



*Governing Urban Diversity:
Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today's Hyper-diversified Cities*

Report 2j Fieldwork inhabitants, Paris (France)

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1. Introduction

There is a growing conventional wisdom in writings on European cities that presents them as centres of ‘super-diversity’ (Vertovec, 2007). This refers specifically to their increasing ethnic diversity and to the demographic diversity between and within such ethnic groups. However, cities are becoming increasingly diverse, not only in socio-economic, social and ethnic terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes and activities. To indicate this enormous diversity, we proposed to use the term ‘hyper-diversity’ (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

Within cities, groups can live segregated or rather mixed. Urban neighbourhoods may be fairly homogeneous residential areas in terms of housing and population, but they may also be heavily mixed with respect to types of housing (tenure, type, price) and population categories (income, ethnicity, household composition, age). In addition, individuals who belong to the same ‘official’ demographic category may possess quite different lifestyles and attitudes and involve themselves in a wide range of activities. Some may for example have a very neighbourhood-oriented life, with all their friends and activities in a very small area, while others may have their social activities stretched over the whole city or even beyond. Residents of mixed urban neighbourhoods may happily live together, live parallel lives, or be in open conflict with each other (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

This report is written as part of the EU-FP7 DIVERCITIES project. In this project we aim to find out how urban hyper-diversity affects social cohesion and social mobility of residents of deprived and dynamic urban areas and the economic performance of entrepreneurs with their enterprise in such areas. In this report we focus on the findings from our interviews with residents in which we explored their experiences of living with hyper-diversity and how it affects their lives.

This general aim can be broken down into more detailed and concrete research questions. They are central in the chapters of this report:

1. Why did people move to the diverse area they live in now? To what extent has the diversity of the area been a pull-factor? Or were other aspects (such as the availability of inexpensive dwellings) a much stronger motive to settle in the present area? (Chapter 3)
2. How do residents think about the area they live in? Do residents see their neighbourhood’s diversity as an asset or a liability? (Chapter 4)
3. How do residents make use of the diversified areas they live in? Do they actively engage in diversified relations and activities in their neighbourhood? To what extent is the area they live in more important than other areas in terms of activities? (Chapter 5)
4. To what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion? Which elements foster social cohesion, which elements hinder the development of social cohesion in the area? (Chapter 6)
5. To what extent is the diversity of the neighbourhood important for social mobility? Which elements foster social mobility and which elements hinder social mobility? (Chapter 7)
6. How are diversity-related policies perceived by the inhabitants of the area? (Chapter 8)

The research in this report focuses on the city of Paris. This city had 2,211,297 inhabitants in 2008¹, according to the French national census. It is a highly diverse city in terms of population

¹ We use the figures of 2008 in order to compare the city of Paris with the case study areas.

with 14.9% of foreigners and 20.2% of immigrants (i.e. French or foreign inhabitants born abroad as foreigners).

Within Paris the research takes place in three adjacent neighbourhoods: Goutte d'Or, La Chapelle and Flandre. Located in the northeastern 18th and 19th districts, these areas are targeted as disadvantaged by the City Policy and labelled "Priority Neighbourhoods" (Escafré-Dublet et al., 2014). The whole area had 102,437 inhabitants in 2008 and can be considered one of the most diversified areas in the city.

Despite an ongoing and unequally advancing gentrification process, it is largely inhabited by low-income residents and migrants due to both the presence of large social housing estates and a wide range of degraded private housing. Foreigners are indeed twice more numerous in Goutte d'Or (32.3%) than in Paris, and they represent around one quarter of the inhabitants in La Chapelle (25%) and Flandre (23%). In each of these areas, more than three inhabitants out of ten are immigrants (30.3% in La Chapelle, 32.8% in Flandre and 36.9% in Goutte d'Or). Managers and professionals, are a relatively smaller share of the population aged 15 and more (10.4% in Flandre, 15.3% in La Chapelle and 17.6% in Goutte d'Or) than at the municipal level (27.1%). Meanwhile, blue-collar workers are at least twice more numerous than in the city of Paris and unemployment rates are high (from 15.7% for La Chapelle to 18.6% for Flandre).

Residential trajectories are also diversified, as fewer than three quarters of the inhabitants living in the neighbourhood in 2008 lived in the same dwelling in 2003 (from 62% in La Chapelle to 72.5% in Flandre). Most of the newcomers left another dwelling within Paris (from 16.8% in Flandre to 19.7% in Goutte d'Or) or another city of the metropolitan area (from 5.2% in Flandre to 7.1% in Goutte d'Or). The others came from another French region, including overseas, or another country (from 2.3% in Flandre to 4.3% in Goutte d'Or).

We interviewed 50 residents of the research area. In the next chapter we will first provide more information on the methodology that was adopted. Then in the ensuing five chapters we will answer the research questions listed above. The conclusion highlights the main results and offers some broader guidance for policy-making.

2. The interviewees

The interviews have been conducted in Flandre, La Chapelle and Goutte d'Or between October 2014 and March 2015. The length of the interviews varied from 25 to 135 minutes, for an average length of one hour.

2.1. Selection procedure: how did we select our interviewees?

Three main entry points have been used to contact respondents. First, four different initiatives studied during the previous step of this research project (Escafré-Dublet and Lelévrier, 2014) were fruitful to recruiting interviewees: the social café *Ayyem Zamen* and the *Islamic Culture Institute* in Goutte d'Or, *Living together in the Maroc-Tanger Neighbourhood* and the *Neighbourhood Maintenance Corporation* of the 19th district in Flandre. Second, connections were established through the local network of social centres and interviews were conducted in four centres located in different parts of the area. Third, personal contacts of the members of the research team were used to find interviewees.

The rest of the interviews (around one quarter of the total amount) have been collected through direct solicitation in public and semi-public spaces of the areas of study, also through the contacts obtained during the previous steps of the research project. Snowballing was used with moderation (n=2) in order to guarantee as much as possible the diversity of the sample.

Interviews were conducted in different kinds of spaces, according to respondents' preferences. Most of them took place in the premises of the four initiatives listed above or in local cafés. The rest of the interviews were held in respondents' homes and workplaces, or in one of the social centres.

2.2. Some general characteristics of the interviewees

The interviewees were selected so as to provide a wide range of diverse social and ethnic backgrounds and not for reason of representativeness.

More than one half of the interviewees are foreigners or were born in France from foreign parents (n=27). They come from 15 countries located on three continents: Europe (Italy, Spain and United Kingdom), Africa (Algeria, Cameroon, Cape-Verde, Ivory Coast, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia) and the Americas (Chile and Costa Rica). A mirror of French colonial history, Algeria (n=5), Morocco (n=4), Tunisia (n=3), Mali (n=3) and Senegal (n=2) are the only countries of origin represented by more than one respondent.

Eight respondents are newcomers, defined as inhabitants settled less than three years before the interview. Twelve of them, around one quarter, are involved in one way or another in one of the local initiatives listed above. At least eight have no school degree and approximately fourteen did not finish high school². Conversely, twenty-eight hold a higher education degree.

Respondents' occupations are also diversified: twelve are managers and professionals and fourteen occupy intermediate professions (e. g. technicians, social workers, primary school teachers), making up half of the sample. Seven are employees, four are blue-collars workers and eight are retired. Six respondents were unemployed at the moment of the interview.

Women (n=33) and inhabitants aged 31-45 (n=21) are over-represented in the sample, whereas respondents aged 18-30 (n=8) and 46-60 (n=7) are slightly under-represented. More than half of the respondents (n=27) have children.

The marital status of the respondents is quite diversified and balanced. Married respondents, single respondents, divorced/separated/widowed respondents or respondents living in partnership represent in each case around one quarter of the sample.

Twenty-three respondents live in a social housing estate; fourteen rent a flat on the private market, while only seven are owners³.

² Information is lacking here for eight interviewees, who most probably have a low educational level.

³ In two cases the respondents lives in a flat owned by his parents, and in one case accommodation is provided by the employer. Information is missing for two respondents.

2.3. Which groups did we miss?

Interviewing as many men as women was an explicit objective at the beginning of the fieldwork. However, as with previous research (Camina and Wood, 2009), such an objective could not be reached, probably partly due to gendered representations that tend to hinder men's interest and sense of legitimacy to discuss local life as easily as women do. Furthermore, no interviews were held with recently settled migrants unable to speak French.

3 Housing choice and residential mobility

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the housing choice and mobility of respondents. Examining their motivations to settle in the areas of study, we will try to understand whether and to what extent diversity has been a pull-factor with respect to other aspects.

In actuality, housing supply characteristics play a central role in their trajectories. While housing prices are on the rise in Paris, the northern districts, in which the areas of study are located, continue to be more affordable than the rest of the city. As a working-class area with a history of migration, it is also a valued place for "gentrifiers" seeking diversity (Blokland and Van Eijk, 2010).

In the literature, housing choice depends on a wide range of factors such as the socio-economic resources of households, preferences, constraints and opportunities (Van Ham and Clark, 2009). The motives underlying residential mobility vary throughout housing careers defined by successive stages of housing occupancy within the life course of a household and connected with professional and familial events (Lelièvre and Bonvalet, 1994; Pickles and Davies, 1991). Social ties and networks are crucial to the choice of neighbourhood, especially when there is an ethnic concentration (Bolt and Van Kempen, 2002; Kley, 2011).

Previous research on large housing estates in France highlights how trajectories construct social heterogeneity and furthermore influence the experience of the neighbourhood (Chamboredon and Lemaire, 1970). The reasons why interviewees move may be quite different according to three main elements: the circumstances of this moving (especially migration or relocation circumstances); the moment when the move occurred during their housing career and life cycle; the housing tenure and sector into which they move, linked to their financial capacity and familial situation. These are key elements in the "choice" of housing, as well as in the experience of diversity, before moving, during the decision-making process and after. We will take into account these different "housing pathways" and past residential trajectories to understand how the diverse households reflect on their moving (Clapham, 2002; Lelévrier, 2013a).

3.2 Why did the residents come to live here

Even if diversity can play a role, it is not the main motivation to settle in the areas of study. We highlight some common reasons linked to urban attractiveness and housing market and to family networks and place anchorage. These reasons can vary according to the different trajectories of the interviewees, which can be distinguished by life cycles, social position and housing tenure in

four types: young, highly-educated, mobile people; low-income single parents and migrants families; middle-class newcomers; and retired households.

The last affordable districts in Paris: low prices and housing diversity in a central location

Whatever the socio-economic characteristics of the households and the circumstances of their moving, housing affordability is the main motivation. Housing diversity in these neighbourhoods in terms of tenure, size and quality of the dwellings creates different types of opportunities for different types of households. Young people under the age of 35 who move to Paris to study or work experience considerable difficulty in finding a dwelling. They may rent a small room in an attic space, while migrants might be hosted in squats or hostels. Working-class families may end up in low-grade private flats or in the social housing sector, while middle-class families may rent or buy a larger apartment.

So for this highly-educated worker who settled in 2012 with his girlfriend, the location combines housing affordability and easy-access to his work place.

Because it is the cheapest district. The most affordable in terms of housing rents in Paris. [...] Clearly the price affects both the choice of the place you go to and your opportunities... Price and transportation. If you combine them, it was the 19th. [...] I was not specifically looking for a mixed neighbourhood.

R05, M, 38, Project manager in a suburban municipality, settled in 2012, French.

The rents in Paris are so high that some parents choose to buy a small flat for their children rather than rent one. The parents of this young professional left their daughter the choice of the flat while fixing a maximum price. Moving to Goutte d'Or for her and her boyfriend was thus not a matter of neighbourhood choice but the choice of dwelling.

