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Redefining the in-place economy and women's role in the local economy of highland areas

Magali Talandier

EDITOR'S NOTE

Translation: Harry Forster

- 1 Women are over-represented in activities classified as belonging to the “in-place”¹ economy, which covers sectors of activity positioned in response to local demand. The corresponding goods and services are consumed on the spot by residents, tourists and any other people present in the area. This heading includes retailing, ancillary services, education and healthcare.
- 2 The increasing share of jobs occupied by women has not changed the concentration of women's jobs by sector, because the rate of feminization exceeds 70% in the service sector, whereas men hold 70% of industrial jobs (Meron, Okba, Viney, 2006).
- 3 This “specificity” of the job market for women is borne out by frequently undervalued professional positions, characterized by poor qualifications, little or no job security, flexible working hours, a majority of part-time jobs and low wages (Muller, 2006).
- 4 Among working women the share of part-time jobs has more than doubled, rising from 15% in 1980 to 30.2% in 2007². For men the share has risen from 2% to 5.7% (Gadrey, 2009). A report by France's Conseil Economique et Social in 2008 noted that part-time work accounts for most of the increase in the number of jobs held by women. In 30% of the cases this was not a matter of choice (Arnault, 2005), this rate being twice as high as the average in the European Union (Bloch and Galtier, 1999).
- 5 In-place jobs undoubtedly present several drawbacks for wage-earners. The level of qualification required nevertheless varies a great deal. These jobs offer employment to people with little or no qualifications, but also to others who are highly qualified, as is

the case for instance in healthcare, education, consultancy and the arts. Furthermore the jobs cannot be relocated, are little affected by economic fluctuations and are more likely to survive the current crisis.

- 6 But such jobs also often have an excessively negative image which minimizes their benefits, which might otherwise help to grow the local economy. As a result the role of women in local economies, over-represented in these sectors, is systematically played down.
- 7 This observation is all the more relevant in highland areas. Work on women's contribution to the highland economy has mostly focused on their part in productive sectors, in particular agriculture (Braithwaite, 1994; European Commission, 1999, or alternatively on the status of the domestic economy, in other words the family economy 'outside the market' (Gramain and Weber, 2003; Barthez, 2005). The aim of the work outlined in the present article was to supplement these approaches, by analysing demand-driven merchant jobs or in-place jobs in France's highland areas.
- 8 According to some authors this state of affairs is one of the side effects of the breakdown of socioprofessional categories which further complicates our understanding of women's jobs. No less than 62% of the jobs they occupy fall within six of the available 31 categories (Amossé, 2004).
- 9 Also of note is the relative lack of organization in these trades. Players in the productive economy, organized by value chains and clusters, are the prime interlocutors for and beneficiaries of public economic development policies in the territories. The in-place economy (including the travel trade) often appears very badly organized to defend its stake in the local market.
- 10 Finally – and this point will be the main focus of the first part – it is apparent that economic analysis of local development minimizes or completely disregards these demand-driven activities.
- 11 Recent work on the residential economy (Davezies, 2003 and 2008) has introduced the concept of in-place activities³, emphasizing that such activities are induced by and dependent on other market forces, rather than acting as a driving force. However, some English-speaking authors defend the idea of consumer-driven local development. We shall look more closely at this analysis of the in-place sector in the second part.
- 12 The third and last part will analyse in detail women's jobs in the in-place economy of various localities in the six highland areas of France, during the period from 1993 to 2009. We shall see the structural contribution made by this sector, powered mainly by women, in periods of growth and in times of crisis.

A theoretical context which tends to minimize women's part in local economic development processes

- 13 The first thing one notices when reviewing international literature on issues related to territorial development is undoubtedly the homogeneity of publications and the almost complete lack of controversy. Economic geography and regional economics are largely dominated by debate about the location of production factors, and the contribution of the spatial and/or territorial factor⁴ to creation of wealth, including in highland areas.

