



Catherine Hélic © Gallimard

ECONOMY

February 2018 • www.lau-idf.fr/en

DEVELOPING THE POP-UP ECONOMY TO MAKE CITIES MORE FRIENDLY

POP-UP STORES, FOOD TRUCKS, TRAVELLING VANS, LIGHTWEIGHT CONSTRUCTIONS, ARE MORE AND MORE VISIBLE IN THE PARIS REGION LANDSCAPE. THEY SHARE CERTAIN FEATURES, NAMELY DIVERSIFIED USES, CONTEMPORARY DESIGN AND USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AS A VISIBILITY-ENHANCING AND PROMOTIONAL MEDIUM. THE TEMPORARY OCCUPATION OF SPACES FOR RETAIL ACTIVITIES ENABLES PEOPLE TO PROVIDE SERVICES, TEST MARKETS AND ENHANCE THE LIVELINESS AND HOSPITALITY OF THE TERRITORIES CONCERNED. HOWEVER, FOR THIS POP-UP ECONOMY TO FIT INTO ITS ENVIRONMENT IN POSITIVE WAYS, ITS DEVELOPMENT NEEDS TO BE ORGANISED.

Grocery vans criss-crossing the countryside, seasonal beach restaurants, market fairs and kiosks have always been part of the economy. Today this model is being revisited and diversified in response to new uses. Thus, temporary shops, bars and galleries, food trucks, travelling vans and provisional urban furniture have been flourishing in our cities and peri-urban areas. In many cases, this pop-up economy has played its part in enhancing territorial hospitality.

THE EXPANSION OF THE POP-UP ECONOMY

Several factors have contributed to the growth in the pop-up economy, namely: changes in lifestyle and consumer behaviour; increasing digitalisation; but also unfavourable economic conditions detrimental to long-term investments.

Renewed demand

The first driver of this development has been new consumption trends. "The taste for street food, the decline in the time spent on lunch breaks¹, very rarely taken at home, are trends that favour fast-food restaurants and their diversification. Food trucks have benefited from this and most of them have successfully upgraded the quality of their product ranges. In addition to the historic hamburger, pioneered in France by Le Camion qui fume, food truck offerings are varied, ranging from

Cover photo:

The pop-up Folio bookstore of the Gallimard publishing company on the bank of the Seine during the Paris Plages event.

foreign cuisines to trendy specialisation (traceable, organic, vegan, local and gluten-free foods). Thus, brands such as La Mobylette Verte, Mijote et Sucrine, Le Cousin Mouton focus on local produce²; the Food 2 Rue food truck in Essonne, Pauline & Valentine in Lyon, La Boulette 56 in Brittany all focus on organic products; whereas Bien Fait and Mes Bocaux food trucks have chefs working at their stoves.

Although it is true that the consumers of such products are often young and connected³, other sections of the public could potentially be involved, as can be seen from the people who buy from food trucks at trade fairs, in railway stations, etc. The concentration of temporary catering spaces on a single site in the form of “food truck villages” and “street catering markets” widens consumer choice. Thus, twice a month in Paris a food market in the 20th borough provides food stands and large tables for people to eat on the spot.

The historic travelling retailers have also been renewing their offerings and taking advantage of the latest trends, such as the sale of second-hand goods between private individuals (buses selling worn textile articles), the repairing of objects (travelling repairers), organic and local food trucks (direct deliveries by producers to consumers), the increase in services to individuals (meals delivered to the home, hair-dressing, dog-grooming, etc.). The purpose of these travelling retailers is always the same, *i.e.* to get closer to customers who have time or mobility constraints. Another driver of the development of the pop-up economy could be the aging of the population in the rural outskirts of the metropolitan area.

The digital media: a booster and a driver

The digital media have boosted the pop-up economy. In the past, the travelling grocery vans criss-crossed the countryside without needing a mobile phone or a website. Today, the situation is different: the digital media are now in everyday use as consumers order their meals in advance, reserve services, check and compare price lists, etc. online. The digital media also enable pop-up economy entrepreneurs to give notice of their visits, publicise their products and services, gain the loyalty of their customers and take orders. Temporary bars, mobile art galleries, temporary sports or cultural facilities display their programmes on dedicated websites or sometimes on the websites of broader projects such as a temporary cultural venue, for example.