What pushed us to come here is the opportunity that I had... My parents wanted to buy a flat, so this was the opportunity for us to live in a larger flat that created the opportunity to move... When we searched for a flat, we looked mostly in the North-Eastern part of Paris because we enjoyed these areas and these neighbourhoods are also... much more affordable in terms of dwellings... It is where you can get larger flats.

R06, F, 29, Manager (NGO), settled in 2013, French.

For those young newcomers without kids, housing and location choices are intertwined. Their motivation is to live inside Paris and not in the suburbs. So the reason to move is also related to their lifestyle at this moment in their lifecycle. These neighbourhoods are a good compromise, affordable but still lively, urban, close to trendy nightlife and serviced by good transportation and amenities. They can also experiment with diverse types of housing tenure, such as being hosted at a friend's place, subletting or co-renting a large flat with other young people.

I wanted to live in Paris. I dislike living alone and I wanted to be close to my potential future work place. I wanted a flat inside Paris, where there are a lot of buses and subway lines, to be sure to arrive on time to my job. I did not want to live in a northern suburb while working in a southern one.

R33, F, 26, Construction assistant-manager, settled in 2013, French (Parents born in Cape-Verde).

The other housing-related reason to move here is the opportunity to live within Paris. Because of this, the quality and affordability of the housing, not the neighborhood, is the next deciding factor for highly-educated and middle-class single households or families, around 35 to 45 years of age.

The arrival in the neighbourhood was really related to the fact that we found this flat that pleased us. We know that this neighbourhood would not have been the one we would have chosen if we took a map of Paris but we favored the apartment over the neighbourhood.

R24, F, 37, Civil servant in charge of cultural policies, settled in 2007, French.

The area's diversification policies created a new supply of housing with lower taxes for middle-class households who want to buy a flat in Paris. This woman moved from a suburb where she was already an owner to the new buildings of the renewed part of Flandre in order to seize this opportunity.

I landed here because I got a preferable price and a reduced tax rate. So I was able to buy a dwelling at an interesting price. [...] It was not related to specific expectations for the neighbourhood. I'm discovering it; before I didn't know the 19th at all. [...] Yes, that was really by chance, I moved here because of the housing development.

R04, F, 37, Unemployed legal expert, settled in 2011, French.

These newcomers still have some housing and location choice. They choose the city of Paris instead of the suburbs, rather than between different areas inside Paris. So even if they do not really choose the northern districts, they choose and enjoy the practical aspects of their central location. Life course changes (e.g. birth of a child, separation) are also the reasons why they move, seeking out cheaper and larger dwellings.

But some of our respondents do not have a real choice, neither regarding housing nor the neighbourhood. First, those who entered into social housing are at the mercy of the allocation system. Workers can get an apartment where their enterprises have vacancies. Some households, considered high-priority due to their poor housing conditions and socio-economic characteristics, can get access to social housing through the emergency track of the city or the central government. Most low-income families simply accepted the dwelling they were offered, especially recently separated single mothers, as for example this elderly woman remembering her first step in the process.

So they proposed me this apartment, in Cité Michelet. I accepted it because where I lived in the 18th, the rent was too high. That's it. I was alone with my daughter so I needed to manage on my own and get out of that situation.

R42, F, 73, Retired medical secretary, settled in 1980, French (born in the French West Indies).

The large immigrant families from North and West Africa also did not choose their location. Relocation from degraded dwellings is another reason to move. This woman was under pressure to find a "solution for housing" when she arrived from Abidjan in 1999 to Paris and then got access to a social housing apartment:

I lived in a squat before. And the building felt down. [...] So, when it happened we managed to get out before, but some died. It burned... So we left and they proposed us this flat; we did not refuse.

R11, F, 37, Unemployed, settled in 2001, Ivorian.

Local anchorage and place attachment

The second main reason to move is the local anchorage of family and community networks. Many of our interviewees actually came to this district because they had a friend or relative who was able to host and support them.

So, we arrived in Paris in June 2003, eleven years ago. We went to Boulevard d'Ornano simply because we got the flat from a friend's brother who used to live there. We stayed there until 2010. It was nice, very small, under the rooftop. A true Parisian flat, but we had a kid so it was too small and we came here. We wanted to stay in the area.

R03, F, 38, Part-time employee (NGO), settled in 2003, French.

Using social network resources is a well-known pattern of migrant newcomer settlement in hyper-diverse cities (Bolt and Van Kempen, 2002; Kley, 2011). Interviews illustrate typical residential trajectories of migrants from sub-Saharan or North African countries. Men arrive first to find a job. Then, their wives from the home country come by way of the “family entry and settlement” legal process. That is the reason why a Moroccan woman of 43 arrived from Casablanca to the 18th district in 2003 (R09), and a Malian woman of 31 arrived to the 19th from Bamako in 2005 (R12). Another young woman of 25 arrived in 2009 (R32) from Bamako, where she lived with her aunt, before join her parents when they received a social housing offer. These migrants do not have a choice. They simply go where migrants from their community and family have previously settled or can host them. The presence of ethnic community operates as a pull-factor for moving there.

Anchorage in the neighbourhood also matters among the reasons not to move for some of the oldest, mostly French-native inhabitants, who arrived more than twenty years ago. They told us local stories going back several generations: compared to newcomers, they are the “established” ones (Elias and Scotson, 1965).

Before living here I lived in another part of the 19th [...] I lived there for a long time with my parents. [...] Then I got a small flat, with my mother living on the same floor. Then, the house was demolished because it was an old one... We were relocated by the social housing landlord [...] I always lived in the 19th because my parents used to live there. My mother lived in the 19th for almost sixty years.

R22, F, 62, Executive assistant, settled in 1987, French.

This local anchorage can also be observed in the housing choice of some of the younger respondents. These “local kids” (Lelévrier, 2013a) are the children of families born and raised in the neighbourhood. Their roots give them a sense of belonging, the neighbourhood being described as a “village” and a familiar place. This place attachment has been a reason to come back for one man, who worked and lived in Lyon (around 400 kilometers away) with his wife before they separated.

It is a family story because my family lives here... My parents and my grand-mother live at the corner [...]. I wished to come back here, yes, that was a choice. As I told you before, it is like a village. I just wanted to live here, I am born here... My parents, my family are here, I also know this place ... I know everybody here, all the elderly... I know all of them... You cannot arrive in a new neighbourhood where you don't know anyone...

R50, M, 45, Unemployed, settled when born in 1970, French (Parents born in North-Africa).

Diversity as a pull-factor? A familiarity with diversity acquired over life courses

Diversity is thus not a pull-factor but still occurs in the “choice” of the neighbourhood. Many interviewees explicitly referred to diversity by using in a positive sense the term “*quartier populaire*”, which refers at the same time to the working-class profile of the population, its cultural diversity and a lively atmosphere.

We were looking for a flat in the 18th because we knew that this district would be more affordable than others. And then, because I liked it anyway, I targeted the 18-19-20th. These were neighbourhoods I wished to live in. A lively, mixed neighbourhood... That's it, a place where there is a little bit of diversity.

R23, F, 40, Musician, settled in 2004, French.

This behaviour could reflect a strategy of coping with constrained housing choices. Nevertheless, the long-term residential and life pathways are more significant to explaining this place “familiarity” (Fischer, 1982; Clapham, 2002). The households who state a preference for diverse areas have often experienced diversity in their lives, for example through mixed marriages, travels abroad, working experiences or also living in a similar residential context.

You know, when I was in Bordeaux, I lived in a “populaire” neighbourhood, even if I don't have a working-class background. They are more lively neighbourhoods!

R34, F, 40, Project manager (NGO), settled in 2007, French.

This “diversity place” experience is not only related to ethnic or working-class groups, but also to the social mixing of big cities.

I come from Casablanca, and Casablanca and Paris are similar. Lots of people around, a big city, like Paris. It is the reason why I did not find it difficult to live in Paris; because I am a « populaire » woman, I like people, I like living with... How can I say that? I like the mix!

R09, F, 43, Assistant-manager, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

3.3 Moving to the present neighbourhood: improvement or not?

Employing the term “improvement” requires a distinction between dwelling and neighbourhood improvement. The perception of improvement varies according to the social characteristics of the households, but also depending on the moment of the life course they moved and the time spent in the neighbourhood.

Housing improvement upon arrival and thereafter

Moving to their current dwelling is mostly perceived as an improvement connected to housing conditions: more space and rooms, better quality and energy performance in the new buildings, access to a formal housing tenure and/or the social housing sector, becoming a home owner, etc.

The interviews highlight how the housing diversity of the area favors a local upgrading of residential careers. Many former residents, like many migrants, illustrated the typical upgrading of housing career experienced inside the neighbourhood. These residential trajectories are not only the result of spontaneous moving. Indeed, living already in the place, especially in a degraded dwelling and being a single-mother are three criteria taken into account by social landlords for priority access to social housing. This single mother with four children told us a common story beginning first by living with an acquaintance, second in a small and degraded apartment as a squatter or a renter in the private sector and third in a social housing dwelling.

Before, I was in Mali. When I arrived, I went directly to my sister's home [in the eastern suburbs of Paris] and stayed there six months. Then I got a job and I needed to live closer so I went to my second sister in Aubervilliers [located just on the other side of the motorway surrounding Paris]. There I met the father of my children who lived in a squat in the 19th and I joined him. [...] At the beginning they relocated me to a small flat because I had a baby of two months. I stayed there for three months and then they offered me this dwelling in the 18th.

R27, F, 35, Homecare assistant, settled in 2006, Malian.

Therefore, living locally and being situated in a diverse and familiar neighbourhood provides opportunities to improve housing conditions through local social ties. So, an elderly respondent got the opportunity to keep his parents' social housing apartment with the benevolence of the social housing corporation (R38, M, 80).

Regarding the housing market, two factors can lead to a more nuanced perception of "improvement". First, unaffordable rents inhibit residents from moving to a new apartment when more rooms are needed. Second, a shortage of affordable, large apartments reduces opportunities to move, but also pushes out working-class families. For those in the private housing sector, there is always a threat of being forced to move.

A place of opportunities

Moving to Paris, whether in such diverse and "popular" neighbourhoods or not, is seen as an improvement for the households coming from another region or from the suburb. It is a way to "save time" in their daily life.

Some young mobile professionals use the diversity of the neighbourhood as an opportunity to combine home and work lifestyles and to develop local economic activities. This young couple succeeded in that combination, by buying an empty degraded flat and transforming it into a mixed-use place.

After three years living here, we thought it could be cool to find a place in an area under construction, with lots of small more or less derelict buildings. That it would be nice to do something which allows us to live better but also to share something of our job with people. That's how we got the idea to find this place, with a commercial space on the ground floor. We recovered 80 square meters and divided the place in these little offices creating a co-working space.

R29, F, 33, Graphic designer, settled in 2010, Costa Rican.

Buying this original place where they can live while working and renting offices was suitable to their lifestyles. Instead of buying « *an ordinary three room apartment and having a kid* », they « *travel* » more, supported by income made from renting out office space and take root in a neighbourhood they enjoy. One partner experienced diversity throughout her life course, having left Costa Rica at the age of 18. This young couple contributes to the well-known process of gentrification; nevertheless their motivation was to « *have an accessible place, open to the neighbourhood* », « *to be able to participate* » in the street life of the area.

The story of another resident (R40) is more connected to his personal and associational commitments. Like others, this man took the opportunity in 1976 to buy a house in Goutte d'Or which was priced very low because of its proximity to a brothel. Even so, the first motivation of this Arabic teacher was to support the local community by offering his Arabic cultural and linguistic knowledge to the local associations.