- 14 So, re-using the criteria proposed by Talandier and Davezies (2009), we may distinguish three main groups of work on local economic development, with approaches based on:
- new economic geography;
 - territorial economics; and
 - residential economics.
- 15 Far from opposing one another, the three groups seek to explain distinct phenomena and processes; in this respect they are in fact complementary.
- 16 In the models defined by new economic geography (Krugman, 1991), territorial policies are studied as economic growth factors. In these models metropolitan areas form what Veltz (2005) refers to as a “complex relational ecosystem” which favours companies which seek to minimize transaction costs and thus limit the risk of supply-chain disruption. Metropolitan areas concentrate strategic, generic resources, among others qualified labour. They constitute what Chinitz described as nursery-cities as long ago as 1961, more recently designated as innovative milieus by the Gremi group⁵.
- 17 One of the main contributions of these models has been to reveal the metropolitan mechanisms underpinning growth⁶. In this theoretical context, rural economic activity other than farming is explained as resulting from the centrifugal forces present in the metropolitan model (Gaigné, 2000; Gaigné *et al.*, 2003), namely the pressure on land exerted by large cities; the congestion created by conurbations; and the cost of metropolitan wages.
- 18 The highlands are rarely mentioned in such work, unlike the broader category of rural space. According to Schmitt (1996), “the rural localization of industrial activities is thought to be linked to the proximity of an urban area, to an abundance of specific production factors (typically labour), or the presence of a dense fabric of small and medium enterprises.” (Schmitt, 1996, p. 365).
- 19 Nevertheless, even if it is not explicitly identified as a specific territory, the highlands are subjected to the same productivist reading of the local economy. In addition to the centrifugal effects of metropolitan areas cited above, the know-how of workers is a factor which explains why productive jobs are maintained in rural areas and the highlands. This poorly qualified, abundant and captive labour, in the words of Aubert and Blanc (2002) also possesses know-how, which is perpetuated and handed down through companies. Looking at country companies in Franche-Comté, eastern France, Yves Janvier (1994)⁷ shows that professional qualifications are limited but that the companies themselves provide extensive training. There are fewer executives than in other areas, but compared to their urban counterparts they are more highly motivated. Among the qualities required, they must be versatile, responsible and self-reliant. But these qualities are also a source of job satisfaction. Janvier was struck by the fact that human resources represent the main asset of these rural enterprises⁸.
- 20 In analysis based on the concept of development ‘from below’ (Störh, Taylor, 1981), the human factor is central to the economic development process. Mobilizing players is key to development. Such active participation is the driving force of local development, defined quite simply by the interplay of agents in order to capitalize on a specific, territorial resource (Gumuchian, Pecqueur, 2007; Lajarge *et al.*, 2012). The territory is not just a space where “economic agents” organize themselves; it emerges out of its players and constantly rebuilds itself. Production processes are the result of this organizational and spatial proximity (Rallet and Torre, 2004).

- 21 The organization of local productive systems may thus be defined as ‘a socio-territorial entity characterized by the active presence of a community of persons and a population of enterprises in a given geographical and historical space’ (Becattini, 1992, p. 36). These localized productive systems, districts, milieus may be construed as a possible alternative to Fordism and metropolitanization, in so far as they allow companies to organize themselves in networks to solve problems of excess capacity and meet demands for greater flexibility (Markusen, 2000).
- 22 As also noted by Bernard Pecqueur (1989) local productive systems have not been brought about by the crisis, they are re-emerging. ‘They are re-appearing, testimony to the permanence of the osmosis between the various forms of know-how, productive activity and human characteristics of place’ (Pecqueur, 1989, 2nd ed. 2000, p. 73). Renewed interest in these models, during the current economic crisis, reflects the need for reassurance which requires territorial, social and family proximity. Contrary to those proposed by the new economic geography, these models have been widely tested and deployed in and by highland territories (Mao, 2007; François, 2007).
- 23 Although very different, the two approaches discussed above both consider that capitalizing on the economic potential of these territories depends on their productive system.
- 24 The in-place realm of the economy – the part that is not exported – is not integrated in the models which underpin thinking on how to plan local economic development. The place of women in these economic development processes is minimized by the nature of the sectors under consideration. Only with the start of work by cultural geographers on gender has it become possible to circumvent these theoretical obstacles and underline the part played by women in giving structure to activities and more broadly to rural society (Louargant, 2002; Guétat, Granier, 2006).
- 25 More recently work on the non-productive factors driving local development has been published, as part of the concept of a residential economy. We shall now look at whether this work contributes to a better understanding of the part played by in-place activities in highland areas.

