



# Paris 13<sup>e</sup> Ouest

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### Congress of Villeurbanne

### Contribution of the Paris 13e Ouest section - Lucie

### Aubrac Territorial Fracture - Inequalities in the Republic

This contribution, which aims to discuss territories at different scales in metropolitan France, comes from a section in Paris. Here we seek to draw up several observations and some possible solutions that we hope that local and national elected officials will be able to (if they have not already done so) take up. Our reflection is based on the observation that at the end of the last municipal elections, the Socialist Party and its allies appeared to be the "party of Parisians and metropolises". Indeed, if for a long time the Socialist Party and the left were strongly anchored in the territories (Brittany, Southwest), this electorate today no longer seems to be a given. It is in the metropolises that the left bloc seems today to be well identified as being a bearer of progress (social, ecological), but this model does not seem to have such a strong resonance at the level of territories further away from the urban centers, whose aspirations and problems are different but can sometimes come together. As a result, the SP, whose ambition is the general interest of all citizens, appears today, rightly or wrongly, to be more representative in urban centers or of the upper middle class. Indeed, the transformation of economic activities has brought about sociological changes in metropolises, their peripheries but also in the rural world. In the run-up to the regional elections of 2021, it seemed essential to us in our discussions to approach these territorial differences differently depending on whether we consider metropolises and their peripheries or rural territories.

#### Territorial inequalities within metropolises

Today, the Paris metropolis and the major metropolises concentrate most of the country's economic activity and population.

##### The hearts of metropolises reserved for CSPs

Within these metropolises, an increasingly large proportion of the lower socio-professional categories (employees, workers, intermediate professions and even beyond) are forced to live in the outlying areas (on different scales).

The city centers, once inhabited by the working classes, have seen their populations change. The share of higher socio-professional categories, attracted by a better quality of life and services, has gradually increased. Paris, for example, is the city with the highest quality transportation, restaurants, sports, cultural and school services, which perfectly illustrates these inequalities. In intramural Paris, the construction and transformation of buildings into social or mixed housing, the fight against substandard housing and the policy of building settlement since 2001 have made it possible to

still a certain social mix. Despite the considerable efforts made by the municipality since 2001, inequalities between the different districts in particular remain. Moreover, the demand for housing and the increase in the cost of real estate in the private housing stock within the city are such that many people who work in the Paris metropolis choose (willingly or unwillingly) to move away from Paris and live in the inner or outer suburbs.

#### Inequalities on a metropolitan scale

In these very outskirts, even within the metropolis, there are still great inequalities, particularly in terms of income. Despite the progress made over the last few decades to redress the balance in certain departments, these inequalities still too often involve significant segregation in the territories, particularly for young people at school, access to culture, access to universities, etc., due to geographical distance and impeded mobility. As is the case in Paris, the peripheries in metropolitan territories are heterogeneous and require a territorial rebalancing through housing and transportation policies at different levels.

#### We offer :

=> encourage greater cooperation at each territorial level (city, department, region) to harmonize policies on housing, services, cultural and university offerings, and transportation in order to promote social diversity in all metropolitan areas.

=> Balance cooperation at the regional level to avoid the construction of super-territories, which would concentrate wealth (e.g. Yvelines-Hauts de Seine Merger).

=> Create more social housing in loss-making departments, particularly around the new stations in the Greater Paris area, in order to improve regional mobility between departments in the social housing stock.

=> Develop and strengthen the social mix in social housing.

=> Giving back freedom of movement to the most remote/isolated people on our territories between the inner suburbs of Paris and the outer suburbs.

#### **Territorial inequalities between rural and urban areas**

Despite the territorial disparities mentioned above, some of the inhabitants of large metropolitan areas still enjoy satisfactory public services at varying distances. The situation for the inhabitants of rural areas furthest from the major metropolises is of a different nature.

#### A feeling of relegation and a dialogue to be renewed with the inhabitants of territories far from the metropolises.

Decentralization as it has been applied needs to be questioned and rethought. The gradual withdrawal of all public services has led to a breakdown of social ties and a feeling of abandonment among a growing part of the population. To this feeling of abandonment of the State is often added the fear of seeing the remaining industrial jobs disappear and move even closer to the large metropolises (economic insecurity). This feeling of relegation leads to disinterest in the

public policies and the ever-increasing abstention rate and/or the rise of extremes in successive elections. In addition, the COVID crisis and/or ecological awareness could result in the installation of new rural dwellers in the countryside whose aspirations may be out of step with those of the "locals".

#### Promote the initiatives and struggles of local elected officials

Planning policies or initiatives at the local level at first sight concern only a tiny part of the population and too often remain unknown to the general public. However, with the growing ecological awareness, it is becoming clear that projects undertaken in so-called isolated territories can have significant repercussions on the entire French population and even beyond. Territorial struggles in recent years have been rather media-supported by militant groups, sometimes anti-republican, invisibilizing the prerogatives and responsibilities of local elected officials. It therefore seems important to support the actions and initiatives of socialist elected officials in the territories. This re-appropriation of a specific identity must address issues of planning (development of large-scale soft mobility) but also industrial (support for innovation for the reconversion of locally established businesses/industries in compliance with new ecological requirements) and environmental issues (coherent agricultural policies at the territorial level, forest management).

#### We therefore believe that it is urgent that our party :

=> The question arises of the aspirations of people living in rural areas in terms of activities, employment and mobility to give them the means to remain "at home".

=> Encouraging initiatives in non-metropolitan territories

=> Gives back a voice and visibility to local elected officials by supporting and valuing their struggles and initiatives when they promote and carry a vision of social, industrial and ecological innovation.

=> Make the decentralization of resources conditional on the respect of certain territorial and ecological criteria and support any transfer of competences with associated budgetary resources.

=> Giving back freedom of movement to people who are remote/isolated in our territories: creating networks of soft or adapted mobility between cities and the countryside.

Contribution voted unanimously at the Section General Assembly