The digital media are inseparable from temporary activity because they provide reliable and immediate information on the changing opening hours and presence of the entrepreneurs, many of whom have websites and social network accounts.

The digital media have also been indirectly one of the drivers of this pop-up economy. The development of e-commerce has weakened the physical links with customers. Brands now wish to restore direct ties with customers and reach out to them to sustain

demand, create excitement or test their products. This explains why major brands of footwear, video games and other products have been opening temporary container shops and pop-up stores in high footfall locations for periods ranging most often for one to three months.

The search for reversible and less costly projects

Current economic conditions are not conducive to heavy investments, so economic players favour reversible projects featuring lower investments and operating costs, which optimise the use of time and space. Lightweight constructions (small buildings, wooden frameworks, furniture, etc.) that can be dismantled or recycled, mobile or convertible structures (buses, trucks, containers) provide alternatives to permanent structures. Among the key factors that favour these solutions for microeconomic urban projects are the shorter time to market, smaller budget and greater flexibility in terms of compliance with urban planning rules.

From the entrepreneurs' point of view, creating a restaurant or service activity using a truck or a scooter is possible for a lower investment. For a food truck, the initial investment is reportedly €40,000, which is three or four times less than the capital required to open a traditional fast-food restaurant⁴.

URBAN FORMS THAT ADAPT TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF SPACE

The pop-up economy finds expression in a variety of urban forms that depend greatly on the environment (density, liveliness, location).

Dense neighbourhoods: opportunities to take advantage of high footfalls

Lively neighbourhoods and high footfall areas provide spaces much sought after by food trucks, retail scooters, pop-up stores and temporary bars. They open for a limited duration in station squares, in front of cinemas, close to exhibition centres or large public facilities. They also position themselves outside corporate sites, higher educational institutions and sports amenities, where they provide catering, entertainment or product promotion.

In the Paris region, exhibition centres host food truck villages and railway stations host pop-up stores, retail scooters, etc.

Service kiosks that match supply and demand on a local scale are very present in the highly urbanised neighbourhoods of Paris, a good example being the Lulu dans ma rue network of “neighbourhood concierges”.

In neighbourhoods experiencing renewal: supporting the transition

In the same spirit as that of transitional urbanism projects [Diguet 2017], and often as part of these projects, light property developments make it possible to exploit urban wasteland and signal that positive changes are under way.

THE TERRITORIAL HOSPITALITY CONCEPT

“Hospitality” is a concept that interests marketing and local development specialists. A hospitable territory is one in which both permanently established people (inhabitants, workers, students) and transient people (tourists, businesspeople, visitors) feel at ease and want to stay to enjoy the quality of human relationships, the atmosphere and the services available. The assessment criteria depend on the target audience and the local capacity to encourage participatory projects focused on developing such hospitality.

LIGHT CONSTRUCTION AND THE POP-UP ECONOMY

A VARIETY OF PROPOSALS...

MOBILE STRUCTURES

Transported by motor vehicle, bicycle, carried in arms, etc. Permanent itinerant traders.