Residential economy, in-place economy: what room is there for women's labour?

From a residential to an in-place economy

- 26 “The challenge for a territory's development is not to create the greatest possible wealth, but to capture as much as possible, merchant production being only one of the ways of doing so,” (Davezies, 2004). The export base theory (Sombart, 1916) serves as a conceptual framework for work on the residential economy (Vollet, Dion, 2001; Davezies, 2003; Talandier, 2007). This theory posits that the local economy may be divided into two sectors: the basic sector which captures revenue from outside the territory; and what we refer to here as the in-place economy, comprising jobs which cater for local demand. The basic sector encompasses all the various forms of revenue imported by a territory. It is the driving force for growth of the local economy. This

external revenue determines a territory's wealth and the dynamics of in-place jobs. Daveziez proposes a further division of the economic base into four main categories.

- The private productive base is made up of all the revenue derived from exporting goods and services produced in the territory. Focussing on individual *bassins de vie*, or living areas [as distinct from labour pools], the private productive base amounted to 20% of the economic bases in 2006; and to 14% in rural living areas (Talandier, 2008).
 - The residential base includes all the revenue captured through the territory's residential and recreational amenities: wages earned by commuters, expenditure by tourists, pensions. The residential base of the living areas adds up to 49% of the total, attaining 60% in rural areas mainly due to the importance of the tourist trade.
 - The public base covers wages paid to public servants, accounting for 9% of the economic bases, and only half that amount in rural areas.
 - The social base, which comprises all the transfer revenue and refunds for healthcare spending, accounts for 22% of the bases, 19% in rural areas.
- 27 The economic base of territories is underpinned by productive, but also residential and recreational functions (Vollet, 1997). In these models, in-place activities are induced by the economic bases and, as such, are considered of less strategic importance for the economic development of territories.
- 28 But other studies, more limited in number, are being published, backed not by the export base theory but rather its consumption base counterpart (Markusen, 2007). This work suggests that the development of economic activities targeting local demand would have as much impact on local economies as export bases. Investment in the supply of cultural services (the example cited by Markusen in 2007) thus encourages spending by local residents and by visitors. Recent work in France has shown that the diversity of the offering of local amenities encourages migration to rural areas, particularly in the case of "neo-rurals", and promotes the circulation of wealth (Talandier, Jousseume, 2013).
- 29 According to Shaffer *et alii* (2006), a region can reduce revenue evasion by offering goods and services which would otherwise have been imported, thus maintaining monetary streams within the region. Jacobs (1969) underlined the importance of these alternatives to imports as a local development strategy. In many industrial sectors it seems inconceivable to replace imports by local production, and we are not suggesting this. On the other hand rethinking the in-place economy with this in mind offers substantial leverage for encouraging local economic development. By limiting the effects of revenue evasion, the wealth of regions can be increased.
- 30 So a regional economy does not only depend on incoming streams, circulating locally (as posited by the export base theory), but also on minimizing outgoing streams. The presence of in-place activities encourages the capture of new economic bases (derived from residents and tourists), determines local consumption of goods and services, enables wealth to circulate and reduces outgoing streams. To maximize the wealth of a territory thus involves maximizing created and captured wealth, minimizing wealth evasion and fostering its circulation. As consumption rises, so will regional revenue (see Diagram 1).
- 31 In the case of highland territories, much as for rural areas and small towns, this component of local development is all the more important because scope for

production is reduced by metropolitanization, the growing importance of a knowledge economy and industrial decline.

Diagram 1. Local revenue

Credits: author's own production

- 32 We shall now define more precisely the in-place economy and its importance in highland territories.

