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## **The mobilities of young people in France during and after their studies.**

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Mobility is “a type of movement which is expressed by a change in geographical location”, and by migrations (Brunet R., Ferras R. and They., 1992). Alternating mobility is a daily or weekly movement between the school site and home (includes boarding), whereas definitive mobility implies a change in the place of residence. The mobility of young people still at school has been little studied by researchers in the Social Sciences. For example it was not included in the *dictionnaire des inégalités scolaires* which was distributed widely in France (Barreau J-M., 2007) or in the *dictionnaire encyclopédique de l'éducation et de la formation* (Champy P. and Eteve C., 2001). Since decentralisation in the 1980's interest has returned however in the mobility of young people aged 15-25 years. This is true of the `rectorats` and regional councils whose responsibility it is to plan the initial training requirements for integration into the labour market in France. These institutions are interested both in the inter-regional and in the inter-urban mobilities of young people still in education as well as those entering the workplace. A number of questions arise. Which regions and towns are attracting young people and why? To the detriment of which communities? What is the extent of alternating and definitive mobility during schooling and throughout the first years of working life? This article will assess these two periods of mobility relying upon published research carried out in France in the disciplines of geography, sociology and the economics of education and labour. After having reviewed some of the data released by public institutions on mobilities it will be necessary to examine

the link between mobilities during schooling and the distribution of initial training offers. This examination will show that mobilities in the initial working years depend upon the level of qualifications obtained along with the different characteristics of local and regional job markets. Publications in this field of research commonly focus on two scales of analysis: the regions and the cities.

### *1 A body of data composed of 5 types of sources*

Five types of sources are available in France which attempt to measure the mobilities of young people. They relate to surveys or different types of survey conducted amongst young people or their parents by using telephone questionnaires or interviews. These surveys are drawn up and carried out by public institutions such as the Ministry for National Education, l'INSEE<sup>1</sup>, the CEREQ (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Qualifications) or observation posts on student integration situated in public universities.

The first type of source is linked to the general population census carried out by l'INSEE which enables the mapping out of the recruitment pools of large conglomerations, of higher education centres and to calculate the remaining migrations for each region (Julien P., Laganier J. et Pougard J. 2001). This census is carried out every 6-9 years (1999,1990,1982,1975,1968,1962) and produces, for those students surveyed, their place of residence 9 years earlier when they were at collège<sup>2</sup>, at school or already students for those engaged in longer term studies of higher education.

The second type of source is made up from the annual file of pupils (academic pupil base BEA) and of students (central steering base BCP), who are registered in an educational establishment answerable to the Ministry of National Education and to the Ministry of Agriculture (collèges, lycées, universités, grandes écoles). In comparing those present and absent from one year to the next in these annual files it is possible to establish the mobility of pupils from one establishment to another and from one region to another. This source shows up the pupils exempt from the 'map of school catchment areas'<sup>3</sup> operational until 2010.

The third source is called the IVA-IPA survey "Insertion dans la vie active-Insertion des apprentis", an initiative of the "rectorats" in each "academie" (Ministry for National Education). This survey analyses young people who do not reregister in a technical or vocational training lycée from one year to the next. Using a questionnaire, the head of the establishment asks the young person leaving what his/her circumstances are and his/her place of residence 7 months after having left the lycée (questioning takes place in February of lycéens having left the previous June). The results pertaining to

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<sup>1</sup> Institut National de la statistique et des Etudes Economiques.

<sup>2</sup> Students in 1999 were on average aged 13 in 1990, which corresponds to a 5e level in college.

<sup>3</sup> The map of school catchment areas is a management tool of the education system established in 1963 which assigns a college to primary school children according to their district of residence and a lycée to college pupils according to the same principle. In Champy P. and Esteve C. (2001), page 162.

the labour market (those in employment, those claiming unemployment benefit, and those having resumed their education) are published by type of training and by level of qualification (BTS, BAC, CAP-BEP). By these means the first mobilities linked to the initial months of working life can be studied.

The fourth type of source is collected by the Cereq and rests on an entire generation of young people. A sample of individuals, representative of the exit flows from the education system towards all levels of training, is surveyed by telephone on their integration into working life 3 years after the end of their studies. Whilst the survey is representative of the exit flows by region, the migratory balance can also be calculated on the same scale. This shows up those regions that are attracting young individuals and those that are losing them during their first 3 years of working life. With data relating to the place of birth, to schooling through to collège, to the obtaining of the BAC and finally to the first job, it is possible to study the geographical journey and spatial trajectory of an individual throughout his/her education and the initial period of working life. The mapping out of migrant flows demonstrates the powerful attraction of the Parisian conglomeration in relation to other regions, and of those regions bordering the one where the young person was educated. Certain regional councils fund regional extensions of these national surveys in order to narrow down information on the integration paths of “their” young people into a wider number of training specialties. It is therefore possible to study the migratory patterns of young people on the intra-regional and thus intra-urban scale.

