones where prices are rising the most!**

This is because the influx of new housing pushes up prices, as it often implies gentrification. Similarly, "town centre" projects, which renovate the centres of rural communes, often have the effect of pushing up prices.

Gentrification

Gentrification is a concept originally theorized by Ruth Glass in the 1960s in London: Aspects of Change describes the transformation of parts of London into enclaves for the wealthy, where the original inhabitants were forced to leave.

It's a complex phenomenon with **economic and/or political causes**. Gentrification can be driven by public and/or private investment in buildings, public spaces and neighbourhoods, often with the aim of improving their quality and making them attractive to a more affluent population. The stated ideal is always social diversity, but it often leads to **segregation**.

The pattern is often as follows: **investors** identify an area that is not very active, not centrally located, and contains vacant buildings with a certain potential, a distinctive quality that would justify their renovation. Industrial wastelands on the outskirts of large cities with old factories are a very common example.

Then a **creative class** arrives, setting up artists' studios and third places, transforming the area, attracting bars and creating an alternative culture.

Then the neighbourhood gets caught **in a spiral of rising prices for shops and housing**. Landlords make capital gains and tenants (if not protected) may be forced to move out of accommodations they can no longer afford.

In the long term, this dynamic does not always lead to the creation of an upmarket neighbourhood.

Private investors may choose to accelerate the process by buying up the land to bring in big brand retailers and drive up prices. Public investment can have the same effect: in an effort to better equip an area, a transport link is built, a railway station is built, a museum is built… all of which drives up property prices and ultimately **pushes the original population to the outskirts**.
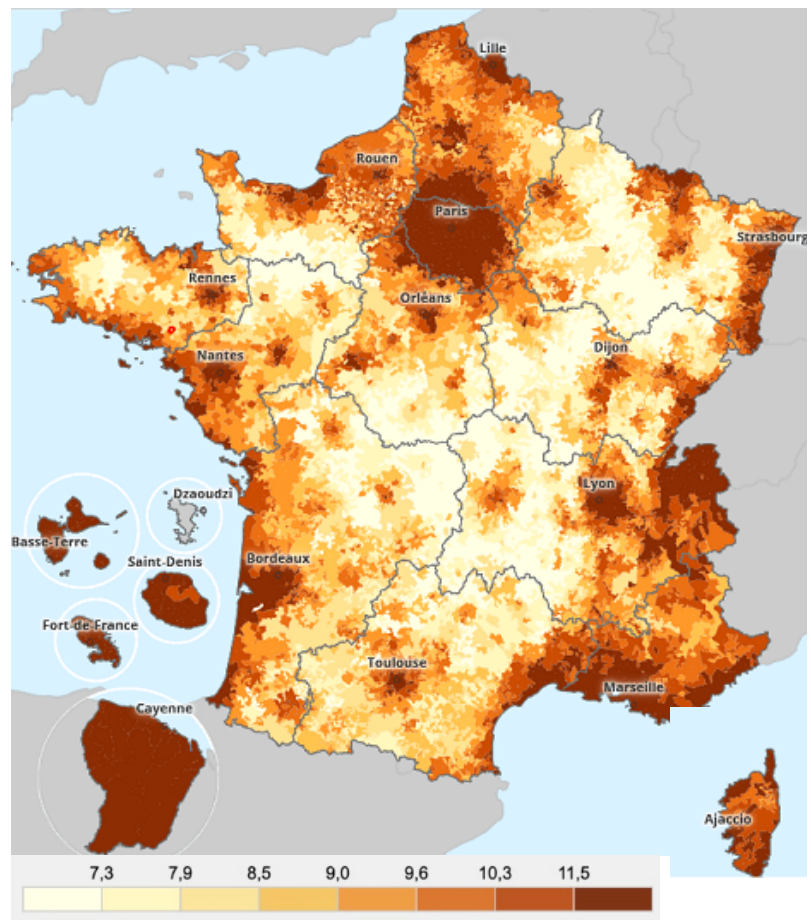
Average rent in euros per m²/month

I.4 INHABITING, does it mean owning an individual home in the suburbs?

## The suburban model and dream

Since the 1960s, there has been an unprecedented boom in the construction of detached homes, and with it the development of suburban housing estates.

These plots of land, divided into lots for the construction of detached houses, often identical and linked by a sprawling road network, are spreading across major cities. The expansion of suburban housing extends to the urban fringes, further and further out to the **rural fringes.** This housing model is responsible for the rapid **consumption of agricultural land**, due to its sprawling nature and the infrastructure it generates (new road networks and independent access for each house).