PROVISIONAL STRUCTURES

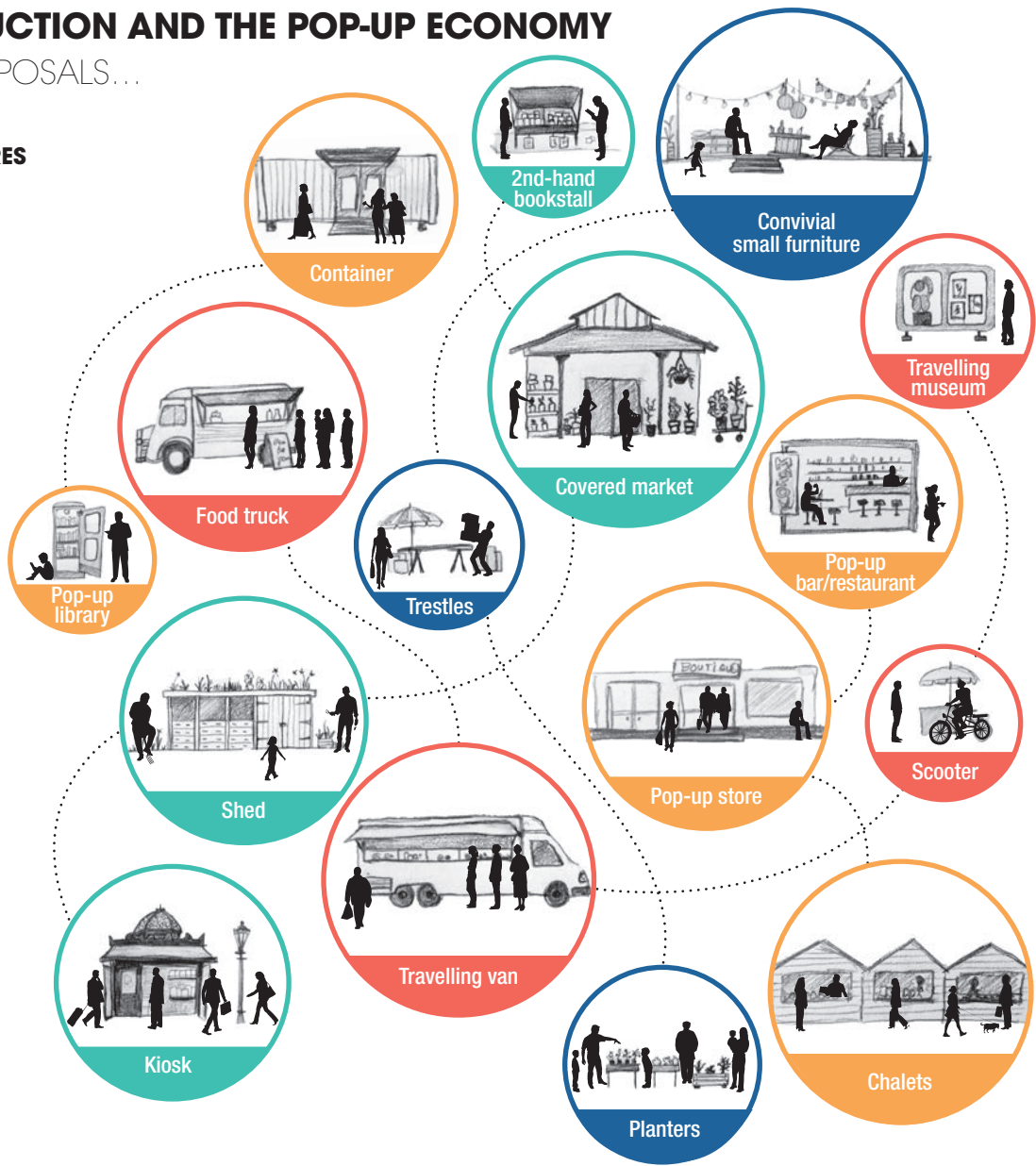
They settle in a place for a limited period (an event or season) and are easily removable.

LIGHT STRUCTURES

Light structures for institutionalised activity. These are provisional structures turned into permanent ones.

PLACEMAKING SMALL FURNITURE

Non-trading temporary installations. They embellish, vegetate and highlight places sometimes with the participation of the inhabitants (placemaking).



... FOR VARIOUS LOCATIONS



Dense urban environment



High footfall areas near major amenities



Wasteland, neighbourhoods being renewed

Rural areas

Business and industrial estates



Kiosks, convivial street furniture: encouraging exchanges and enhance neighbourhood livability

These light structures enhance hospitality and commercial, collaborative or convivial exchanges. Thus, Lulu dans ma rue (see photo in the Marais district, 4e arrondissement of Paris) provides concierge services to a whole neighbourhood, connecting the inhabitants with local professionals. Kiosks for citizens, composting sheds, street furniture, participatory planters (licensed to revegetate), etc., all foster the involvement of local residents in the life of their neighbourhood.