I met people through church: a priest who created an association and I got in touch with another association that teaches literacy... I established ties around that. [...] It was an Arabic area, the shops and the population [...] and so it did not bother me to come here. I was even pleased to move because I began to get involved in different associations.

R40, M, 63, Arabic teacher and deputy mayor, settled in 1976, French.

Disconnection and distance with diversity through time

The perception of an improvement in environment and daily life varies depending on life courses and types of trajectories. For instance, most of the young newcomers who are at the beginning of their residential trajectory enjoy the urban, social and cultural diversity. Being able to settle in an area adapted to their lifestyle, is looked upon as an improvement, especially with the knowledge that living there may only be a step in their longer trajectories.

However, the perception of senior residents who settled decades ago has changed over time. Retired for most of them and at the end of their residential trajectory, they have a sort of reflexivity both on their personal life course and on what they perceive as a degradation of their neighbourhood.

It was nice until the 2000's, when the situation got worse. The problems with the youth make me nervous. Delinquency started then and has lasted since. It began with drug trafficking but it was not as severe as nowadays.

R20, F, 67, Retired administrative employee, settled in 1981, French.

In spite of their place attachment, some retirees would like to leave. Therefore, they are not rich enough to move elsewhere, and face difficulties in getting social housing in another district, as this woman who grew old in the same apartment:

I arrived in 1970 and I am still here, but I would like to leave now. I asked for a smaller apartment from the social landlord eight years ago, because my daughter got married and I live alone now. I am frightened by the environment which has worsened a lot. I asked for another district but if you are in the 19th you can just get another flat in the 19th. So I asked for another corner. [...] But what they proposed was such a shame!

R19, F, 71, Retired social worker, settled in 1970, French.

Families, especially middle-class families, also progressively change their perception of the improvement when they have kids. They may worry about violence in the streets and the risks associated with drug trafficking and consuming, but interviews particularly highlight school concerns (Boterman, 2013).

3.4 Conclusions

For many of our interviewees, the reasons to move and the feelings of improvement are connected more with the dwelling than with the neighbourhood. Moving to the areas of our study combines affordability and accessibility and allows them to live in Paris. Thus, the housing-related reasons to move are interconnected with family events, professional changes and migration pathways. Having acquaintances and relatives nearby is also a reason behind neighbourhood choice.

What about diversity? This fieldwork investigated the social diversity of the life courses and residential mobility of the households. The housing diversity and the central location of the areas of study attracted and still attract diverse social groups arriving at different stages of their life cycle. Four types of households are relevant to highlight the diversity of the lifestyles and to better understand the housing choices and perceptions of improvement:

1/ Highly-educated young mobile students, artists, migrants and workers under 35 to 40 years of age are at the beginning of their trajectory, living alone or in couple, moving to study and work in Paris. Diverse in their resources, they are still similar in their open-mindedness and experiences of diversity through traveling, living in small rooms and/or renting a larger flat after the first move.

2/ Low-income single parents and migrant families with few resources have peculiar trajectories featured with many constraints. Some of them are moving through well-known migration patterns, using their community networks, living in precarious housing conditions and accessing the social sector through formal emergency networks.

3/ Middle-class newcomers in the middle of their life course may either get the opportunity of a social housing flat through their enterprise or decide to become owners. Moving to the neighbourhoods is a choice they may eventually question when facing ethnic diversity in schools.

4/ Older households, with low and middle income or pensions, who settled in the area decades ago and managed to get a rental in the social sector, are rooted in the area but in experiencing its changes, they see themselves as the “established” ones of the neighbourhood (Elias and Scotson, 1965).

Compared to deprived suburban neighbourhoods, the central location of these Parisian districts attracts a more diverse population with higher income levels than even the “lower-middle-class” of the renewed suburbs (Lelévrier 2013b). Nevertheless, familiarity with working-class neighbourhoods and the local anchorage of both former residents and newcomers is a common feature shared by Parisian deprived neighbourhoods and the suburban ones.

Diversity should thus be considered as an *outcome* of both the local housing market and different types of social and migrant trajectories, much more than as a *pull-factor* for settling in the area. Therefore, the more the respondents have experienced diversity and otherness in their previous personal, professional or residential experiences, the more open they are to diversity. Seeing diversity as part of the improvement is thus a highly relative to residents' trajectories and social positions.

4. Perceptions of the diversity in the neighbourhood

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on respondents' perceptions of the diversity of their neighbourhood and neighbours. After analysing the way they perceive their neighbourhood boundaries, we will focus on their descriptions of its inhabitants. We will then more extensively discuss the different ways of perceiving diversity at the local level, aiming at understanding if it is considered as an asset or a liability.

While the positive and negative outcomes of diversity tend to rely on comparisons made with less diverse neighbourhoods (Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Corbillé, 2013), contrasted and sometimes ambivalent (Tissot 2014) perceptions of diversity are shaped by social and residential trajectories (Elias and Scotson, 1965; Blokland, 2003).

4.2. Perceived boundaries of the neighbourhood

Two different kinds of neighbourhood boundaries can be distinguished from interviews. Physical barriers such as canals, warehouses, motorways, large streets or railways influence interviewees' perceptions of neighbourhood boundaries. The architectural quality and homogeneity of buildings also give shape to boundary definitions. They may also demarcate sociological differences. Respondents refer to the large social housing estates or the paucity of elegant Haussmanian apartment buildings as signs of the socio-economic level of the neighbourhood.

In the 18th district, the *boulevard Barbès*, separating Goutte d'Or and a wealthier area to its west, is a remarkable example of the way social and ethnic diversity can also define the perceived boundaries of a neighbourhood.

R30 : The boulevard Barbès marks a clear border between its two sides, Montmartre and Goutte d'Or have nothing to compare [...] You really feel a difference in the style of the neighbourhood. [...] There is a neighbourhood with high-quality shops, on one side, very French, and on the other side you find another quality of life, much more...

R29: Mixed.

R30: More mixed.

R29: Less Parisian. Less French.

R29 and R30, F and M, 33 and 32, Graphic designers, settled in 2010, Costa Rican/French.

R06: *We call the boulevard the “river Barbès”, because when you cross it you switch worlds. [...] It’s impressive.*

R07: *Most definitely. There is a neat difference in the origins of dwellers. [...] The way they clothe is absolutely not the same... On one side there is much more money than on the other.*

R06 (F) and R07 (M), 29, Manager (NGO)/Free-lance animation artist, settled in 2013, French.

Perceptions of boundaries are also formed from interviewees’ use of the neighbourhood for their activities. The way interviewees use the neighbourhood on a daily basis sheds light on their perceptions of its boundaries. For instance, commercial and cultural amenities, sports facilities, public parks or places of worship often correspond to frontiers between distinctly perceived neighbourhoods. These uses vary significantly among the respondents, and lifecycle position appears to shape perceptions of the neighbourhood. For instance, parenthood changes inhabitants’ knowledge of the local area, throughout their child’s development.

As your child grows up you progressively use the neighbourhood in new ways. With a baby, you tend to walk for short distances. You never go too far from home, because you need to go to the square but also to come home early in order for your baby to have a nap. So you never go far away, whereas the older your child is, the more you venture further from home.

R03, F, 38, Part-time employee (NGO), settled in 2003, French.

I was not used to go to the southern part of the neighbourhood, but then I went there more frequently because the nurse of my daughter was living there.

R24, F, 37, Civil servant in charge of cultural policies, settled in 2007, French.

In general, the degree of personal involvement in local life and networks (e.g. associations, political activities) impacts interviewees’ perception of the neighbourhood and its boundaries.

4.3. Perceptions of neighbours

When asked to describe the population of their neighbourhood, respondents highlight several dimensions of diversity, such as ethnicity, occupation, lifestyles and age. However ethnic diversity appears as the dominant perception of otherness intertwined with other social constructed categories and referring also to religious belonging, perceived or genuine. Then the “bobos” and the “youth” are two other categorizations designating forms of social diversity and disorder in the neighbourhoods.

The visible presence of “Africans” and “North-Africans” is almost always outlined to describe the cultural heterogeneity of the areas of study. Therefore, different groups emerge referring to different and intertwined dimensions of cultural diversity. Countries (e.g. Senegal, Ivory Coast, Algeria or China) or wider geographical origins (e.g. Eastern Europe, Africa) are used in parallel with ethnic and racial categories to qualify cultural and religious differences (e.g. “Blacks”, “Jews” or “Arabs”). The frequent use of the term “French” as synonymous with whiteness illustrates the overlapping of nationality, skin colour and ethnicity. It also confirms the predominance of ethnic categories in the social classifications of neighbours in Parisian mixed neighbourhoods (Bacqué et al., 2011).

There is a huge diversity here. Orthodox Jews live in front of my flat. There are Muslims, Christians, also... Atheists, like me. Yeah, a good diversity! (smiling).

R02, F, 36, Librarian, settled in 2012, French.

I know Blacks, Arabs, Jews... All kind of people. Now some Chinese also. [...] You'll find all the cultures here, all the religions, it's a crazy thing!

R50, M, 45, Unemployed, Settled when born in 1970, French (Parents born in North-Africa).

More refined perceptions arise in relation with respondents' professional skills or experiences. A translator insists on the different languages he noticed in public space, whereas a deputy mayor who is frequently in contact with migrants' representatives points out the role played by both religious sub-groups and villages of origin in shaping local sociability.

There is no Malian community, this doesn't mean anything. People... First of all they go by village, or by... Last Sunday I went to a Tijani meeting, there were people from Guinea, from Mali, from Senegal, I mean... It's maybe something stronger than the country [...]; there are transnational links which are very strong.

R40, M, 63, Arabic teacher and deputy mayor, settled in 1976, French.

Occupation, housing conditions and lifestyles are also frequently used to describe the local diversity, much more than class.

In terms of social level I know very different people here. I have friends working as managers, but also a lot of people who live in precarious conditions.

R45, F, 47, Receptionist, settled in 1993, French (Parents born in Algeria).

Middle-class young (and predominantly white) inhabitants who arrived during the previous decade are called "bobos" (for "bourgeois-bohème"), a term highlighting their ambiguous social position. In relation to their past or present access to higher education, their larger flats and better salaries, they are perceived as a specific category of inhabitants. Based on the consumption of specific material and symbolic goods, their lifestyle is described as a push-factor for the transformation of local commerce (wine and coffee shops being the most frequently quoted). Some interviewees perceive that not all the "bobos" they cross in the streets of the neighbourhood live there.

And you just wonder where they come from... Sometimes I see people; I really doubt that they live in the neighbourhood! Where do they come from, I mean, it feels like we borrowed them from another neighbourhood!

R28, F, 32, Architect, settled in 2009, Tunisian.

Some diversity in the sexual orientation of neighbourhoods' inhabitants has also been pointed out, in spite of the very limited visibility of gay or lesbian businesses. More striking to inhabitants' eyes is the generational diversity of the population, all the lifecycle positions living close to one another.

Literally meaning the “young people”, “*les jeunes*” refers to the disadvantaged young male inhabitants with a migrant background (their parents) overlapping several dimensions of social stratification (age, class, skin colour and gender). This specific fraction of young inhabitants is commonly associated with illegal activities and disorder, and accused of being a noisy nocturnal presence in public or semi-public spaces. Portrayed as trouble-makers with the police or the schools, they also tend to be considered as dangerous role-models for neighbourhood children. More empathetic inhabitants highlight the difficulties these youth face to find jobs, but also to leave the neighbourhood.

