

learning from french housing

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January 7, 2025

Harvard Graduate School of Design - Department of Urban Planning and Design

agenda

comparative snapshot: California versus France

agenda

comparative snapshot: California versus France

actionable strategies

agenda

comparative snapshot: California versus France

actionable strategies

A. national fair-share mandates

agenda

comparative snapshot: California versus France

actionable strategies

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B. adaptive reuse + infill densification

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comparative snapshot: California versus France

actionable strategies

A. national fair-share mandates

B. adaptive reuse + infill densification

C. traditional ways of financing affordable housing

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comparative snapshot: California versus France

actionable strategies

- A. national fair-share mandates**
- B. adaptive reuse + infill densification**
- C. traditional ways of financing affordable housing**
- D. public-private partnerships**

the elephant in the room

**the elephant in the
room**

OPINION

Only Washington Can Solve the Nation's Housing Crisis

The federal government once promised to provide homes for every American. What happened?

July 10, 2019

By Lizabeth Cohen

Dr. Cohen is the author of the forthcoming "Saving America's Cities: Ed Logue and the Struggle to Renew Urban America in the Suburban Age."

the elephant in the room



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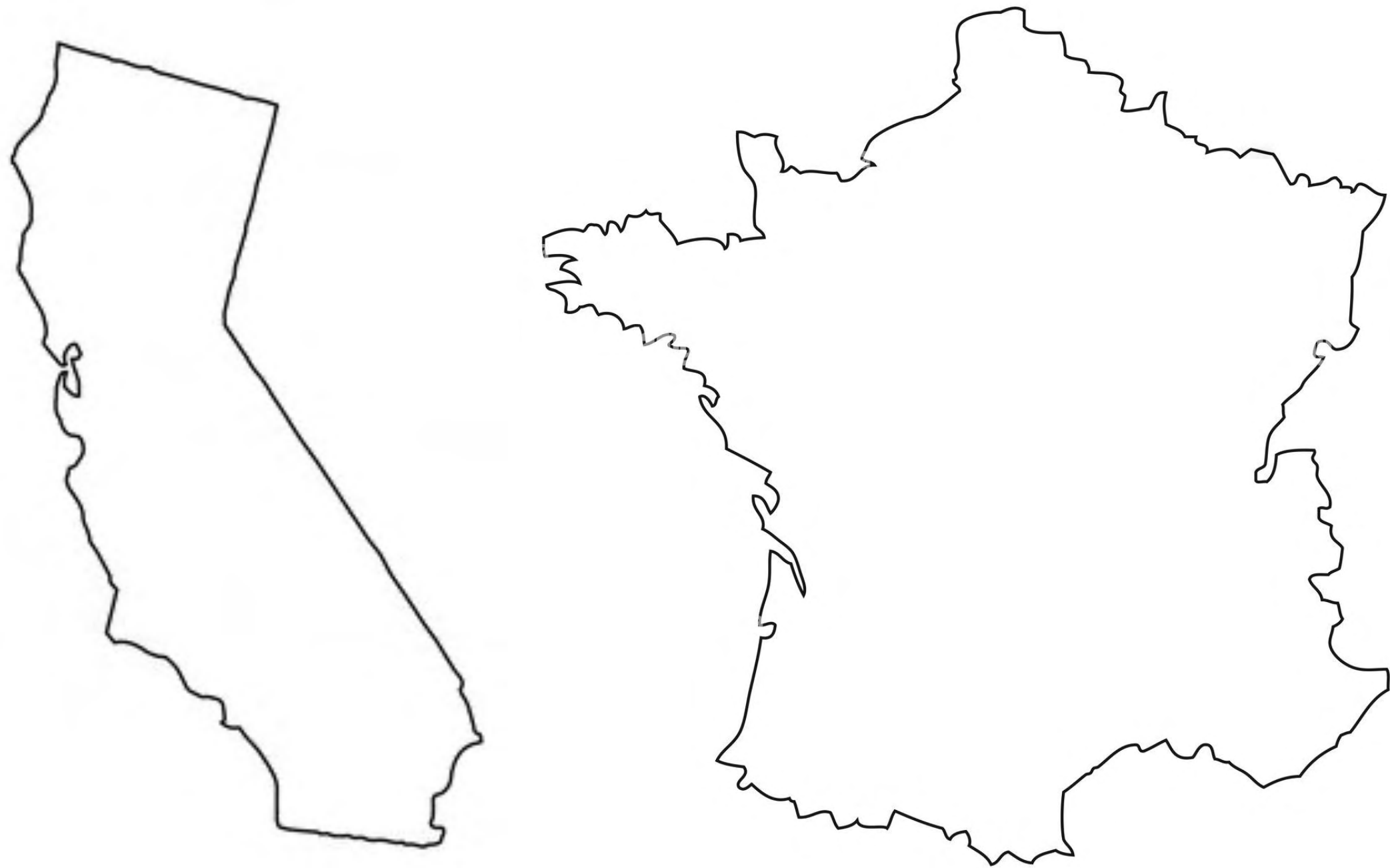
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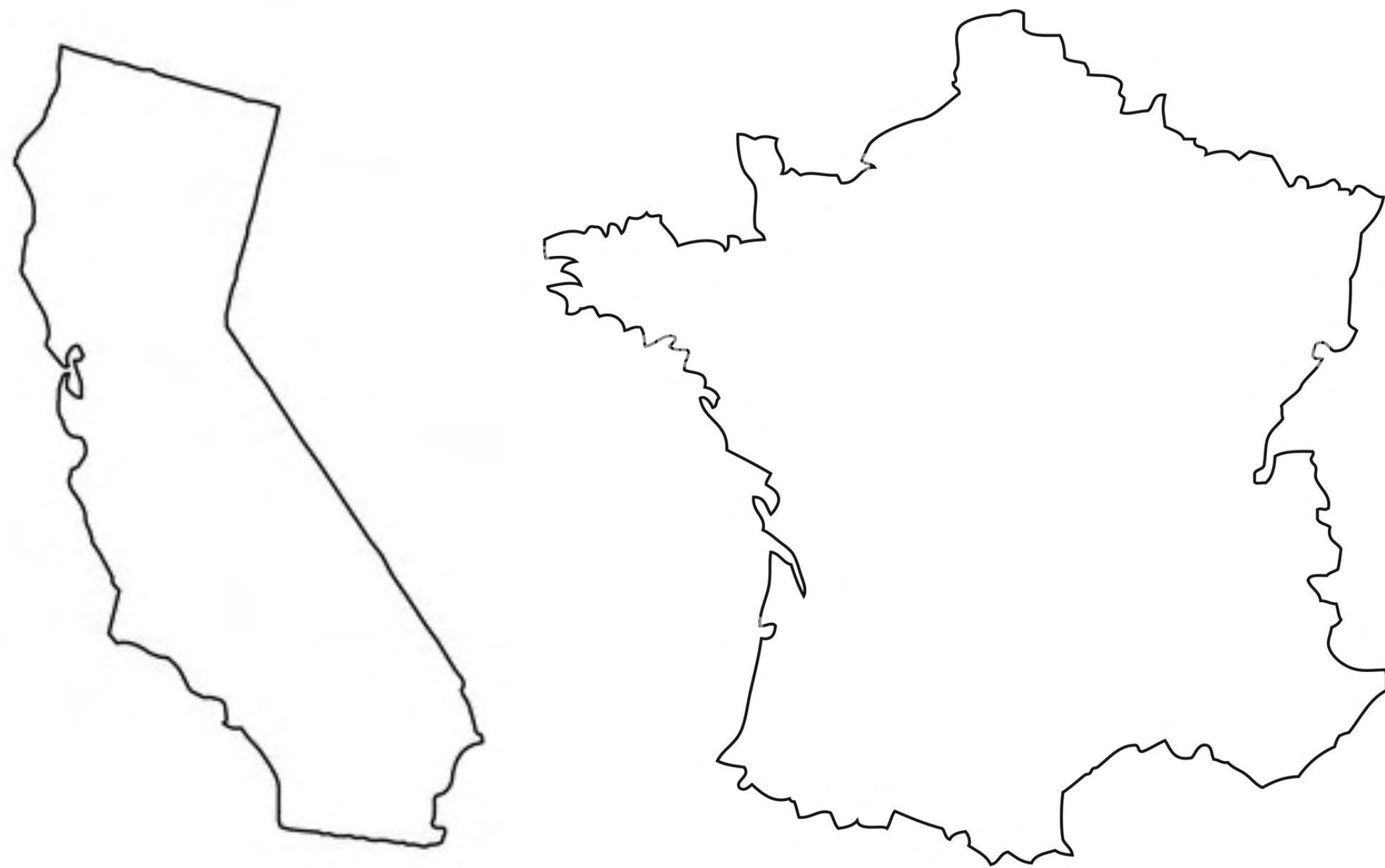
two not so different contexts



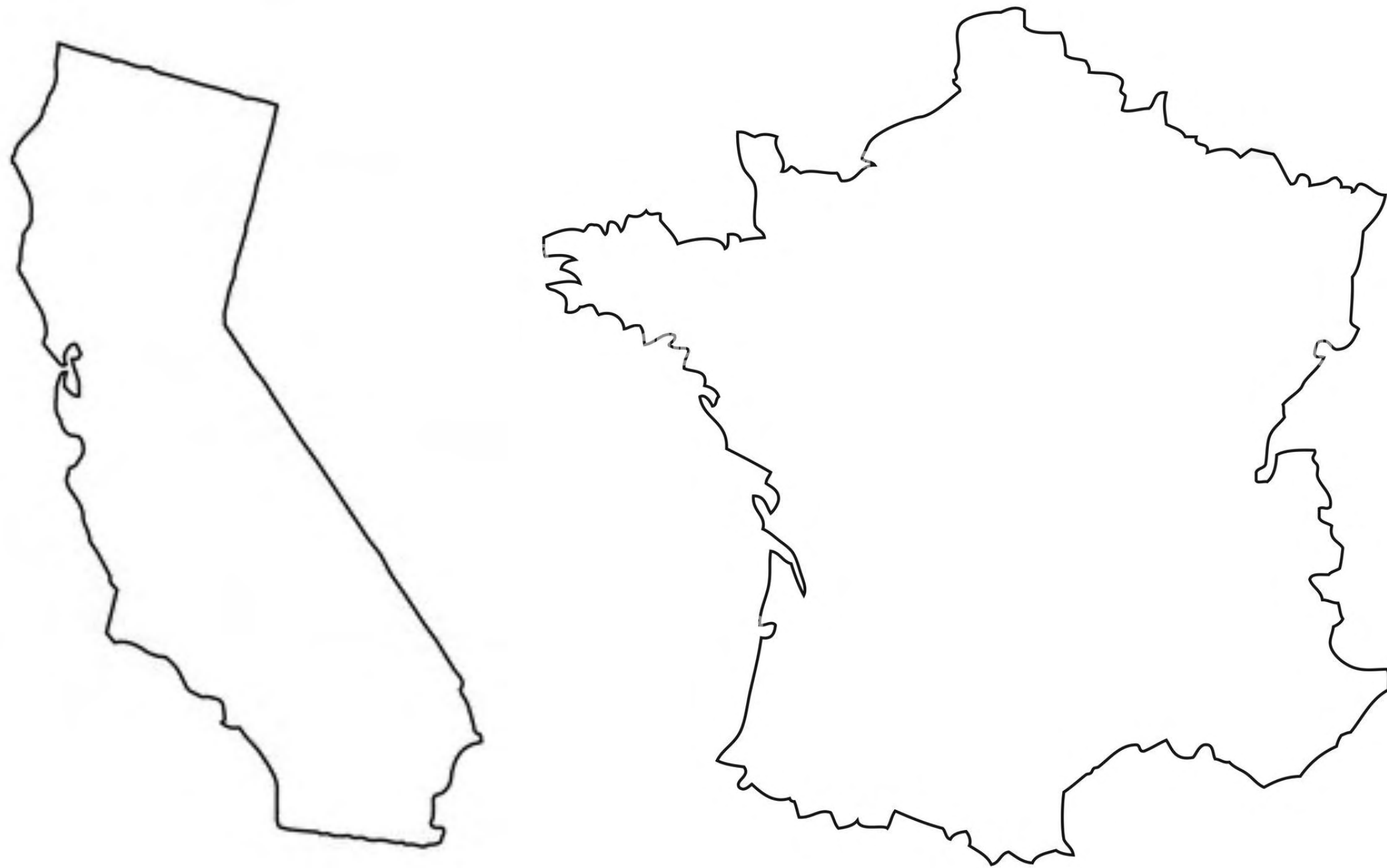
two not so different contexts



two not so different contexts



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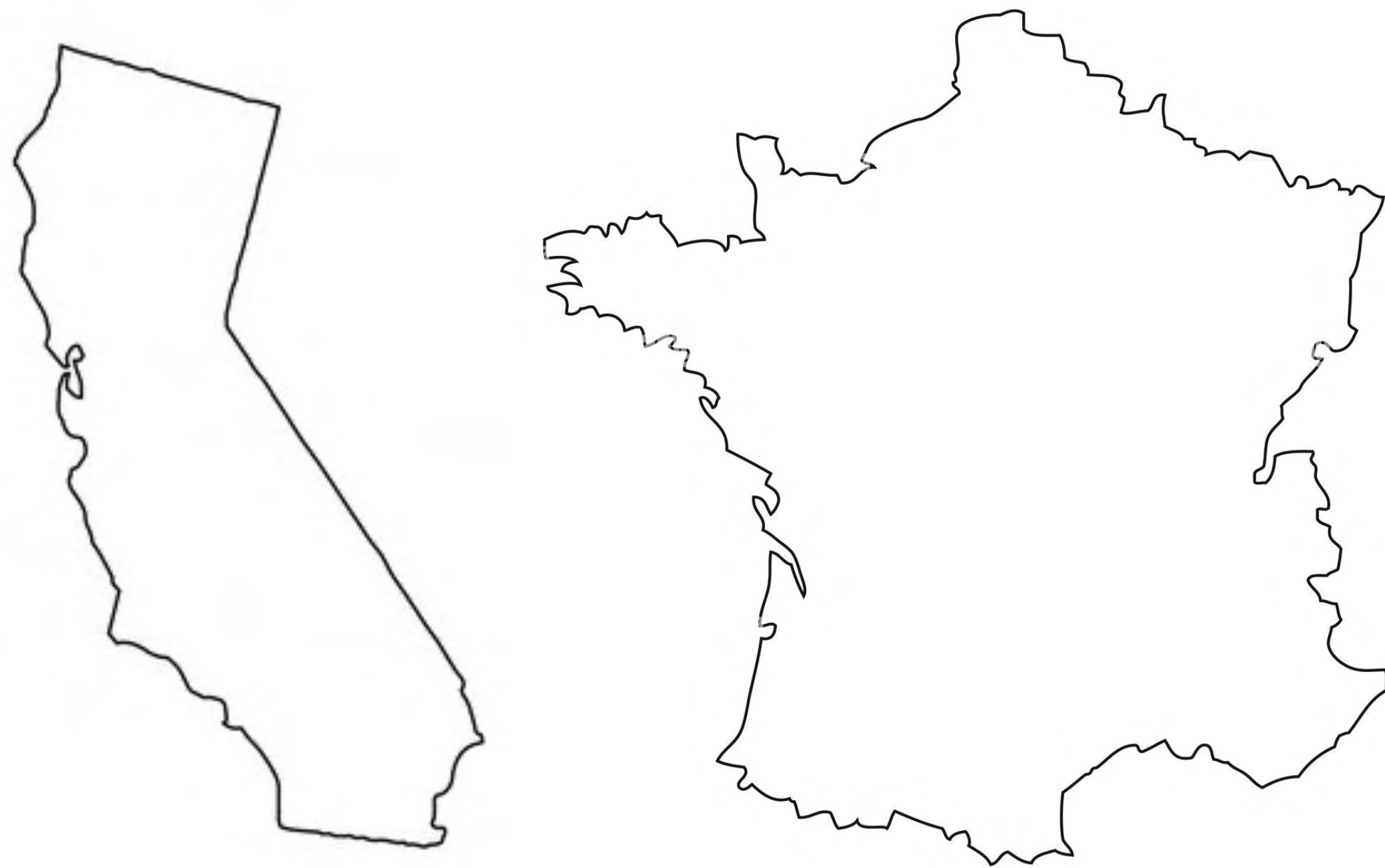


2023-2024 homeownership data

in France: **6 households out of ten** own their primary residence [60%]

in California: **4 in 7 households** own their home [56%], lower by 10 pts than overall US homeownership rate