The fifth type of source is more fragmented because it is held by a large number of public institutions such as the observation posts of student life (OVE) in universities, the OREF (Observatoires Régionaux Emploi - Formation) financed by the State and the regional councils, or other observation posts such as those of rural schools, at the initiative of university lecturer/researchers in sociology or in educational sciences (Alpe Y. and Fauguet J-L. 2009). These organisations question pupils or students on their schooling, their places of residence, and on their integration into the workplace. They sometimes question them several times during the course of their schooling in collège, lycée and in higher education with the aim of tracing the paths of several young people for as long as possible. The parents of pupils can also be surveyed at the same time as their son or daughter in order to discover, for example, whether the mobility is linked to future studies or the search for work. The observation posts financed by the universities or the grandes écoles lead wide-ranging surveys amongst graduates of degrees, masters and doctorates 2-3 years after their qualification, in order to obtain quantitative and qualitative data on the future of their students.

The results of all these surveys relating to mobility are an indicator of stable migratory patterns, the same regions losing students to the benefit of those more populated (which is to say, a region including at least one conglomeration with a minimum of 300,000 inhabitants). The notion of regional migratory systems has been utilised to analyse these phenomena (Baron M. and Perret C. 2005). These exchanges of population, relative to

training and integration into the labour market, underpin the demographic “health” of regions and cities (migratory and natural balances) and in the long term their size and place in the urban hierarchy (Baccaini B.1993 and 2001). The offer of initial training, like the job offers to first time employment seekers, appear as the major determinants of mobilities observed during schooling and initial integration.

The methods utilised to study mobility are above all quantitative (gravitational model, LOGIT model, regression model, multi variant analyses, longitudinal methods etc) although qualitative techniques are also deployed (the analyses of biographical interviews, for example). Depending on each discipline, certain methods are given a higher priority (sociology, economics, political science, geography). At the initiative of the Cereq (Degenne A.2003), the analysis of longitudinal data is the subject of many symposia in France amongst quantitative sociologists.

## ***2 On mobilities during schooling linked to offers of training***

### *On daily mobilities linked to the map of school catchment areas*

The alternating mobilities between home and school of collégiens and lycéens during their studies are regulated by the map of school catchment areas that designates each pupil to a given establishment. Since 2010 this regulation is no longer active which means that a larger number of families can ask for dispensations, so as to have their child educated in the collège or lycée of their choice. In the 1990’s and 2000’s, only 10% families made this choice linked to a strategy of access to educational establishments considered “better” than others (Van Zanten A. and Obin J-P. 2010). This phenomenon concerned a larger proportion of families of teachers than factory workers, the former having a greater degree of knowledge of the educational system and its establishments than the latter. To demonstrate the extent to which these strategies were developed when faced with a choice of educational establishment, and the inequality of information held by each family, certain authors suggested notions of mobility capital and school avoidance (Francois J-C. and Poupeau F.2008 and 2009). Based on the study of parisian collégiens and a survey conducted in the communes to the west of Paris, J-C. Francois and F. Poupeau showed how certain families possessed the mobility capital to avoid certain collèges (“the capacity to be highly informed about one’s environment, the capacity to act according to the options available, the location of the residence in the urban zone”), a notion different to that of spatial capital. More superficially, the strategies of parents take into account the “word of mouth” and the rumours that make and destroy the reputations of schools, of collèges and lycées.

It seems that the geography of the alternating mobilities of collégiens and lycéens have remained stable given that the most respected establishments, those therefore in high demand, cannot accept any more young people in dispensation because of a shortage of extra places within their walls. Thereby regulated by the map of school catchment areas, the daily

migrations between home and school do not exceed a few tens of kilometres for young people living in rural areas and even less for those in urban ones (Brutel C.2010). The migratory flows caused by the dispensation game remain very difficult to analyse, considering the scarcity of statistical sources, but certain studies have shown the power of attraction of some Parisian collèges on the fringes of close but more impoverished departments (Caro P. and Rouault R.2010).

