

Land use management for sustainable European cities

epures



How to Develop an Inter-municipal Land Use Strategy The Case of Saint-Étienne Métropole (France)

LUMASEC (Land Use Management for Sustainable European Cities) is a European project which aims to identify the scope of strategic and operational action for European cities in land use planning. Each of the five partner-cities of the project has developed a local action plan (LAP) with decision-makers in order to build up a strategic approach to land use management.

This leaflet presents the local action plan of Saint-Étienne Métropole, that consists of the production of an inter-municipal and integrated land use strategy. It deals with long-term land use management on a large scale, and also aims at building a strong partnership and an integrated approach to serve local needs in the short term: fostering brown-field regeneration, developing affordable and well-located housing programmes and reducing urban sprawl.



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▶ Saint-Étienne: the City and its urban Region

Saint-Étienne is a city of 175.000 inhabitants integrated in an urban region of 400.000 inhabitants. Located at 65 kilometres from Lyon, it takes part in the Lyon Saint-Étienne metropolitan's area (1.200.000 inhabitants).

Saint-Étienne has growth with the heavy industries. Large firms in mines, arms and iron fabric have made the economic and the urban successes of Saint-Étienne from the 19th century. Saint-Étienne had a very huge and speed

growth between 1850 and 1970. The urbanization was guided by industry needs. Large residential and industrial districts have been produced to respond at the development pressure. A lot of migrants came to Saint-Étienne to furnish workforce at big firms from Poland, Portugal, Morocco, Algeria or Tunisia.

This process has not only concerned the city centre but also other cities located in the two main valleys around Saint-Étienne: the Gier's and the Ondaine's valleys. Large agricultural and rural areas have been conserved (a regional natural park has been an asset for these protection) leading to a strong contrast between high density districts very near from natural districts.

In 2006, 44,9% of households were single one households. 10,8% of people were more than 75 years old in the city centre and 50,8% of households were not taxed because of low level of income.

The economic characteristics of Saint-Étienne have deeply changed. The number of jobs has growth in the nineties (in 2006, the Saint-Étienne's city region had 194.629 jobs) and the economic profile has changed. The unemployment rate has decreased and stays just over the regional level (7,8% in the Saint-Étienne's city region, 6,9% for the Rhône-Alpes's region).

Of course industry is still present but firms are now essentially little and medium size. Only 5,3% of firms have more than 20 employees in 2007. A diversification of industrial fields can be noted with the development of vision industry, design, bio-medical. The most part of firms work for big firms located in other places but they develop more and more high value process making them less dependant from their. Scientific and technological partnerships with the local University and the local engineering schools have brought economic opportunities for the firms. The second main characteristic concerns the services development. Healthcare, retail, services for households represent sectors employing a lot of people in Saint-Étienne. On opposite, the services for firms are not very developed (the proximity of Lyon is one of the reasons explaining this lack of high value services).

Important urban regeneration projects have been implemented in Saint-Étienne to increase its residential attractiveness. In 2006, the city centre had 28,7% of its residential offer composed by housing built before 1949. We can give examples of projects delivered in urban regeneration:

- Regeneration of economic brown-field with the building of offices, retail centres, parks... ;
- Rehabilitation of old housing;
- Demolition and rebuilding in social housing neighbourhoods;
- Amelioration of public space quality;
- Building of new public infrastructures with a high architectural quality (International Complex for Design by Finn Geipel, "Zenith" Concert Hall by Norman Foster).



View of the GIAT Industry area in Saint-Chamond (© Epures)

A huge economic crisis has concerned the local industry from 1970 until 1990. These twenty years of economic decline had social and urban consequences. Many households were concerned by unemployment but the most social decline has concerned people with a low qualification level. Migrants had to face these difficulties with a high intensity.

The attractiveness of Saint-Étienne has decreased. Large brown-field appeared with the departure of big firms. The high and medium income families moved from the city centre to the suburb to live in one single dwelling. Because of economic decline, there were no demographic arrivals. In consequence, very poor and deprived districts have appeared in the different urban centres. Between 1968 and 2006, the population of the urban region has been quite stable while the population of the city of Saint-Étienne has decreased from 223.000 to 177.000 inhabitants on the same period.



View of the GIAT Industry area in Saint-Chamond (© Epures)

This urban voluntarism had impacts:

- The population decrease has been less important since 2000 than during the nineties;
- The part of no occupied housing has decreased in the last years (9,8% of total housing in 2006, 11,2% in 1999).