two not so different contexts



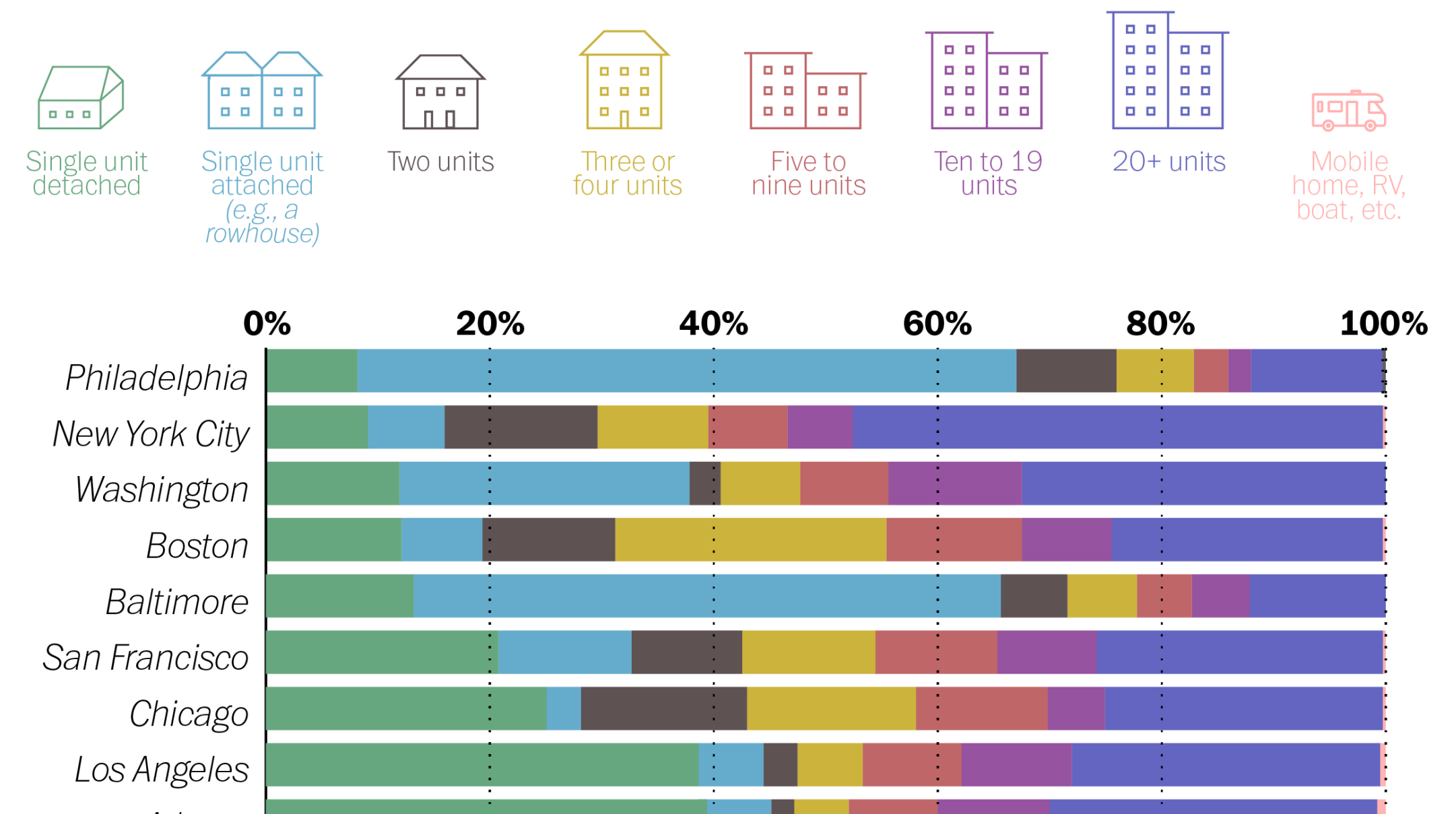
US Census / INSEE 2024 data

65.2% units in CA are single-family / 95.8% state is zoned for sf zoning

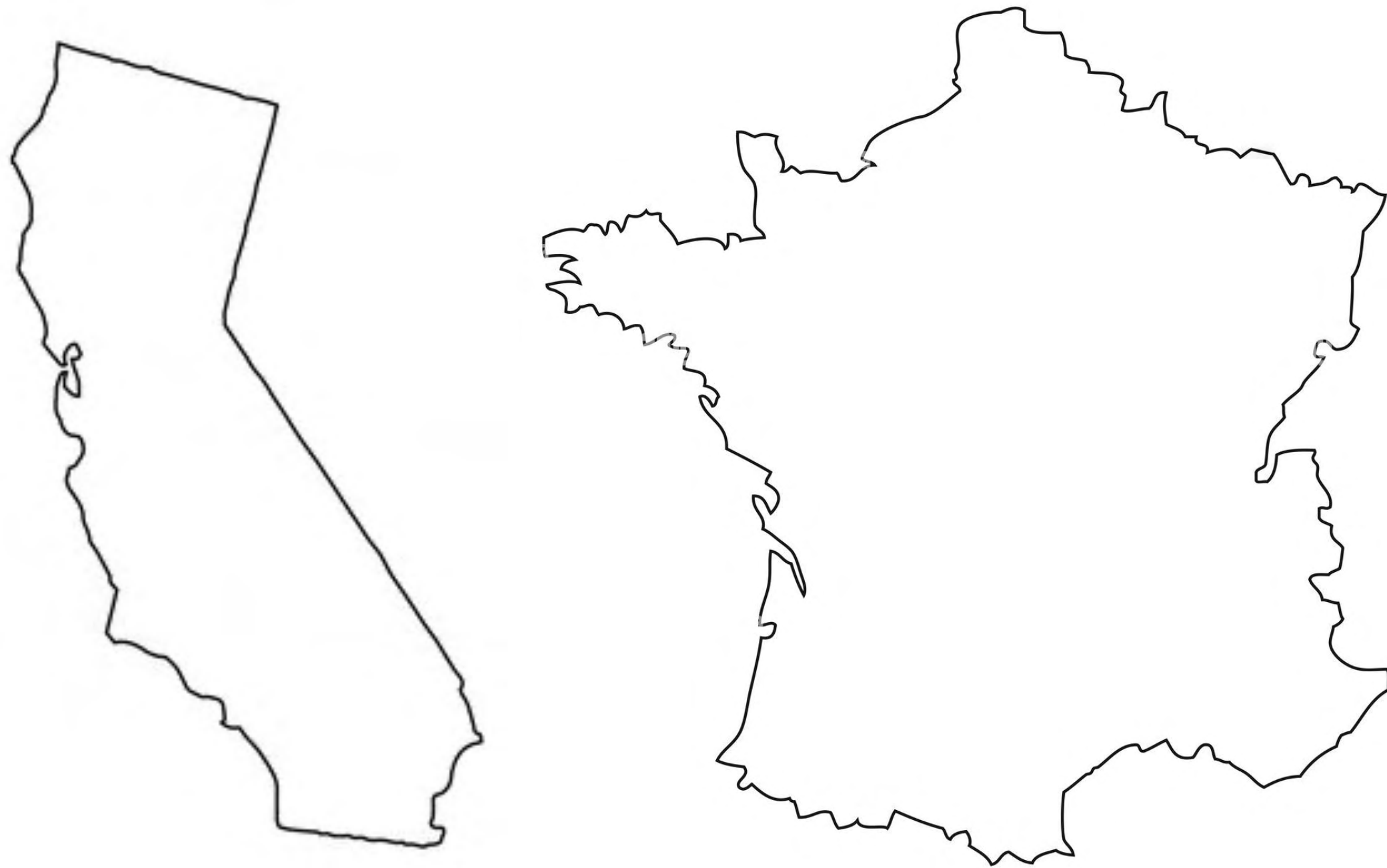
55% units in FR are single-family

The way we live, city by city

Occupied housing units, by building type



two not so different contexts



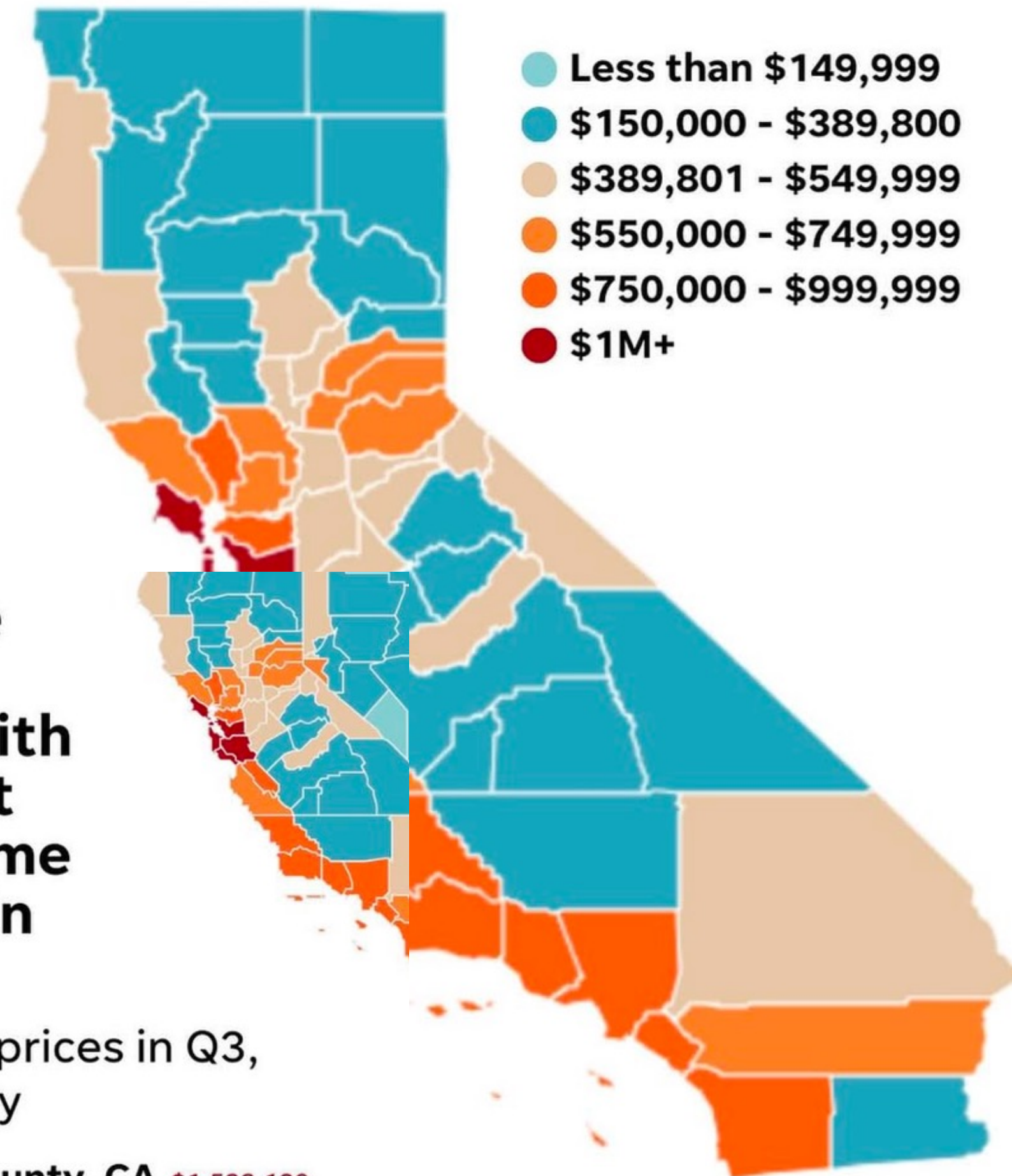
Median household income [*Census + OECD Better Life Index*]

in France: **from 25k to 30k** (2008-2023).

in California: **from 57k to 90k** (2008 to 2023).

About 64% of counties in California have median home values above the national median of \$389,800

Median home prices in Q3 2023 in California, by county

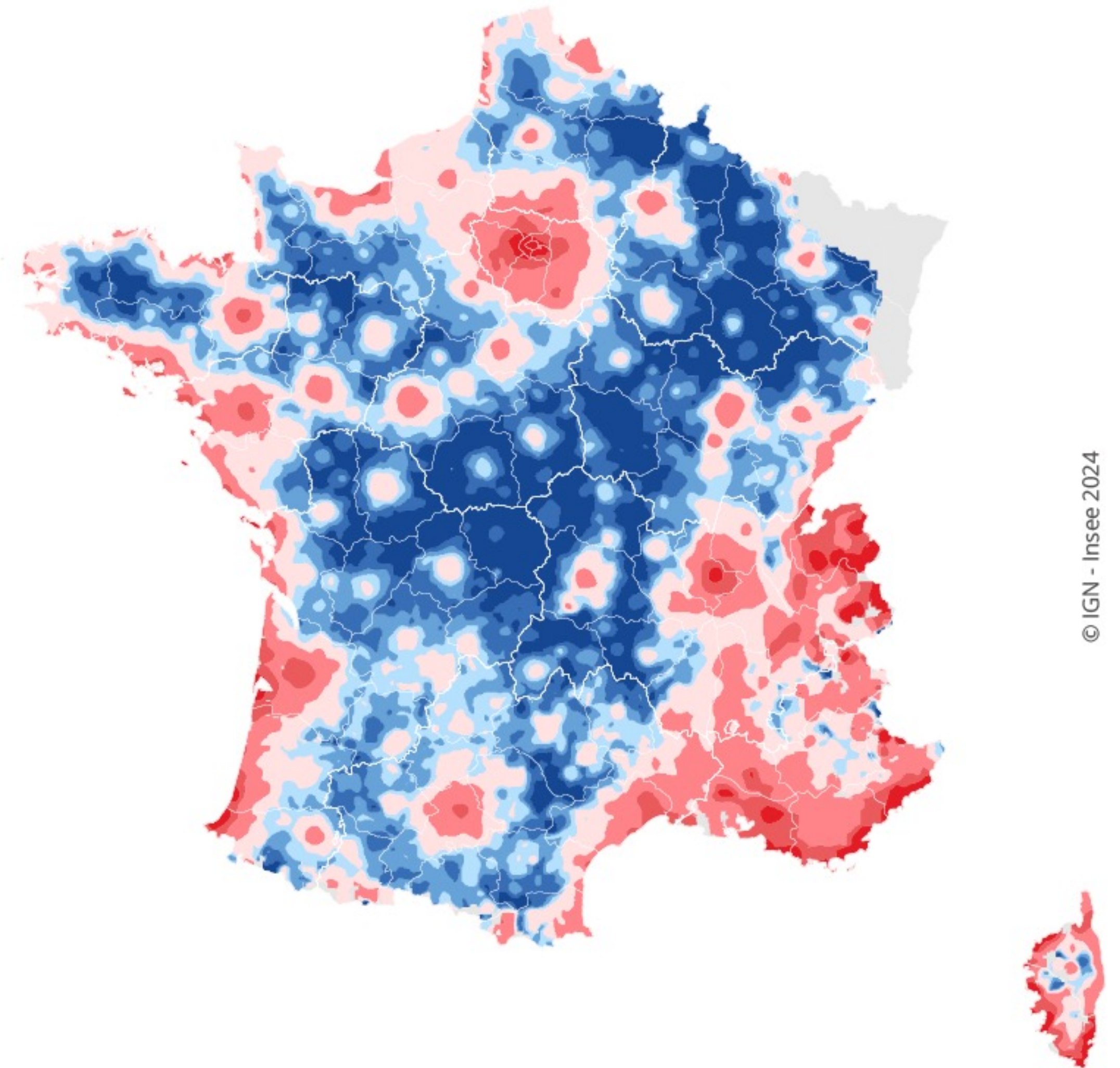


Four of the top six counties with the highest median home prices are in California

Median home prices in Q3, 2023 by county

- 1 Santa Clara County, CA \$1,583,130
- 2 San Mateo County, CA \$1,573,470
- 3 Marin County, CA \$1,454,450
- 4 San Francisco County, CA \$1,332,660
- 5 Nantucket County, MA \$1,313,450
- 6 Teton County, WY \$1,193,160

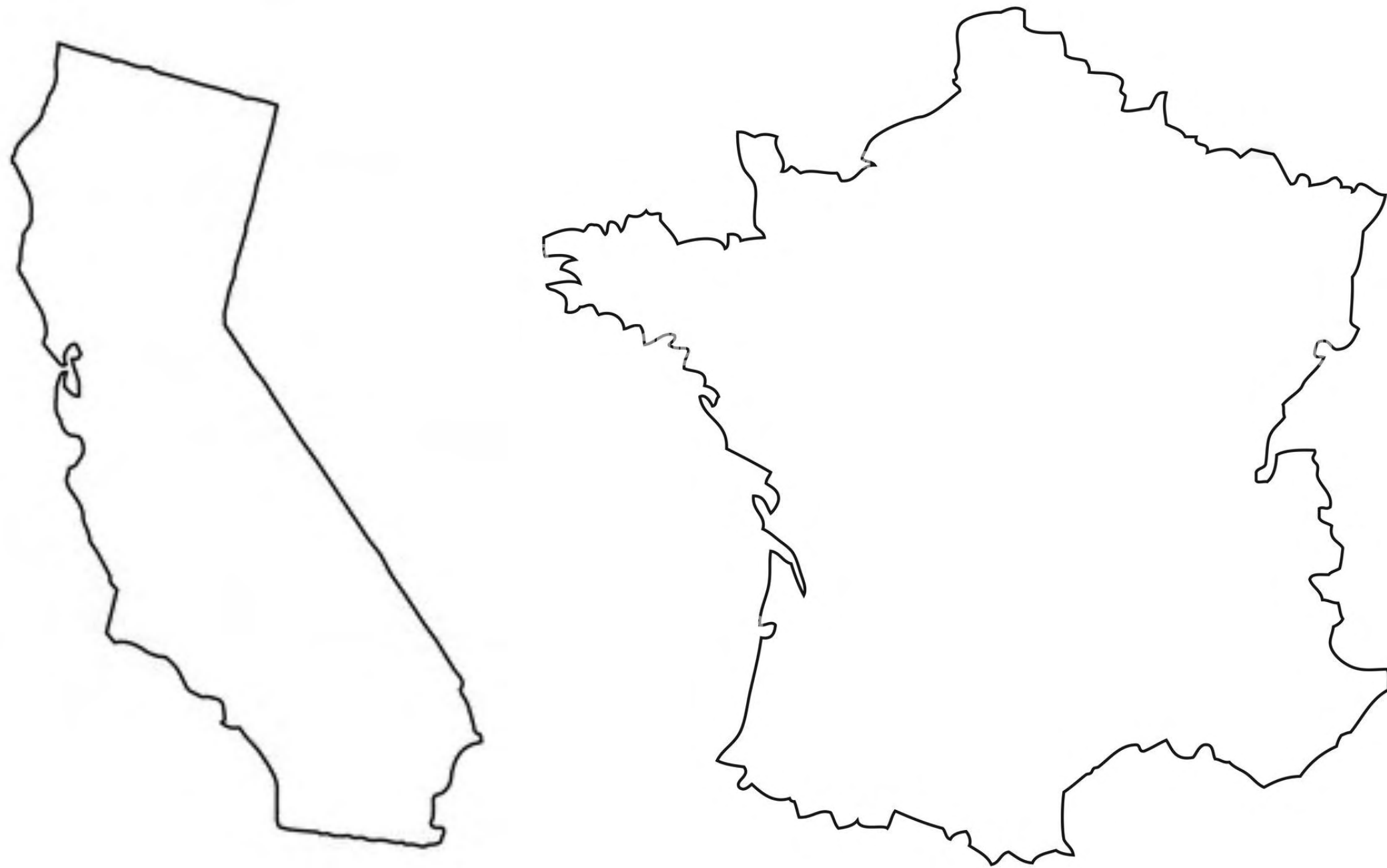
prix au m², en €



© IGN - Insee 2024

more tension in denser, more urban, more populated hubs + with huge variations depending on unit size and location

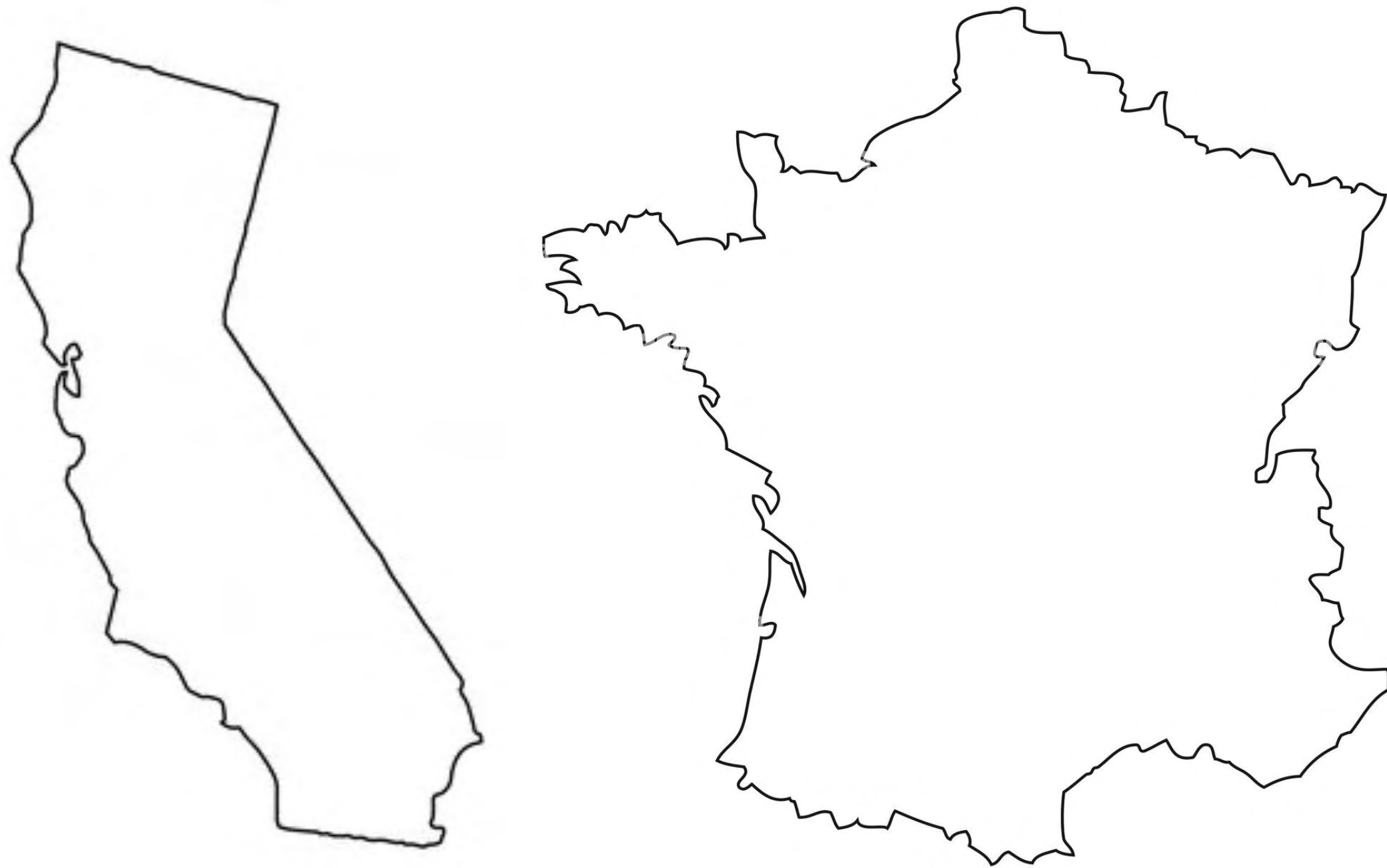
two not so different contexts



In the United States, approximately **1 out of 1000 developers** undertake affordable housing efforts.