This has had a significant impact on the density of the built environment: from an average of 600 inhabitants/km² in the 1960s to 400 inhabitants/km² today. Currently, the equivalent of a French département(**6,000** km²) **is urbanized every ten years,** resulting in the loss of 40 km² of agricultural land every year.
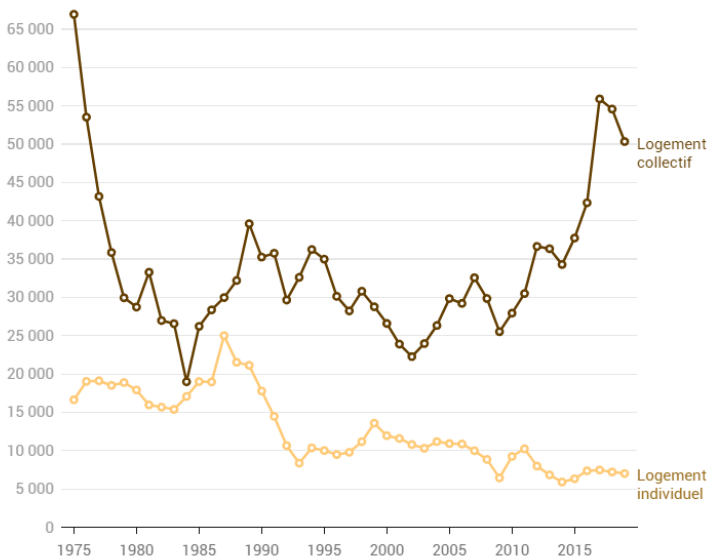
This land acquisition affects surrounding fields, forcing existing farmers to reorganize. For agriculture to survive, it is necessary to increase the surface area of farms through land dispersal, as well as intensive production.

The suburban fabric

Logement individuel

Sources : APUR
Photo proche infrarouge -
MNE · MNT· © IGN-2021
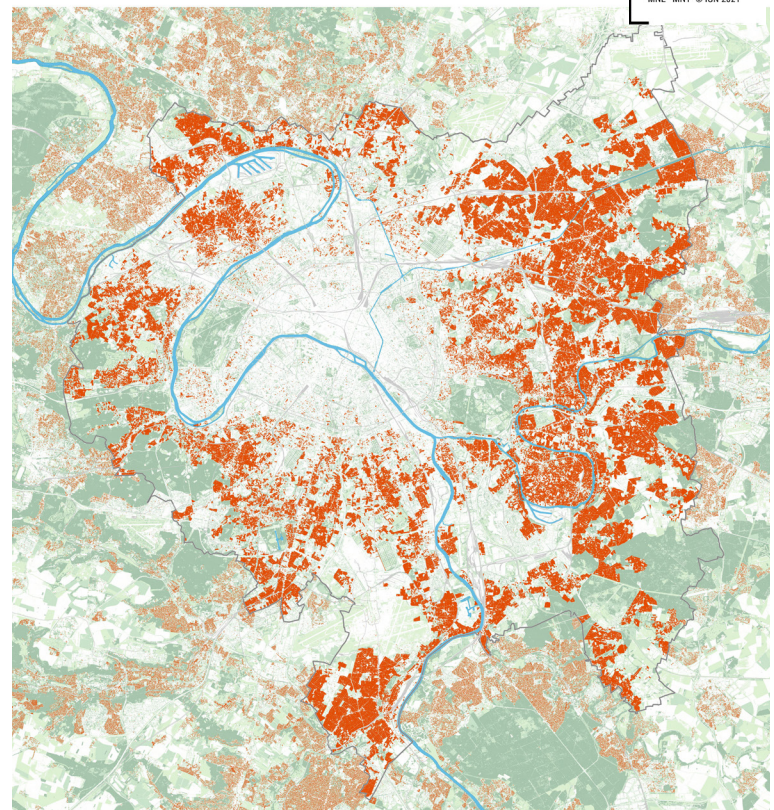
Housing construction since 1975

Nombre de logements commencés par année en Île-de-France

Logement collectif

Logement individuel

Graphique: L'Institut Paris Region • Source: SITADEL-SDES 2019 • Créé avec Datawrapper

Key figures for suburban housing in the Île-de-France

- **1.5** million detached houses
- **3.9** million people live in detached houses (27% of households in the Paris Region)
- **20%** of homes are occupied by a single person
- **30%** of occupants are aged 65 or over
- **40%** of homes have been occupied by the same person for more than 20 years
- **22%** of occupants are executives
- **80%** of residential space is devoted to detached houses and their gardens (according to the MOS)
- **6,000** collective housing complexes are built each year following the demolition of single-family homes.
- "Soft" densification produces around **4,500** homes per year.

Environmental impact

This construction model leads to a total **dependence on the car:** housing estates often have no services or shops, are mono-functional and often have poor transport links.

The massive use of the car has been much criticized, but has recently been put into perspective: the energy consumption associated with the transport of an average urban resident is equivalent to that of a suburban resident. This is because the average city dweller uses public transport on a daily basis, but travels much more for leisure purposes at weekends (although these trips are mainly made by well-off urban residents).

Some households are currently building low-energy houses on these estates. However, as these are mainly affluent households, their lifestyle outweighs the energy savings: they end up using more energy than others.

Today, it is no longer the rural/urban duality that characterizes the landscape, but the d**uality between areas densely populated with jobs and housing and deserted areas.** Connections must be improved to limit the impoverishment of the latter.

An economic choice

Peri-urban households are highly dependent on the price of petrol, and the current situation of fuel poverty severely limits their mobility. Combined with the remoteness of services, this situation has led to a slight decline in the popularity of housing estates.