The reinforcement of the cooperation between Saint-Étienne and Lyon or other urban centres of the Lyon's metropolitan area is an important characteristic of the last decade. Local authorities of the different urban centres develop common projects and policies (transport, economic, spatial planning). The University of Saint-Étienne and the University of Lyon have integrated a common Pole to reinforce their teaching offer and develop common research projects.

The metropolitan dynamics could have positive residential and demographic impacts for Saint-Étienne. The proximity of natural landscapes and environment and the low level of housing prices - by comparison with Lyon - represent advantages for Saint-Étienne. If residential quality and urban offer are increased, the residential implantations of households leaving from Lyon could progress.

▶ Land Use Issues in the Region

Large economic and urban brown-fields needed to be recycled. Important land use actions have been implemented to accelerate the recycling of brown-fields in housing and economic fields.

In 1999, a national public land establishment called EPORA has been created to accelerate the economic brown-field regeneration. EPORA was funded by ERDF, national and local subsidies. This public money has permitted to find solutions for polluted lands and to sell them at very competitive price to accelerate their regeneration.

In 2005, a new national public structure has been set up to accelerate the urban regeneration of the core city centre: EPASE is in charge of the redevelopment of central districts, for instance around the main railway station (Saint-Étienne Châteaucreux), the old arm manufactory (transformed in a design centre with university, high school, firms, retail centres, housing), and two old residential neighbourhoods (Crêt de Roc, Beaubrun).



View of the GIAT Industry area in Saint-Chamond (© Epures)

Vacant housing demolitions have been realized in social housing district located at the city centre periphery. These projects have been funded by the National Urban Regeneration Agency (ANRU) with the support of local authorities. Rebuilding projects have permitted to propose a new housing at families in little well integrated buildings. The objective is also to attract new resident in these neighbourhoods like first owners households by proposing housing at a lower price and having a high quality.

will be delivered and often only residential plots without economic activities, shops.

3. To develop land use management on a large scale. Effects in brown-field recycling depend on urban sprawl organization or limitation. The space consumption has been important in the urban Saint-Étienne's region even if the demographic context was not dynamic. Between 1999 and 2005, 440 hectares have been consumed by new urbanization (254 hectares for residential use and 79 hectares for economic and commercial activities) on the Saint-Étienne Métropole's territory. The price of land in recycled places will stay higher than in rural if a limitation of new residential settlements is not delivered in rural spaces.

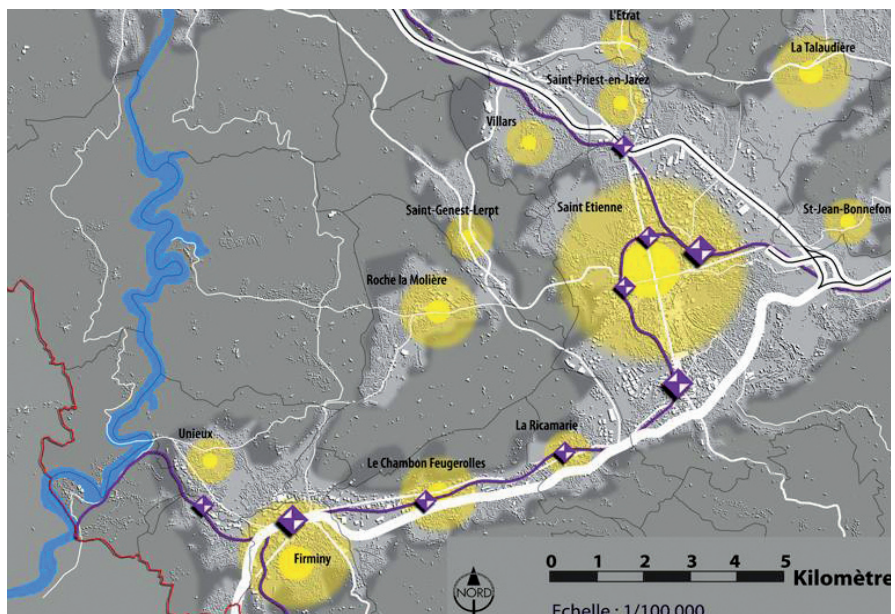
Urban sprawl must also be limited for itself because it has negative consequences on the development of the urban region of Saint-Étienne :