In France, **52% of new affordable housing units** are produced in VEFA, ie through public-private development.

two not so different contexts



Los Angeles Times

SUBSCRIBE

Wealthy town has an answer against building affordable housing:
Mountain lions

ouest
france

Le Courrier
de l'ouest

**Des poids lourds indésirés dans le village : la
maire distribue les contraventions**

An aerial photograph of a city, showing a mix of residential areas, green spaces, and commercial buildings. A large white rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text 'strategy A: national fair-share mandates'.

strategy A: national fair-share mandates

french model

the national SRU fair-share mandate imposing a **minimum 25% social housing** on municipalities

french model

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2 main outcomes:

french model

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- **1 million housing units built in 25 years –*still short by 1 million to reach goals set in 2000***

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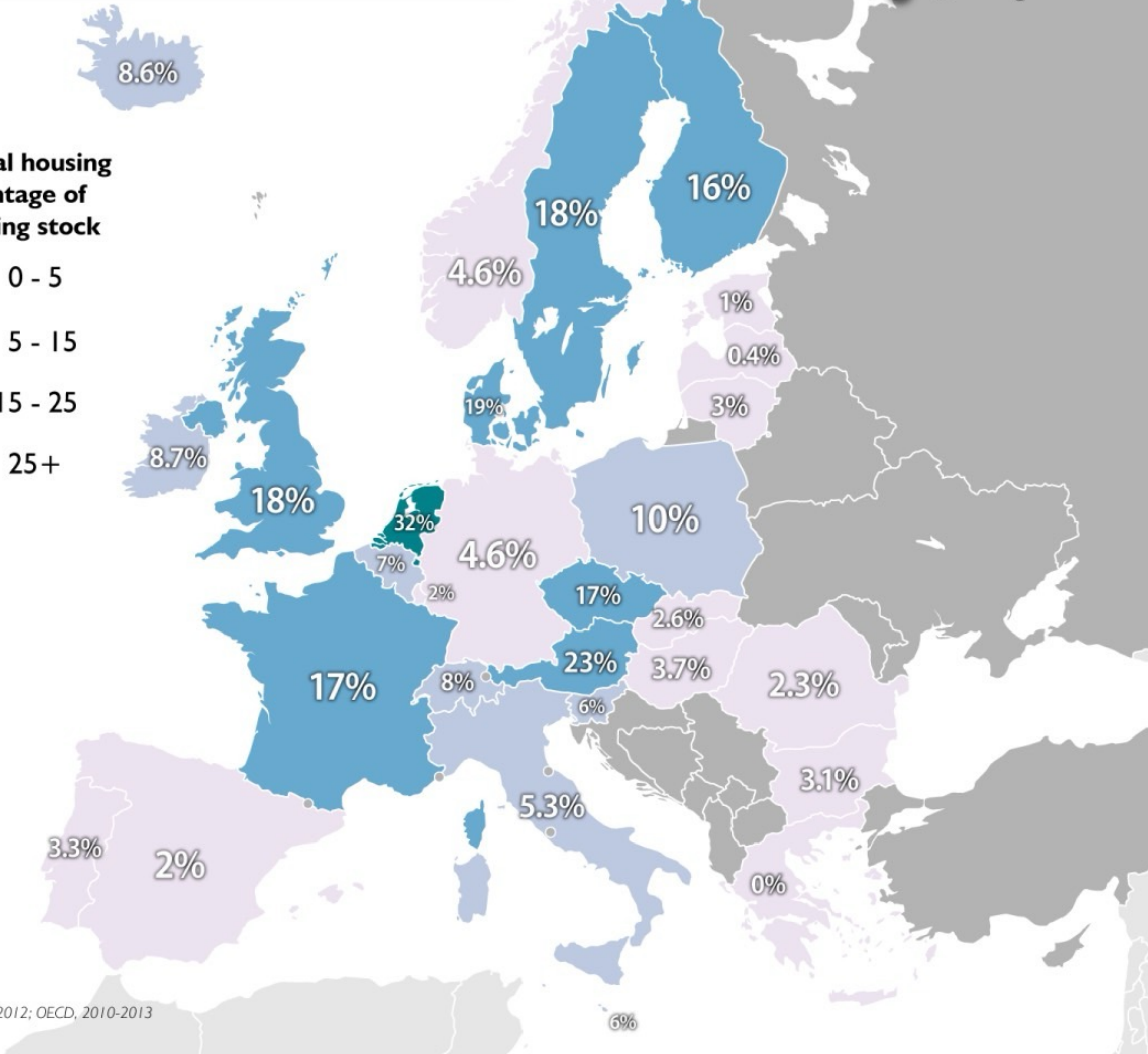
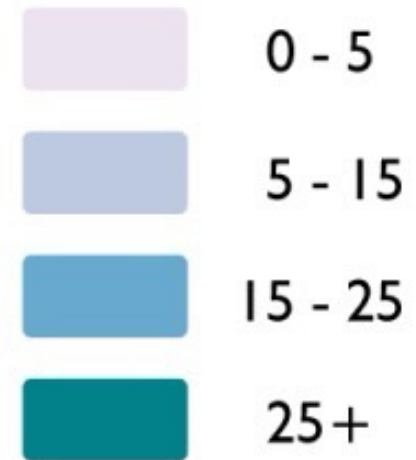
2 main outcomes:

- **1 million housing units built in 25 years –*still short by 1 million to reach goals set in 2000***
- **real territorial rebalancing of social housing supply**

Social Housing

Landgeist.com
 @Land_geist
 @Landgeist

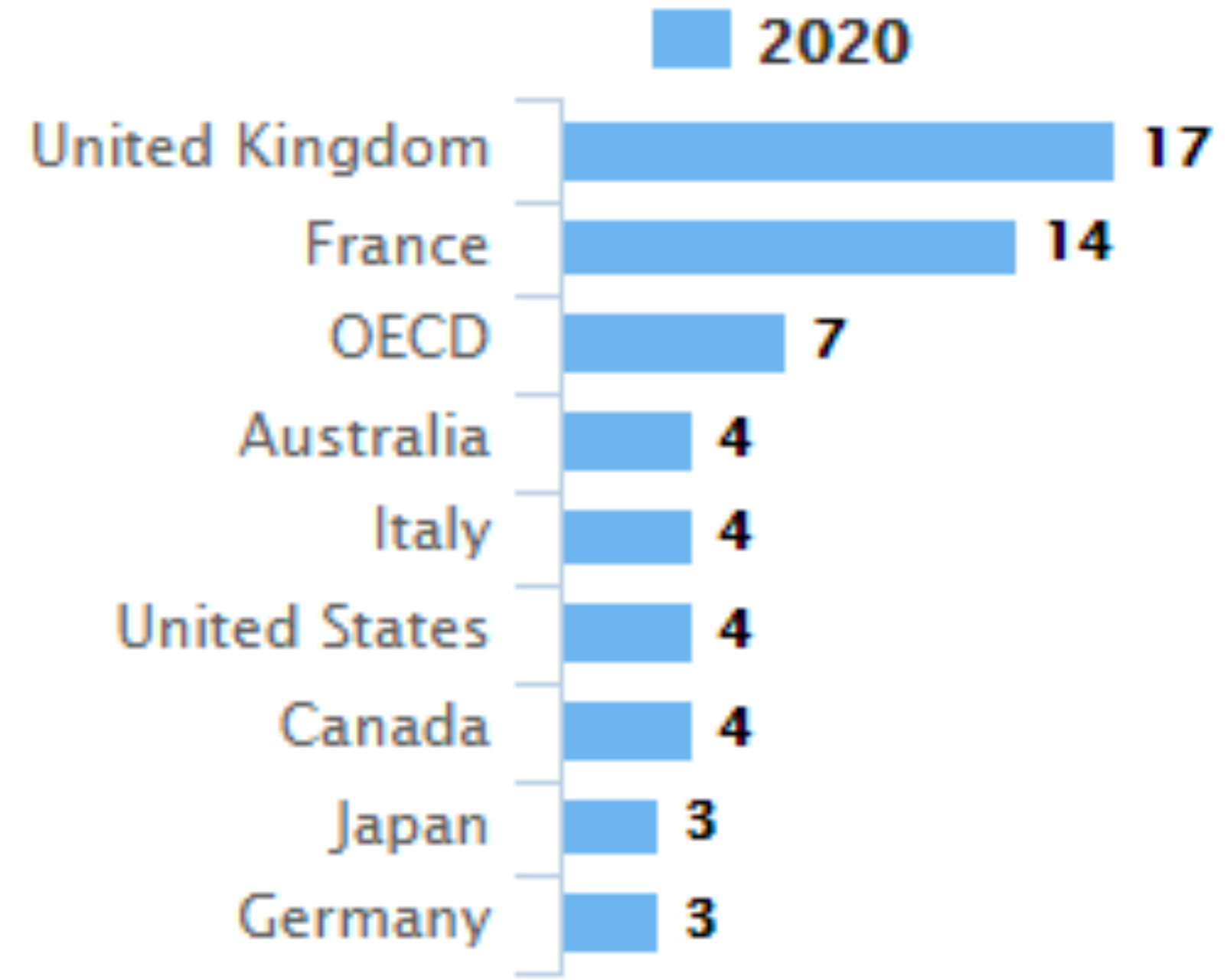
Social rental housing
 as percentage of
 total housing stock



Source: CECODHAS, 2012; OECD, 2010-2013

Social Rental Housing Stock

Social rental dwellings as share of total dwellings, 2020 or l...

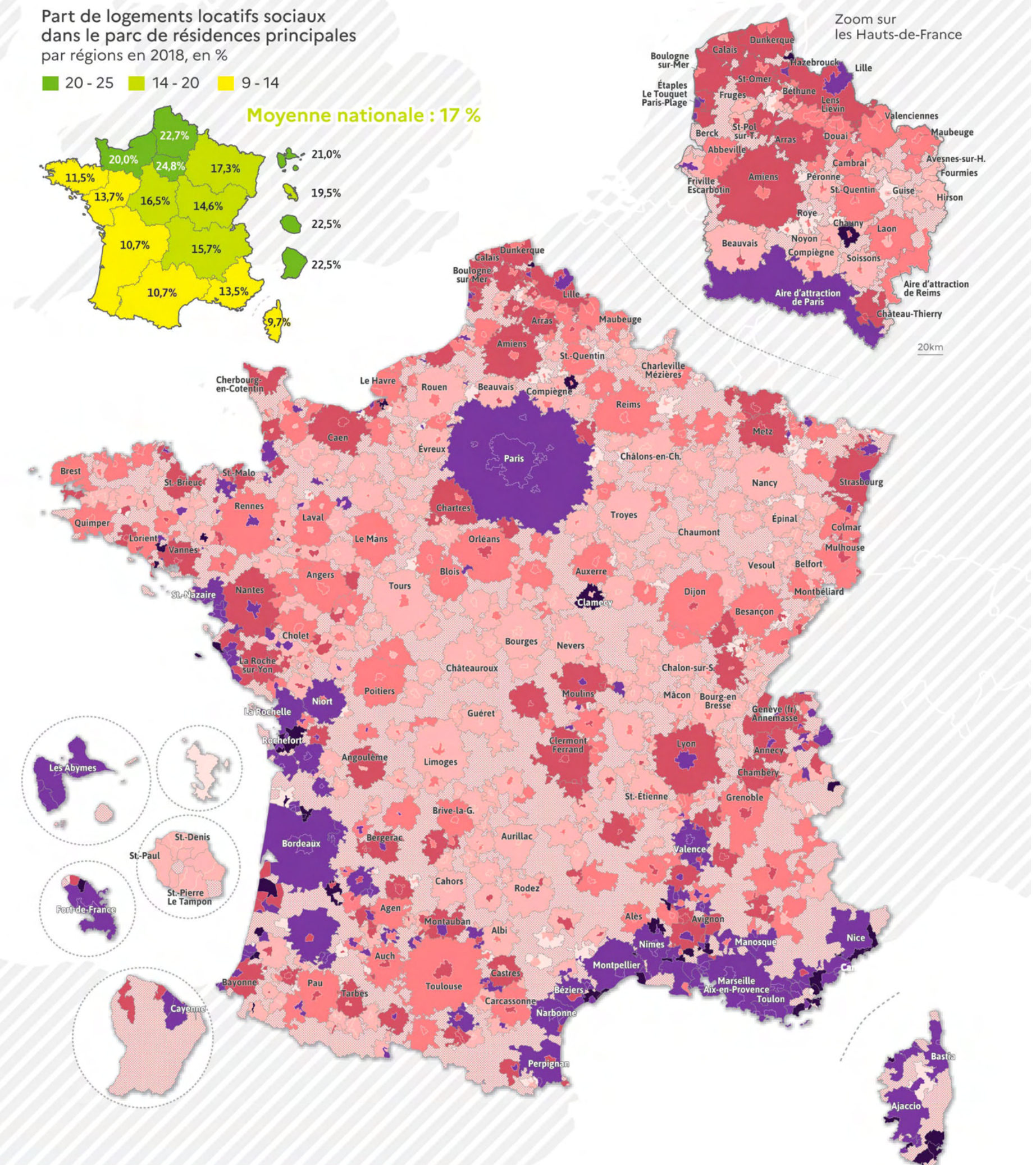
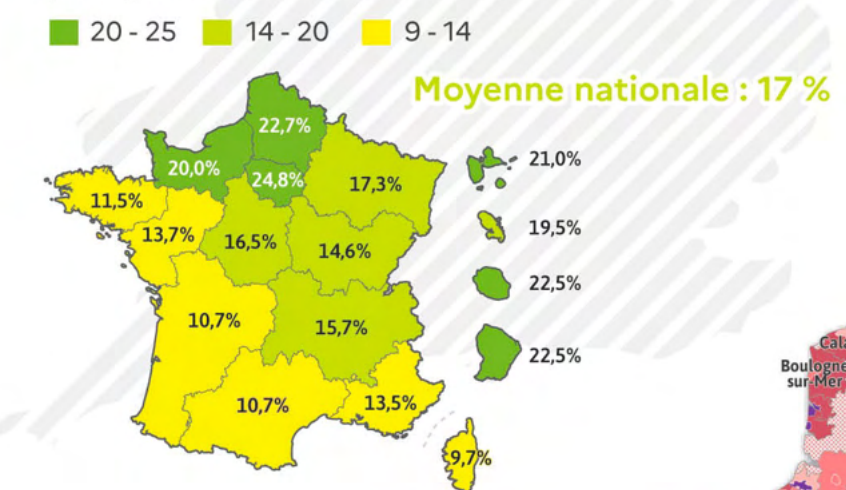


Source: [OECD Affordable Housing Database](#)

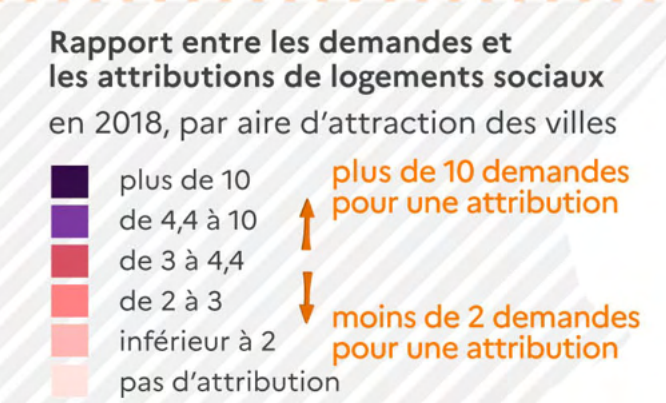
25% social housing

YET so many differences when we look at local residential markets: patchwork of inclusionary & exclusionary territories