#### *On intensive definitive mobilities at the beginning of higher education*

The more that further studies are pursued, the higher the increase in definitive mobility, which is to say there is a change in the place of residence and the leaving of the parental home – otherwise known as “decohabitation” (Dubujet F.1999). Definitive mobility and alternating mobility are played out in the return to their parents at the end of the week of certain students. The obtaining of the BAC and the subsequent registration in further education is a time of intense migration towards a metropolis or a regional capital. The number of places offering this service has gradually increased over the last 20 years (cf “Université 2000” Plans “U3M” plan). 80% of the two million students in France during the 1990’s were concentrated in thirty or so of these large centres for higher education (Julien P., Laganier J. and Pougard J., 2001). The Ile de France (Paris), Midi-Pyrénées (Toulouse), the Nord-Pas-de-Calais (Lille), the Languedoc-Roussillon (Montpellier) and Rhône-Alpes (Lyon et Grenoble), constituted the five most attractive regions for this population. In total, nearly 1 “bachelier” (holder of the BAC) out of 2 changes conglomeration at the time of entering into higher education (Lemaire S. and Papon S. 2008). The larger the size of the conglomeration where a young person studies for the BAC, the lower the frequency of mobility. The exchanges between regions and bordering cities are the most frequent, for example, between Marseille and Aix, between Lyon and Grenoble, between the regions of Burgundy, of Franche-Comte and of the Rhone-Alpes. Once entrance into higher education has been secured, transforming the “bachelier” into a student, the latter becomes less mobile.

#### *On students who are less mobile during the course of their studies*

In the 1990’s, less than 10% of students changed university towns every year, and only 3-4% changed university within the same town. This rate is only 7-8% in Ile de France (Baron M. and Perret C.2005). The mobilities preferably take place between cycles, for example when starting a Masters after a degree (forced mobility), and when, for example, a student wants to transfer towards vocational training (Raulin E., Saint-Julien T., Toutin G., Baron M. et Grasland C. 1998. Grasland C. and al. 1999). It seems that students migrate more easily to a city or neighbouring region if a close relative or friend has preceded them and has spoken about it or has left them a flat. These phenomena of inheritance underlie, in part, the stability of the

observed migratory patterns. Beyond these biographical aspects, the characteristics of the student's town and region of origin, and his/her region of training, all weigh on his/her migratory practices during the course of his/her studies (Hermenegildo P.2006 and Falcon F. 2007). These characteristics of the young person's place of origin (urban, rural, industrial etc) influence his/her image of other regions and of other university towns in France. More widely, beyond the influence of the geographical background on mobility practices, it seems that the territories of origin shape the educational paths of young people (Grelet Y. 2006). An effect of territory weighs upon the organization of school, the career choices and the success of pupils. This systemic effect has been recently examined using survey data from the national observation point "education et territoire" (Champollion P. 2011). But, in parallel to these phenomena, the influence of teachers can prove decisive for the migratory choices of young people, as in the case of students pursuing their studies in France and choosing to study abroad through the Erasmus scheme (Agbossou I., Carel S. and Caro P. 2007). In the same way, the systematisation of work experience – which is increasingly an obligatory feature of training at all levels – has caused an increase in the alternating and definitive mobility because students are frequently employed by former supervisors met during work placements.

### ***3 On mobilities during integration in the labour market conditioned by the level of qualification (along with other factors)***

According to Cereq, in the 2000's approximately 20% of young people at the national level changed regions between the entrance to collège at around 12 years old and leaving the educational system. Similarly, after 3 years of working life, 20% of young people changed regions in relation to the one where they had trained<sup>4</sup>. Three out of four employed young people work in their region of training (Cereq 2005,2007,2008). After 3 years of working life, more than 80% of young people with a CAP or BEP level live in the same zone where they resided whilst attending collège (Grelet Y.2006). The main exchanges between regions are those of proximate mobilities, as in the case of mobilities during further studies (Cuney F., Perret C. and Roux V. 2003). The notion of regional migratory systems therefore brings its full significance to bear on the habits of young people during the period of training and integration into the job market (Baron M. and Perret C. 2005,2008). The most populated and best served regions are the most attractive, starting with Paris and the regional conglomerations. The migrations take place primarily towards Paris and the regions that border a student's place of training. Fewer young migrants get downgraded and they are better paid than those who remain sedentary. Mobilities during the initial work integration period, like those which take place during the course of studies, depend on the level of qualification (Drapier C. and Jayet H. 2002) and the characteristics pertaining to the territory of departure and arrival,

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<sup>4</sup> The publication of "Qui forme pour qui? L'enseignement superieur et l'emploi » -Who trains who? Further Education and Employment- (Collection Etudes n055,1990)is one of the first attempts to estimate the volume of flow of newly qualified young people from further education migrating to another region in order to begin work.

starting with the type of residence: urban rural or suburban (Lemistre P. and Magrini M-B. 2010). They depend, for example, on the level of unemployment and the salaries paid in the local, regional and national labour markets, as compared with the number of higher posts on offer in the larger conglomerations, along with opportunities open to first time job seekers in the territories of departure and arrival (Damette F. and Scheibling J. 2003). Mobility patterns are therefore shaped by the characteristics of territories left behind and those found attractive, but they also reinforce these characteristics (state of the housing market, income of local population etc). The case of trans-border mobilities, alternating or definitive, of young people in Lorraine towards Luxembourg and of young people in Alsace, Franche-comte and the Rhone-alpes towards Switzerland is enlightening on this subject. The characteristics of these territories also determine the educational trajectory of these young people ahead of this initial phase of work integration, which, in turn, contributes to social reproduction (Grelet Y. 2004 and 2006).