While moving away from cities might be a choice motivated by a search for nature, it is more often the result of financial constraints. In the Paris Region, rising prices in the inner and outer suburbs are pushing the working **classes further and further away from urban centres.**
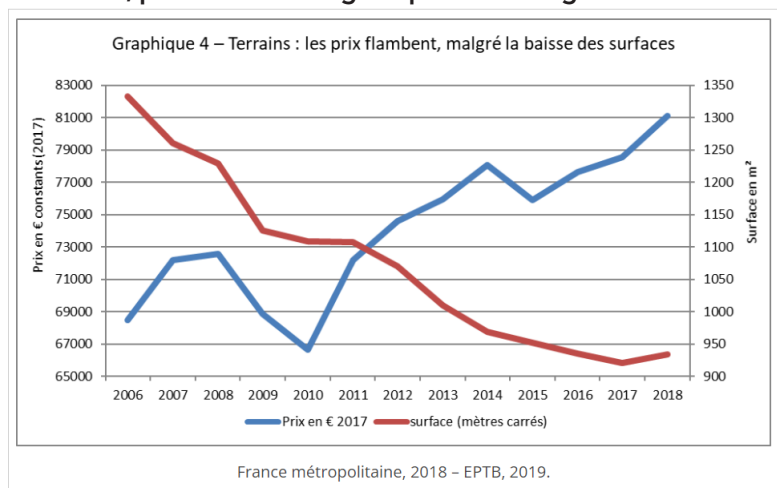
The property market in France is in crisis, and single-family homes are no exception. Compared to the last fifteen years, sales of apartments have fallen by 30% and sales of single-family homes by 25%. This crisis is due to the international increase in the cost of energy (on which the production of materials is largely dependent) and the environmental policy (which, although necessary, contributes to pressure and inflation).

The fall in purchasing power has been exacerbated by rising borrowing rates and tighter credit conditions. The financial situation of the French is no longer able to keep pace: the number of loans **taken out to buy property has fallen by 42%**.
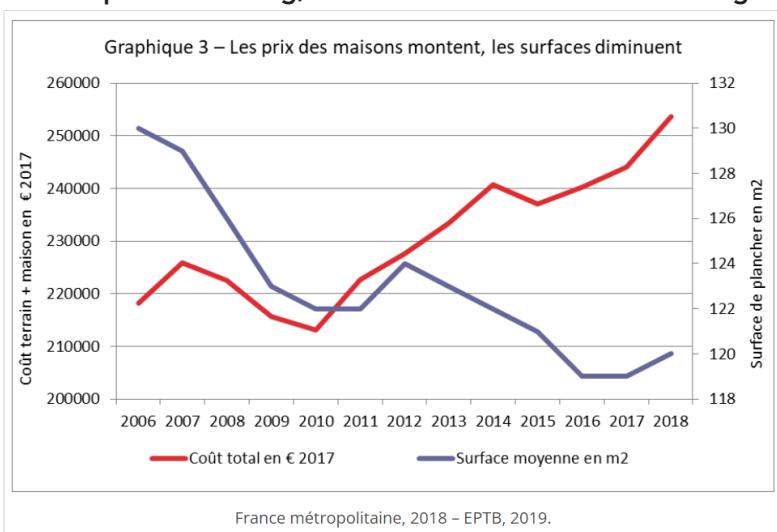
Today, despite the disastrous environmental impact, it is **cheaper to buy a single-family house than an apartment in collective housing.** This is because agricultural land is sold at low prices and road connections are paid for by local authorities. The ZAN target is intended to change this trend by severely limiting the amount of land that can be developed, thereby increasing its value.

Is it possible to include environmental costs (of construction and lifestyle) in the price of development? Would this be desirable? It's time to reclaim the suburbs and improve the quality of life and the environment.

Land, prices are soaring despite declining surface areas

Graphique 4 – Terrains : les prix flambent, malgré la baisse des surfaces

France métropolitaine, 2018 – EPTB, 2019.

House prices are rising, but their surface areas are shrinking

Graphique 3 – Les prix des maisons montent, les surfaces diminuent

France métropolitaine, 2018 – EPTB, 2019.

2. 1 COHABITING, different forms of shared living

Collective ownership

Collective ownership is often not born out of a desire to live together, but out of a need to agree on the s**ecurity and finances of the place** where you live together. It covers the management of the common areas and the maintenance of the building. Collective ownership is financed by community fees and managed by a group (the syndic) elected through a voting system.

At present, **20%** of apartment complexes in France are in a very **precarious state** because the residents refuse or are unable to pay the service charges. The result is a deterioration of the property: broken lifts, peeling paint, water leaks, etc.

Ageing

Multi-generational living (e.g. with grandparents) was very common in France until the 1970s and is still the case in many countries

The country is ageing rapidly: the number of centenarians is expected to rise from **30,000** in 2024 to **150,000** in 2060.

Older people, who often own large homes, move to smaller ones when they can no longer manage the upkeep. In many cases, the house has been **under-occupied** for a number of years..

Retirement homes or EHPADs (Éstablishments d'hébergement pour personnes âgées dépendantes) are not very appealing and remain unpopular with the elderly, who fear being infantilized. Home care is encouraged by public authorities. However, it requires **a lot of labour** (home care workers, help with errands, home visits from doctors, etc.) and, with the rapid ageing of the population, it is very difficult to **individualize** all this care.

Seventy per cent (**70%**) of home care is provided by women, in **precarious conditions**.