The importance of the in-place economy

- 33 France's National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (Insee) makes a distinction between two economic spheres:
- an ex-place sphere comprising all the activities which are located somewhere to produce and export;
 - an in-place sphere comprising activities the product of which is consumed on the spot.
- 34 We propose to add a third, "mixed" sphere (see Annex 1) which comprises activities for which the distinction between local consumption and export is not clearly defined: construction, judicial and consultancy work, among others. This third category is of particularly strategic importance for territories. It encompasses activities which, depending on specific establishments, may target a local, regional, national or even international customer base, including both private individuals and companies. These characteristics, which rule out any clear separation between an in-place or ex-place economy, constitute a specific feature of territories and sectors, justifying their being set aside.
- 35 The data we have used is taken from Unedic-Pôle Emploi (National Professional Union for Employment in Industry and Trade), for the 1993-2009 period with details of the

individual *communes* (localities) of mainland France. The records register the total number of private-sector salaried jobs, on the last day of each year, with a breakdown by gender and sector. We analysed two separate periods, due to the break in economic dynamics observed in the territories before and after the 2007 financial crisis (Davezies, 2012). It was not possible to analyse public-sector and self-employed jobs due to the lack of data. Additional analysis may be carried out subsequently to supplement this initial work.

- 36 Lastly the highland localities studied belong to the six *massifs* of mainland France, as defined by the official Insee geographical code⁹. So we have distinguished between localities in the French Alps, the Massif Central, Vosges, Pyrenees, Jura and Corsica.

Table 1. Breakdown of private-sector salaried jobs by family in 2009; variation between 1993 and 2009

	Mainland France			All six massifs		
	% in 2009	Annual variation 1993-2007 (%)	Annual variation 2007-9 (%)	% in 2009	Annual variation 1993-2007 (%)	Annual variation 2007-9 (%)
Ex-place	20.0	-0.8	-4.0	25.0	-0.7	-4.9
Mixed	41.0	3.1	-1.5	35.0	3.4	-2.0
In-place	39.0	2.6	0.9	40.0	3.0	0.9
Total	100.0	1.7	-1.1	100.0	1.8	-1.7

SOURCE: AFTER UNEDIC-PÔLE EMPLOI

- 37 The ex-place category accounts for 20% of [private-sector] salaried employment in France as a whole, rising to 25% in the highlands. But the number of these “productive” jobs has been steadily dropping. Indeed the speed of this collapse has picked up since the 2007 financial crisis. Such destruction of jobs affects all industrial sectors, but has had an even more drastic effect on traditional sectors (furniture manufacturers, machine-tool builders, metallurgy) and sectors characterized by the high number of women’s jobs in highland areas (textile, garments, leather, footwear).
- 38 Women occupy a much larger share of agricultural jobs in the highlands than on average in France. Women accounted for barely 35% of wage-earners in farming (crops and stock raising) in France as a whole, the share rising to 45% in the highlands.
- 39 Women contribute to the organization of the farming economy (Louargant, 2003), perhaps even more so in the highlands. Jouvenot-Jacques and Tripier (1994) have highlighted the input from farmers’ wives developing new rural functions. In highland areas, where polyculture is predominant, women have often launched new activities generating additional income: direct sales, marketing of farm produce (fruit juice, jam), and rural tourism.

- 40 Mixed jobs account for a majority of salaried employment and registered the strongest growth in 1993-2007. However such jobs have suffered from the crisis, due to the increase in part-time work, which now lends flexibility to the male job market.
- 41 Lastly in-place activities represent 40% of salaried jobs and have enjoyed steady growth since 1993. One of the features specific to this sector is that it is less sensitive to economic fluctuations. Being linked to private consumption, growth in this sector has slowed since 2007, but until 2009 the crisis still had little impact on it.

The role of women in the highland in-place economy: close-up on France's six mountain massifs

- 42 Theoretical analysis has highlighted five fundamental effects of the in-place economy on economic growth: impacting the volume and dynamism of the labour market, and acting as a shock-absorber countering external pressures; encouraging the circulation of wealth and raising local income.
- 43 The volume effect reflects the sector's weight, providing jobs for 58% of wage-earners in the French highlands; 65% of these jobs are occupied by women.
- 44 The dynamism effect reflects the growth these jobs have enjoyed in recent decades. In 1993-2007 this sector created nearly 220,000 new salaried jobs in the highlands, adding more than 15,000 jobs a year. Furthermore the in-place economy accounted for three-quarters of the new jobs for women created during this period.
- 45 The crisis has so far had relatively little impact on the in-place economy. The pace of job creation has substantially slowed, but it has not stopped. So this sector has acted as an economic shock-absorber for highland territories, maintaining the level of employment and wealth. As such, it has done more than just sustain women's jobs (Hofmann, Marius-Gnanou, 2002); it has saved some households from financial disaster. It should be borne in mind that 97% of the job cuts registered in France since 2008 are exclusively due to the reduction in the number of jobs held by men (Davezies, 2012).
- 46 We have also examined 30 sectors in detail, the 15 which created the most jobs and the 15 which lost the most jobs in 2007-9 in the highlands. Of the first category the majority of jobs in only two sub-sectors were held by men (R&D, and computer programming and consultancy). In contrast men were in the majority in all the sectors most severely affected by the crisis, except retailing.
- 47 The specific examples cited for individual massifs provide additional details on these overall trends.

