The role of cognitive approaches in the local appropriation of a national program for « left-behind small towns » The example of a former mining town in central France

AESOP 2024 CONGRESS – 10/07/2024 SPECIAL SESSION 02 : Beyond 'left behindness': Understanding The Role of Small and Medium Size Towns for territorial innovation

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Outline

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Introduction

I. Theoretical framework

II. Methodology and

study area

III. Results

Conclusion

The agenda for "left-behind places" focused on small and medium-sized towns in France

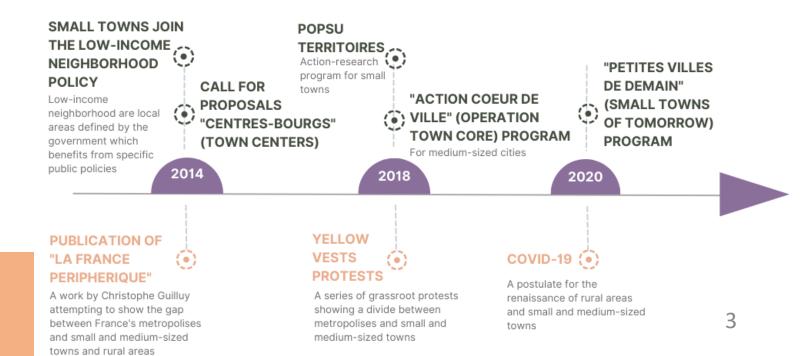
Focusing on small and medium-sized towns and rural areas rather than urban decline

Evolution of public debate and public policies specific to small towns

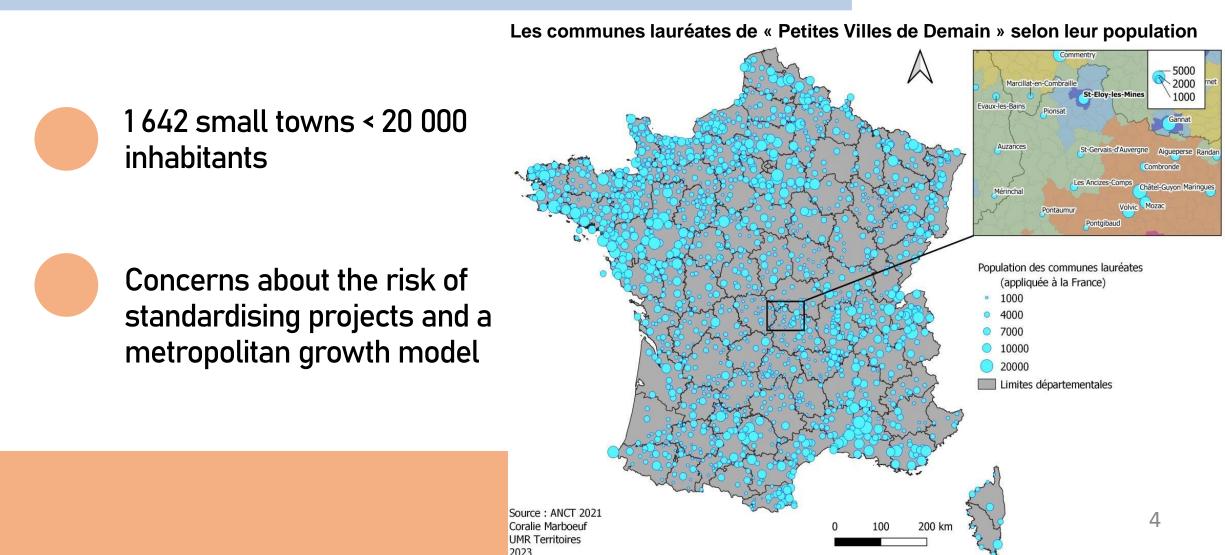
2014-2023



Policies to accommodate local representatives (Béal, 2023)



The « Small towns of tomorrow » program



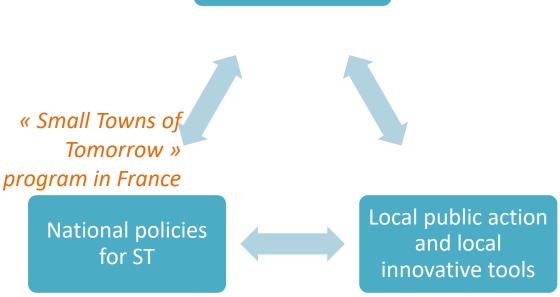
Theoretical framework

What role do cognitive approaches play in the local appropriation of a national program to support "left-behind small towns" ?