As the population ages, **700,000** elderly care facilities will be needed by 2030 and 900,000 by 2045, an increase of more than **50%** between 2015 and 2045.
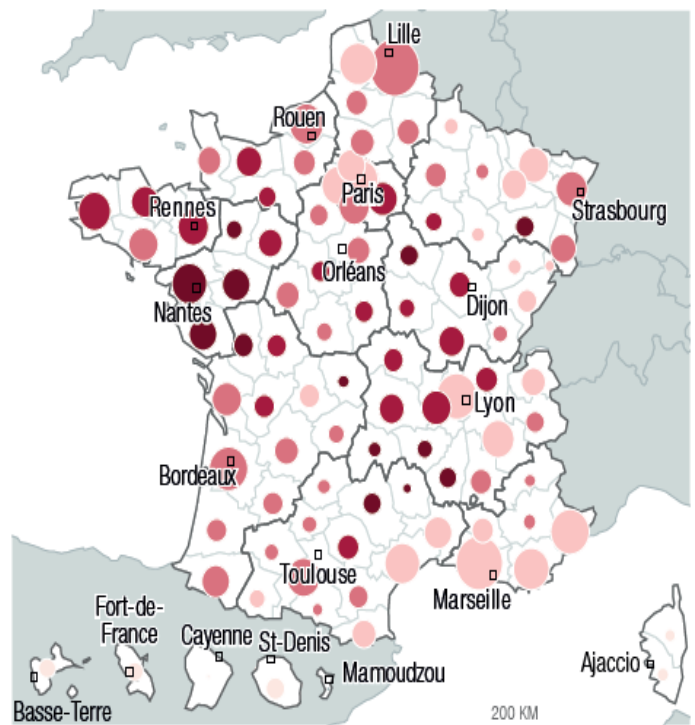
Taux de couverture des places d'EHPAD par département

| 36 | 61 | 92 | 110 | 128 | 175 |
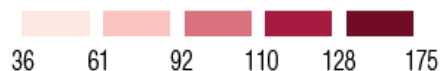
Nombre de personnes âgées de 75 ans et plus

- 200 000
- 100 000
- 10 000
- 1 000

Sources : Insee,2013 ; IGN GéoFla, 2015 • **Réalisation :** CGET, 2017

Intergenerational housing

Intergenerational housing could provide a solution to the problems faced by younger people (who have limited financial resources) and older people (who often suffer from loneliness). However, beyond the idealized images it conjures up (e.g. service, mutual help, friendship, etc.), it is not easy to set up this type of housing. The activities of younger people can get in the way of older people, older people need accessible housing, etc. Intergenerational living needs to be thought **through in advance** to ensure that it is comfortable for everyone.

Images by Coliving agencies.

Apartment-sharing and coliving

Apartment-sharing is a way of living together where you **set the boundaries.** It's a model that's easy and widespread because it allows you to share the rent, have a bigger, better quality home, spend time together and meet new people.

More recently, "**Coliving**" platforms have sprung up that operate like apartment-sharing agencies.

The commercial images they **promote are similar to those of a hotel or holiday centre:** a marketing strategy with "beautiful people", a roof terrace, a swimming pool, etc. They target an audience in their thirties. They tend to operate on an all-inclusive basis, taking care of administration, Wi-Fi, laundry, cleaning, security, entertainment, etc. Although their living conditions are defined by these services, the tenants are also active in coliving: they take part in classes, meals and conferences.

This way of **selling a complete lifestyle** is reminiscent of the corporate giants of Silicon Valley (headquarters of Google and Facebook).

In Paris, a small studio in one of these residences costs around **1,000** euros a month, a price that **is beyond the financial means of households looking for accommodation.**

3. 1 REINHABITING, more equitable and better equipped areas

Public and accessible cities?

Is the city really a public and accessible space? Political choices tend to limit the enjoyment of the city through measures such as street furniture that prevents people from lying down (to prevent homeless people from settling there), the disappearance of benches and the "purification" of public spaces (fewer hidden corners, less greenery). The idea is to give priority to visibility, which also reflects the desire to **prevent free parking** altogether and direct people to paid parking (shops, terraces).

The city sets the stage for social representations and segregation and is still largely inaccessible to PRMs (people with reduced mobility). However, the privatization of outdoor spaces is still very rare in France: there are few private residences, private parks or gated neighbourhoods

Fifteen-minute city

This concept, the brainchild of wealthy urban planner Carlos Moreno, has taken the world by storm. During the COVID lockdown, he came up with the idea of a city where you could find schools, healthcare, shopping, leisure and services all within a **15-minute walk** of your home. In France, the isolation perimeter was exactly fifteen minutes from home.

But the idea actually **goes back much further**, to Clarence Perry's work on neighbourhood units in 1900, and was taken up again by Jane Jacobs and then by François Ascher in the 1990s, who studied the relationship between travel time and quality of life, or "chrono-urbanism".

