

## Session 12 : How to Reconcile the Core and the Periphery?

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1- Two transformations have been at work for 30 years in the world and therefore in Europe:

- The development of the New Industrial Revolution of computing as an industrial system and of digital technology as an economy of the multitude. This transformation is accelerating with 5G, artificial intelligence and the explosion of NBIC,
- The “metropolisation” of growth, resulting from densification of creative and productive processes: researchers, entrepreneurs, funders, engineers and designers of the factories of the future all want to work together in the same place.

As a result of these transformations, non-metropolitan territories are defined as those without:

- A metropolis connected to the globalized world of the New Industrial Revolution,
- Powerful research, innovation and funding systems,
- A visionary governance of the territory, simultaneously wielding the levers of economic development, urbanism and transport to attract the actors of the New Industrial Revolution

... are quickly marginalized.

2- A major specific phenomenon has hit France for twenty years now: accelerated de-industrialisation, resulting in massive plant closures in territories that are poorly or not connected to the globalised world and cannot bounce back.

The weight of manufacturing output has fallen to 10% of GDP in France, against 20% of GDP in Germany, while Germany has a powerful network of metropolitan cities, irrigating all of former Western Germany (the situation in former Eastern Germany is less favourable).

In France, 90% of the population live in only half the territory and the other half does not have any metropolis. The first ‘yellow vests’, those protesting against rising fuel prices, came from these peripheral, non-metropolitan territories.

3 – It is therefore necessary to act on two levels if we want to reconcile territories and metropolises in countries that must also reduce public spending to lower taxes, in order to increase its attractiveness:

- National action is needed (to accelerate modernization of productive system within the New Industrial Revolution) through enhanced research and innovation, robotisation and digitisation of enterprises, and strengthening metropolitan system,
- Regional action is needed to link remote territories with strengthened metropolises.

**Questions:**

1 – How to strengthen the metropolitan system in connection with the transformations mentioned above?

2 – How to combine remote territories with reinforced metropolises?

3 – Does the French institutional system allow for these changes? If not, what new institutional system should be proposed?