Cognitive approaches Narratives Images Belief system...



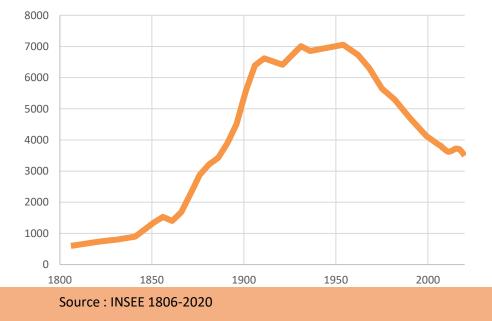
What does it tell about the innovative capacity of small towns?



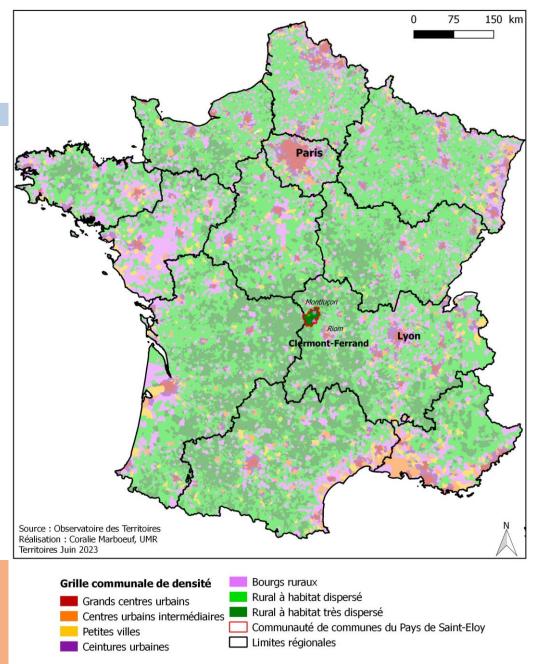
The study area : Saint-Eloy-les-Mines

A former mining town located in a rural region of central France





Situation du Pays de Saint-Eloy par rapport à la grille communale de densité appliquée à la France en 2022

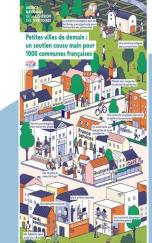


Corpus and methodology



Triple analysis of a corpus of national and local institutional documents :

- Textual
- Textometric
- Iconographic



	Guide du programme PVD 2020	Dossier de presse PVD 2020	Dossier de presse PVD 2021	Corpus national (total)
Champ lexic	al Actions			
(re)dynam*	13,0	16,8	11,6	13,5
reconver*	0,0	4,8	1,9	1,7
réhabilit*	2,4	2,4	5,8	3,4
relance	8,3	69,6	7,7	22,5
renouv*	4,7	4,8	5,8	5,1
rénov*	1,2	19,2	19,3	10,7
revitalis*	53,2	14,4	19,3	34,2
	82,8	132,0	71,3	91,0

1. Présentation générale du territoire

La Communauté de Communes du Pays de Saint-Eloy se situe au nord ouest du département de Pay-de-Dôme, dans le Pays de Commanies, aux Introlaires départementaies de Fallment et de la Crease. Situé à antento se biciomèses au Brod de Clement Fernand et à antenno 36 kitomètes au Sait de Montupon, le famithe est indémenent élogiel des principaus bassins d'ampli.

La Communel de Communel de Payl de Saint-Eloy (comple 34 communes pour 1919) habitante (2011). Else s'alend sur une superitor de dat xin/. Sa densel de population est habiter d'algeville. 205 habitante/hima contre El habitante/hima pour le digiantement. Elle est membre de Syndicat Minie afanlaisgement et de Divelopement des Combrailles (SMACL), et est convent par le SCOT des Combralles.

