

Master Thesis

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The Analysis of Economic Development and Resilience Dynamics of Medium-Sized Towns

A Methodological Approach and a Test on Cases of Montargis and Vendôme in France

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Problem definition

- ▶ **Globalization and raise of new geographies**
 - ▶ Attractive and unattractive; competitive and uncompetitive territories (Knox and Mayer, 2009)
 - ▶ Constant adjustment to external technological, economic and demographic changes (Klaesson et al., 2011)

- ▶ **Challenges in front of cities**
 - ▶ Nodal points for global processes (Sassen, 2011)
 - ▶ Ageing population, immigration pressures, decline of traditional manufacturing industries, urban sprawl, etc. (EC, 2011)

- ▶ **Small and medium-sized towns (MSTs) – forgotten???**
 - ▶ SMSTs: **50% of the European population**
 - ▶ **16,000** small towns; **3,100** medium-sized towns vs **400** large cities (OIR, 2006)

Research questions, hypothesis and aims

▶ **QUESTIONS**

- What is position of MSTs in urban hierarchy? How do MSTs face challenges of global competition?
- What are characteristics of development of MSTs? Can we draw some models that portray MSTs?
- Are MSTs resilient to external shocks of global changes? What is the future of MSTs going to be like?

Research questions, hypothesis and aims

▶ **HYPOTHESIS**

- MST are important phenomenon that need to be explored in a more analytical and consistent way

▶ **AIMS**

- **Identification** of characteristics of MSTs and their modes of economic development
- **Evaluation** of economic development and resilience strategies

Methodology in five stages

I. Literature research

- I. MSTs, economic development and economic resilience

II. Creation of system of indicators of economic development

- I. Based on four dynamics (demographical, spatial, business, institutional)

III. Quantitative analysis of dynamics of economic development

- I. Two selected cases: Montargis and Vendôme, France

IV. Design of town typology

- I. Based on degrees of attractiveness and diversity

V. Identification of resilience

- I. Based on solving territorial dilemmas

Outcome

NEW APPROACH TO MEDIUM-SIZED TOWNS

- ▶ Analysis of economic dynamics on two MSTs
- ▶ Comparison of attractiveness and diversity of two MSTs
- ▶ Comparison of approaches to resilience of MSTs

Outcome

theme/variable	ATTRACTIVENESS	DIVERSITY
DEMOGRAPHY	ind 01 Growth rate of population	ind 15 Population by socio-professional category ind 16 Population by education level
SPACE	ind 02 Ratio of migrations home-work of working population ind 03 Number of equipment, amenities and services	ind 17 Classification of activity zones
BUSINESS	ind 04 Number of major local and international investors ind 05 Number of tourists ind 06 Creation rate of firms and organizations ind 07 Number of local firms in clusters and production of labelled products	ind 18 Employment by in-place economy and productive economy ind 19 Employment by sector ind 20 Firms and complementary organisation by sector ind 21 Top 3 employers ind 22 Clusters, labelled products by sector ind 23 Local and international investments and R&D investments by sector
INSTITUTIONS	ind 08 Number of education and R&D institutions ind 09 Number of students and researchers ind 10 Number of financial institutions, chambers or antennas ind 11 Number of activity zones ind 12 Average price for land and real estate m2 ind 13 Local tax rate for land and real estate ind 14 Number of memberships in associations, federations, and twin towns cooperation	ind 24 Education branches, offered specializations in education and R&D institutions ind 25 Number of events (culture, sport, business)

Contribution and further research

- ▶ Typology of MSTs based on attractiveness, diversity and resilience
 - Instrument to improve competitiveness
 - Benchmark for policy makers
 - Lessons-drawing
 - Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
 - Tool that fits to MSTs
- ▶ “To do” list
 - Improvement of system of indicators
 - Qualitative analysis
 - Application on larger sample
 - Inclusion of other perspective of development in analysis (social, environmental, governmental)

References

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- ▶ Klaesson, J., Johansson, B. and Karlsson, C. (2011), *Metropolitan Regions. Preconditions and Strategies for Growth and Development in the Global Economy*, CESIS.
- ▶ Knox, P. and Mayer, H. (2009), *Small Town Sustainability: Economic, Social and Environmental Innovation*, Basel-Boston-Berlin, Birkhauser.
- ▶ OIR (2006), *The role of small and medium-sized towns (SMESTO) - Final report*, Vienna.
- ▶ Sassen, S. (2009), *La globalisation. Une sociologie*. Editions Gallimard.