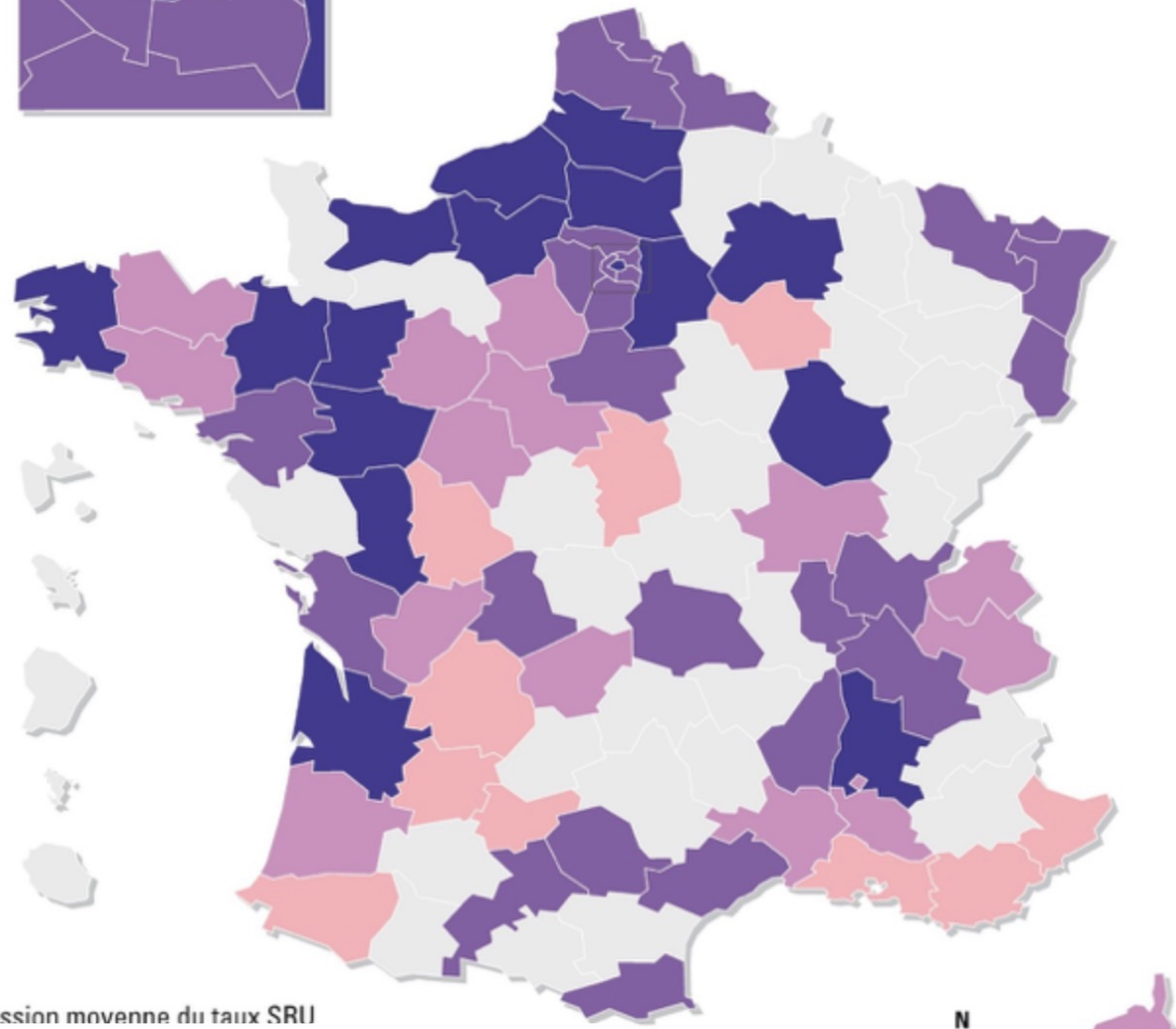
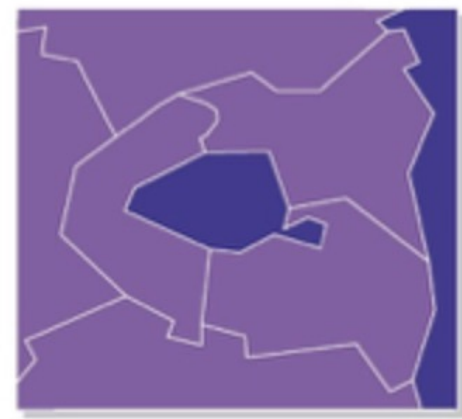
Part de logements locatifs sociaux dans le parc de résidences principales par régions en 2018, en %



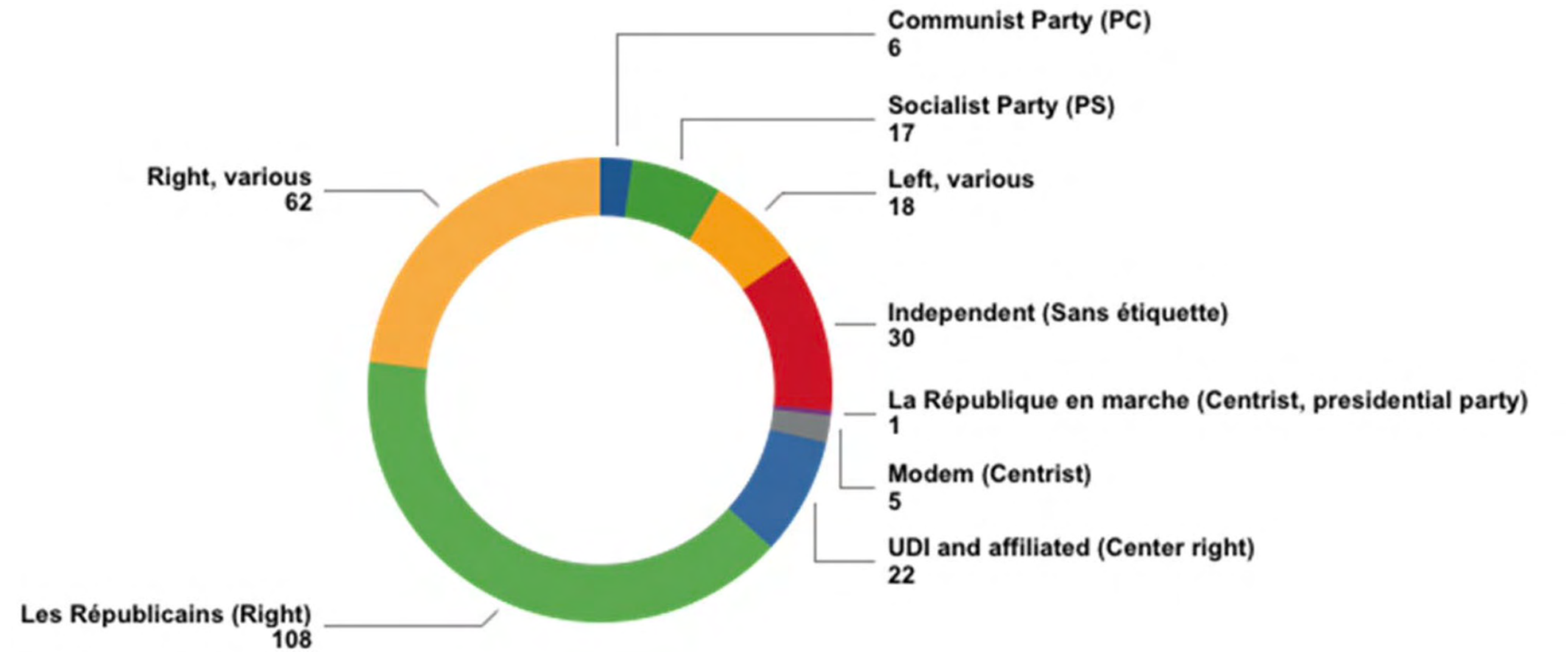
Pression sur le logement social dans les aires d'attraction des villes



Sources : Système national d'enregistrement (SNE) 2018 ; Répertoire des logements locatifs des bailleurs sociaux (RPLS) 2018 ; Insee RP 2017 ; Aires d'attraction des villes 2020 • Réalisation : ANCT pôle ADT Observatoire des territoires Cartographie • février 2021

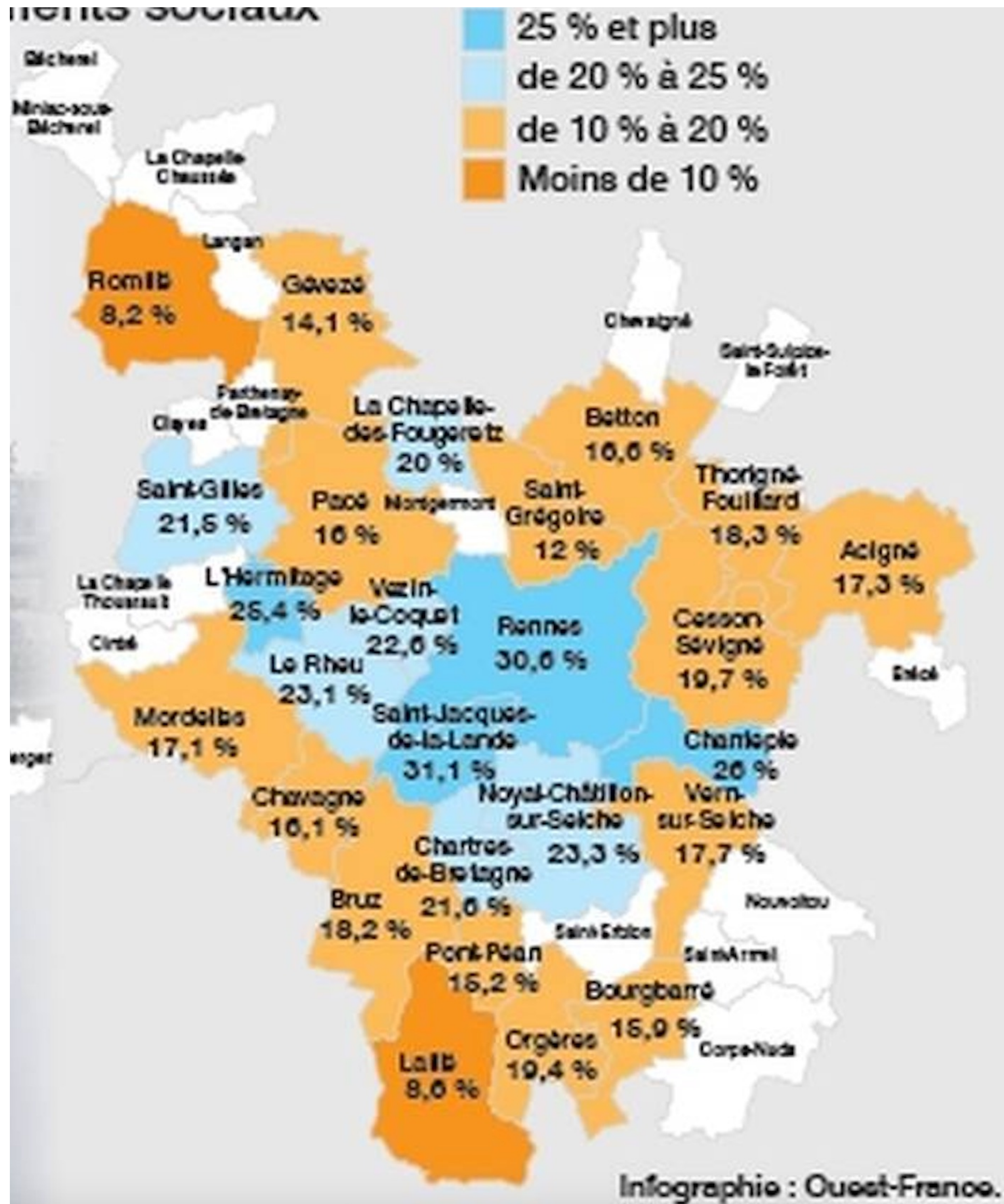


Progression moyenne du taux SRU



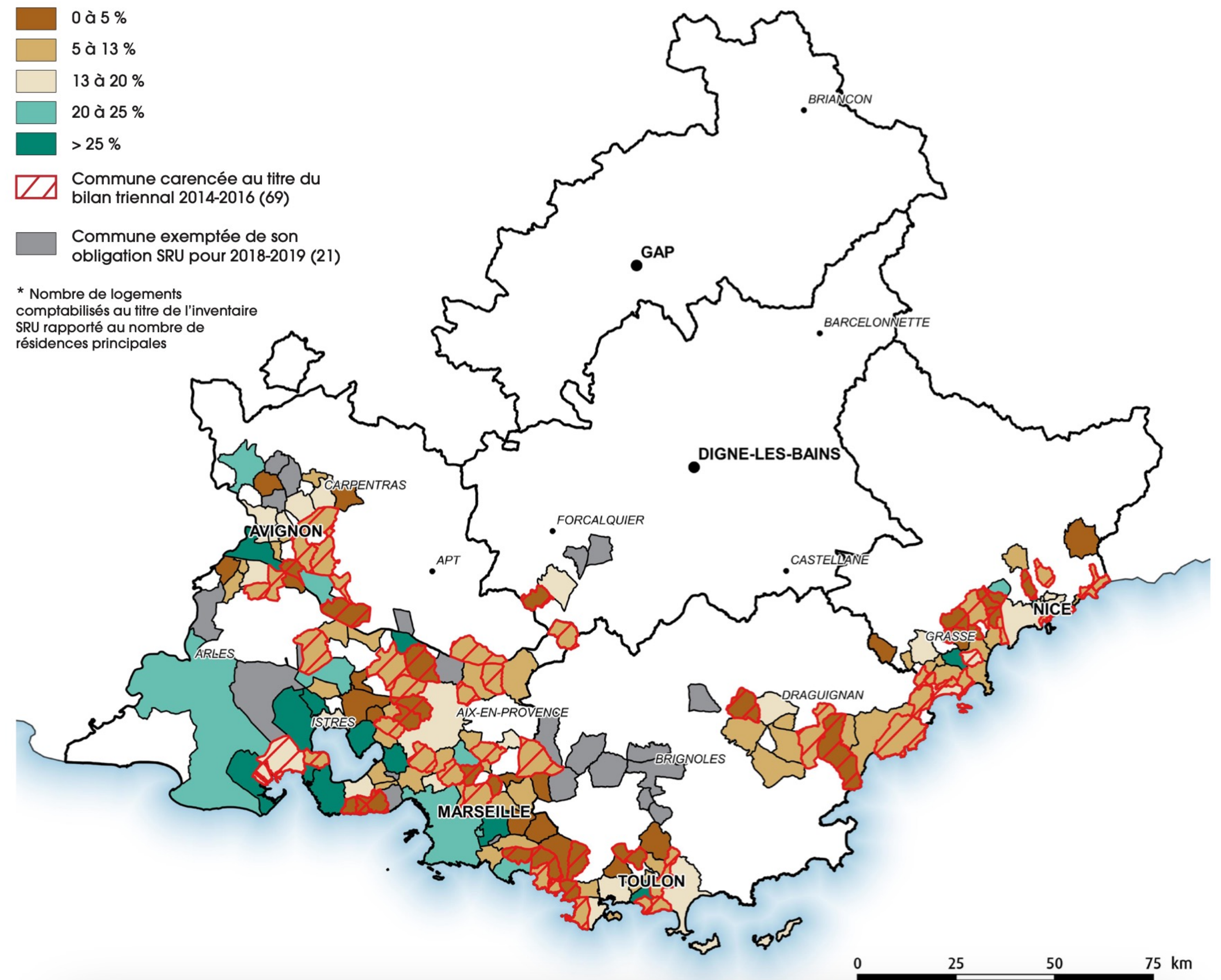
France's SRU fair-share mandate enacted in 2000, requiring municipalities to include 25% social housing in their housing stock

71% of municipalities not complying with the law have a right wing mayor



Brittany/Rennes
the intermunicipal success story

Commune soumise à la loi SRU au 01/01/2017 (192)
Taux de logement social au 01/01/2017 *



Provence/French Riviera
the "outlaws"

lesson(s) for california

this is not a French tale of the all-powerful state mandating local municipalities to build more

lesson(s) for california

~~this is not a French tale of the all-powerful state mandating local municipalities to build more~~

this is a **never-ending battle**, regularly threatened by the national assembly, and challenged locally, particularly with reluctant exclusionary places

lesson(s) for california

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think about the **Provence/French riviera** case, “**the California**” of France

An aerial photograph of a city grid, showing a mix of residential buildings, green spaces, and parking lots. A large white rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text 'strategy B: adaptive reuse + infill densification'.

**strategy B: adaptive reuse + infill
densification**

french model

**mayor Hidalgo's affordable housing provision strategies since 2014,
accompanied by her deputy mayor for housing Ian Brossat**

french model

mayor Hidalgo's affordable housing provision strategies since 2014, accompanied by her deputy mayor for housing Ian Brossat

goal: increase social housing from 13% in 2000 to 25.5% in 2024, with a goal of 30% by 2030 (*and 40% affordable housing by 2035*)

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in a city more built-up than San Francisco, and as dense as Calcutta

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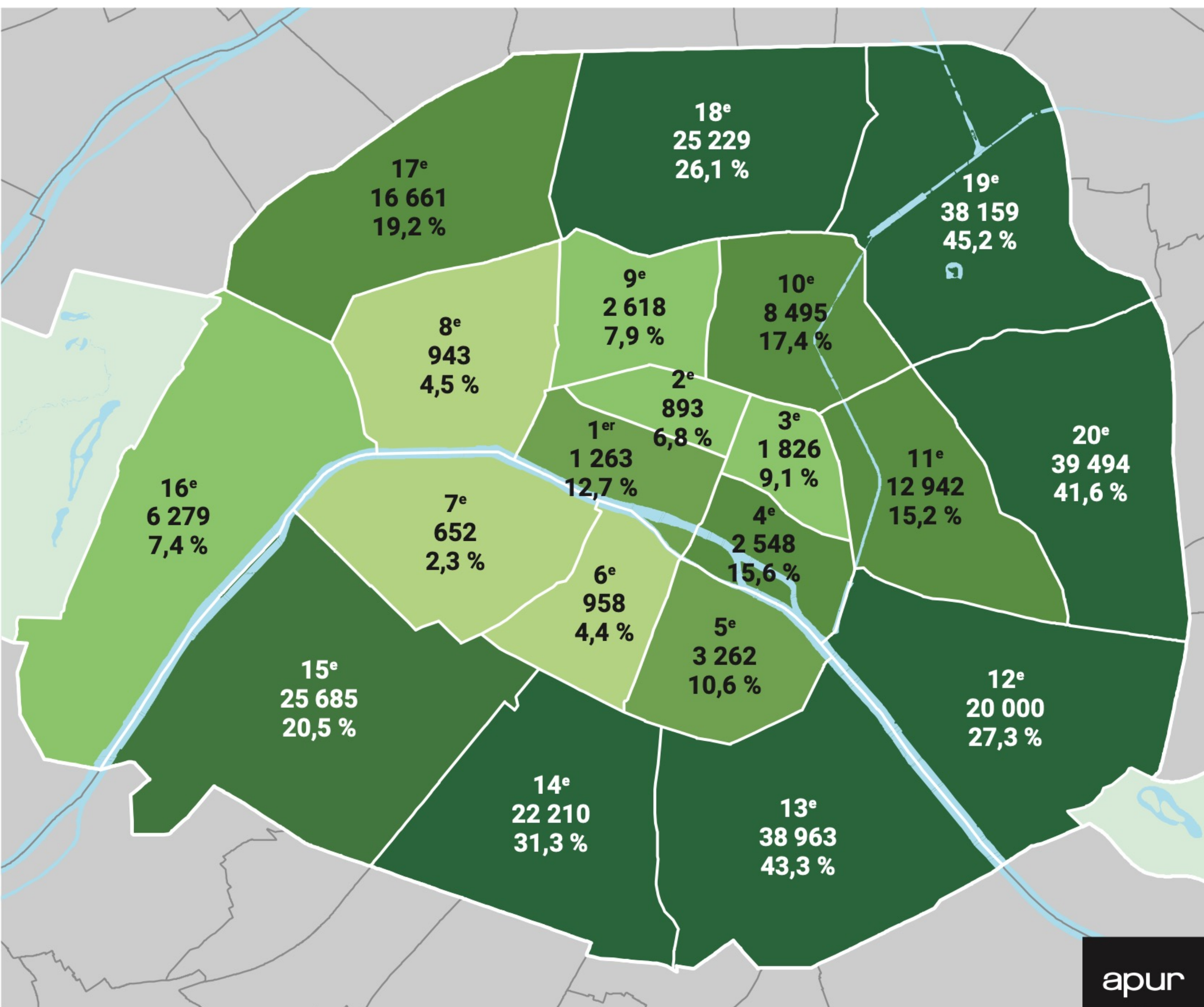
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in a city more built-up than San Francisco, and as dense as Calcutta

– and not just a parcel-by-parcel ad hoc strategy, but inscribed in a new one-of-a-kind **PLU bioclimatique** (bio climatic land use plan)