Young guys with an African or North-African background. [...] For them going elsewhere in Paris is an adventure, taking the subway sounds like an expedition. [...] In the 'hood they feel at home, with their friends, their habits, but when they venture outside the neighbourhood it's a very big deal. [...] We just would like the situation to improve, for them to find jobs. They are apparently gifted in engineering, or opening doors, so they don't need much training (semi-ironically).

R20, F, 67, Retired administrative employee, settled in 1981, French.

Respondents' descriptions of neighbourhood life include two other groups who are perceived as featuring the neighbourhood: drug addicts and prostitutes. Addicts' behaviour is depicted as unpredictable and threatening when they are in need of drugs. However, beyond physical danger, they can be described by interviewees with empathy, as they become a familiar presence over time, part of the local social landscape.

Often associated with a migrant background, perceived or genuine (from mainly sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe), prostitutes should also be considered as a facet of neighbours' diversity, especially in Goutte d'Or. Like drug addicts, they are associated with sanitary risks and a symbolic degradation of the neighbourhood, but empathy toward them is commonly expressed. To a certain extent, these stigmatized groups are perceived as part of the diversity of lifestyles.

4.4. Perceptions of the neighbourhood: positive and negative aspects

Perceptions of ethnic and social diversity are ambivalent: diversity can be valorised as a positive feature of the working-class and multicultural life of the area, but also blamed for a supposed incompatibility of lifestyles.

Positive perceptions of diversity

The respondents who appreciate diversity tend to positively associate the heterogeneity of the local population with dynamism, vibrancy and warmth. Diversity is then considered to foster the lively character of the area, in contrast with the boring, tasteless and “dead” wealthier neighbourhoods (Corbillé, 2013). This positive perception is shared mainly by young mobile newcomers, some of the migrants and some of the middle-class groups.

Young mobile newcomers point out a relatively high tolerance toward noise which they particularly appreciate when they invite friends to their home, and/or play an instrument.

It is the only place in Paris where we had parties until very late, with loud music and so on. We always invited the neighbours, who barely came, but no one was upset with us. And no one was upset because all

the others dwellers also make a lot of noise! During Ramadan for instance they were partying until very late. [...] So we really loved this area, for me it was the first time in my life that I could play saxophone in Paris without fearing the police to come and knock on my door (laughing).

R29, F, 33, Graphic designer, settled in 2010, Costa Rican.

Gastronomic outcomes are also central in the positive discourses on diversity. Respondents frequently outlined the huge variety of culinary items in local stores as one of the main assets of the neighbourhood, making it possible to affordably purchase fruits, vegetables and spices from all over the world. While some respondents admit that they “discovered” new products at the local groceries, many restaurants also offer dishes from distinct culinary traditions. This diversity enhances the feeling of “travelling” while staying in your own neighbourhood, particularly appreciated by both young mobile newcomers and middle-class older newcomers (Corbillé, 2009).

Another outcome of this diversity is the opportunity enjoyed by many respondents to learn new recipes from their friends and neighbours. Such transfer of knowledge can operate between French inhabitants and immigrants, but also between immigrants themselves.

Here I tried some food from other African countries, not only from Mali. My best friend is from Congo so I try [her food] sometimes. [...] I enjoyed it, now I often prepare this dish at home.

R32, F, 25, Unemployed, settled in 2009, Malian.

While middle-class respondents enjoy “travelling” in the neighbourhood, recently settled migrants appreciate the vibrancy and availability of ethnic foods. This combination contributes to making them feel at home.

Barbès reminds me of Morocco. The people, the shops... All this crowd... it's nice. The market, it's lively. You find everything you need. My sister, in Austria, doesn't find as much things as I do here. She says we are lucky.

R16, F, 64, Unemployed, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

However, the described outcomes of diversity are not only related to gastronomy. The experience of living in a diverse neighbourhood is also associated with a progressive intellectual opening: a better knowledge of other languages, habits and religions is frequently presented as an enriching secondary outcome of living in the neighbourhood.

We learn a lot of things about the others' lives, about their religion, that's nice. [...] Ordinary things. Food, habits... Religion. Once a friend of mine taught me a lot of things about Buddha. [...] We don't live the same way, but at the end of the day you've learned a lot of things, that's great.

R50, M, 45, Unemployed, Settled when born in 1970, French (Parents born in North-Africa).

What I like in this neighbourhood is the diversity. I do like it! I learned how to interact with all kinds of people, and I do like travelling so... This opened me to... new doors and new thoughts. Opened my mind. Makes you change completely.

R08, F, 62, Building caretaker, settled in 1989, French.

This opening process to diversity due to the daily experience of diversity is frequently depicted as weakening cultural stereotypes, and helping interviewees better understand behaviours that were previously perceived as irrational or in some cases threatening.

The first day I came here to visit the flat, I felt totally lost. [...] And I was also quite afraid. [...] There were people from Africa, I was very shy because in South America we have this aggressive image of black people in the movies. That sounds very stupid but we don't have so many foreigners in Chile. [...] Now I'm not afraid anymore!

R21, F, 30, Social worker, settled in 2010, Chilean.

Living among people with very distinct earnings and housing conditions has also been depicted as favourable to this opening to different norms and behaviours. In some way, hyper-diversity is an experience that fosters the development of more refined perceptions of the social and spatial contrasts.

To me this is a positive aspect of living in this neighbourhood. You gain anchorage in the world. I have the feeling that I look at the political debate in a new way.

R23, F, 40, Musician, settled in 2004, French.

All those positive outcomes of diversity are generally presented as great benefits for the children growing up in the areas of study. By contrast, more socially and culturally homogeneous neighbourhoods are depicted as less favourable to building tolerance.

Negative perceptions of diversity

Older and long-time inhabitants are more uncomfortable with diversity. They tend to associate the visible presence of “non-white” dwellers with a supposed inability to respect polite interaction rules, depicted as producing tensions in public and residential places.

I am not opposed to the fact that there are a few of them [non-white people]. But not that much! I have the feeling that it is worse and worse. It is not normal that we, white people, have to endure all this! It's not normal. No. Because they do not have the same culture, neither the same lifestyle.

R18, F, 82, Retired employee, settled in 1969, French.

This portrayal of “diverse” people can be equated with disrespectful (noise, children lacking discipline) and illegal practices (fraud, robbery). The social programs or local initiatives from which non-native French people benefit are then considered as encouraging them to pursue their current lifestyle. This idea of incompatible values and norms is enhanced by nostalgia for a once homogeneous and safe neighbourhood.

The idea that a “threshold” of tolerance has been exceeded recalls Talja Blokland's analysis of a Rotterdam neighbourhood. According to her interpretation, these nostalgic discourses are an unconscious reaction to the increased autonomy of migrant households (Blokland, 2003). A strong feeling of dispossession appears in relation with the rise of new dominant social norms in the neighbourhood, a by-product of the increased relative weight of newcomers (Galster, 2001). Migrants' “foreign” clothing habits are particularly pointed out by “native-French” as a negative symbol of the newly dominant lifestyles in the area.

Veiled women, women who do not dare to say “bello”, women who keep their eyes down. And as Europeans we are shocked to see women behaving this way.

R47, F, Receptionist, 39, settled in 1996, French

Furthermore, the lively character of the neighbourhood, closely associated with diversity in respondents’ descriptions, is not always appreciated. The noise, the “mess” and the dirtiness are then emphasized as tiring and irritating.

Such critical discourses cannot be understood without taking into account the trajectories of respondents. Residential and personal trajectories shed light on the expressed desires for a quieter neighbourhood. A previous socialization to other residential contexts (e. g. upper-middle-class suburbs or the countryside) and the lifecycle position are closely related to a more critical position towards the dense and noisy uses of public and semi-public spaces. In particular, working mothers who describe themselves as “tired” do not enjoy as much the vibrancy of the neighbourhood as do the young mobile newcomers (who in some cases they used to be).

Ambivalent perceptions of gentrification

Positive perceptions of the arrival of gentrifiers rely on three main ideas. First, their presence is associated with the renewal of degraded buildings and public spaces. Second, they are perceived as interested in and capable of mobilizing their social and cultural capital to improve the neighbourhood. Lastly, their presence and the opening of new shops and restaurants are believed to reduce the visibility of drug selling and consumption. Despite all this, many interviewees, including newcomers themselves (Rose, 2006), fear that increasing prices will lead to radical changes in the neighbourhood, produced by the progressive displacement of migrants and lower-income inhabitants.

We see new inhabitants arriving here. It’s not necessarily pejorative but we call them “bobos”. They are more and more numerous in the area, and this leads us to consider that the neighbourhood is improving. [...] But at the same time it is losing its essence, as people born here have to leave. [...] So there are positive outcomes, and at the same time it’s a pity.

R10, M, 33, Youth educator, settled when born in 1981, French (Parents from Mauritania).

4.5. Conclusions

Interviews highlight the difficulty of considering diversity as either a pure asset or a pure liability for the inhabitants of “diverse” neighbourhoods. In fact, perceptions of diversity vary according to the position occupied on the social ladder and to residential and personal trajectories.

Positive perceptions of ethnic and cultural diversity are mostly expressed by middle-class newcomers and migrants. Whereas, the first group appreciates the feeling of “travelling” in their own neighbourhood; the latter enjoys its vibrant character and varied food offerings, which enhances their feeling of being at home. The daily transmission of experiences, knowledge and know-how (e.g. culinary skills) is proclaimed as a richness that is believed to be lacking in less diverse, and especially well-off neighbourhoods.

Negative perceptions of religious diversity and diversity of lifestyles are more often expressed by older retired inhabitants, settled in the neighbourhood decades ago. Their strong local anchorage appears to be threatened by the rise of new dominant norms of behaviour and self-presentation. It is thus necessary to insist on the role played by the position in both the lifecycle and the residential trajectories in shaping the perceptions of diversity and the importance of the racial and ethnic categorizations constructed by the diverse groups to describe differences, perceived or genuine.

Critical discourses on urban change (gentrification in some sectors of the areas of study vs. increased ethno-racial segregation in others) should then be analysed by taking into account the feelings of dispossession involved by the changes of the population, and by the transformations of the commercial supply.

5. Activities in and outside the neighbourhood

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the relevance of the neighbourhood and of diversity to inhabitants' daily activities and social relations. We investigate how "people may construct belonging through their daily routines in their neighbourhoods" (Blokland and Nast, 2014) while putting to question the notion of the neighbourhood as a closed space with the same importance to all inhabitants (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014).

Van Eijk (2012) argues for the "need to distinguish carefully between narratives and practices", especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods often associated with bad neighbouring, conflicts and distrust. The previous chapter examined perceptions of diversity and the neighbourhood; here, inhabitants' activities are highlighted. These daily routines bring empirical focus to diversity as it is actually practiced in their everyday lives. Moreover, residents' uses of public spaces and engagement in local associations demonstrate the nature of diversified relations in the areas of study.

As such, this chapter aims to answer the following questions: How do residents make use of the diversified areas they live in? Do they actively engage in diversified relations and activities in their neighbourhood? To what extent is the area they live in more important than other areas in terms of activities?

5.2 Activities: where and with whom?

The types of activities interviewees mention have to do with everyday practices or routines, including time used for consumption, leisure, commuting, home-making, parenting, civic engagement and socializing. Examining how interviewees spend their time in diverse spaces and with diverse others, reveals similarities and differences in attachment to the neighbourhood. Sharing ethnic bonds and childhood memories are important; however, more significant is the capacity afforded by the neighbourhood to conveniently carry out activities that match with ones preferences, budget and social relations.