Map 1. In-place share of salaried jobs in 2009

Map 2. Women's share of private-sector salaried jobs in 2009 **Map 3. Variation in salaried jobs between 1993 and 2007**

Source: after Unedic-Pôle Emploi, 1993, 2007 and 2009

- 48 Analysis of Maps 1 to 4 shows the substantial variations between the various French massifs with regard to economic characteristics and dynamics. It is apparent that in highland areas, the presence of a large in-place economy coincides with a larger share of wage-earning women (except Corsica), a dynamic labour market during periods of growth and greater resistance during more difficult periods. The effects cited above – dynamism and shock-absorption – are also apparent.
- 49 In the Vosges, for instance the in-place economy only accounts for 33% of salaried jobs, whereas this figure rises to 52% in the Pyrenees. There is a 5% difference in women's share of local jobs between the Pyrenees (48%) and the Vosges or Corsica (43%). But the disparities are most striking when it comes to underlying trends. The Vosges and Jura display little dynamism in periods of growth, and were hard hit by the present downturn. Corsica stands out for strong growth rates for jobs before and during the crisis. The Pyrenees and Massif Central enjoyed similar growth rates before 2007, but the former (with more in-place jobs) has fared a little better during the crisis. In the

French Alps the economy was very buoyant before 2007 and has suffered relatively minor job losses since.

- 50 A closer look at variations in in-place jobs in individual localities in the Alpine massif before and after 2007 reveals divergent trends, but almost everywhere the crisis has left its mark on jobs (see Maps 5, 6, 7 and 8).

Map 5 and 6. Variation in in-place private-sector salaried jobs in localities in the French Alps

1993-2007

2007-9 (%)

Maps 7 and 8. Variation in ex-place and mixed private-sector salaried jobs in localities in the French Alps

1993-2007

Source: after Unedic-Pôle Emploi, 1993, 2007 and 2009

- 51 Maps 6 to 8 underline the dual effect of the in-place economy in the French Alps. Between 1993 and 2007 in-place jobs achieved faster, more evenly spread growth geographically, than other jobs (mixed and ex-place). In 2007-9 the number of in-place jobs continued to rise, though more gently, in more than one-in-two localities, whereas the drop in other sectors affected almost the entire massif.
- 52 This analysis may be fleshed out by more detailed sectoral analysis, for each of the six massifs (see table in Annex 2)
- 53 The Vosges and Jura massifs display the largest concentration of traditional industry: more than 37% of jobs here were ex-place in 2009 (compared to a national average of 20%). But industrial activity has steadily declined and the 2007 crisis precipitated its downfall. These two highland areas are now in the throes of far-reaching structural adjustment, the destruction of industry not being counterbalanced by jobs in the in-place economy or the travel trade. Job losses in traditional sectors such as textiles, clothing, leatherware, machine-tools and manufactured goods, but also the automotive industry seem irreversible. It will not be possible to create identical jobs in this sort of sector. Furthermore women are already better represented in industry in these

territories than elsewhere. In the Vosges and Jura 30% of working women are employed in industry, compared with only 6% in Corsica, 11% in the Pyrenees, 15% in the French Alps and 17% in the Massif Central. Households with both parents working in these sectors are all the more vulnerable.