But the set up of very strong operational tools did not mean the end of land use issues. Three main challenges can be stressed on:

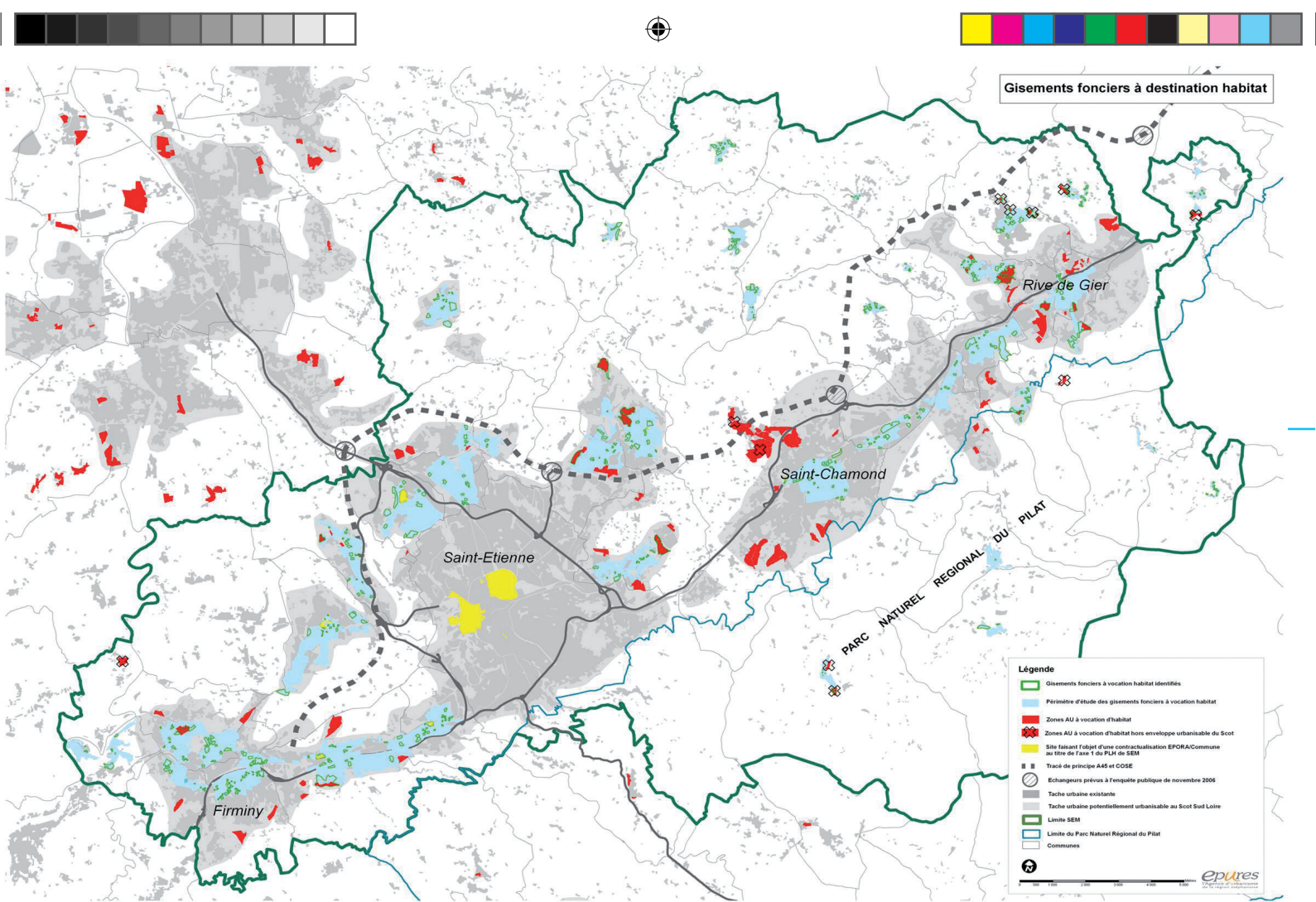
1. To build an integrated land use strategy instead of having sectoral interventions. For example, the public agency in charge of the urban and industrial brown-field (EPORA) wants local authorities to adopt a cross-sectoral land use strategy. EPORA considers its action as not efficient (in economic and operational terms) because of not existing a global strategy. Financial cost of its action could be optimised if local authority had a mid and long term strategy because acting in short time means being in market trends and so accepting market prices.