Activities: time and money constraints

Lifecycle position, preferences and resources shape interviewees' decisions with regard to activities and the distance they are willing or able to travel. For many inhabitants who are single or in a couple without children, activities tend to be compartmentalized, doing one activity at a time. For example, a young neighbourhood newcomer without children describes with pleasure going for leisurely walks around the city, food shopping, walking to and from work, playing "pétanque" (a traditional outdoor French game with balls) and socializing over drinks before dinner. In general, her activities appear to be centered on *leisure*, *personal consumption* and *socializing*.

On the other hand, several single working mothers mention having little time for *leisure* activities. When she is not *working*, one woman prioritizes her time for *parenting* activities which also include *home-making* and *consumption* for the household.

Centquatre [NB: a cultural centre] it's a matter of time. From time to time my daughter goes with my friend, because the center organizes some... theater and musical events, various things; and my daughter goes with my friend and with her daughter. But I don't have the time. It's a matter of time. Because I am the one taking care of everything, I have to do the groceries, the cleaning, and so on, and so on, and so on...

R09, F, 43, Assistant-manager, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

As part of her *volunteering* activities, the concierge of a social housing estate takes mothers in her building to the suburbs for their food *shopping*. There they can save money, and by buying in bulk, she explains that they save on the time it would take to go more frequently to the local market.

Indeed, the decision to stay inside the neighbourhood or go further for ordinary activities has to do with time organization and ways to save on the costs of everyday living. The distance of an activity can be a time constraint. In other cases, it is worthwhile to travel further for food and leisure depending on one's personal preferences, lifecycle position and available resources. Even friends tend to have similar financial means, as revealed by the types of establishments they frequent. Going out as a group in Paris requires choosing a place that is agreeable to everyone's preferences and pocketbooks.

The neighbourhood has it all

There is a kind of neighbourhood pride among inhabitants regarding the availability of everything they need, food, but also doctors and other household goods. This sentiment is most prevalent among mothers of North African origins, for whom the neighbourhood's abundance of resources and other Arabic-speakers are great assets.

Everything is close by, you see, I do my groceries by foot. And also, for transportation, thanks to the subway I can go wherever I want. Even the healthcare building, there is a big one on rue du Maroc; we have the... another healthcare, dentists, and some specialized physicians next to it; it means everything is close by. We even have four food markets to buy vegetables during the week, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays; everything is close by.

R09, F, 43, Assistant-manager, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

The neighbourhood is also essential to those who grew up in it. A 28 year old man whose parents are from Senegal (R26), was born and raised in Goutte d'Or. This place is home to nearly all his

activities, such as his work, going to the cinema and playing football with family and former schoolmates. Another “local kid” (Lelévrier, 2013a), of Moroccan descent (R37), no longer lives in his childhood neighbourhood; yet, he spends most of his time in it. He works there, and brings his children on the weekends to play with their former classmates and spend time with family. It is no different for some of the elderly immigrants, who encounter old friends and neighbours through socializing at the market, on the street, or the subsidized café (social café *Ayyem Zamen*, see Escafré-Dublet and Lelévrier, 2014).

For cosmopolitan newcomers, especially from non-European countries, indulging in the diversity of neighbourhood offerings is part of the appeal of living there. They are young, educated, and financially at ease. A young woman from Costa Rica shops the African market where she finds all the food products that satisfy her own ethnic cuisine tastes. Another young woman from Chile frequents places she did not find in her country, like the Algerian butcher and Jewish baker. While the neighbourhood is not their only hang-out, they immerse in its vibrancy and diversity for their leisure and consumption activities.

For parents, there is great satisfaction in the variety of activities available to their children. Furthermore, their own activities, developed through their children’s schools, become an opportunity for new and diverse relations in the neighbourhood. While the Maghrebin mothers appreciate the neighbourhood’s many conveniences and cultural support; for others, from a multitude of ethnic backgrounds, it is the social relations through their children’s schools and parenting activities that are greatly emphasized. The mutual support among mothers also helps alleviate the burdens of parenting activities and creates a deeper attachment to the neighbourhood.

Because I am a mom, I spend time with everyone. Everyone spends time with me as well. Therefore, the neighborhood, honestly, we really like the neighborhood. [...] They [the local city hall] gives us a space to have our neighbourhood parties... different events. We do all kinds of things together with the moms. So, there you have it: the neighbourhood is that kind of place.

R11, F, 37, Unemployed, settled in 2001, Ivorian.

Neighbourhood ambivalence: “diversity-seekers” seeking activities and relations elsewhere

Interviewees also express ambivalence about the neighbourhood as a place for their activities. A British newcomer mentions a sentiment implied by other newcomers, that one *should* consume in the neighbourhood to support local vendors. Nonetheless, in reality he rarely frequents the more “ethnic”-oriented businesses, preferring what some would term the “bobo” shops like the new microbrewery and a bakery opened by young couple of mixed French and Malian origins. Similar to inhabitants in Blokland and van Eijk’s study of Rotterdam (2010), despite preferring to live in a multicultural, working-class neighbourhood, he admits to having few social relations with those outside his prior circle: “*It is true that my interactions, my relations in the neighbourhood are rather limited. It’s unfortunate, really*” (R01).

One important difference between younger newcomers and long-time residents is that the former’s activities are less bound to the neighbourhood. For one, they may have social relations scattered across Paris, and family in other parts of the country or abroad. But they may also feel that the whole city and beyond is open to them for exploration. This appears to be an outcome of greater financial ease which affords them the ability to go elsewhere for activities that satisfy their tastes and attitudes.

There are others in the neighbourhood with the resources to escape frequently and even further, enjoying nature and precious relaxation outside the city. In fact, a particular distinction in the leisure activities of neighbourhood residents who are French of several generations appeared in many interviews. They refer to a second private home in the country-side (*maison de campagne*) which may be inherited from family, the home of children that have moved out of the neighbourhood, or a little oasis they have purchased on their own. This kind of luxury is one that many “non-white” residents of the neighbourhoods do not have access to.

We harvest a lot of fruits and vegetables in the countryside, from my parents' garden. [...] It is a real chance to get away and breathe.

R02, F, 36, Librarian, settled in 2012, French.

5.3 Use of public spaces

The neighbourhoods' public spaces are the places in which all inhabitants, users and passersby interact at one point or another. A variety of activities bring people to the squares, streets and sidewalks at different times of day and night, making visible the diversity of the neighbourhood. “Between purely visual contacts and friendly interactions, there is a range of encounters that may have an effect on how people become conscious of the reality of multiculturalism” (Peters and de Haan, 2011), as well as similarities and differences in generations, wealth, and way of life. Yet, interviewees also claim to avoid public spaces due to the presence of specific people or groups. Our empirical focus on practices reveals that it is not the people per se, but the activities they are engaged in, that are experienced as less-desirable. Seen as such, interviewees describe both compatible and conflictual uses of public spaces, some of which are highlighted in this section. In examining these uses, explanations emerge for contentious uses.

Compatible uses: enjoying diversity and friendly relations

The majority of interviewees describe the general vibrancy of the neighbourhood as a great asset, juxtaposing it with wealthier neighbourhoods that lack public life. The many spaces to enjoy the outdoors become a stage on which to carry out one's own leisure activities, while enjoying the ambiance.

Actually, it's mostly during summertime, but we stay a lot in the neighbourhood; it's hard to get out because there are so many activities [...] it's not like in... you see the 15th district [a wealthier southern district], with everyone on their own, there are beautiful buildings but there is no neighbourhood life. In the 19th, you see people in the streets enjoying the public spaces. And that's what is nice about the 19th.

R21, F, 30, Social worker, settled in 2010, Chilean.

Despite the preference for the lively working class and multicultural spirit of the neighbourhood, for many younger newcomers, it is simply that: a kind of décor. While there is interest and curiosity, they appear to lack ways to actively engage with others in public spaces. On the other hand, when a “third party” (Peters and de Haan, 2011) such as children or pets are present, interactions start to occur. For instance, one interviewee reflects on the role of a seemingly banal activity, walking her dog, as a context for meeting people in the neighbourhood.

All the people you see there (NB: interview takes place in a café), the couple there for instance, are people I met through the strolls with my dog, [...] there are a lot of people I met thanks to my dog. Some storekeepers, when I pass in front of their store come to ask me: « What is this thing? ».

R28, F, 32, Architect, settled in 2009, Tunisian.

Another inhabitant describes what appears to her to be people of diverse ethnic backgrounds interacting in a newly regenerated park. She takes pleasure in observing this diversity, remarking in particular on the role of children in producing positive outcomes through the exchanges their activities engender among their parents. These uses of public space appear to go beyond the simple compatibility of activities occurring side-by-side toward building a sense of community across diverse ways of life.

You experience that a bit during the nice days of summertime, when people from the suburb come and you see all the skin colors; people meet, mix, they are next to each other. But especially at Eole; what a great place for it... And on top of that, there are communities from central Asia, migrants that make this place their meeting point. There are a lot of things at Eole. The kids talk to each other while playing; they share their buckets; they queue together at the seesaw. Indirectly, from time to time, there are exchanges among the parents, and that is wonderful.

R24, F, 37, Civil servant in charge of cultural policies, settled in 2007, French.

Conflictual uses: confronting, avoiding, ignoring

On the other hand, a negative side-effect of vibrancy is the frequent overcrowdedness. A mild daily confrontation might arise over something as mundane as sharing the sidewalk.

When the weather is nice and you try to cross the neighbourhood with your stroller, it's very difficult, you beg people three times to move but they don't.

R24, F, 37, Civil servant in charge of cultural policies, settled in 2007, French.

In particular, Goutte d'Or attracts people from beyond Paris for its famous African market, and there are also many illegal street-sellers of foreign origins that set up make-shift stalls here and there. A Tunisian woman who has lived in this neighbourhood for nearly thirty years says: “*You can't get through. An old lady, she can't get through. A lady with a baby carriage, she can't get through*” (R35).

While she is optimistic that the police presence is driving them away, other residents say that the street-sellers only disappear momentarily, coming back as soon as the police leave. The police, in fact, are a frequent user of the streets. Their presence seems to deter some activities from manifesting in public, but it is possibly only localized and temporary.

One elderly French woman who has lived in her neighbourhood for over forty-five years attempted to confront activities she did not like, but eventually gave up. She also correlates behaviors such as not saying “hello” with her neighbour's cultural origins, assuming disrespect. Over time she stopped speaking to her neighbours and avoids using the parks and squares around the neighbourhood, preferring the wealthier areas of Paris for leisure.

Well, sometimes there are quarrels between people. [...] If you say: “you shouldn't do this or that”, well some persons don't respect it. They follow their idea of how things should be; according to their own way.

R18, F, 82, Retired employee, settled in 1969, French.

Some female interviewees mention feeling uncomfortable in particular areas, due to the presence of men who make remarks when they pass by. Again, there is reference to the cultural origins of the men which seems to participate in the negative experience recounted by this French woman:

The Maghrebians they... you see they... they are always commenting on you. They look at you, you see; they always comment on you. Whereas the Africans, you can pass right through... On Marcadet Street there are two or three night clubs, it looks like you are in Bamako; there are people everywhere, but you can pass by. You walk through the crowd with no problems, you see. Whereas in the Goutte d'Or area, sometimes, you walk through the crowd and you have to deal with catcalling all around you.

R03, F, 38, Part-time employee (NGO), settled in 2003, French.

This situation refers not only to the activities of men in the space, but the corresponding relative *absence* of women and girls, especially after dark. Such absence of women on the streets enhances what a male inhabitant calls the “masculine ambiance of the neighbourhood” (R01). Women with the means may move away; others, especially young women who still live with their parents, stay inside. All of these actions contribute to the masculinization of the streets. This gendered dimension of the residential experience is emphasized as unpleasant, also because some female friends of relatives living in other areas may be reluctant to come and walk alone in the neighbourhood.