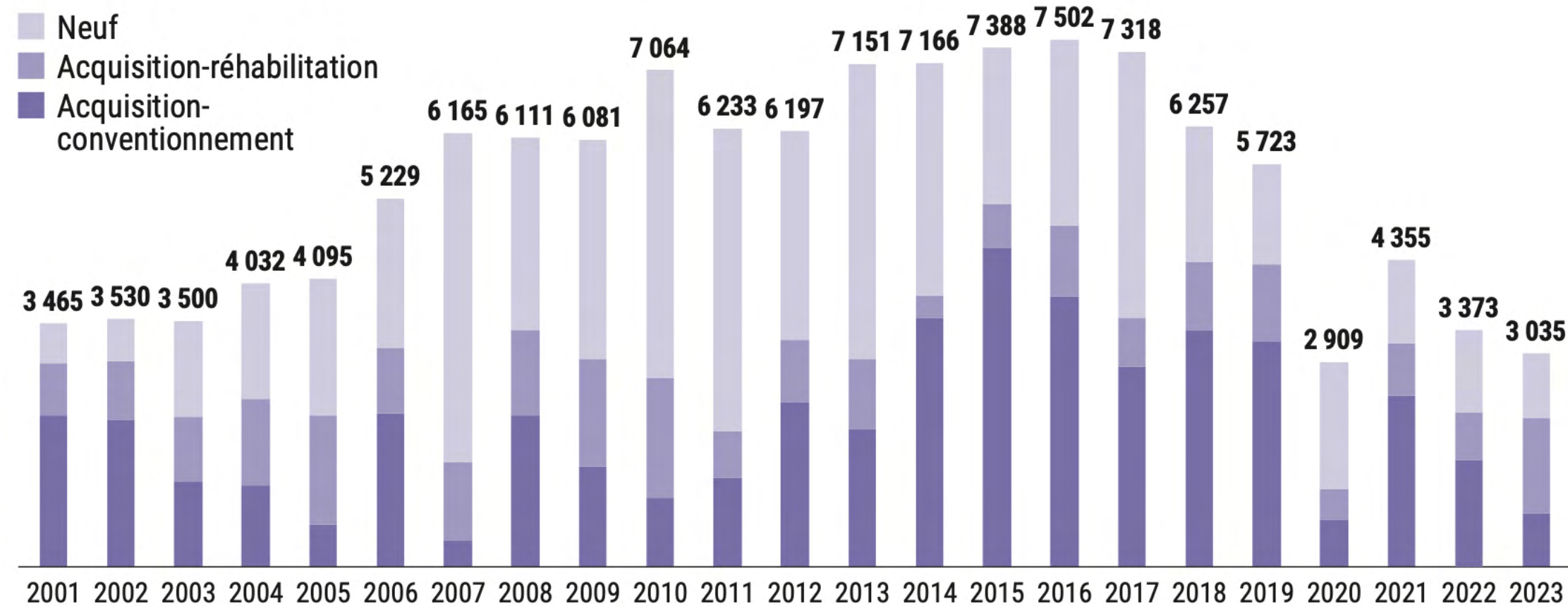


Credits: Ville de Paris 2022



Mode de production

- Neuf
- Acquisition-réhabilitation
- Acquisition-conventionnement



Source : Ville de Paris 2024 - Traitement Apur

CARTOGRAPHIE DU LOGEMENT SOCIAL À PARIS

250 618

logements sociaux au sens de la loi SRU au 1^{er} janvier 2019

21,4%

de logements sociaux parmi les résidences principales au 1^{er} janvier 2019

+ 110 000

logements sociaux financés depuis 2001

23,9%

de logements sociaux parmi les résidences principales en intégrant les logements financés restant à livrer



LOGEMENTS RUE JEAN-BART

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE QUINTON ARCHITECTE - RIVP

Adresse

12 rue Jean-Bart, 75006 Paris

Programme

8 logements familiaux et extension d'une crèche

Maîtrise d'ouvrage

RIVP

Maîtrise d'oeuvre

Jean-Christophe Quinton architecte
assisté de Charles Rosenfled

Adresse

12 rue Jean Bart, 75006 Paris

Equipe MOE

Eco+construire (économie de la construction)
EXEDIX (structure)
AXPACAAL (fluides/thermiques/HQE)

Entreprises

AMT (entreprise générale)
Hérès (découpe pierre)
Batipose (pose de la pierre)
Semefer (serrurie)
Daubigney (menuiseries extérieures bois)
Laumond (menuiseries extérieures alu)

Livraison

Septembre 2021

6th arrondissement
typical average price in
neighborhood by sq.m.:
15,000-20,000



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Livraison

Septembre 2021

1,900,000 euros
2016-2020



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Laumond (menuiseries extérieures alu)

Livraison

Septembre 2021

former police station

6 3BRs (64m2)
2 studios



9th arrondissement
85 rue Saint-Lazare
office conversion

17 social housing units + bioclimatic design



PLURIEL[LES] ARCHITECTES

Mission de Maîtrise d'œuvre complète

Maître d'ouvrage : PARIS HABITAT

Bureau d'études : OTEIS Etco

Performance :
Plan Climat de Paris / Label Cerqual PHE

Calendrier : Livré en 2019



40% vacant office space
located in the 9th + 8th
in large part Haussmannian stock





PLU
#bioclimatique

lesson(s) for california

pathway already started of reforming single-family only zoning

lesson(s) for california

pathway already started of reforming single-family only zoning

it should pay off to do further work on reforming building codes that do not allow for easy adaptive reuse, rehabbing, building of smaller FARs, etc.

An aerial photograph of a city grid, showing a mix of residential buildings, green spaces, and parking lots. A large white rectangular box is overlaid in the center, containing the text 'strategy C: traditional ways of financing affordable housing'.

strategy C: traditional ways of financing affordable housing

french model

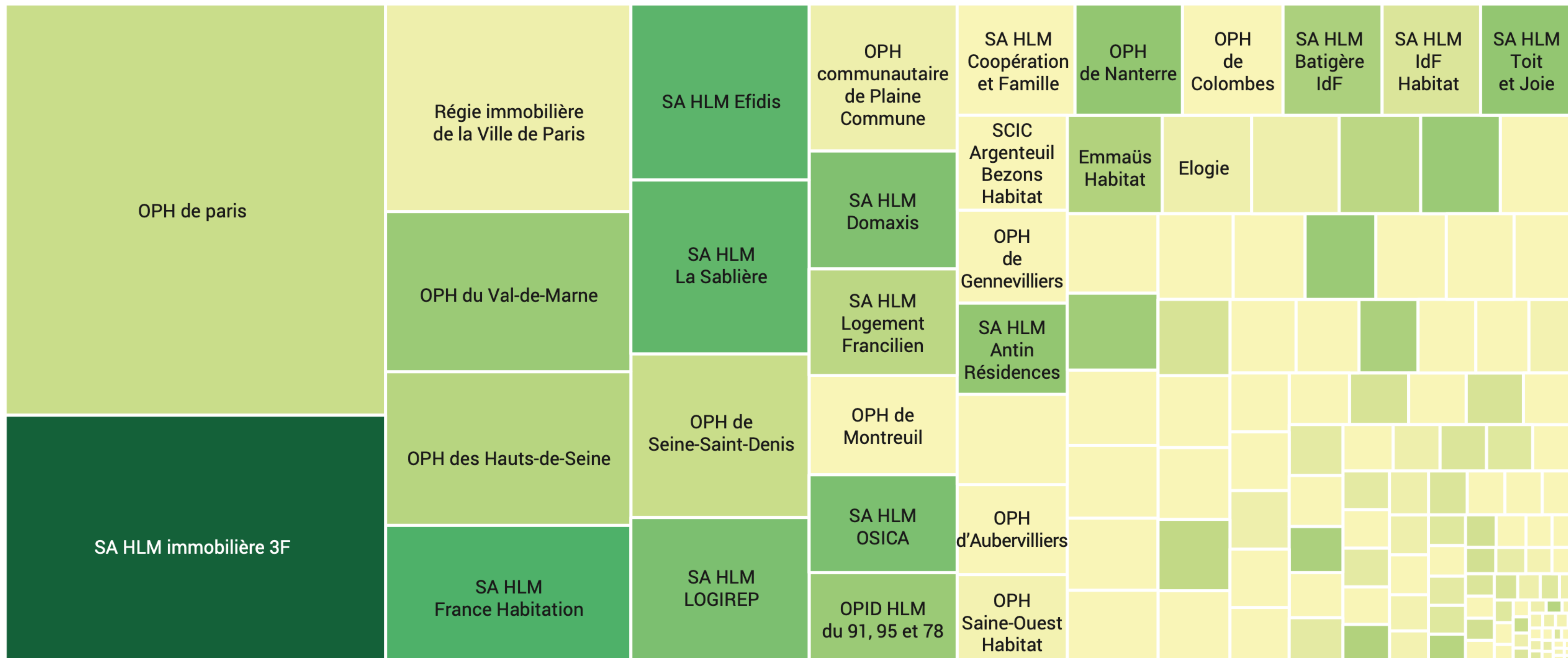
not just a question of **steady/important social housing financing** by century-old institutions and developers

french model

not just a question of **steady/important social housing financing** by century-old institutions and developers

also a deep reliance on **harnessing of publicly owned land** that stems from the tradition of postwar *grands ensembles*, similar to US public housing projects, but with a better fate

ENSEMBLE DU PATRIMOINE SOCIAL SITUÉ DANS LE PÉRIMÈTRE DE LA MGP, SELON LE BAILLEUR ET LE NOMBRE DE COMMUNES DE PRÉSENCE, EN 2016



Nombre de communes où les bailleurs ont du patrimoine



Note de lecture : la surface des rectangles représentant chaque bailleur est proportionnelle au nombre de logements gérés par le bailleur dans la Métropole du Grand Paris.

Source : RPLS au 1^{er} janvier 2016, version Loi

Traitements de données : Apur

Example EPF Île-de-France

Budget = 540 M€ (2022)

Technical assistance to reach goals set by SDRIF [Schéma Directeur de la Région Île-de-France]

Provides land at the basic cost of an operation (acquisition cost + carrying costs – rental income)

EPFIF operations in 2023:

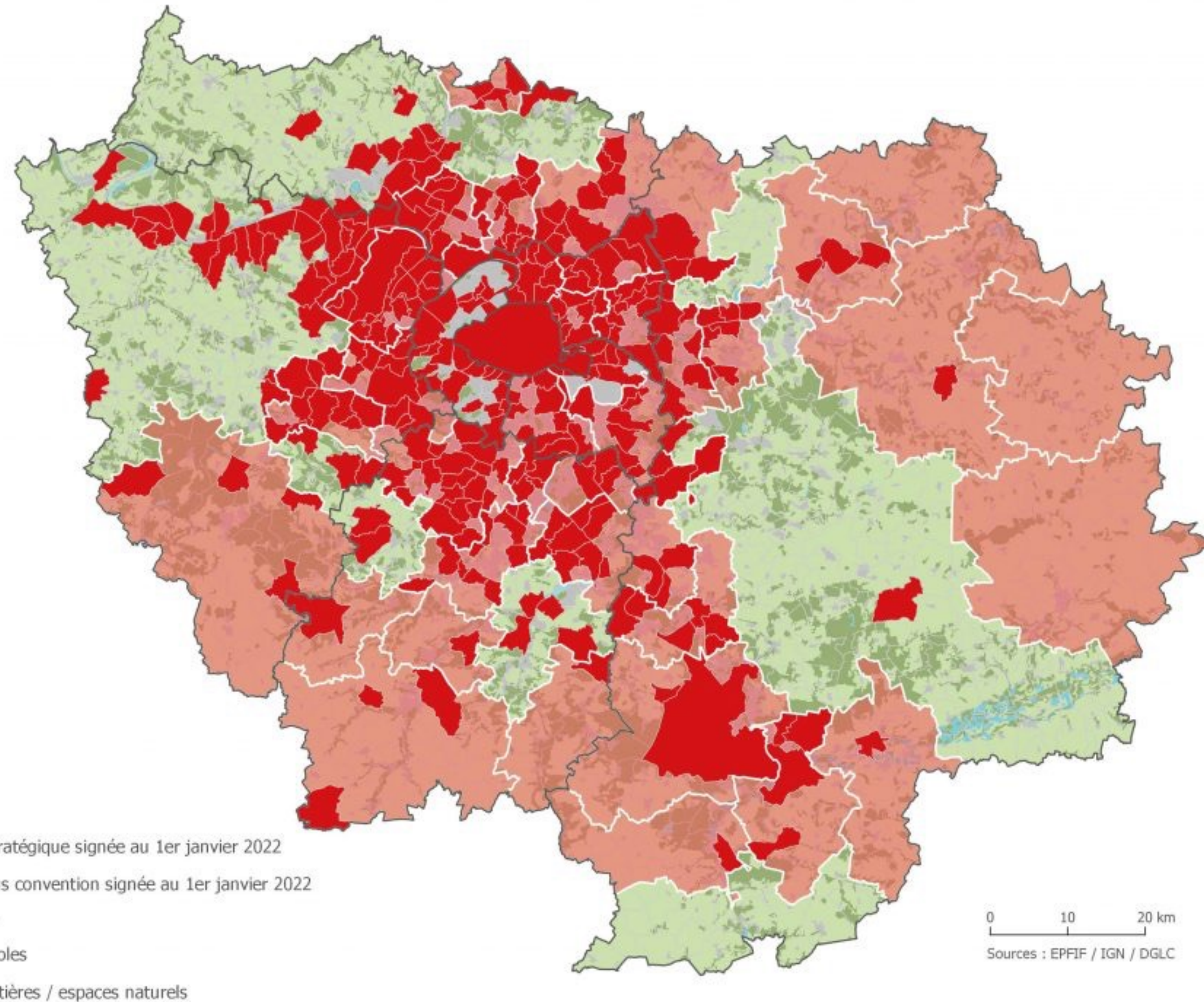
- 477 M€ in acquisitions

- 283 M€ in cessions

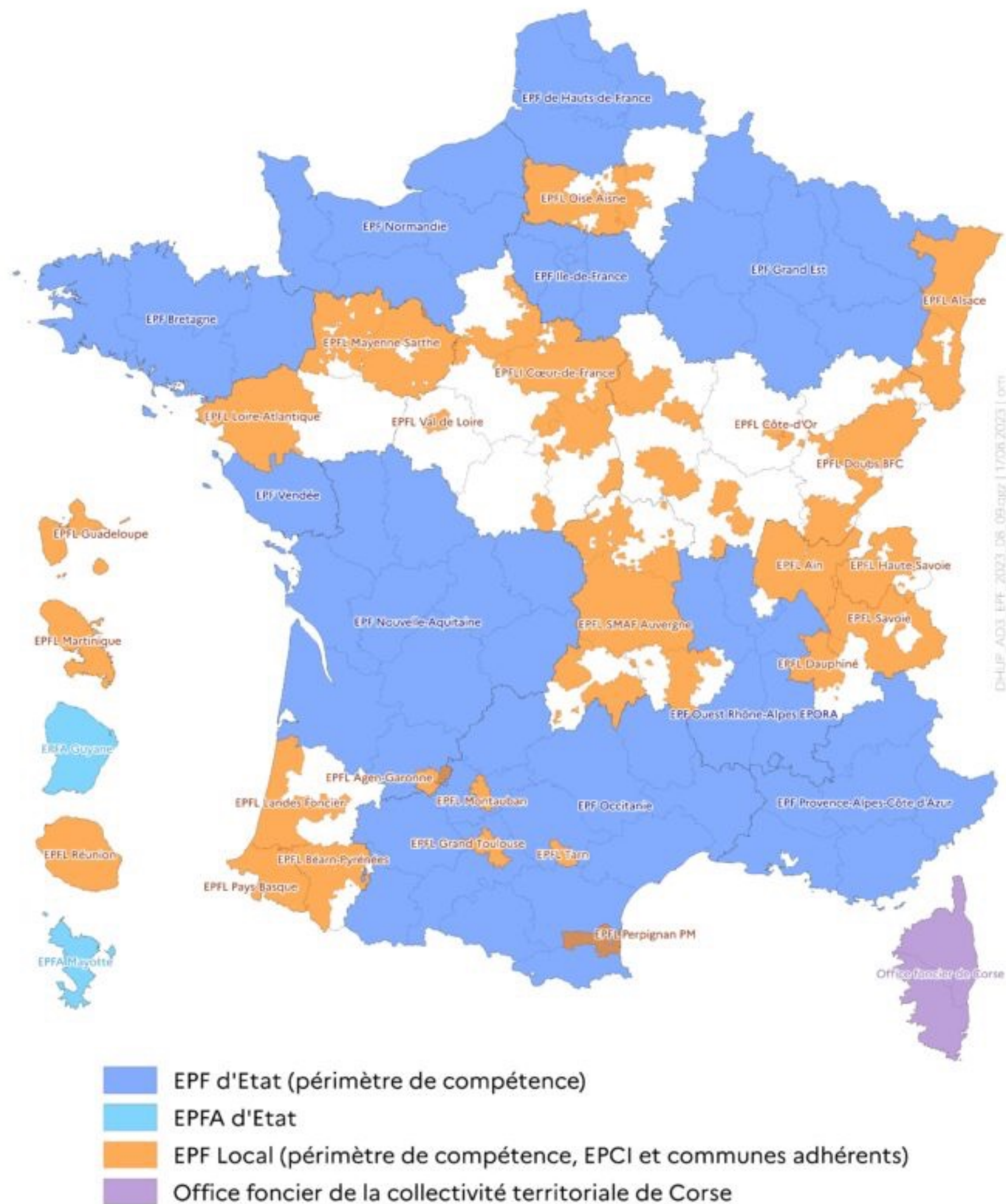
(6 700 housing units/ 170,000 m²)

50% increased land transfers for housing between 2013 and 2018

epf
ILE-DE-FRANCE



Les établissements publics fonciers (EPF) d'Etat et les EPF locaux Janvier 2023



Source : DGALN/DHUP/AD3
Cartographie : DGALN/ICAPP/NUM

Example EPF Île-de-France

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RENAUD
EPSTEIN

ON EST BIEN ARRIVÉS



UN TOUR
DE FRANCE
DES GRANDS
ENSEMBLES

LE NOUVEL ATTILA



Social contract

The Architectural Review

Provision of social housing in Grand Paris is a very mixed picture, yet some exemplary architects and politicians are spearheading a change of direction, writes *Magda Maaoui*

financing portfolio

1. Maintenance of historic heritage

The Architectural Review



Lacaton & Vassal's careful repair and adaptation of Tour Bois le Prêtre is a successful example of using existing social housing stock
Credit:Frédéric Druot

financing portfolio

1. Maintenance of historic heritage
2. Climate adaptation of public housing

Un nouveau Cœur de Ville se construit à Clichy-sous-Bois

COPROPRIÉTÉS RÉHABILITÉES
La résidence Allende fera l'objet de travaux de rénovation énergétique et de résidentialisation tout comme les résidences Sévigné et Vallée des Anges, et les petits immeubles maintenus sur le Chêne Pointu et l'Étoile du Chêne Pointu.



GRANDE PELOUSE
Sur la Grande Pelouse, une aire de jeux est prévue, ainsi que de nouveaux éléments de mobilier urbain (banca, tables, toilettes...). De nouvelles plantations permettront d'avoir plus d'ombre et un cheminement permettra d'y circuler plus facilement. La Grande Pelouse restera un espace d'accueil évenementiel comme « Clichy Plage » et le parking de la Mairie attenant sera rénové, pour y accéder plus facilement.