- Alteration of landscape quality;
- Increase of car transport demand;
- Housing specialization (social housing in a little of number of communes);
- Social segregation (poor and foreign households in the old urban centres);
- Growing difficulties for the city centre to pay public facilities (theatre, university...) because of the departure of middle and high incomes;
- Growing difficulties for periphery to deliver services for new population (school, social and leisure activities).

2. To link better land use and urban planning and operational projects to be able to produce housing in urban centres and to develop jobs in urban centres with a quality, a diversity and a density. To be achieved, the functional diversity in new programs needs large operations and a land control on large sectors. If not, only diffuse projects



Saint-Étienne and the other central locations to reinforce, as pointed out in the Master Plan (© Epures, Syndicat mixte du SCOT Sud-Loire)



Potential development land for housing (© Epures)

The Local Action Plan: Developing an Integrated Land Use Strategy

The local action plan has consisted in the elaboration of an integrated land use strategy by Saint-Étienne Métropole. Saint-Étienne Métropole is the political institution of inter-municipal cooperation grouping 43 municipalities. It was created in 2003 after a long period of tension between the city centre and suburbs. These municipalities have accepted to share strategic competences to Saint-Étienne Métropole: economic development, housing, waste collect and treatment, public transport, spatial and strategic planning. The budget of Saint-Étienne Métropole comes from firm tax (called tax professionnelle) - that municipalities used to collect for themselves - and national allocations from the Government.

The methodology adopted was articulated around three steps:

1. The GIS analysis has permitted to locate the largest extension areas for economic and residential development and the main economic and urban brown-fields. Satellite photos were used to

define potential development land (in continuity with existing urban areas, proximity of public transport and infrastructures). The urban planning documents have been compiled with GIS to check if the potentialities defined by satellite could be urbanized or not.

2. An analysis of each area (in extension or in urban renewal areas) has been delivered by a team of architects, geographers and economists to determine its strategic character for the implementation of Saint-Étienne Métropole's policies. This work has led to the definition of a priority geography in terms of land use management:
3. Indications were given for each area selected as strategic in terms of tools to implement, budget and calendars. The local action plan has designed the places where Saint-Étienne Métropole should buy and control their development:
 - The strategic places where to develop mixed urban renewal projects (housing, activities, green spaces) with a high quality:

- The strategic new housing areas where to develop new urban forms (density, quality, diversity of housing...);
- The areas concerned by land use conflicts.

The tools and the procedures for the intervention of Saint-Étienne Métropole (spatial planning documents, development tools);