You know, these youth there [motioning to the window], they're always hanging out there. They don't know what to do anymore... They're lost when they see a woman: « pssss pssss » (laughs sincerely). You know...it's a problem, the women are afraid after when they see a gang like that!_And I've personally found that this technique doesn't work (sincere laugh).

R26, M, 28, Receptionist, settled when born in 1986, French (Parents born in Senegal).

This interviewee talks at length about young men of Maghrebian and sub-Saharan African origins in the neighbourhood, the problems they face finding jobs, the lack of activities, and their overcrowded homes which drive them outside to the streets. According to many interviewees, this appropriation of public spaces by young men and boys may take a variety of forms: loitering in front of residences, talking loudly, “male-to-female street remarks” (Gardner, 1980), urinating, blasting loud music, but also using and dealing drugs and occasionally stealing or becoming violent.

Yet, in many cases the young men and boys are simply hanging out, smoking or playing ball. Nonetheless, their presence tends to be associated with delinquency, which then arouses fear and affects how some residents use public spaces. One young female resident (R41) believes concerns are overblown, even about illegal activities. With regard to the young migrant men selling cigarettes on the street corners, she says:

In general, they're just making a living. And then, in the worst case scenario, when they talk to you from time to time, you only need to say “hello”, you respond calmly, and then there's no other problem at all.

R41, F, 23, Law student, settled in 2001, French (Parents born in Togo).

5.4 The importance of associations

The vast array of associations attests to the presence of a rich associational life in these neighbourhoods of the 18th and 19th arrondissements. We found that among the associations some had objectives oriented toward improving quality of life in the neighbourhood, while others united diverse people with shared interests regardless of neighbourhood boundaries. In general, all interviewees held a high regard for associations and were knowledgeable about their work, whether they participated in them or not.

In fact there are a plethora of organizations in which inhabitants participate that are considered local but may address needs at a variety of scales. The range could include the social housing complex, the neighbourhood, the district, and neighbouring districts, as well as areas across the periphery. They may be managed directly by city hall, simply financed by it, or entirely independent. Our interviewees participated in all of these types of associations.

Associations offer important opportunities to meet and interact with diverse others, doing so through concrete activities. For example, inhabitants may exchange services or pitch in together to clean up a local square. Some go expressly looking to intermingle with people that are different from themselves and others are pleasantly surprised at the degree of diversity they encounter, as well as what they can learn. For parents, participation in their children's scholastic activities opens the door to other associations and a diversified social life.

I found that it is through my kids that I experience it the most, the life of the neighbourhood. Because as a result, it is less obvious here, but when they were at pre-school, you have the entire associational life that revolves around the school and makes it so that one day, off you go to a cultural association, a block party, and as a result, well there it is...

R23, F, 40, Musician, settled in 2004, French.

Associations also provide services to struggling families; through this solidarity and support for greater social equality, they help sustain the diversity of the neighbourhood. Recent immigrants, but also retired immigrants who have lived for many years in France come for language classes or others bring their children for educational assistance that their parents are less qualified to give. Quite a few associations are oriented toward supporting a particular population, such as social cafés for low-income people and the elderly. Yet, they gather inhabitants across other differences. For example, an activist got started in his local church fighting for the rights of undocumented immigrants to be regularized. His charity work was inspired by religion but effectively assisted people of all faiths and various nationalities (R46, Retired engineer, 73, French).

Newcomers also create or participate in associations which sustain their presence in the neighbourhood by catering to their preferences and lifestyles. Some associations, focused on common private interests, are created by inhabitants when they find that certain goods and services are lacking in the neighbourhood, such as organic food. In other cases, these inhabitants participate in local associations to bring resources to the neighbourhood, which may result in regenerated parks and new cultural centers.

Having the know-how to deal with the administration, their efforts can be successful and procure resources with potential benefit for the whole neighbourhood (Blokland and van Eijk, 2010). On the other hand, they may also bring changes that render the area unaffordable for poorer inhabitants.

Associations also play a critical role in reducing complaints and conflicts among inhabitants. A woman intensely involved in the local associational life highlights the fact that associations jointly organize activities, which creates interaction among groups that may be in conflict with each other. She also insists on extending these efforts beyond neighbourhood boundaries. She is concerned about turf wars between the young inhabitants of different neighbourhoods which have erupted into violence in the past.

We are working so that the two neighbourhoods can do things together. So people from the other side can also come here. Thus, we started this three years ago, and little by little, well... We realize there are more people, but slowly people are managing to get along.

R08, F, 62, Building caretaker, settled in 1989, French.

5.5. Conclusions

An examination of inhabitants' concrete practices through their ordinary activities, use of public spaces and engagement in local associations conveys important empirical evidence for the significance of diversity to their everyday lives in the neighbourhood.

One of the key points revealed by the analysis of interviewees' activities through time and space is the extent to which "time in-between" (Blokland and Nast, 2014) or inhabitants' daily routines, are defined by variations in life-cycles, lifestyles and personal preferences. Activities that are seemingly banal produce important interactions between diverse others: walking one's dog, engaging in one's children's school, going to the market and sitting in the park. These activities reveal the importance of the neighbourhood, which is stronger for some groups such as parents with young children, low-income immigrants, and the elderly (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). This is also true for "local kids" and long-time residents, which demonstrates how continuously carrying out activities in the neighbourhood produces belonging and place-attachment. Activities further demonstrate the degree of depth of diverse social relations. For newcomers, relations with neighbours are largely "absent ties" characterized by polite greetings (Blokland and Van Eijk, 2010). But for those who engage in schools and associations, relations are strengthened by mutual need and support.

We also investigated the use of public spaces through which many interviewees become familiar with and enjoy diversity. However, public spaces are also the stage upon which the neighbourhoods' problems play out. At first glance these issues appear strongly correlated with seemingly "non-divisible" differences between groups (i.e. ideological, religious, generational differences). A closer examination reveals that underlying claims of frustration with diverse others are conflicts between activities in the public space: too much of some, such as street selling and loitering outside; too little of others, such as affordable recreational spaces. Activities seen on the street may be indicators of social inequalities experienced elsewhere, in overcrowded homes, lack of employment opportunities and satisfying recreational activities for youth.

Some local associations attempt to address these inequalities, while also fostering tolerance and cross-cultural understanding. They do so through concrete exchanges between neighbours which are also opportunities to learn from each other. They may combine their efforts or seek the help of the municipality. The multitude of associations working in these neighbourhoods may reflect a concentration of inequalities, as much as the civic virtue of residents (Putnam, 1993). The

diversity of the area could be an even greater asset for the economic and cultural vibrancy of the area if the benefits brought in by gentrifiers might be better accessed by all.

6. Social Cohesion

6.1 Introduction

“*Social cohesion* can in a very general way be defined as the internal bonding of a social system (Schuyt, 1997 in Tasan Kok et al., 2013)”. In this chapter, we examine the egocentric networks of inhabitants and their mutual support practices. We highlight first the most important relations: family and friends, school and associations, as well as those among neighbours and shopkeepers. Next we examine what inhabitants do with these social relations, looking specifically at forms of mutual support (Young and Willmott, 1957). While diversity is often considered as a problem in urban research, to what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion? Which elements foster or hinder the development of social cohesion in the area?

Interviewees’ various networks reinforce a sense of place attachment, trust and familiarity among neighbours of diverse identities and lifestyles. In fact, the interviews reveal that neighbourhood solidarity has some importance to inhabitants, and that they are both producers and consumers of it (Galster, 2001). Our findings suggest that social cohesion may be achieved in many ways, from helping one another to social control and the imposition of norms. As indicated by Forrest and Kearns (2001), it may not be “everywhere virtuous and a positive attribute”.

6.2 Composition of interviewees’ egocentric networks

We develop the common nodes in individual networks highlighting the different types of social ties and the diverse spaces and groups connected through these networks. How do people connect?

Diverse networks of family relations inside and outside the neighbourhood

Extensive family relations in the neighbourhood are important for immigrants and their children, specifically for those from North African and Sub-Saharan African origins. Interviewees that were born in Paris and now have their own children demonstrate a particularly strong sense of place-attachment. It is assisted by the thick networks of friends and relatives they have in the neighbourhood. Their parents, who immigrated to France decades ago, also have extensive family networks in their home countries. This reality creates transnational relations and allegiances which may lead them to spend more time in their home country after retirement.

A woman who moved to Paris from Martinique 35 years ago goes back increasingly more often to visit her daughter and other family. Despite spending more time there, she feels ambivalent about moving back in her retirement:

When it has been a long time to live in some place (Paris), you make friends, you have your habits, it’s not the same life as over there (Martinique). [...] So, right now, it does not appeal to me to settle down. However, I go there every year. I spend 3-4 months, sometimes 6 months. But as I have substantial activities here, I have to come back.

R42, F, 73, Retired medical secretary, settled in 1980, French (French West Indies).

Many newcomers have no family network in the neighbourhood, especially younger arrivals with parents living in the French provinces where they grew up. Yet, in a similar sense they live out a sort of “transurban” dynamic: they may frequently go out of town to visit family and old friends and imagine their time in Paris as a temporary experience. One young woman, who is active in her neighbourhood and deeply appreciative of its diversity, says:

Then, my goals would be to come back in province. [...] But it's not because of here (she insists), it's because my family is over there. I feel as though I am sitting between two stools.

R04, F, 37, Unemployed legal expert, settled in 2011, French.

Relations through children's activities and associations

Parents are one of the largest and most active networks described by interviewees. Even those who are not parents make this distinction, adding in some cases that it is through their friends with children that they have managed to extend their personal networks in the neighbourhood. Parents are generally in the same age range, but of diverse cultural origins and lifestyles. It is also through their children's caretakers that new relations across different social groups are formed.

The fact to have a nanny who lives in the neighbourhood for instance, who's taking care of your children, to have your day-care center in the neighbourhood, or school, to see other parents, to talk with other parents, changes things tremendously. Even to go regularly to the square with your children creates bonds. This is not the case for me.

R01, M, 34, Free-lance translator, settled in 2011, British.

School really helped me to meet other people who were coming from a different cultural background.

R23, F, 40, Musician, settled in 2004, French.

This parenting network appears to be of greater importance for women than for men. While men also mention activities with their children, they place less emphasis on developing social bonds through these activities. Other collective activities that are more frequently mentioned by men, such as playing sports, or those mentioned about (young) men, such as hanging out on the street, may be more important arenas for forming bonds.

Associational involvement is a common node that produces meaningful bonds in the neighbourhood based on overlapping interests or needs. They are especially important for newcomers. For a young male interviewee the opportunity to take part in the development of a social center provided an opening to bond with some of his neighbours, whom he says he would not have encountered otherwise. These neighbours and fellow volunteers can become life-time friends, as avowed by one long-time resident:

I do have quite a lot (of friends) here. [...] These relationships were built through my children but also as I am involved in a lot of associations, and I advocate a lot for my neighbourhood, I met many people who have become good friends.

R22, F, Executive assistant, settled in 1987, French.

Lastly, several inhabitants mentioned having friends through their neighbourhood religious affiliation. These can be places for the development of diverse relations across many categories:

ethnic, class and even religious differences. The Islamic Cultural Institute, for example, has a café and free art gallery which welcomes all faiths. Another interviewee is an activist for migrants through his church. For others, however, their religious center can be a place to meet people of the same ethnic background. This woman was one of the first “Black” persons to move to her neighbourhood. She explains that she has never sought out friends of the same ethnic origins, but her Church is a place where she can have such encounters if she wishes.