NOUVEAUX LOGEMENTS AVENUE DE L'AVENIR
Avec un démarrage des travaux début 2024, le programme de logements à l'angle de l'allée Maurice Audin et de l'Avenue de l'Avenir est l'une des premières opérations du quartier. Le nouveau bâtiment abritera 69 logements sociaux et 48 logements en accession ainsi que des commerces en rez-de-chaussée. L'arrière du bâtiment donnera sur le bois de la Lorette, qui sera un parc ouvert au public.

AGRANDISSEMENT DU SQUARE DU CHÊNE POINTU

Dans le cadre des travaux d'enfouissement menés par le Département, le bassin de rétention sera recouvert. Cet espace public, qui viendra prolonger le square du Chêne Pointu sera aménagé comme un espace sportif et de jeu. Plus au nord, le stade Calot sera facilement accessible, ouvert sur le parc de la Mairie et planté de nouveaux arbres. Un parking paysager attenant verra également le jour.



GROUPE SCOLAIRE PAUL VAILLANT-COUTURIER

Le groupe scolaire Paul Vaillant-Couturier rénové par la Ville sera plus grand, plus confortable et plus écologique, il accueillera de nouvelles fonctions pour en faire un pôle éducatif ouvert et innovant.



NOUVELLE PLACE ET NOUVELLE TRAVERSÉE EN CŒUR DE QUARTIER

La création d'une nouvelle place en cœur de quartier, sur l'actuel parking du centre commercial, ouvre le quartier et crée un nouvel espace de rencontres, favorisé par l'implantation d'arbres qui apportent de la fraîcheur et des gradins en bois pour s'asseoir. Depuis cette place, les habitants accèdent à des commerces et des locaux d'activité en rez-de-chaussée des immeubles. Cette place est desservie par un nouvel axe qui traverse le quartier d'Est en Ouest.



NOUVEAUX LOGEMENTS AU 6-10 ALLÉE FRÉDÉRIC LADRETTE

Première opération située sur une ancienne emprise de l'Étoile du Chêne Pointu (celle du bâtiment B18). Les nouveaux immeubles d'ICF la Sablière comprennent 46 logements sociaux, dont 50% sont dédiés au relogement des habitants qui habitaient au Chêne Pointu et à l'Étoile du Chêne Pointu.

- Bâtiments existants
- Bâtiments neufs
- Bâtiments publics
- Copropriétés réhabilitées
- Commerces et services

financing portfolio

1. Maintenance of historic heritage
2. Climate adaptation of public housing
3. Building *public* infrastructure on *public* land

lesson(s) for california

1. assess the current landscape of public, nonprofit and private organizations in the US and their **capacity for taking on new roles** that could form the foundation of a new form of social housing

lesson(s) for california

1. assess the current landscape of public, nonprofit and private organizations in the US and their **capacity for taking on new roles** that could form the foundation of a new form of social housing
2. identify the **public resources that would be required to support the sector** (e.g., sources of development capital, land for siting housing, support for operating costs of both social housing organizations and their housing developments, and technical assistance to support the field)

An aerial photograph of a city grid, showing a mix of residential buildings, green spaces, and parking lots. A large white rectangular box is overlaid in the center, containing the text 'strategy D: public-private partnerships'.

strategy D: public-private partnerships

french model

the public-private partnership *à la française*

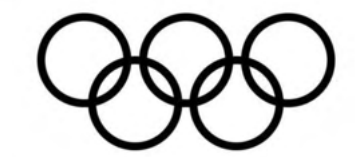
french model

the public-private partnership *à la française*

how private developers are currently building the majority of **master planned mixed-income housing developments**



PARIS 2024



extension zones

- 1 Stade de France
- 2 Centre aquatique
- 3 Centre de Water-Polo
- 4 Le Bourget - Pavillon I
- 5 Le Bourget - Pavillon II
- 6 Stand de Tir

ZONE PARIS CENTRE

- 7 Champ-de-Mars
- 8 Tour Eiffel
- 9 Champs-Élysées
- 10 Grand Palais
- 11 Esplanade des Invalides
- 12 Paris Expo - Hall I
- 13 Paris Expo - Hall IV
- 14 Parc des Princes
- 15 Stade Jean-Bouin
- 16 Roland-Garros
- 17 Paris Arena I
- 18 Paris Arena II

other sites

- 19 Arena 92
- 20 Stade Yves-du-Manoir
- 21 Zénith Paris
- 22 Base Nautique
- 23 Château de Versailles
- 24 Vélodrome National
- 25 Piste de BMX
- 26 Colline d'Élancourt
- 27 Golf National
- 28 Marina
- 29 30 Stades de Football
- 37 Stade Pierre-de-Coubertin

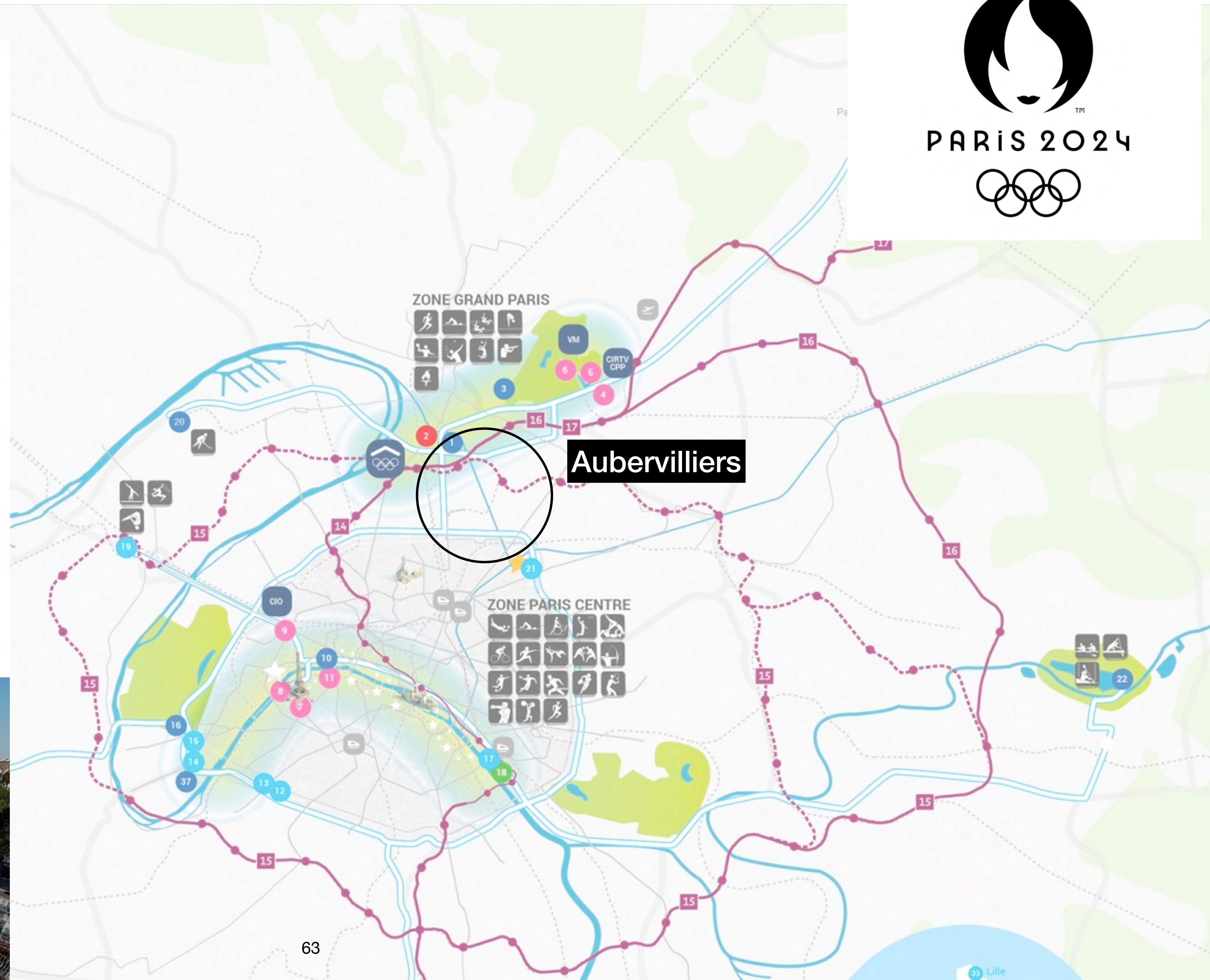
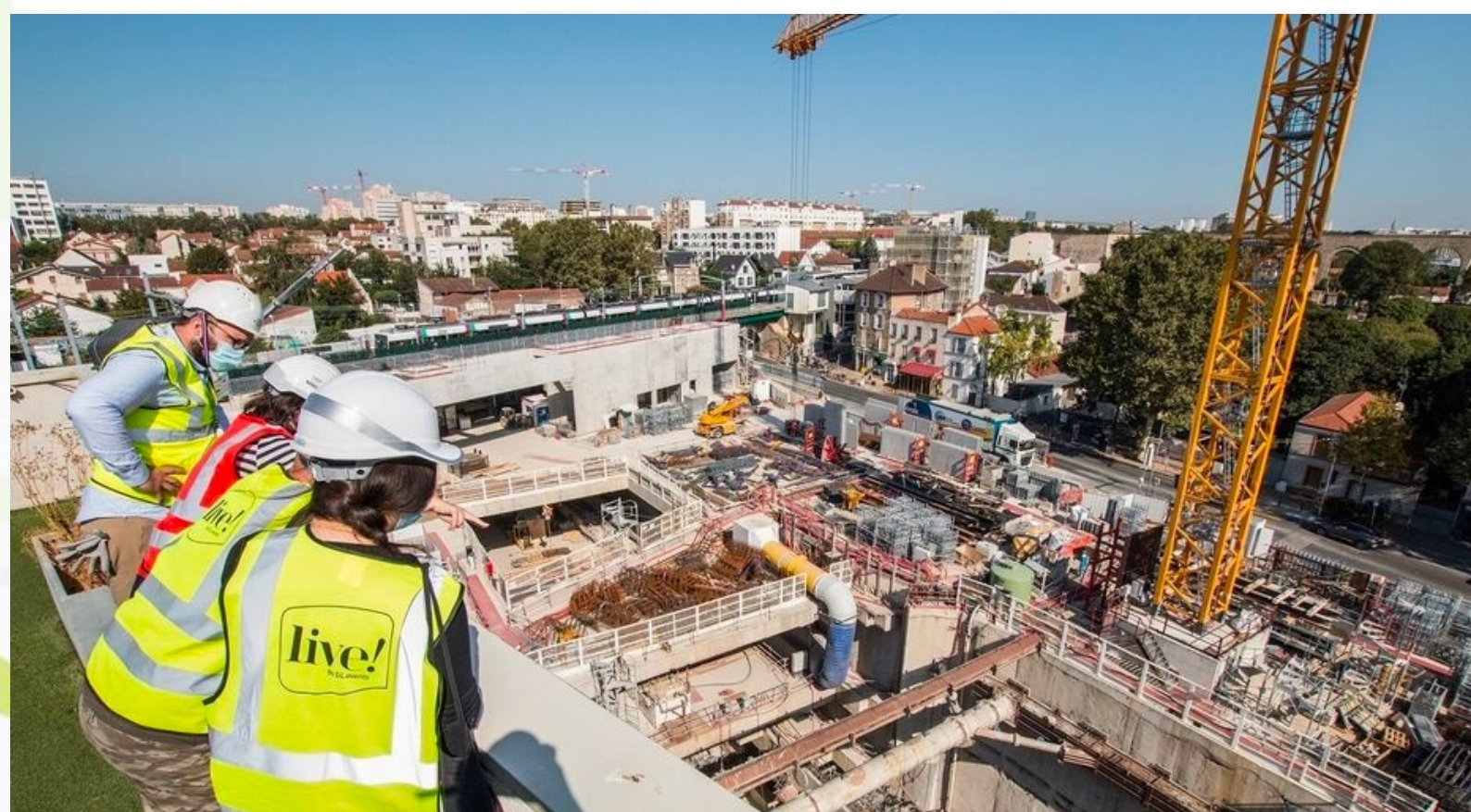
- Village Olympique
- Hotels du CIO
- Village des médias
- Centre International de Radio et Télévision Centre Principal de Presse
- Live site

infrastructure

- Autoroute et voie rapide
- Transilien - RER - TGV
- Métro - Tramway
- Grand Paris Express (horizon 2024)
- Grand Paris Express (horizon 2030)
- Voies olympiques

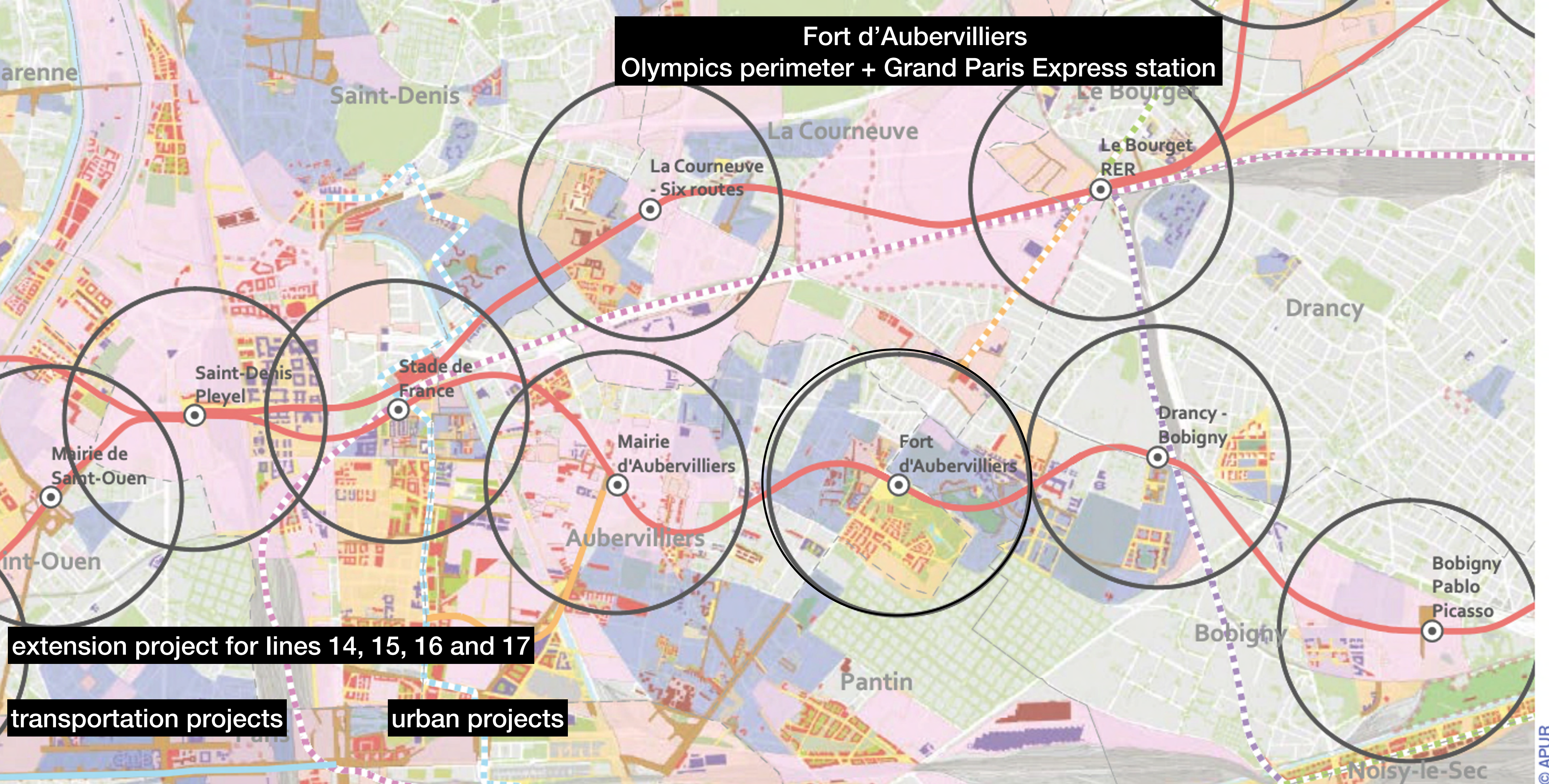
color code

- Existant, pas de constructions permanentes nécessaires
- Existant, constructions permanentes nécessaires
- Prévu
- Supplémentaire
- Temporaire