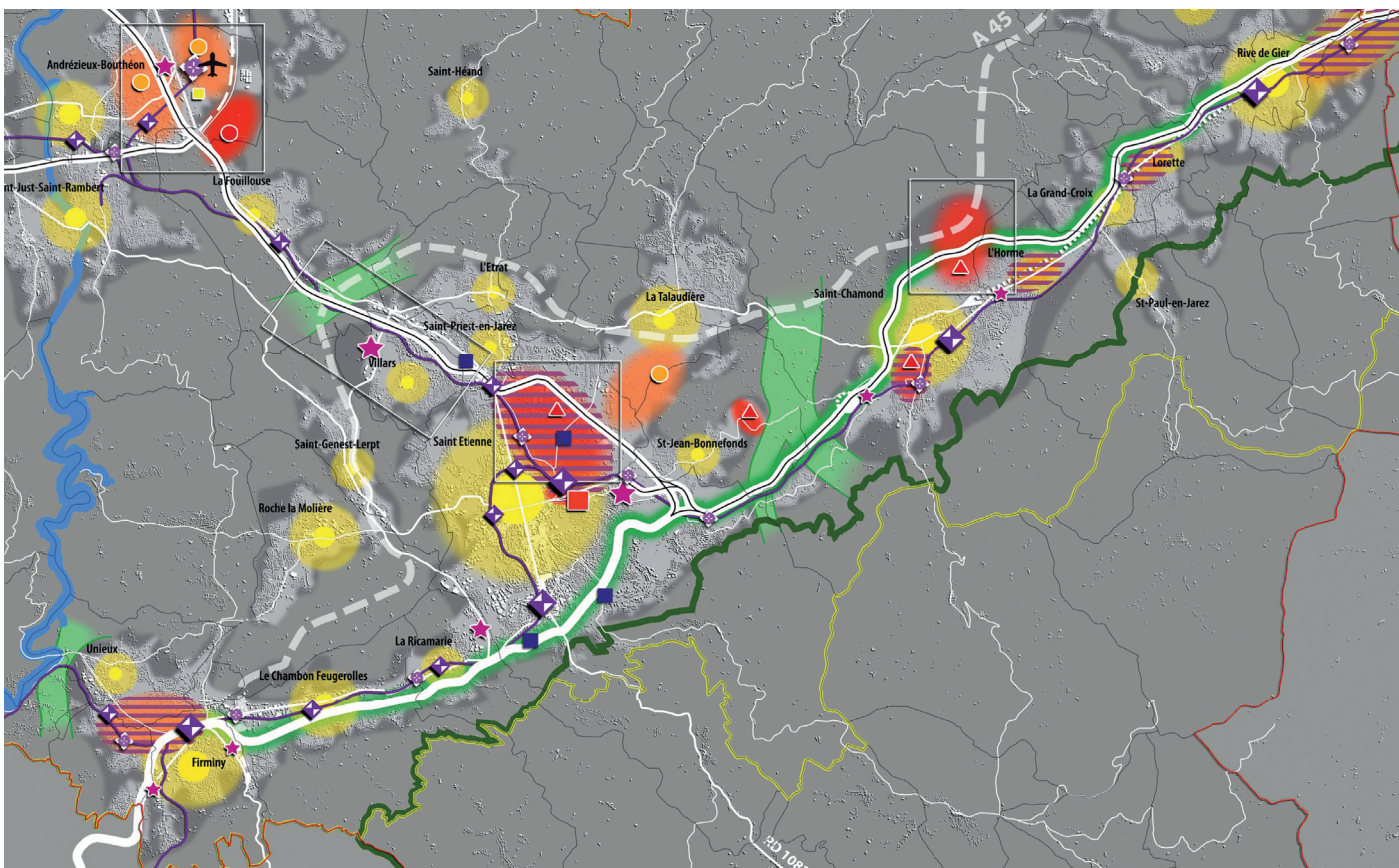
The strategy for places where the control on development project is let at the municipal level (contract, financial subsidies, expertise).

The land strategy involves articulating the regulatory tools and financial resources. In a context of limited public budgets, strategic approach is therefore based on an understanding of land markets (land observatory, watch on pending sales), an appropriate use of all existing tools (regulatory, financial, negotiation, agreements) and a formal framework for partnership with local owners and operators operating on the territory (target agreement). The local action plan also includes an awareness of local elected officials to the various tools of action by the land development factsheets illustrated with local examples. Saint-Étienne Métropole, through its strategic vision and cross by its leadership role, advisory or standby to operational actors, may well be the guarantor of a sustainable implementation of development planning.

The LUMASEC Local Support Group (LSG) was composed by:

- Saint-Étienne Métropole (decision leader in the LSG);
- Epures, the public city-planning agency;
- EPORA, EPASE (key operational actors in the LSG)
- The Préfecture de région (EU managing authority) and the Région Rhône Alpes (regional political institution in charge of regional spatial planning);
- The Direction Départementale des Territoires: Local Service of the French Sustainable Development Ministry (technical and financial support);
- Certu (for expertise aspects).