There is a little church located five minutes from my home, I like to go to mass; I am an observant catholic. So there I meet women from the French West Indies, people of my age. We greet each other, we talk for a while [...] It's the perfect place to meet people.

R42, F, 73, Retired medical secretary, settled in 1980, French (French West Indies).

Relations with and through neighbourhood shop-keepers

Many inhabitants count among the people they know in the neighbourhood either shopkeepers or neighbours they encounter regularly at shops. A man settled more than forty years ago in Goutte d'Or describes the role played by local shops in provoking encounters between neighbours:

Since this bakery has been established [...] when we go buy bread, one time out of two we say to each other “oh hello, you're here, what brings you here?” [...] They made a spot to sit and drink coffee. I never went, but there are perhaps some people, because they are lonely, who go there to drink and chat and it creates an atmosphere.

R46, M, 73, Retired engineer, settled in 1973, French.

A new, young resident knows some of the local shop-owners through her consumption habits and walking patterns in the neighbourhood:

Downstairs from our apartment, there is a doctor's practice, but next to it there is the live chicken seller. I don't buy any, but by bumping into this guy all the time, every day I say “hi” to him. I never got a chance to engage in a conversation, but there is this proximity that has been created. It gives me the feeling of being integrated, a part of the neighbourhood.

R25, F, 30, Architect, settled in 2013, French.

The less the residents have family and friend networks in the neighbourhood, the more likely they are to build their neighbourhood relations via their interactions on the street. As argued by Blokland and Nast (2014) “the recognizing and being recognized in local spaces, where one meets some people whom one knows and many whom one does not, but with whom one develops some level of acquaintance, however superficial and fluid – creates a comfort zone that allows people to feel they belong, even though they may have no local friends or family, never talk to their direct neighbours, and not even like the place where they live”. This “public familiarity” seems to correlate with a more positive view on diversity, and the neighbourhood itself.

6.3 Living together with neighbours: bonds, forms of mutual support, etc.

The diversified networks discussed above produce tangible outcomes for social cohesion through both bonding and bridging capital. In this section, we discuss a wide array of forms of mutual

support that take place on the same floor, in the same building, on the street or square, and within the boundaries of the neighbourhood or in the larger vicinity. These interactions may occur across ethnicities, lifestyles, lifecycles and attitudes, and reveal other forms of diversity. Yet, the picture is not rosy at all times. Some types of exclusion are revealed through the interviews, although in the end there is a general feeling of trust and security among neighbours.

Forms of mutual support

One form of mutual support is perceived as bonds among persons of similar ethnicity. A respondent discerns a strong African community within her neighbourhood which she believes includes both inhabitants and visitors from all around Paris and its suburbs.

I know that many Africans come here in the neighbourhood because they know they will find the African community, they will benefit from its solidarity, a cheap plate of mafé (traditional Senegalese dish), tips for places where to sleep. And for North Africans it's quite similar. I discovered that: the migrants' sense of community.

R03, F, 38, Part-time employee (NGO), settled in 2003, French.

Interviews with persons of African country origins, however, do not necessarily focus on mutual support and bonds within an “African community”. Respondents more emphatically emphasized the multicultural dimension of helping others, which arises through, for example, the informal parenting network. Forms of such “bridging” support between socially heterogeneous groups may include taking others’ children to activities, looking after them for a few hours, or lending another parent a baby stroller.

Paris City Hall has funded the development of associations with the mission to serve as a point of exchange (*Accorderie*). These places attract people of all ethnic origins and income levels to participate by being both a beneficiary and a provider of services. Unofficially, other places in the neighbourhood are surprisingly inclusive and encourage diverse encounters between different ethnic groups, but also very different lifestyles. A local restaurant has created an environment in which addicts are welcome to eat with everyone else:

There is a little Chinese restaurant next door, very nice, with quite inexpensive meals, which is cool, and it's turned out before that I'm having lunch there when all of a sudden some guys will show up completely stoned. It's true that at first, you're like “Oh, wow, for real?”. These guys are really, really destroyed! [...] They are included, you see, because the junkies, here, they can go eat at a Chinese restaurant if that's what they want.

R07, M, 29, Free-lance animation artist, settled in 2013, French.

Interviewees also recount instances of mutual support that arise in informal person-to-person form in the housing unit. These practices include: helping an elderly Algerian woman who wants to sell her car online, or another who cannot write in French to complete her paperwork for work authorization. Assistance can also be monetary, such as lending money to the unemployed single mother across the hall. One woman had recently lost her husband for whom she had moved to France from Morocco. She was surprised and moved by the emotional support she received from people in her building but also from strangers throughout the neighbourhood.

The relatively high degree of trust produced by repeated experiences of mutual support and encounters in public spaces also creates a sense of safety. Several interviewees, particularly

women and mothers who are newcomers, emphasize the importance of this feeling. It is even positively linked with ethnicity:

I let my son play freely around here and I feel at ease about it. There are a lot of adults and a lot of people. The fact that this neighbourhood has a largely African and Maghrebin community means that the adults are all very attentive to the kids. You really can't imagine much of anything bad happening here for a child.

R03, F, 38, Part-time employee (NGO), settled in 2003, French.

These “eyes on the street” (Jacobs, 1961) contribute to producing a limited perceived risk of aggression in the neighbourhood, in particular for children. By looking out for each other, the migrants that this interviewee describes are in fact “producers” of the neighbourhood (Galster, 2001), making it a trustworthy arena for social interaction. This sense of safety in public spaces is often compared with the lack of mutual support in less diverse neighbourhoods, which may be wealthier but much less animated.

The thing with this neighbourhood is that you'll always find people in the street here. If you go to the 16th (wealthy Parisian district), you'll hardly see anyone on the sidewalks. Never. You could be dying on the sidewalk: no one will help you. Whereas here people will more easily worry about you, about what you do. [...] A sort of solidarity.

R29, F, 33, Graphist, settled in 2010, Costa Rican.

Social order and social control

Forms of mutual support at times appear more like social control. They create order and security for the sake of some people and not others. For example, some long-time residents claim that strangers in the neighbourhood get mugged, their cars destroyed, and that women have been sexually assaulted. Yet, insiders are safe. One long-time resident of Goutte d'Or talks about her strong sense of security that she will never be harmed in the neighbourhood:

Someone from outside who would come here at night could perhaps be harassed but not us. If someone touches me, the next day [...] I have my son's friends, my son... Everybody will search the guy. We know each other.

R35, F, 72, Retired, settled in 1977, Algerian.

This form of social cohesion is actually quite ambiguous with regard to outcomes for the neighbourhood's diversity. While, at first glance, it may seem that this way of looking out for each other is reserved for longtime residents or members of the same ethnicity, a French woman who settled more recently demonstrates that the system of “resident protection” is perhaps more open than it seems. On the other hand, the example shows that this manner of maintaining social control is also unpredictable.

There were two young kids hanging around in front of the entrance. 10 PM and they are outside... There were also some older guys around the kids. Rather muscular guys, according to my husband (she laughs). When he arrived, they closed the door in front of him, saying “Where are you going?” (in an aggressive tone). By chance, the little kids told them: “No, no, he's the father of the twins; we know him; let him go”. He (my husband) told me that he wasn't feeling so confident about the situation!

R48, F, 49, Housewife, settled in 2009, French.

In a similar vein, neighbourhood youth, often referred to as “parentless” or “lost”, receive “brotherly” guidance from the more mature men in the neighbourhood, who empathize with their conditions. This form of unofficial civic engagement attests to a high degree of social interaction within the neighbourhood, especially among those with long-standing relations.

Sometimes social control mechanisms protect the social cohesion of ethnic “communities” by regulating relations with other groups and imposing codes of behavior. These practices tend to promote solidarity along similar ethnic lines and divisive relations with other ethnicities.

People don't necessarily mix as you would expect. I've observed that North-Africans don't really spend time with Africans. [...] I speak to a lot of Blacks in the neighbourhood, and sometimes I have friends from Algeria, or neighbours, who tell me: "You talk a lot with Blacks". Like, they don't want me to go out with them.

R28, F, 32, Architect, settled in 2009, Tunisian.

In other cases the effect is quite the opposite, counteracting divisive attitudes. The intention is to create inclusion across ethnic and religious lines, by insisting on intergroup tolerance and civic culture. At the same time, it builds pressure for everyone to belong and could become oppressive in the hands of only a few persons regulating civic virtues.

When people say "Jews" I'm getting nervous, because we are all the same. We are moms. Be you African, White... Russian... We are all the same. This year we told the Jewish moms: "Why do you have your own school, and we don't? Bring your kids to our school!" We think it's important to have the kids in the same schools. 'Cause they have their own school, their food, everything is separated. That's not good! Because people will think that they are racist, while they are not.

R11, F, 37, Unemployed, settled in 2001, Ivorian.

Lastly, in recent years residents have noticed the growing presence of police on the streets of Goutte d'Or, both in number and in frequency. On the one hand, longtime residents hope for an increase in social order and better regulation of conflicts. On the other hand, there is a sense of resignation that historic mistrust of the police, coupled with social realities such as the fact that many people in the neighbourhood have prior records, means that they will not call on them for help.

They don't trust the police [...] You know, a young guy will not call the police if he has a problem. Never. Because he knows this won't help him [...] They will never consider his request. I've been confronted with this personally, they won't help him.

R26, M, 28, Receptionist, settled when born in 1986, French (Parents born in Senegal).

6.4 Conclusions

Emerging from the study are two aspects of diversity that have a significant impact on social cohesion in the neighbourhood. In some forms discussed by interviews, diversity appears divisive and the source for various conflicts. Standing out most strongly is the perception of conflicts along lines of religion and ethnicity. Interviewees mention separate schools for Jewish

inhabitants, and forms of confrontation and avoidance between “Blacks”, “Whites” and “Arabs”. A second area of conflict that inhabitants describe is between residents and visitors, which may also affect the newest of newcomers. This translates into a feeling of security for some and fear for others. Disorder is connected with marginal groups, illegal practices and intense uses of the streets.

Is diversity itself the reason for all these conflicts? Interviewees’ mutual support practices paint a different picture in which hyper-diversity appears to be a strong asset for social cohesion and bonding over similarities in lifestyles, attitudes and activities. Interviewees’ egocentric networks, developed from associational participation, leisure activities, and “good neighbouring” practices, reveal relationships across ethnic and religious differences. As such, intergroup mixing softens conflicts by creating a more inclusive sense of belonging that is also open and engaged. This is important because diverse relations appear to mitigate any one group from dominating the others through its own values and forms of social control.

Perhaps all these bridging behaviors are fostered by the visibility of bonding practices within their homogenous ethnic groups. Both the working class dimension and the perception that people of similar immigrant groups help one another, convey a neighbourhood culture of solidarity. Meanwhile, interviewees from these ethnic groups do not necessarily emphasize intergroup solidarity. Families, communities and neighbourhood ties produce a kind of trust and familiarity which further produces a sense of belonging and safety, if you are from there.

None of the factors attributed to social cohesion and diversity indicate a capacity to alleviate socio-economic inequalities in any remarkable way. Forms of mutual support certainly provide short term relief and a feeling of social solidarity but they do not appear to improve access to opportunities or resources that would drastically change the conditions of even those who are the most engaged in the neighbourhood.

7. Social mobility

7.1. Introduction

As pointed out by Walter Benn Michaels, diversity does not necessarily mean equal opportunities for all (Michaels, 2006). This section aims to empirically question the links between diversity and social mobility, defined as “the opportunity of individuals or groups to move upwards or the risk of descending the ‘social ladder’, such as with respect to jobs, income, status and power (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013). To what extent is the diversity of the neighbourhood important for social mobility? Which elements foster or hinder social mobility?