Aubervilliers

Fort d'Aubervilliers
Olympics perimeter + Grand Paris Express station

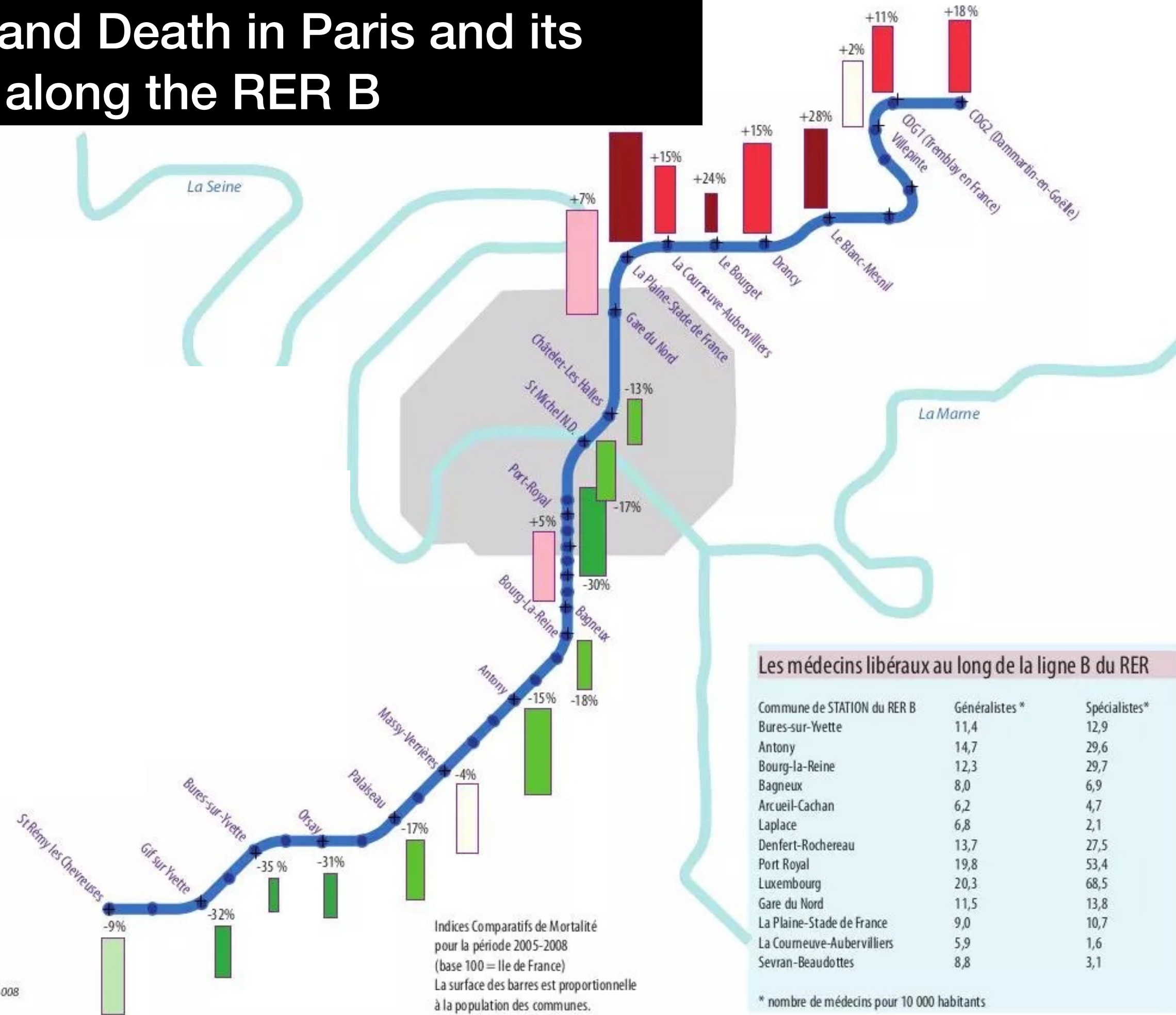


extension project for lines 14, 15, 16 and 17

transportation projects

urban projects

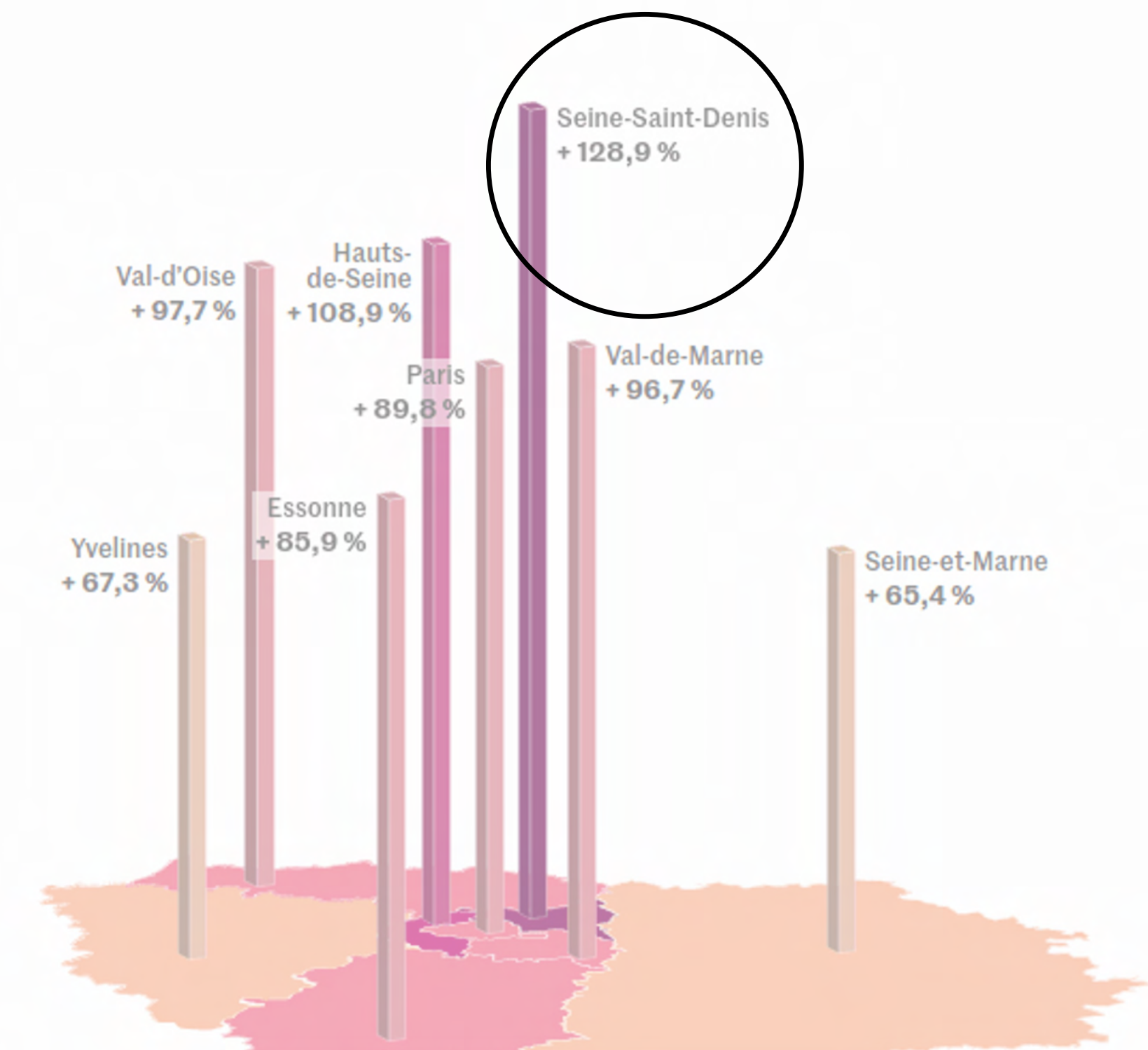
City, Life, and Death in Paris and its banlieues along the RER B



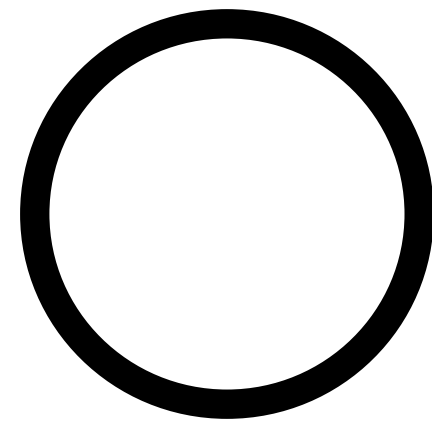
© E.Vigneron/NFT 2010
 Source des données : INSERM SC8 et INSEE-RP 2008
 Calculs et mise en forme : NFT 2010

Taux de surmortalité départementale observé entre le 1er mars et le 27 avril

“coronavirus: inequality is killing in Seine-Saint-Denis”, *Le Monde*, April 2020



**Fort d'Aubervilliers
Olympics perimeter + Grand Paris Express station**



2014-2025

36 acres

1,800 units, 25% affordable

Extension project for lines 14, 15, 16 and 17

transportation projects

urban projects

Fort d'Aubervilliers construction site



Credits: Ville d'Aubervilliers



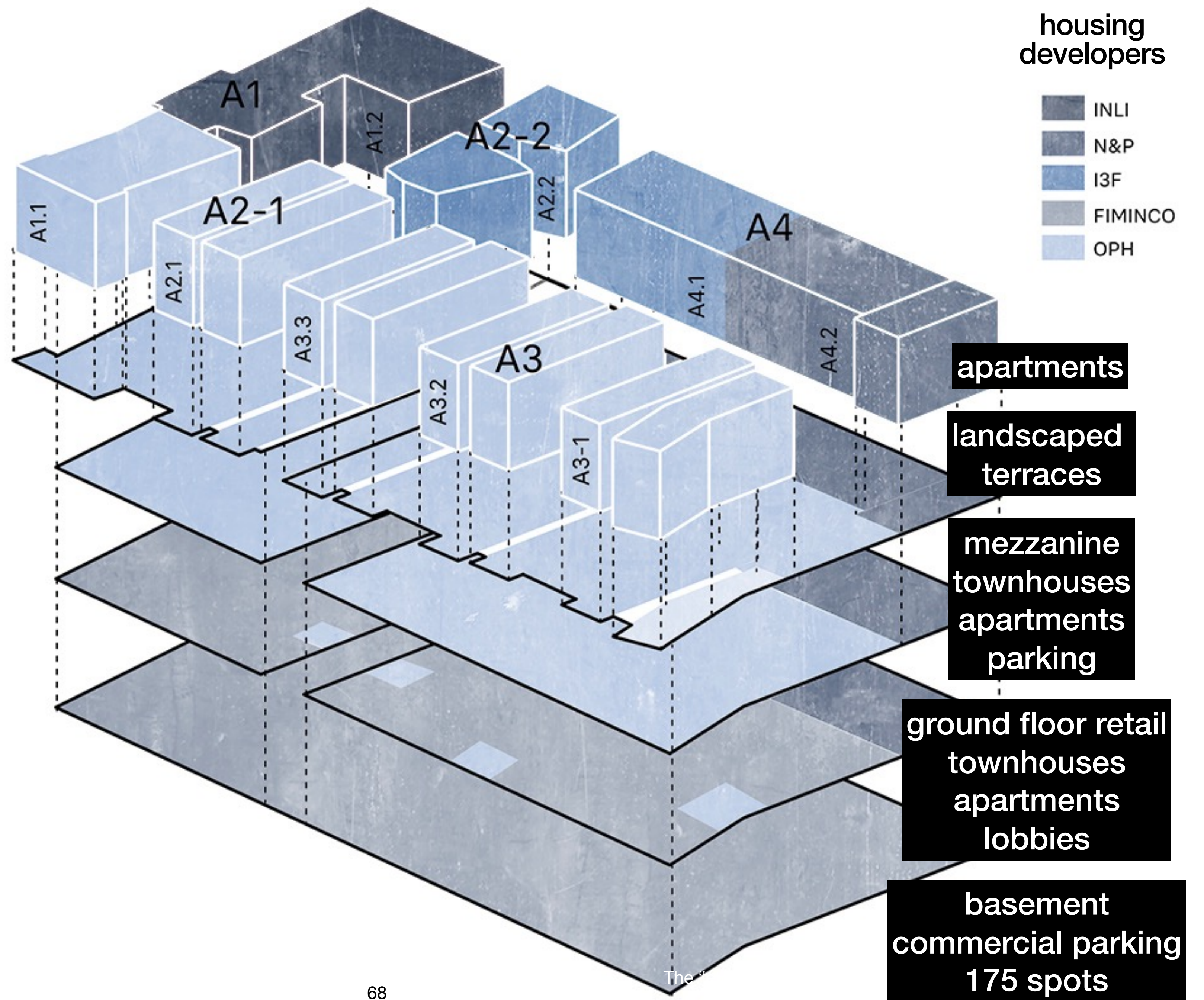
"the future of Paris will be decided in its peripheries"
-intermunicipal president Patrick Braouezec

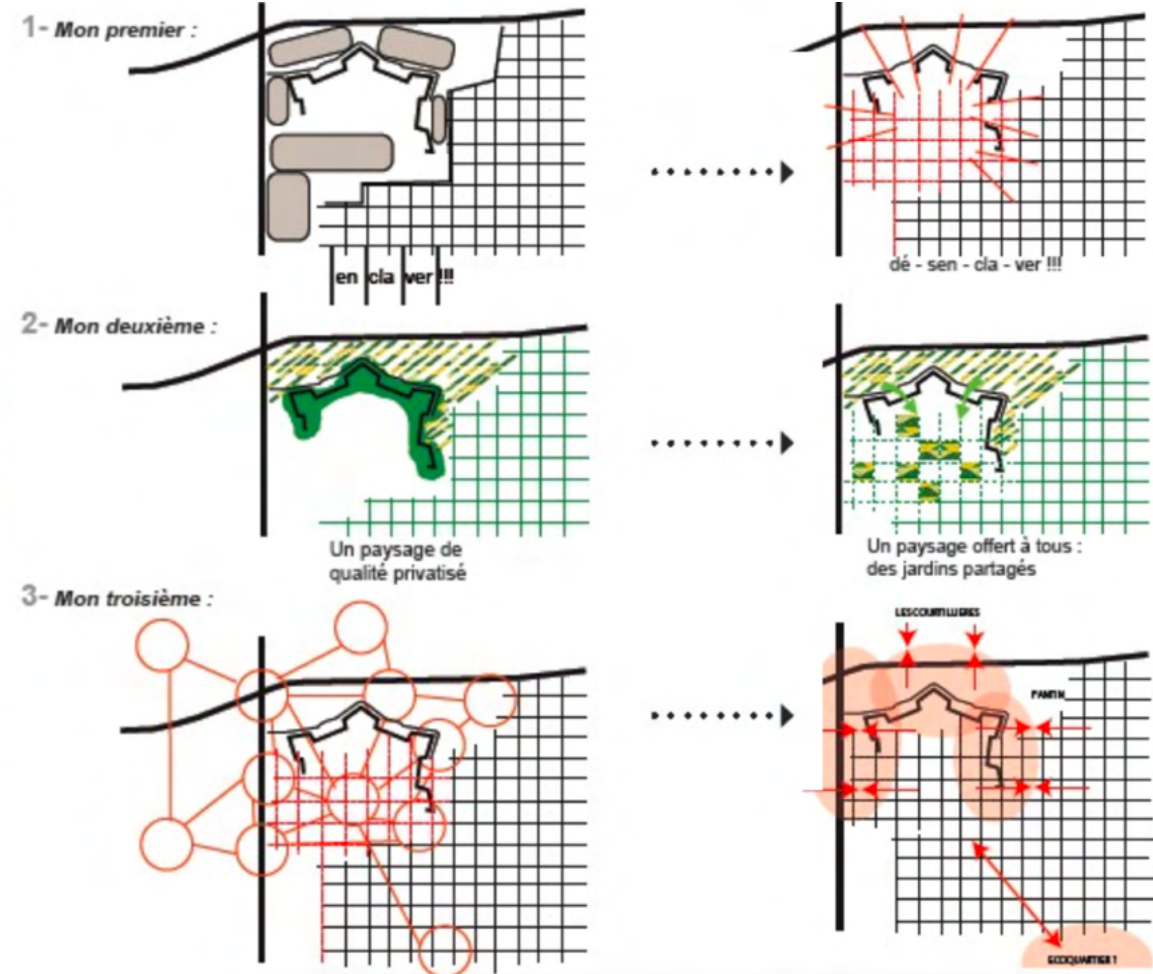
1. complaint filed
2. building permit process stalled
3. public-private partnership contract signed

"the banlieue does not complain, it files a complaint"
-ministry of housing and sustainability
Emmanuelle Cosse