The longer the period of observation, the higher the mobility figures. Similarly, the smaller the scale of observation, the higher the mobility. Thus, close to half of young people have changed employment zones during the first seven years of their working lives (Margirier G. 2004). The higher the level of qualification, the higher is the inter-regional mobility during the initial work integration phase, engineers covering longer distances than others and especially more frequently. But there is an exception to this rule. Young university graduates with degrees and masters in law and social sciences migrate in the same proportions as the BAC+2, which is to say less than their scientific counterparts (Caro P.2006).

All these results come from surveys of the fourth type (Cf part 1) where the representation of the flux of young school leavers is only assured at a regional level. The analyses of mobility during the initial work integration phase are therefore concentrated on this scale. The economists and labour or education sociologists, having access to these surveys, therefore give priority to the study of mobility between regions (Magrini M-B. 2007). Their aim is to measure the effect of a change of region on the opportunities for stable employment or for a higher salary in comparison to the prospects of young people who are less mobile (Lemistre P. and Magrini M-B. 2008, 2010). As in the case of schooling, certain researchers want to evaluate the impact of the regional context on work integration (Dupray A. and Gasquet C. 2004).

All in all, the analyses attempt to explain the “yield” and the determinants of geographical mobility by isolating these “macro” and “micro” factors. Amongst the former can be listed regional offers of training, the type of discipline, the structure and quality of employment, the workings of the regional labour market, the effect of local politics, the size of the regions and the distances between them. These are all factors taken into consideration in order to account for mobilities. But other types of factor such as the behaviour of the individual in decision making, together with the gender, the level of qualification, the economic and social characteristics of the individual, the effect of the migratory experiences throughout their



education, such as the images linked to careers and places (attractive or unappealing towns and regions) are equally drawn upon to interpret geographical mobilities. The fact of having a father or mother in management or in an intellectually superior profession clearly favours the changes of region at the beginning of a career (Cuney F., Perret C. and Roux V. 2003). Young people best endowed with social and educational characteristics do not make the same choices as others: they are more tempted by studying in Paris or by a professional experience outside of their region of origin (Baron M. and Perret C. 2005). Through repeated use, the notions of paths and itineraries have established themselves in academic literature. Geographical mobilities during the educational phase are taken into account ahead of integration into the labour market. The mobility of certain categories of young people such as those arising out of rural areas (Detang-Dessendre C., V. Piguet, B. Schmitt.2002) constitutes, from this point of view, an important issue for the qualification of manual labourers in certain areas (Arrighi J-J.2004; Arrighi J-J and Roux V.2008).

### ***Conclusion***

Geographical mobilities can be measured by tracking those individuals who cross an administrative border between communes, departments or regions either daily or when changing their place of residence. From this point of view, young people aged 15-30 constitute one of the most mobile age groups in France. This is demonstrated by the INSEE and the Cereq both of whom devote part of their studies to these phenomena. The work of the Cereq focuses on the mobilities of young people looking for further education places and workplace integration. The survey device entitled "Génération" allows researchers to quantify and qualify the inter-regional migratory flows of young school/higher education leavers of the same year at all levels of qualification. With the decentralisation of a part of the basic education system, the future of young people who have just finished their studies is becoming an important issue for every regional council. Furthermore, the demographic decline or expansion of the regions depends in part on the mobility of its young people, be it daily or definitive. Metropolisation in France is largely explained by the attraction of young students and workers towards large conglomerations. Thus, all things being equal, students in search of further education and the newly qualified in the initial phase of work integration leave the agricultural and industrial regions more readily to go towards regions where the level of unemployment is lower and the proportion of skilled jobs higher (Perret C.2007 and Perret C. and Roux C. 2004;Joseph O. and Roux V.2004). Public policies of localising the offer of secondary and further education, as well as the workings of the local and regional labour markets, explain this metropolisation (for example, the supply and demand of employment, the differential in the level of salaries). However, all forms of mobility would benefit from further research into the sense of belonging felt by young people to their region, their town, and in relation to their experiences of mobility and that of their close family and friends. It seems that the decisions to migrate during and after school stem from a weighing of

possibilities and opportunities (like social networking), in a system of constraints relative to each individual, to each family (financial constraints for example). This evaluation of options takes place in relation to the cost/benefit ratio. But decisions are also made according to the images that young people have of the regions and the towns where they live, and of other places offering training and employment.

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