Travelling trucks and buses: to reach remote communities

Travelling retailer trucks selling goods and services, educational buses and mobile art galleries travel all over the sparsely populated and remote areas. They are renewing the historic economic services provided by itinerant peddlers in past centuries and the itinerant bakers in the rural areas of France. They also bring moments of convivial exchanges to isolated communities. The aging of the population on the outskirts of Paris could be a development opportunity for these travelling service providers and benefit from the growth in the digital media.



Food trucks: diversification and quality upgrading of fast-food restaurants

There has been a significant increase in food trucks and numerous municipalities have been organising their reception. This success has been a response to demand for diversification, notably during lunch breaks. It has also been due to the focus by food truckers on the traceability of food ingredients and the use of local and organic produce, which have led to the upgrading of the quality of fast food. Small-scale catering services (coffee, ice cream, pastries, etc.) provided by itinerant traders using vans, scooters, carts and small vehicles have also diversified.

These urban wastelands are temporarily occupied by removable or mobile modules. Examples of this are integrated sports trails, such Le Corps du Canal along the Ourcq Canal in a Paris neighbourhood undergoing renewal; Les grandes tables, a temporary restaurant built on scaffolding in the garden of Seguin island in Boulogne-Billancourt, a western suburb of Paris.

Low density spaces:

adapting the frequency of visits to demand

Travelling trucks reach out to their customers by going on tours, notably in rural areas. Such extensive geographical coverage offsets the low rates of customer density. These travelling trucks traditionally specialised in food (groceries, meat, bread, etc.), have also followed recent trends by bringing producers together for the direct sale of organic products or delivery of meals or second-hand clothing. There are also offerings of cultural products such as library buses, travelling art galleries (Mum02 in the Paris Region, Tinbox in Bordeaux). This model seems more prevalent in the French provinces, but several experiments were carried out between 2012 and 2017 in the Paris Region, such as, for example: Natalie's grocery shop, which tours the "départements" of Seine-et-Marne and Val-d'Oise; Cécile's grocery truck in Yvelines "département"; Karine's truck in the county of Bray, west of Beauvais; and the social grocery truck Tournées villages in Essonne "département"; and David's grocery truck in the La Brie region.

Some entrepreneurs position themselves in various market slots: high footfall areas, on-demand services, events. Thus, in the Paris Region, the Triporteur bike repairer provides its services in stations, market places and to businesses. The Alto café scooter service is opening points of sales in stations, shopping malls and airports, but also appears at events and near corporate facilities. A British initiative called The Museum of Everything, travels throughout Europe in a variety of ways, including the temporary occupancy of wasteland, travelling buses, etc.

At present, the pop-up economy cannot be quantified using standard activity classifications. So, is this trend genuine or...ephemeral? According to the press and the internet, it would seem the number of projects is large and increasing. Moreover, there are other signs of the dynamism of this economy: the increase in franchises; the involvement of industrial players in vehicle innovation (Peugeot, Nissan); the number of stakeholders involved in promoting and designing this pop-up economy.

A TOOL TO ENHANCE TERRITORIAL HOSPITALITY...