The 15-minute city goes against the modern idea of separating functions, also known **as zoning**. In the 1960s, the modernists designed cities according to zones: residential zone, industrial zone, commercial zone, etc. (this is the model that prevailed when Cergy Préfecture was built). This separation of functions is still very much present in the design of French cities.
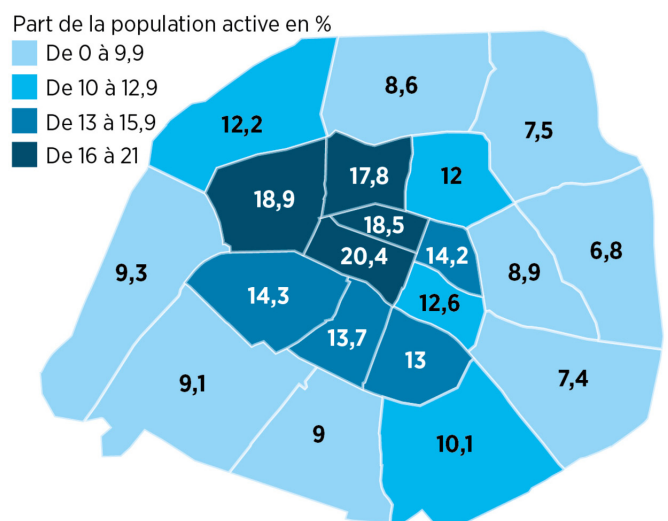
The creation of a mix of functions and functional density within neighbourhoods, blocks and even buildings already exists: old town centres and market towns are perfect examples.

However, this model currently raises a fundamental question in terms of **social diversity.** The concept of the 15-minute city implies the ideal of eliminating socio-spatial inequalities by creating **a homogenously equipped territory.**

Today's affluent populations tend to live in city centres, benefiting from all the services, culture and wealth they have to offer. **How can social class and territory be decoupled? How can areas be developed and shops and services provided without inflating the property market? Where will the shopkeepers, bus drivers and medical staff live?**

If the 15-minute city does not address these social questions, it runs the risk of reproducing the existing concentric pattern. While a small number of people will be able to benefit from the 15-minute city, many others will have to live around it, creating **a geography of areas served and areas that serve them.**
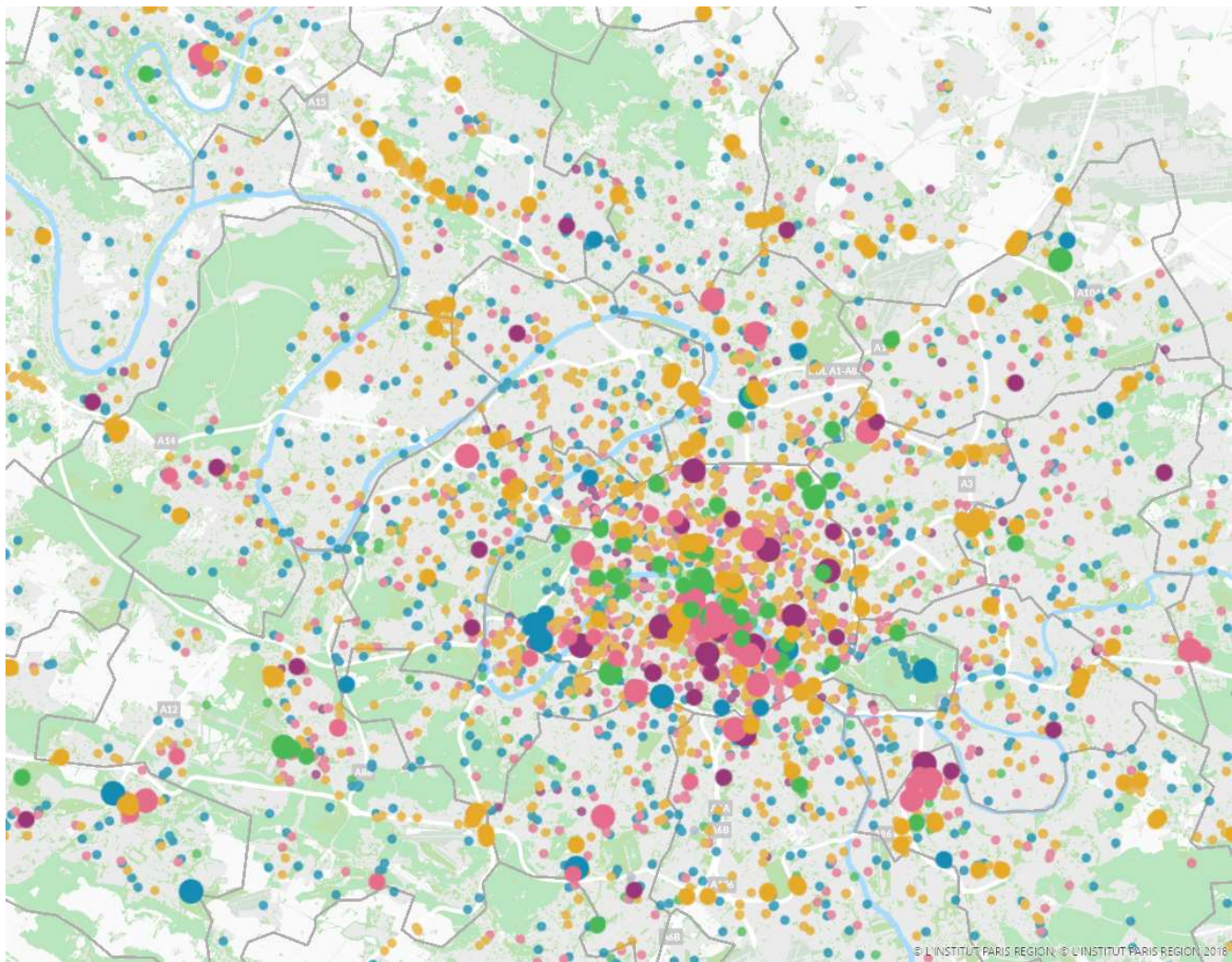
How many people walk to work?