La démante d'élaboration du projet de territoire communatation, présent el « anones L, a perme directemit se position de a postetation de doiveloppement, an languément in languémet et que passet sur ce territoire. Parrei les atouts : la population bénéficie au quotation de services enfancepaneses de qualité, d'une d'hit cuburelle et factors varies de d'un environmententature présent (a totse attriburas et d'anguément). La secter montant et levelse aus qui a les trataires de l'anguéments et soldantes post anguéments. La secter montante it levelse aus qui a les trataires de l'anguéments et soldantes post anguéments. La secter montante it levelse aus qui a les trataires de l'anguéments un intellissement et un tassement démographique, de rombres logements vélucites et exactés, des préfits comment de la posteminie o clificatif, une de modellal auxiliantes et des trataturas de la contratation at d'anguément trata postet d'anguément de clificatif au est de modella auxiliantes de des tratations de la contratations de postetural trata postet de la contratation service de la contratation de la contratation de la contratation de la contratation postet de la postetura de la contratation entre de la contratation de la

III. Results

The national imaginaries of small towns:

A deteriorating situation requiring government action

Small, fragile towns that are lagging behind and need revitalising

Champ lexical en re-				
Revitalis*	28			
Redynamis*	25			
Relance	35			
Reconv*	3			
Renov*	22			
Renouv*	10			
Renfor*	26			
TOTAL	117			

Frequency of occurrence of the prefix "re" in the national corpus (per 10,000 words)

The national imaginaries of small towns:

The ideal towards which small towns should strive

			DE LA COHESION DES TERRITOIRES Petites villes de demain :
An imperative for	Lexical field of	fgrowth	TONE Petites villes de demain : un soutien cousu main pour 1000 communes françaises
growth based on the metropolitan model	TOTAL	79*	Demain", A
	Lexical field of of life and rur	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	B B B B B B B B B B B B B B B B B B B
A pleasant, unspoilt lifestyle	TOTAL	68*	"Better veille en
•	Lexical field of cohesion and		tion de la
	TOTAL	104*	Bolka Marca en Capacite d'agr Capacite d'agr Verre et faire ensemble Des habitants connectes
	*Frequencies of o	ccurrence of th	

*Frequencies of occurrence of the lexical fields (per 10,000 words)

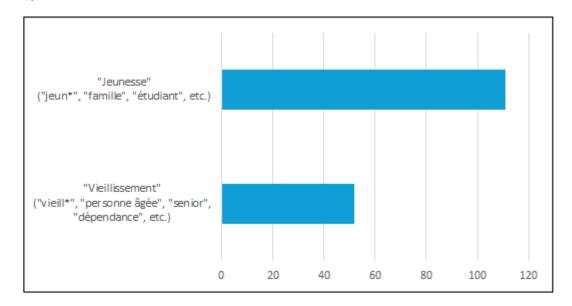
Spreading national imaginaries at local level

A quest for attractiveness to the detriment of certain local issues

The example of the ageing population:

A major issue: increasing ageing, with 31% of people aged over 65 in 2020

Little consideration given to this issue at local level, compared to the attractiveness of younger populations Frequencies of occurrence of the lexical fiels of youth and ageing population in the local institutionnal documents (per 10,000 words)



Inventing local narratives to put local issues on the agenda ?

Saint-Eloy-les-Mines, crossroad of energies



A town built on coal mining in the past

Converting to energy preservation



A future based on green energies and "human energies"

A dual role for the narrative:

Between territorial innovation and making the action plan coherent



A narrative promoting energy shift Example of the heating network project





A story that is also used to give coherence to a very wide-ranging action plan

The Saint-Eloy's action plan actualized (june 2024) :

- 22 actions for 6 years
- 12 principal themes

CONCLUSION

Dissemination of national imaginaries, which reinforce the belief system of growth and attractiveness and thus play a role in local issues

The dual role of narratives between promoting innovative local solutions and bringing together a wide-ranging and standardized action plan

Thanks for your attention

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