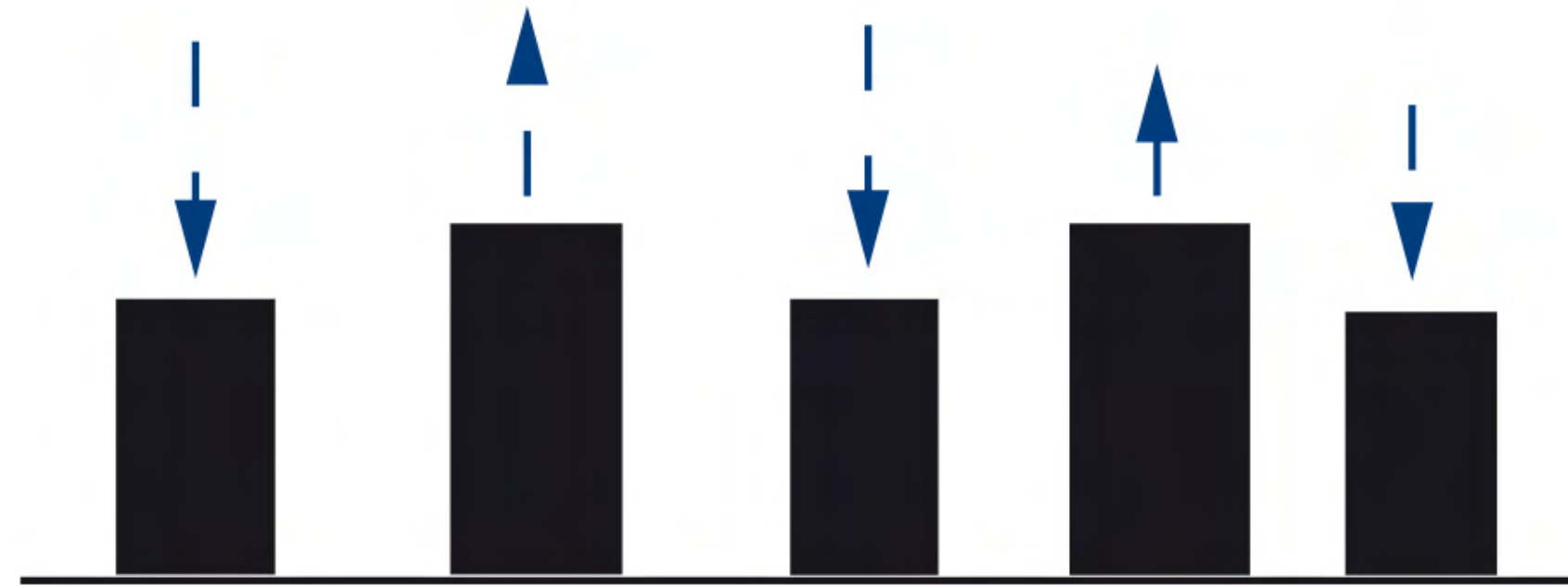


1. upzoning process

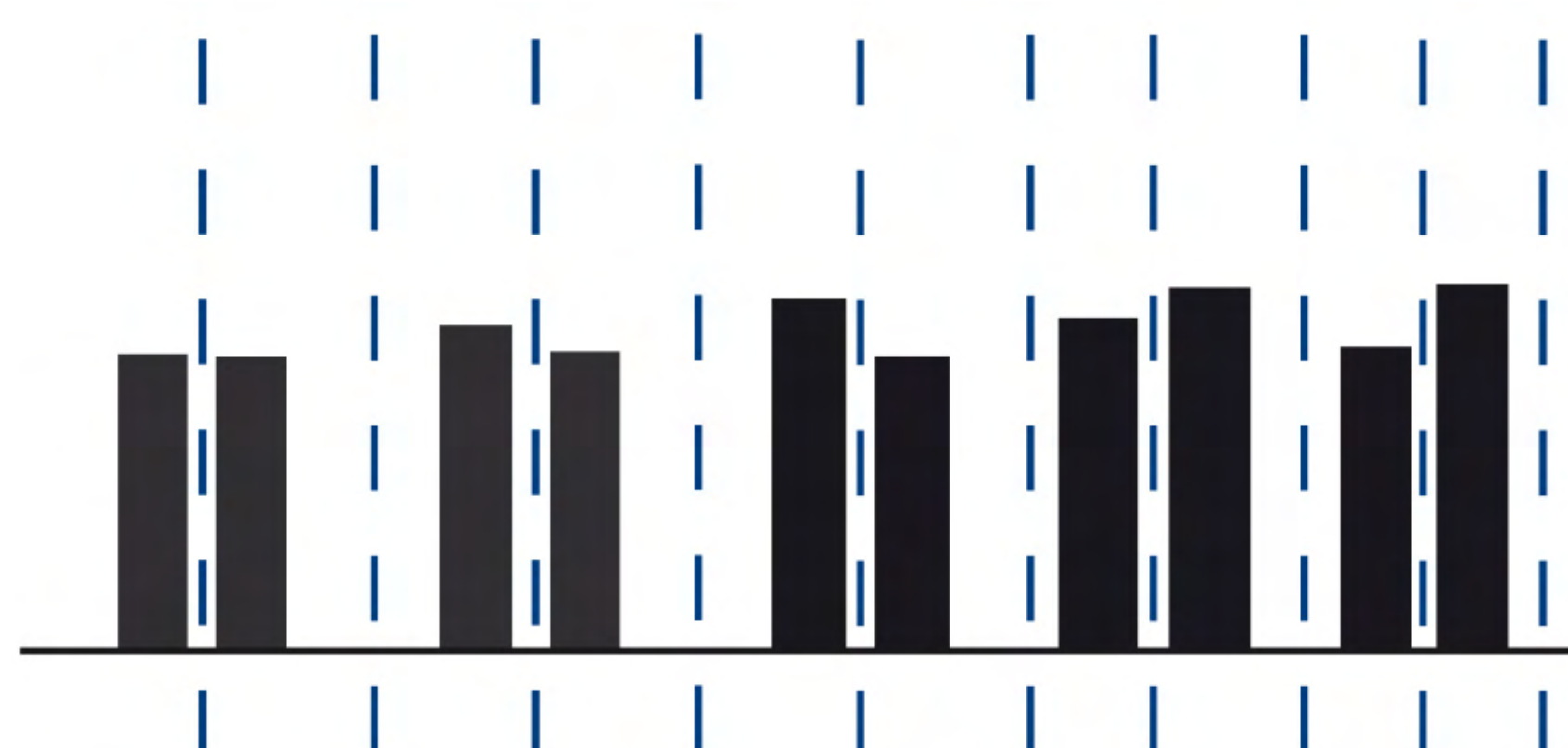




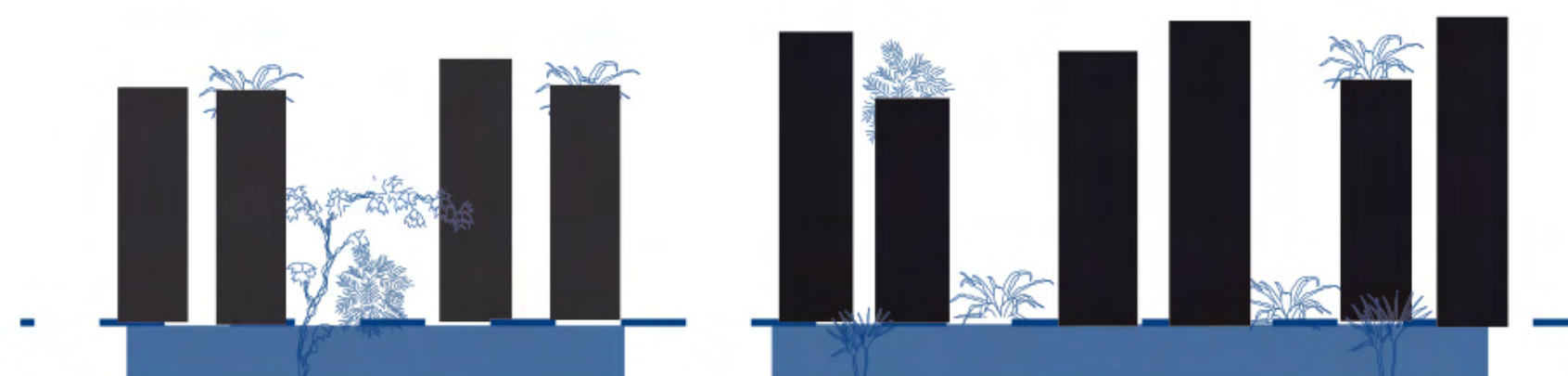
2. planning process



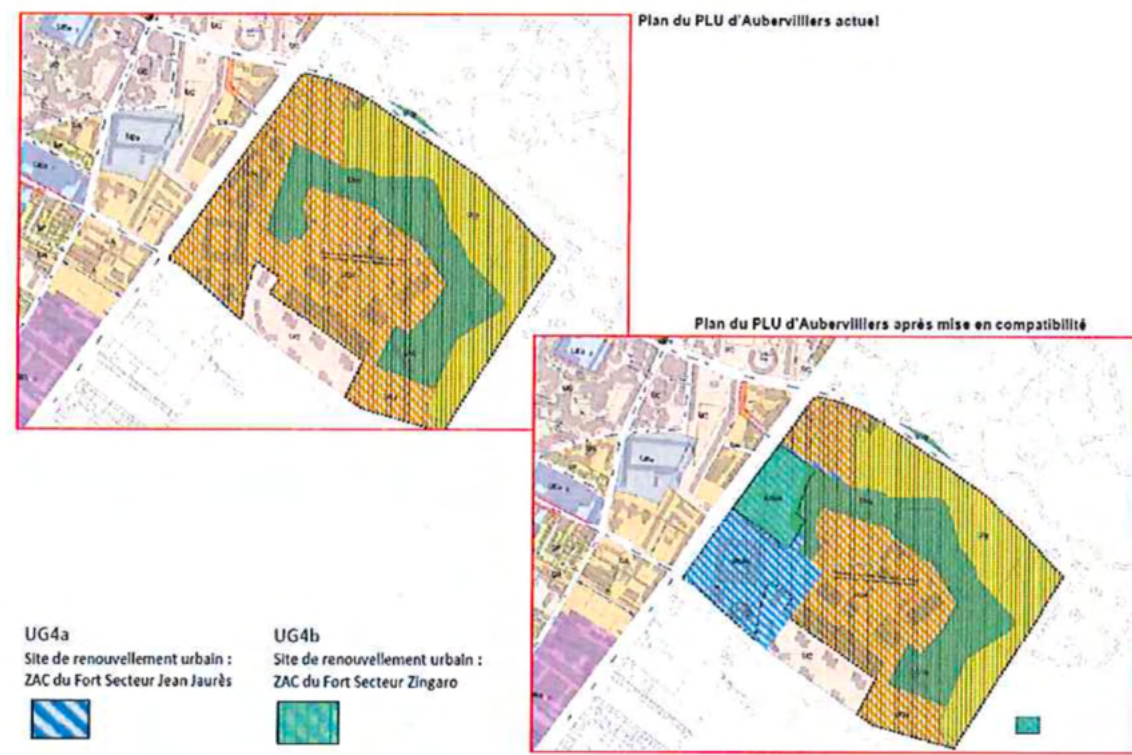
alternating building volumes
 healthy housing units



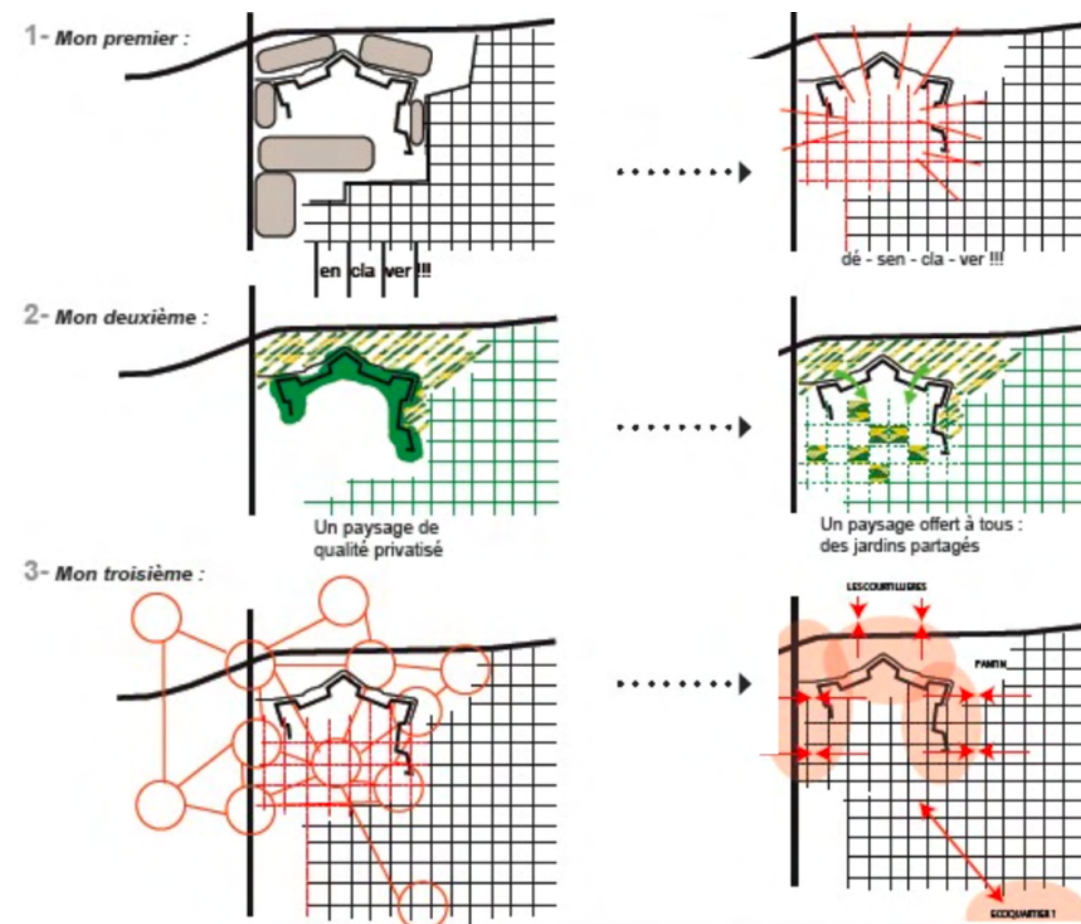
sustainable façades
 "faubourg" dense urban grid



mix of healthy amenities
 green space landscaping
 neighborhood gateways/buffers



1. upzoning document



2. planning process



“it was not a war of numbers, rather putting into music what was 99% politics”
 –planner Chloé Petazzi

“we are witnessing the rethinking of design politics”
 –architect Dominique Perrault

the healthy housing project that the coalition built

transit access

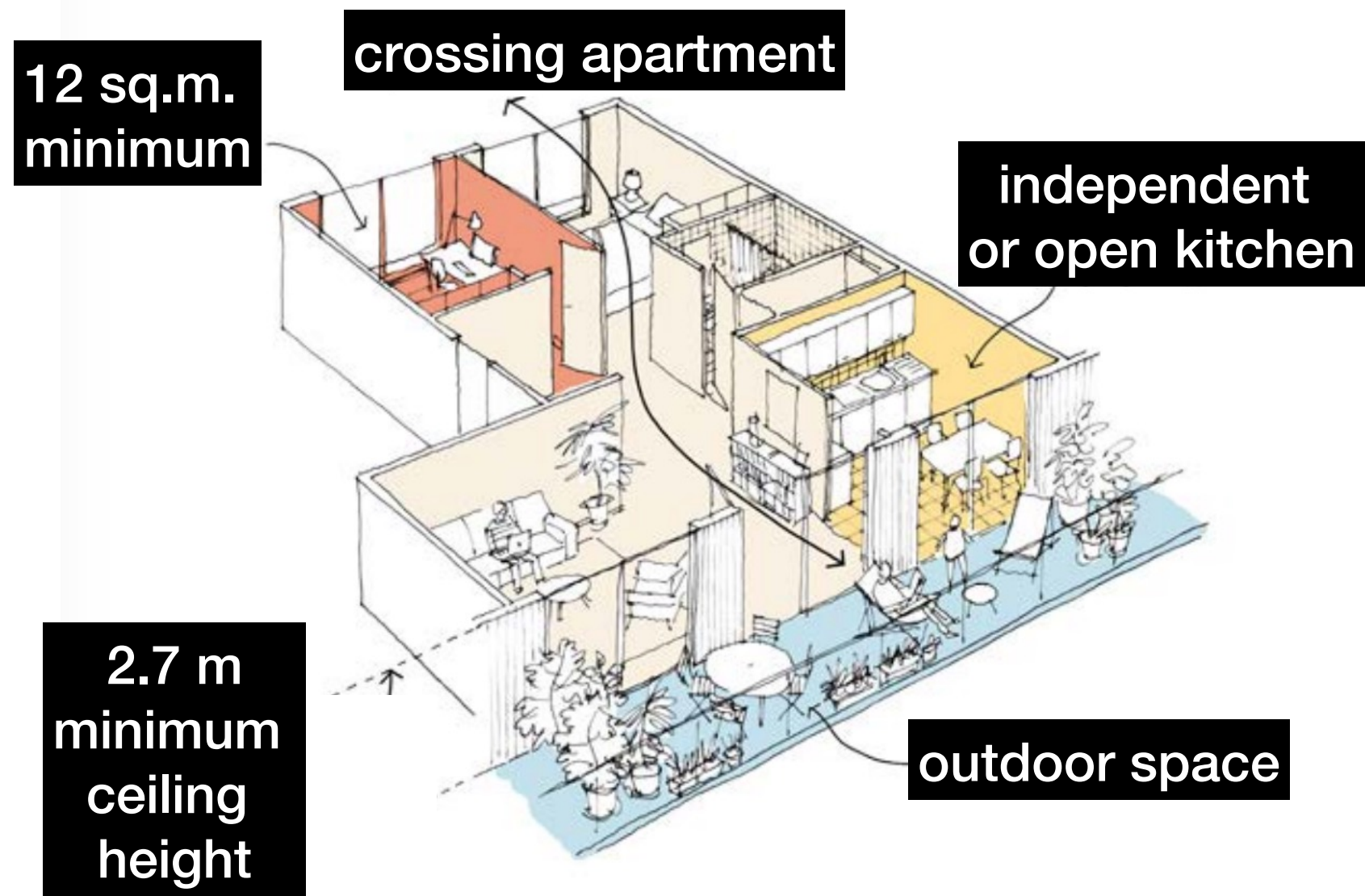
sustainable architecture

social mix

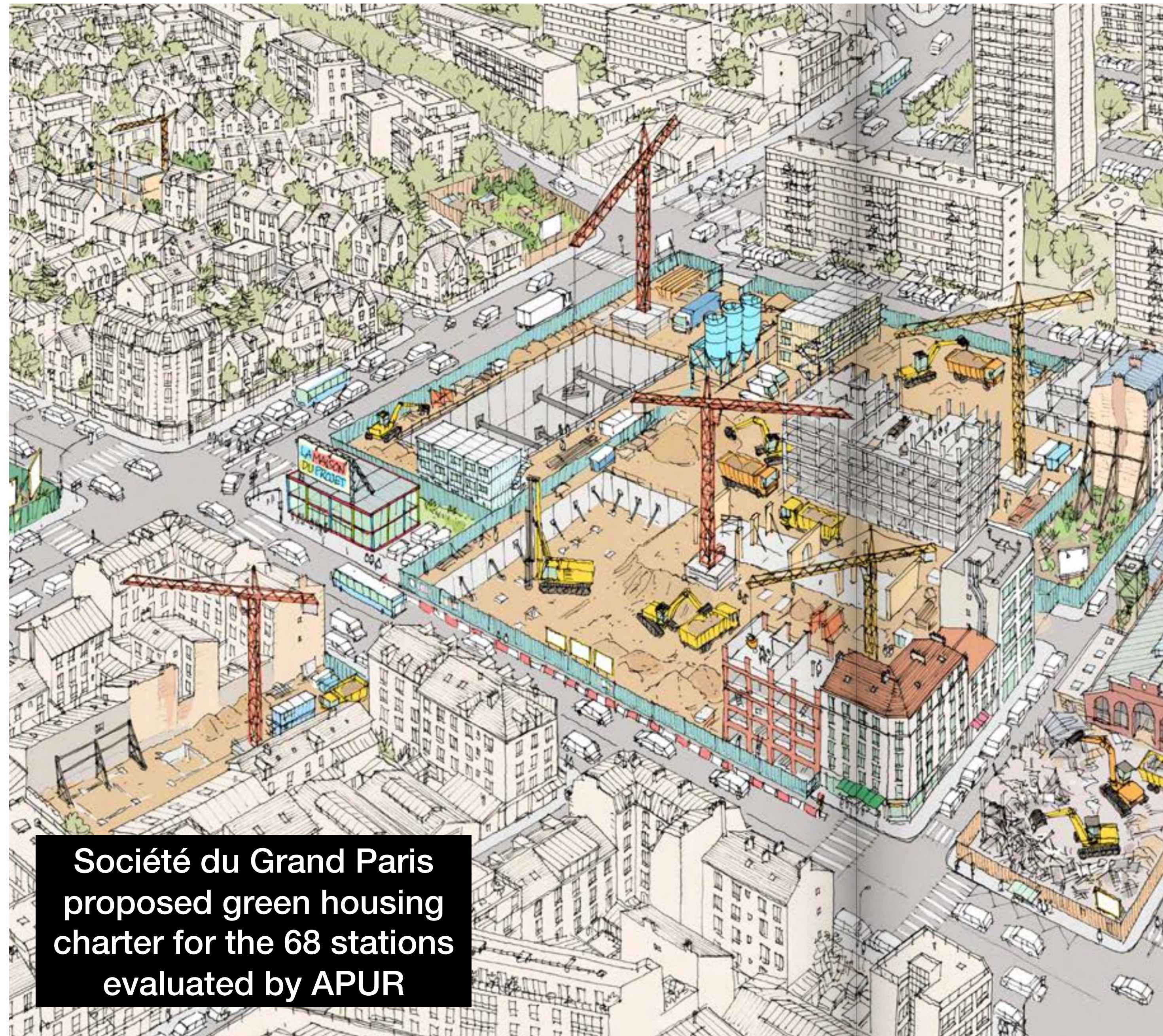
community gardens

swimming pool

Fort d'Aubervilliers construction site



Credits: Société des Grands Projets, 2022



lesson(s) for california

french 3P way of injecting private capital but **limiting private developers' agency** otherwise

lesson(s) for california

french 3P way of injecting private capital but limiting private developers' agency otherwise

this model works for both master planned projects as well as small infill projects

lesson(s) for california

french 3P way of injecting private capital but limiting private developers' agency otherwise

this model works for both master planned projects as well as small infill projects

3PS tying housing provision to other infrastructure eg. transportation

concluding thoughts

the need for a comprehensive strategy

first
pillar:
increasing
supply

second
pillar:
preserving
affordability

third pillar:
maximizing
other
outcomes



Credits: Mairie de Paris - senior sports session in the 19th arrondissement Curial social housing project

Recommendations

making goals mandatory

Recommendations

making goals mandatory

multi-level enforcement & financing

Recommendations

making goals mandatory

multi-level enforcement & financing

diverse coalitions to back this industry

Recommendations

making goals mandatory

multi-level enforcement & financing

diverse coalitions to back this industry

prioritize territorial rebalancing, exclusionary enclaves

Recommendations

making goals mandatory

multi-level enforcement & financing

diverse coalitions to back this industry

prioritize territorial rebalancing, exclusionary enclaves

ride the current reform wave as hard as we can

Bibliography

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Maaoui, Magda, & Ray, Rosalie (2024). [Beyond the Grands Chantiers: Mapping the Deliberative System of Transport Governance in Paris](#). *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 44(3), 1386-1400. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X211066557>

Maaoui, Magda. [“The SRU Law, twenty years later: evaluating the legacy of France’s most important social housing program”](#), *Housing Studies*, August 2021.

Maaoui, Magda. [“In Search of the Grand Paris: an Interview with Pierre Mansat on the Eve of the June 2020 municipal elections”](#), *Metropolitics - Métropolitiques*, June 2020.

A man in a light blue shirt and dark trousers, wearing a camera around his neck, is looking down at a stack of books on a shelf. A woman in a dark top and a light-colored, buttoned vest is standing next to him, also looking at books. The background is filled with bookshelves.

thank you

**WHO GOES TO PARIS
FOR LECTURES?**

Q&A