Part de la population active en %
- De 0 à 9,9
- De 10 à 12,9
- De 13 à 15,9
- De 16 à 21

8,6 · 12,2 · 7,5 · 17,8 · 12 · 18,9 · 18,5 · 14,2 · 9,3 · 20,4 · 8,9 · 6,8 · 14,3 · 12,6 · 13,7 · 13 · 7,4 · 9,1 · 9 · 10,1

SOURCE : INSEE.   LP/INFOGRAPHIE AVEC LA CELLULE DATA.

EQUIPOMETRE

Legend:
- Santé
- Enseignement
- Commerce
- Sport
- Culture

SITUATION

L'INSTITUT PARIS REGION

A highly unequal, concentric distribution of services

Services and facilities are represented by symbols whose size varies in relation to the extent of their coverage. The facilities included in the calculation of polarities (visible at intermediate scales) are shops and cultural facilities as well as town halls, sub-prefectures and prefectures.

3.2 REINHABITING, access to decent housing for all

Shantytowns

"You would have to be blind not to see these makeshift camps on the outskirts of European cities, sometimes even in their very heart, these tent cities that accumulate until an authority decides to evict these undesirables who have no right to live there. In the absence of a solution, they try to rebuild their lives elsewhere in the same conditions, haunted by the fear of being chased away again"

SABBAH Catherine, *En finir avec les idées fausses sur l'habitat*, Editions de l'Atelier, p124.

France is both a destination and a staging post for migration: people fleeing countries in the south cross the Mediterranean or the Alps, often to reach England.

These exiles, awaiting passage to England, gathered in the makeshift dwellings sadly known as the "Jungle" in Calais. Successively built, dismantled and rebuilt between 2002 and 2015, the Jungle served as shelter for some **9,000** people.

There are currently **430** shantytowns in France, with an estimated **22,000** migrants and asylum seekers, **25%** of whom work and **25%** of whom are minors.

The are officially called "illicit camps", a choice made by the government. The term refers more to illegal and suspicious settlements and delinquency, whereas the term "shantytowns" refers to very precarious housing in which households live in great difficulty. **This way of describing these camps as temporary and illegal prevents them from being properly dealt with.**

Dans les années **60-70** en France, il y avait une explosion des campements de fortune aux abords des grandes villes : **60 000** personnes y vivaient en île-de-france.

At that time, the approach was different: the government did not implement eviction plans, but rather "slum reabsorption" plans. This more progressive approach, which accompanied the transition and reception of the inhabitants, succeeded in reabsorbing a large part of these shantytowns.

On the other hand, the current designation leads to a logic of hunting down, destroying and **constantly pushing back** these camps, which will inevitably be recreated elsewhere as long as the problem of inadequate housing remains unaddressed.

Homelessness

Four million people in France are without or inadequately housed. Of these, around **300,000** are homeless (i.e. sleeping in non-designated structures or places). This means that 0.3% of the French population is homeless, compared with a European average of 0.175%..

Over the last fifteen years, the number of homeless people in France has doubled. During the COVID lockdowns, they were banned from sleeping rough, even though the solutions offered could not accommodate all of them. Emergency shelters were set up in hotels, gyms and offices, but these were evacuated and returned to their original function as soon as the lockdown was over.

Many of these people have a legal right to housing (77,000 out of 300,000) but are w**aiting to be housed.**

Rehousing

There is an emergency clause that allows the government to reclaim **empty homes for rehousing,** but it is rarely used because the French are still very attached to property ownership.

According to INSEE, **8.4%** **of homes are vacant.** This "vacancy" status covers a **wide range of situations:** inheritance disputes, houses that have not found a buyer, houses between leases, houses awaiting renovation, etc. It is difficult to determine which situations are sustainable and can be exploited.

Despite the fact that empty properties are taxed, the number continues to rise. Some people prefer to leave their property empty rather than rent it out for fear of damage or unpaid rent.

Improving energy efficiency

There is no shortage of techniques for designing energy-efficient home**s**: homes that are easy to heat, cool and ventilate. These include Canadian wells (a ventilation system that goes underground to cool the air), ventilation systems that use wind or water to maintain a set temperature, and the use of materials with high inertia (such as stone). These low-tech systems make it possible to maintain a difference of 10 to 15 degrees from an outside temperature that is too hot or too cold.

This work can also be done on an **urban scale**: creating arcades (and thus shaded facades), adding well-placed trees, water fountains, etc.

It's very difficult to apply these techniques to buildings that have already been built. This kind of expertise is therefore essential from the **very beginning** of construction.

Today, however, there is a **lack of interest** in low-tech techniques on the part of developers, who prefer not to take risks, especially if the benefits are long-term rather than short-term.

Lack of training is also an obstacle to the widespread use of these methods: workers and technical consultants are trained to use "traditional" materials, mainly concrete, and are unfamiliar with natural materials (straw, adobe, earth, natural insulation, etc.).