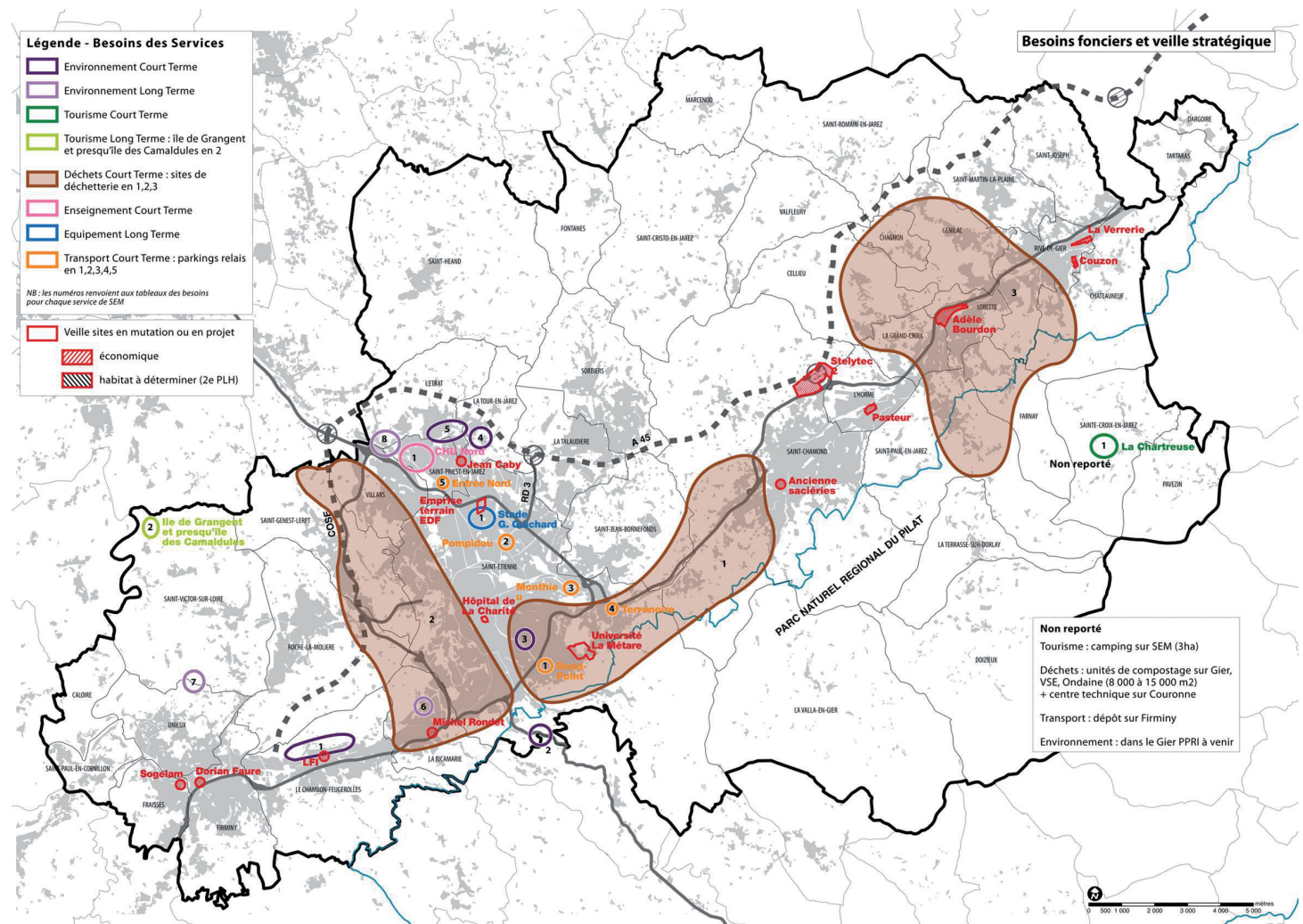
A national conference about land use management has been organized in April 2009 to mobilize private actors and to inform them about the LUMASEC project. Other French cities were invited to present their policies in this field.



The orientations for future development areas as shown in the Master Plan (SCOT Sud-Loire) (© Epures)

Légende - Besoins des Services

- Environnement Court Terme
 - Environnement Long Terme
 - Tourisme Court Terme
 - Tourisme Long Terme : île de Grangent et presqu'île des Camaldules en 2
 - Déchets Court Terme : sites de déchetterie en 1,2,3
 - Enseignement Court Terme
 - Equipement Long Terme
 - Transport Court Terme : parkings relais en 1,2,3,4,5
- NB : les numéros renvoient aux tableaux des besoins pour chaque service de SEM
- Vieille sites en mutation ou en projet
 - économique
 - habitat à déterminer (2e PLH)



Potential development land for housing (© Epures)

▶ Results and Lessons Learned

The local action plan has permitted to reinforce the dialogue between the Saint-Étienne Métropole's services. It was an opportunity to develop inter-sectoriality inside the local administration.

The local action plan has also permitted to develop the local GIS on land use aspects. Information about operational projects has been integrated in the GIS. A basis of strategic areas has been set up and will be actualised by Saint-Étienne Métropole.

The local action plan has permitted to show at the local elected officials the necessity to adopt an integrated land use policy.