- 54 In contrast the Pyrenees and Corsica stand out for the size of their in-place economy, which accounts for, respectively, 52% and 49% of salaried employment in the two massifs. As elsewhere “conventional” industrial sectors have shed jobs, but as they play a relatively minor role in these two areas, the losses have been counterbalanced by the boom in jobs catering for local demand and tourism... but not exclusively. Alongside these in-place jobs, mixed activities are developing (business services, consulting, transport, etc.) but industry too (metallurgy, chemicals, agrifood, pharmaceuticals, etc.). These signs of an industrial resurgence are particularly interesting in so far as they signal an upturn in industry and manufacturing in areas with a vibrant in-place economy.
- 55 Lastly, the situation in the French Alps and Massif Central is more balanced. The in-place economy represents about 40% of jobs, its ex-place counterpart from 20% to 25%, mixed sectors making up the remaining third. But what differs between the two massifs is the significant amount of traditional industry still operating in central France, whereas it has almost completely disappeared in the Alps. In both areas the sectors hardest hit by the crisis are temporary jobs and metallurgy. The service sector is much larger in the Alps, focussing largely on specialist business services and tourism.

Conclusion

- 56 In-place jobs, of which 65% are held by women, are a driving force in the economy of highland territories, perhaps to a greater extent than elsewhere. Traditional industry, which before the crisis seemed to be holding its own in rural areas, is now shedding jobs at an alarming rate. The economic crisis has proved fatal for these sectors and by extension for the areas concerned. This is particularly the case in the Vosges and Jura, and part of the Massif Central. Without the sectors of activity, often played down, which are driven by [consumer] demand, and women's jobs, also often undervalued, these areas would be in an even more critical state. In the absence of both in-place and women's jobs the Vosges would have started losing jobs as long ago as 1993. In the Jura and Massif Central the increase in the number of jobs would have been two or three times slower. So in-place jobs have had the greatest “social” impact in the most vulnerable territories. In the other highland massifs variations in the number of jobs would also have been smaller during periods of growth, with more severe losses during downturns had it not been for the in-place economy. But, in the latter case, the difference is not so great. Lastly it is worth noting signs of an upturn in manufacturing in areas where the in-place economy is most dynamic. This raises the question of whether mixed and in-place activities may underpin future manufacturing sectors in highland areas.

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NOTES

1. France's National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) defines the in-place economy (*économie présentielle* in French) as all the activities deployed locally for the production of goods and services to meet the demands of residents and tourists present in the area.
2. Data taken from INSEE job surveys.
3. Sometimes also referred to as domestic activities in the literature.
4. The spatial factor being predominant in work on geographical economics, the territorial factor – in the sense of a specific resource – is studied by territorial economists, as is the case here.
5. Groupe de Recherche Européen sur les Milieux Innovateurs. According to these researchers, the *milieu* constitutes a specific resource in itself, made up of players capable of mobilizing local resources (Maillat, Camagni, Matteaccioli, 2006).
6. These models played a decisive part in the understanding and analysis of the economic consequences of the European economic integration process, explaining, for instance, the differences in development between European regions, in a context of national convergence (Bourguignon, 2012).
7. Quoted by Ganne and Bertrand (1996).

8. See also the work of Grep, in particular the articles by Lutz, Wiener, Le Monier and Biche in the journal *Pour*, n°180, December 2003.

9. The code fixes the official, administrative limits contained in France's Loi Montagne, which distinguishes between the various highland areas (on the basis of a sectoral approach, which gives priority to farming in order to recognize and compensate for their natural handicaps) and built-up massifs, in order to encourage self-development of highland territories. This legislation defines six 'mountain' massifs: Vosges, Jura, Alps, Massif Central, Pyrenees and Corsica. In addition there are three massifs in overseas départements: Martinique, Guadeloupe and Reunion.

ABSTRACTS

The in-place, or presential, economy has become the prime source of jobs in France's highland areas. Yet little research has investigated this category of activity, which is also undervalued by economic players. Focusing primarily on production, classical economic analysis has minimized both the economic and social role of these sectors, and by extension the part played by women in local economies. In the highland areas of France two-thirds of in-place jobs are held by women. We shall see from France's six mountain ranges that such jobs are vital for sustaining local economies and the living standards of households. Apart from providing a second income, these jobs, which are less under threat than those in which men are predominant, act as a powerful shock-absorber against the fluctuations of the global economy.

in-place economy, residential economy, rural development, highlands, gender

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