©IGN - Insee 2024
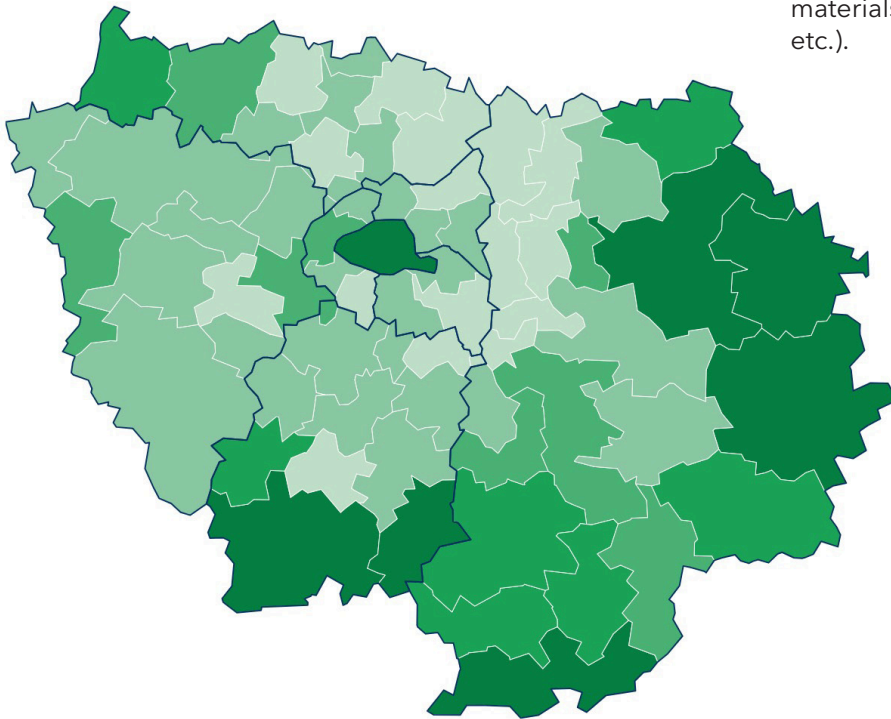
Vacancy rate (%)

- moins de 6
- de 6 à moins de 7
- de 7 à moins de 8
- de 8 à moins de 9
- 9 ou plus

3.3 REINHABITING within the existing fabric

The ZAN approach (Zero Net Artificialization)

Established in 2018 through the French government's Biodiversity Plan and further endorsed in 2020 by the Citizens' Convention on Climate, this approach aims to minimize urban sprawl by restricting construction on natural or agricultural lands while compensating for urbanization with increased green spaces within cities.

The Zero Net Artificialization (ZAN) is a national goal set for 2050, which requires territories, municipalities, departments, and regions to reduce the paceof artificialization by 50% by 2030 compared to the consumption measured between 2011 and 2020.

Artificialization of land refers to the conversion of natural, agricultural, or forested areas into artificial surfaces, such as urban zones, industrial infrastructure, and roads. This transformation has significant consequences for biodiversity, ecosystems, air and water quality, as well as climate change.

The case of l'Île-de-France

Île-de-France is heavily urbanized, leading to a significant loss of agricultural land, natural areas, and green spaces. Several actions and policies have been implemented in Île-de-France to promote the concept of Zero Net Artificialization (ZAN). With ZAN, the goal is not to completely halt all new artificialization but to restore a natural equivalent for each new urban expansion. In Île-de-France, this would mean renaturalizing an equivalent of the 840 hectares urbanized each year (based on observations from the period 2012-2017).

However, the principle of interchangeability between artificialized and non-artificialized surfaces is, in reality, not very operational because most of the impacts are not compensable

The disappearance of a natural soil often results in an irreversible loss. The formation of a natural soil is an extremely lengthy process (several centuries) involving natural processes (biological and climatic activity) that cannot be replicated. In Île-de-France, planning has already produced significant positive results in reducing land consumption.

Comprendre le zéro artificialisation nette (ZAN) en Île-de-France*
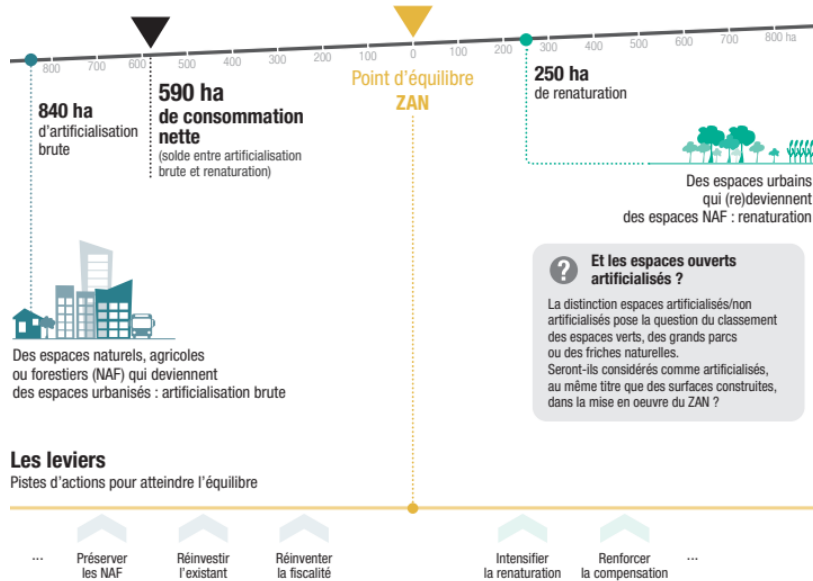
Balancing densification and green space preservation

The strategies required to achieve Zero Net Artificialization (ZAN) in Île-de-France involve a multifaceted approach. It's essential to densify urban areas and peripheral hubs to restrict expansion into natural and agricultural lands. However, this approach must include thoughtful considerations on how to seamlessly integrate built structures into the landscape and urban environment to avoid rejection by residents.