The organization of a national conference about land use strategies in French cities has been an opportunity for local actors to benchmark. This event has been set up with the support of the Certu and the National Association for Studies in Land Use Field (ADEF).

But the local action plan has shown that challenges were still being existed in land use management.

A lack of public-private partnership in land use management

The PPP with landowners is not really developed in the governance process of land use. Sometimes a municipality can organise cooperation between property landowners concerned by a future urbanization. Political officials try to negotiate with landowners the calendar for the urbanization to optimise the infrastructure project (roads, energy networks).

Three main reasons can be advanced to explain the lack of private landowner's mobilization. First, the landowner won't be the developer (this is a huge difference with England, for instance). Second, the heritage is still pregnant in France of a common representation in which public and private keep different functions. To make process decision with private partners is not shared by public leaders (political officials or civil servant). Third, in small municipalities, the mayors know directly the main landowners and don't want to make with their private affairs.

With property developers, the negotiation is delivered project by project. French property developers are not used to have in charge complete renewal or development areas. The local authority wants to keep the control on the design



"Cité du Design", Saint-Étienne (© Artefactory)

Contact

LUMASEC

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)
 Institute of Urban and Regional Planning
 Dr. Dirk Engelke
 engelke@kit.edu
 www.urbact.eu/lumasec
 Tel: +49 721 608 2294

Contact

Team Saint-etienne

Sandrine SANCHEZ (Epures)
 & Rémi DORMOIS
 ssanchez@epures.com
 www.epures.com

of the new neighbourhood. It doesn't want to be dependant of the private interests. In this negotiation, the partnership principally concerns the funding of public amenities: green spaces, schools, public libraries... and takes part in public control project. In many cases, the municipality is the land owner and accepts to sell the land at a price negotiated with property developers in exchange of public infrastructures realization.

A difficulty to implement strategic planning goals at an operational scale

The institutions in charge of regional spatial planning, but also the institutions in charge of operational actions, ask for a land use management but they aren't active to involve political local authorities. Of course, each political local authority agrees with the general principle to elaborate a global land use strategy. But the operational pressure leads to give priority on land use action to set up projects, instead of elaborating a global land use strategy. Land use is still related to operational project and not considered for itself.

Moreover, because of the repartition of competences between different local authorities, no

one feels the legitimacy and the authority to take the leadership in land use management. All spatial and urban planning documents in France converge to fix quantitative and qualitative objectives about urban development. They converge also to fix new development areas. But very few are the planning documents which set precise objectives about land use management. The Housing Program of Saint-Étienne Métropole (called Programme local de l'habitat, PLH) proposes tools and funding procedures to foster the development of affordable housing programs in urban regeneration areas. At a larger scale, the local Master Plan (called Schéma de cohérence territoriale, SCOT) contents a list of priority urban renewal projects with precise indications about urban design and densities, and suggests a public control to deliver them. But these example of orientations in land use management for the implementation of the planning strategy are quite rare in the French urban planning context.

The strategic level should be the institution in charge of strategic spatial planning. The SCOT is a Local Master Plans established on a large area, permitting to address transport, housing and environment issues. But the body in charge of the SCOT Sud Loire stays a young institution in Saint-Étienne's area. The SCOT has not yet been adopted and no such document existed before. Saint-Étienne hasn't heritage in urban and spatial planning. The political leaders of SCOT haven't yet a common habit in term of projects. Huge interests' conflicts still exist between them concerning housing or retail developments. Any more, the implementation of strategic orientations is limited by a sort of "gentlemen agreement": political officials involved in the SCOT Sud Loire refuse to contribute directly in the local plan development process at municipal level.

LUMASEC is a European network dealing with strategic land use management as one of the most important topics to address, to ensure competitiveness, attractiveness and sustainability of our European city-regions. It focuses on both the strategic level (planning methods, observation tools...) and the operational level (action plans, case-studies), and aims at producing methods and practical recommendations.

The LUMASEC partners are: Epures (public city-planning agency, Saint-Étienne, France), Certu (France), the cities of Bytom (Poland), Baia Mare (Romania), Kavala (Greece), Bristol (Great Britain) and the Universities of Karlsruhe (Germany) and Ljubljana (Slovenia). The University of Karlsruhe is the lead-partner of LUMASEC.
 More information on <http://urbact.eu/lumasec>

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