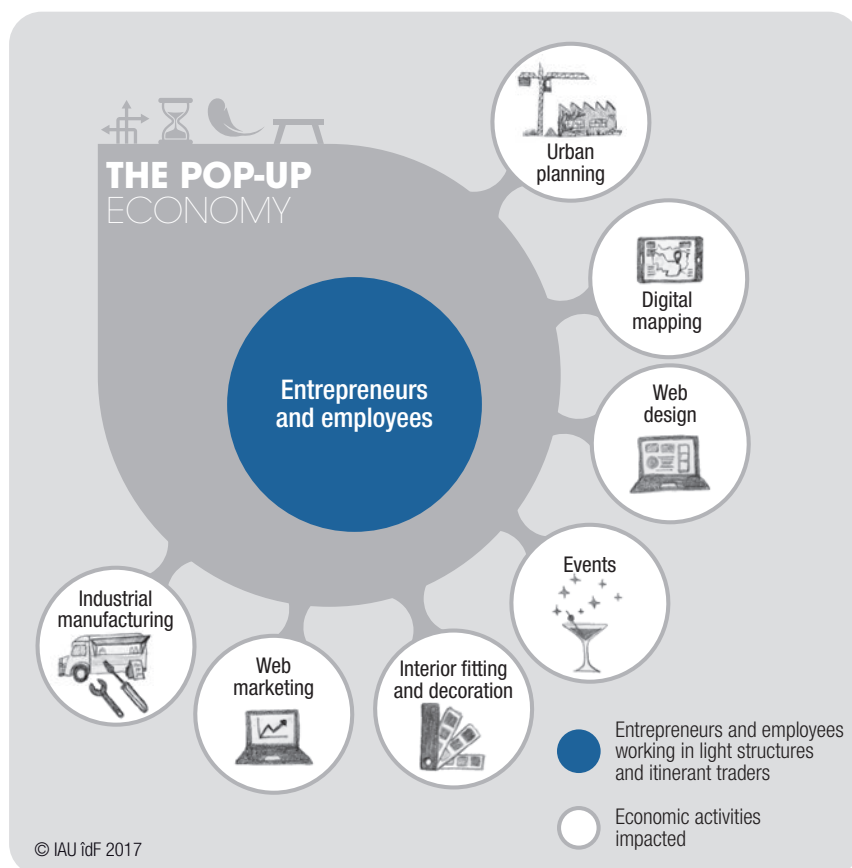
Private individuals have expressed the wish to benefit from high quality, user-friendly spaces. Businesses see the strategic value of these spaces. And everybody recognises they are a major factor of territorial attractiveness. Providing services, organising events and entertainment, enhancing the

local visual identity by good signage, encouraging artistic activities, etc. are all conducive to improving hospitality.

Numerous other initiatives have been initiated in the Paris Region and elsewhere showing the linkage between the pop-up economy and the quality of territorial hospitality. For example, travelling grocery trucks build important bonds with elderly people in rural areas. Furthermore, groups of residents or users invest time and energy in improving their living environment through placemaking (developing people-friendly spaces), environmental projects (revegetation, composting) and short distribution points of sale, etc.

Thus, in the French capital, the pop-up economy supports numerous events including Christmas markets, the annual Paris Plages (Temporary Beaches) and ephemeral cultural venues such as Les Grands Voisins or Grand Train. In addition, the Paris City Hall issues authorisations to reserve certain spaces for food trucks (19 in 2017, reserved for two years), service kiosks and lightweight structures the use of which is granted to residents to allow them to revegetate and compost the land, etc. In Paris, there is already a long-standing tradition of lightweight structures involving booksellers on the banks of the river Seine, newspapers kiosks, permanent market places (food, flower and book markets.)

**POP-UP ECONOMY
ACTIVITIES IMPACTED**



Another example of the pop-up economy: in the la Défense business district, the local development corporation organises numerous events to enhance the area's hospitality (concerts, lunchtime neighbourhood visits, etc.) and reserves spaces for food trucks during the breakfast and lunch breaks, for which it issues a call for applications. A final example: through its Gares et Connexions agency in charge of renovating and revitalising its railway stations, French Railways (SNCF) is planning to develop lively stations thanks, among other things, to temporary franchised boutiques and independent or franchised coffee-selling tricycles located in station forecourts. Small modular structures have been designed to accommodate provisional points of sale at peak hours, sometimes in partnership with local retailers or farmers who provide articles such as fresh produce baskets.

... AND WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS

In the metropolitan region's urban and suburban areas, some neighbourhoods sorely lack vitality because there are few shops and services, few meeting-places and landscapes that are sometimes soulless and barren. The office neighbourhoods featuring mono-functional buildings without any shops on the ground floors and remote business estates do not meet the main wishes of employees "to work in a mixed-use neighbourhood made up of housing units, shops and offices."⁵

The pop-up economy provides prospects for making these neighbourhoods more hospitable by improving the availability of services and revitalising their offerings of catering facilities, shops, outdoor activities or temporary points of sale. This is particularly true when the existing buildings cannot possibly accommodate these activities. Furthermore, the pop-up economy is often the only way to intervene in mature neighbourhoods in which no service offering had been planned. The tactical urban planning initiatives that have been taken mainly in dense housing neighbourhoods may be transferable to working neighbourhoods.

AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS TO FOLLOW?

Obviously, the pop-up economy raises questions such as competition with permanent shops, trading terms and conditions, etc. Building a customer base is a slow process for itinerant traders: rigorous hygiene standards must be respected. There are often mechanical problems. And business is often seasonal. Working in a container or a kiosk is less comfortable than working in a bricks-and-mortar shop. However, trading in a lightweight structure is not necessarily experienced as a temporary activity. Numerous street traders who are durably successful do not switch to permanent shops. However, for this pop-up economy to fit into its environment in positive ways, its development needs to be organised by specifying the desired objectives for the area concerned; ensuring the high quality of the goods and services provided; getting traders and their employees to work together; think on an inter-municipal scale (notably regarding the reception of itinerant traders); get established permanent shopkeepers involved (in occasional one-time sales, for example); plan the availability of lightweight but practical all-weather structures (shelters, covered markets, etc.); and develop "unexpected" projects in conjunction with voluntary non-profit organisations or with residents. ■

Pascale Leroi, economist
under the responsibility of Vincent Gollain, Head of the Economics Department
with the participation of Antonin Michelet,
Créaspace, consultant specialised in territorial economic development

1. In the Paris Region, the results of the EGT Global Transport Survey show a reduction in peak home-work trips during the lunch break.
2. <http://www.mangeonslocal-en-idf.com/cuisine-de-rue/foodtruck>.
3. According to the French Directorate General for Competition Policy, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (DGCCRF): in 2015, a regular consumer was aged 30, spent 10 euros per meal and chose his/her food truck via the social networks or via geo-tracking smartphone applications [DGCCRF, 2015].
4. Source: Observatoire de la franchise.
5. Ifop and Paris WorkPlace2014 survey, by l'observatoire de la métropole du Grand Paris.

PUBLISHING MANAGER

Fouad Awada

HEAD OF COMMUNICATION

Sophie Roquette

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Isabelle Barazza

MODEL

Olivier Cransac

GRAPHICS

Pascale Guery

TRANSLATION

Cabinet Iain Whyte

MÉDIA/PHOTO LIBRARY

Claire Galopin, Julie Sarris

PRODUCTION

Sylvie Coulomb

MEDIA RELATIONS

Sandrine Kocki

sandrine.kocki@iau-idf.fr

IAU île-de-France

15, rue Falguière
75740 Paris Cedex 15
01 77 49 77 49

ISSN 2555-7165

ISSN online 2497-126X



www.iau-idf.fr/en



RESOURCES

- Apur, *Les lieux singuliers de l'espace public, une stratégie de la petite échelle. Accompagnement de la stratégie Paris Piéton*, March 2017.
- Cocquièrre Alexandra, Diguët Cécile, Zeiger Pauline, « L'urbanisme transitoire : aménager autrement », *Note rapide*, n° 741, IAU îdF, February 2017.
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), *The pop-up economy*. Municipal implementation tool #26, November 2014.
- Douay Nicolas, Prévot Maryvonne, « Circulation d'un modèle urbain "alternatif" ? Le cas de l'urbanisme tactique et de sa réception à Paris », *EchoGéo*, n° 36, April 2016/June 2016.
- Leroi Pascale, *L'économie éphémère, une opportunité pour renforcer l'hospitalité des territoires*, IAU îdF, November 2017.



GLOSSARY

- **Placemaking**: a method for planning public spaces that enhances the living environment by focusing on the territory's inhabitants and users and by consulting them. It is based on observing actual uses and giving scope for experimenting. Source: IAU îdF, according to <http://placemakingchicago.com>
- **Tactical urban planning**: invites each citizen to act physically on his/her immediate and day-to-day urban environment in order to enhance its livability. Source: [Douay, Prévot, 2016].
- **Transitional urbanism**: encompasses all initiatives that aim to reinvigorate local life by temporarily using unoccupied land or buildings pending decisions on their future use. Source: [Diguët, 2017].



INSTITUT
D'AMÉNAGEMENT
ET D'URBANISME