Furthermore, the success of new projects relies on preserving existing green spaces within urban areas and increasing their availability in areas that lack them. Urban green spaces play a crucial role in enhancing the well-being of residents and providing ecological benefits, such as urban cooling, soil percolation, water management, preservation of ecological corridors, and more.

Therefore, it's imperative to make efforts to classify different urban structures based on their suitability to absorb the intensification of urban activities
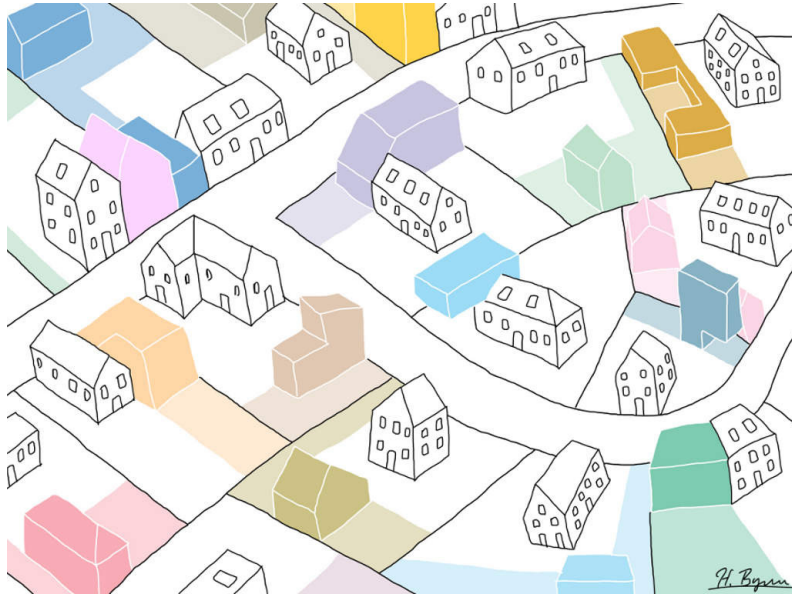
Densification of housing estates

Densification has a negative image; it is said to be synonymous with noise, saturation, lack of green spaces, etc. Today, the densification of single-family homes is done **empirically** (it increases the number of roads and accesses and generates individual speculation).

Today, couples whose children have left home find it very difficult to give up their **houses, which are often too large and under-occupied.** This is often due to the idea that they will continue to host their children/grandchildren from time to time. Renting out part of their home could reduce the maintenance burden, provide extra income and mean that they are less lonely.

Land-sharing schemes between private individuals make it possible to provide affordable housing that does not require additional infrastructure. There is no shortage of supply: landowners are interested in a financial contribution for their land, while other households are looking for cheaper, smaller plots. This creates an economic opportunity, with stakeholders acting as facilitators and brokers; and a political opportunity, with local authorities having a vested interest in encouraging and supporting these initiatives. At the moment, these divisions are taking place in an empirical way, without any planning or centralization. **How can this phenomenon be controlled as a whole? How can the income from these rentals be used to equip local areas? What shared contribution? What architectural quality?**

The BIMBY

BIMBY (Build in My Backyard) is a trademark registered by Le Foll and Miet, which requires builders to follow a multidisciplinary training course it runs. This company offers homeowners the opportunity **to divide their garden into two plots and rent out part of it.**

It also aims to reverse the image of suburban housing as an individualistic way of life, turning on its head the idea that no one would want to contribute to densification if it affected their personal space, illustrated by the acronym NIMBY (Not in My Backyard).

The BIMBY model has been imported into France with all its faults: it mainly generates **individual benefits** and does not have a community vision. It is based on a liberal model that does not respect social principles (no control of rents or sales, no inclusion in social housing, no social protection, etc.). The value of land is difficult to estimate, fluctuates and needs to be regulated. This model mainly enriches the owners of large plots of land and thus **increases inequalities.**

It also raises the question of how gardens are used. Gardens can be useful tools for moderating neighbourhood relations (noise, neighbours, etc.). In the western suburbs of Paris, where the value of properties also depends on the quality of their gardens, residents are reluctant to share them, whereas this is more acceptable in the working-class towns of the east.

In order to avoid overcrowding in these residential areas, it is also necessary to think about d**iversifying activities** (small trades, personal assistance, commerce) in order to create a more autonomous and viable urban fabric.

There are other forms of plot-sharing in other countries. In England, some residents build a new house in their garden without dividing the plot and then rent out the old one. Or they ask for their plot to be subdivided and approach a company offering to buy a piece of the garden.

In the United States, divisions happen spontaneously because of poverty and are then legalized afterwards so that everyone pays taxes.

les Ateliers
maîtrise d'œuvre urbaine

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