After developing on the role played by neighbours and local associations in helping inhabitants to find a job, relations between neighbourhood reputation and upward social mobility will be questioned. A focus on local schools sheds light on the gradual social and ethnic segregation of children. Shaped by diversity-related parental concerns, this process most probably contributes to reproduce social inequalities and hierarchies.

7.2. Using neighbours and others to find a job

Three respondents benefited from the help of neighbours to find a job or business opportunities. One of them is a French woman aged 38 (R03), who works part-time for an NGO that offers gardening activities for adults with psychiatric troubles. After chatting with two inhabitants of her building, she was invited to create a garden at the Parisian headquarters of one of the most important French charity organizations in which they are involved. Beyond this specific opportunity, she routinely hangs around Goutte d'Or, looking for empty spaces that she could use for her future projects, but also for new connections with local inhabitants interested in urban gardening.

The case of a man aged 45 reveals the role played by local social capital in counterbalancing the lack of other resources. Raised in Goutte d'Or, he had been working for eight months as a waiter in a restaurant at the moment of the interview. After a brief period of unemployment, this father of five children was relieved when he was recruited by two childhood acquaintances from the neighborhood of the same Moroccan origin.

[Interviewer : Did you know your employers before?] Yes, they saw me for the first time when I was a young boy. They saw me grow up [...] There are not many jobs here, nowadays it's not easy to work! It's true that you have to study, the more you study, the more opportunities you have. I've not studied a lot, I had a lot of small jobs, I was lucky enough to find someone I know that offered me a contract of employment. But otherwise it's hard to find a job!

R37, M, 45, Waiter in a restaurant, settled in 1974, French (Parents born in Morocco).

In Flandre, a Malian woman found a job in the Neighbourhood Maintenance Corporation of the 19th district (see Escafré-Dublet and Lelévrier, 2014) after being encouraged to apply by one of her neighbours, who previously worked there.

A friend of mine was working here before me. She told me to send my C.V., and after a while they called me. [...] She is one of my neighbours. [...] One day, while chatting, she invited me to apply, that I could have a chance. That's how I found my job.

R12, F, 31, Janitorial employee, settled in 2005, Malian.

The “weak ties” (Granovetter, 1973) built up in the neighbourhood are not the only elements that foster inhabitants' social mobility. Indeed, local initiatives such as the Neighbourhood Maintenance Corporation not only provide some of them with paid jobs; they also provide help with improving linguistic skills, benefiting from vocational training and/or obtaining professional qualifications. Particularly relevant is the case of a woman born in Morocco and settled in Paris in 2003. Recruited by the Neighbourhood Maintenance Corporation as a cleaning employee in 2005, she continues to work there ten years later as an assistant-manager. Thanks to her efforts and the benevolence of her colleagues, she earns a better salary and has many new responsibilities.

I began my work here as a cleaning lady. Afterwards I received training, and then I became a team leader. And now I'm an assistant-manager. [...] Thanks to the whole team, because here we have a very cohesive team, we support each other. The headmistress, when we need some help, is here to help us. I needed a one-year training to become an assistant-manager, and had to write a report... And my problem was that I'm not so good in writing, but the colleagues helped me to make it.

R09, F, 43, Assistant-manager, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

Several other respondents with an immigrant background pointed out the benefit they received from free French and literacy courses after settling in the neighbourhood. Also precious is the help offered to deal with public institutions or apply for jobs (e. g. writing cover letters).

Sometimes I come here [NB : Association Goutte d'Or] to fill out (administrative) forms, especially when I don't manage to understand what they are all about. And they give me very useful information.

R27, F, 35, Homecare assistant, settled in 2006, Malian.

Associations also contribute to fostering inhabitants' social mobility by providing them with the social capital they lack to get job opportunities. This is what highlights the case of a young law student, born in France from Togolese parents. Living in Goutte d'Or since she was ten, she lacks a professional network in her field. Therefore, she benefited from the help of a mentor to find an internship in the legal department of a multinational corporation based in Paris.

It's an association which helps young people with a modest background in getting prestigious degrees thanks to tutorship. You can get English lessons for instance. And for one year you meet a kind of mentor who has professional expertise and introduces you to the codes of professional life. [...] I had one last year, generally this lasts for one year but we still keep in touch. He comes from a wealthy family; it is interesting to chat with him. [...] He helped me a lot; he talked to the chief legal counsel. I had to pass interviews, with a lot of tests, but I think it is thanks to my mentor that I got the internship. I think I would not have been recruited if I had applied on my own.

R41, F, 23, Law student, settled in 2001, French (Parents born in Togo).

Providing inhabitants with the bridging social capital that they cannot find in their own networks appears to be a very efficient way to foster social mobility in working-class neighbourhoods. As pointed out by this student, it is more difficult to benefit from local connections to access high-skilled work positions in these kinds of residential areas. Meanwhile, neighbourhood reputation can constitute another barrier for upward social mobility.

7.3. Neighbourhood reputation as an asset in upward social mobility?

Neighbourhood reputation is not perceived as an asset in upward social mobility. Conversely, it is often conceived as an obstacle when applying for jobs. This perception is particularly widespread among respondents with an immigrant background, who surmise that a "territorial discrimination" (Duguet et al., 2010) holds back their ability to find a job.

And the fact that they [NB : les jeunes] live in the 18th district, they send CVs with their addresses, Barbès, Marcadet, they are rejected, they do not believe anymore in this, not at all.

R26, M, 28, Receptionist, settled when born in 1986, French (Parents born in Senegal).

I don't know if it's true or not, but I've heard that people living in the 19th district, especially here in Curial-Cambrai [NB : A large social housing project], don't find jobs easily. 'Cause the neighbourhood has a bad reputation [...] I don't know if it's true, but they say that this is an area with problems, so that employers are afraid of hiring people living here.

R09, F, 43, Assistant-manager, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

Such perception sheds another light on the reasons why the ongoing social upgrading of the areas of study is looked upon favourably by low-income interviewees. Any improvement in the neighbourhood's reputation is then considered as a potential asset for forthcoming applications, with a special concern for children's future professional opportunities.

However, neighbourhood reputation is not the only criteria for discriminations on the labour market. As outlined by a youth educator, several dimensions are intertwined, such as skin colour, age, gender and social background. Spatial, social and racial dimensions intersect.

As an educator, I observed that for a lot of youngsters it's difficult to find an employer. All the more (louder) when you live in a neighbourhood like this one, when your name sounds non-French, and when you have a certain kind of skin color.

R10, M, 33, Youth educator, settled when born in 1981, French (Parents from Mauritania).

Conversely and symptomatically, a young and white interviewee who grew up in a well-off Parisian district has no doubt that her and her boyfriend's professional careers will not be impacted by the reputation of their current neighbourhood (R06, 29, settled in 2013, Goutte d'Or).

7.4. School, social mix and segregation

Respondents emphasize the role played by local schools in producing encounters and building social ties in the neighbourhood, being themselves parents or not. Due to the characteristics of the areas of study, the schooling experience has among its consequences a strong impact on the way parents perceive diversity. School is indeed an arena in which the experience of diversity is concrete and meaningful, in relation to its outcomes in terms of children's education and development. With this perspective, the number of different nationalities present in schools has frequently been mentioned as mirroring the diversity of the neighbourhood.

My children went to the local primary school, it was a nice experience. With pupils from thirty-six countries, can you imagine that? Thirty-six countries in a school of two hundred pupils!

R45, F, 47, Receptionist, settled in 1993, French (Parents born in Algeria).

This diversity tends to be perceived as fruitful for children during the first years of schooling, appreciated by respondents as long as its impact on children's future social trajectories is not really at stake. Yet, in primary school, concerns arise among middle-class (and largely white) families. The social heterogeneity of pupils is progressively perceived as impacting the quality of teaching, due to the difficulties faced by teachers to deal with the needs of all the pupils, especially the most advanced. Increasing contrasts in reading, writing or counting skills are perceived as a threat in terms of intellectual stimulation, but also in terms of social isolation for the best pupils. Besides, children with a working-class and (more or less implicitly) with an immigrant background are frequently portrayed as relatively more agitated and aggressive. Some parents thus begin to reconsider keeping their children in the public local schools.

The choice of secondary school is actually of particular focus for parents. The diversity of pupils in local public schools is then perceived as significantly lower, as many middle-class and/or white children are sent to other secondary schools. Interesting to note is that the relatively poor results obtained by local secondary schools at the national exams are not associated with a weak quality of teachers, but with the “quality” of the school population. Parents are anxious about the atmosphere inside classrooms, perceived as not propitious for studying, but also the potential for verbal and physical violence toward their own child.

My daughter will enter secondary school next year, and I am almost the only one among the white parents of our primary school to consider sending her to the local secondary school. And to be honest I'm not sure that I will do it because it has quite a bad reputation... The atmosphere is unpleasant, as kids who share similar social problems are concentrated together; there is no more the mix nor the interactions that make up the richness of the local primary school experience. [...] Honestly, among the relatively well-off white population, no one goes to that secondary school.

R23, F, 40, Musician, settled in 2004, French.

Parents perceive that their options are never totally satisfactory. On the one hand, the choice of the local public school tends to be associated with different risks for the child. On the other hand, the choice of a private school is costly, when public schools are almost free. Within the public allocation system, parents can cheat by indicating another address than their actual one in order to escape the local catchment area. Therefore, sending a child to a school located outside the neighbourhood means longer journeys and weaker participation in local networks (Raveaud and van Zanten, 2007). This is why a fourth option, seriously considered by some respondents, is to leave the neighbourhood for another area with better-perceived public schools. Such choices are extensively discussed among parents; moral dilemmas arise, as it is difficult to reconcile the feeling of being both a “good parent” and a “good citizen” (Butler 2003; Oría *et al.* 2007).

Those choices produce an increasing segregation between children along the school path. Concerns for children’s well-being and future school success underlie this incremental and self-fulfilling process, reinforcing the bad reputation of local public schools. Some respondents expressed a feeling of abandonment by institutions, the local public school provision being considered much less attractive than those in proximate neighbourhoods.

I am angry with the public schooling, absolutely. Because they complain about parents that don't follow the rules, but nothing is done for them to follow the rules. I have the feeling that this ghettoization is fostered by the institutions. And here I talk about normal schools, because I don't want the best schools of the city for my children. I just want a school where you find a lot of different colors, a normal school.

R24, F, 37, Civil servant in charge of cultural policies, settled in 2007, French.

This situation is perceived as unfair. As the competition for entering the best higher-education curriculum is very intense in France, the level achieved during school years plays a decisive role in shaping social trajectories (Van de Velde, 2008). Whereas schooling is a crucial stake for most parents we interviewed, upward social mobility opportunities for working-class and ethnic minorities’ children appear weakened by this gradual segregation.

The fact that most of the best pupils leave the local public schools, and in some cases the neighbourhood, not only impacts the quality of interactions that occur inside schools; this social and ethnic segregation process also produces social differentiation in the networks of both

children and parents, whose neighbourhood social capital largely rely on their children's friendship ties (Weller and Bruegel, 2009).

7.5. Conclusions

Interviews suggest that social ties between neighbours are not a primary resource to find a job. The role played by associations appears to be more decisive in terms of fostering social mobility. They can provide information and vocational training, but also access to bridging social capital.

Neighbourhood reputation is perceived as hindering job opportunities for working-class inhabitants, especially when they have an immigrant background. This widespread perception sheds light on the positive reaction of low-income dwellers towards the ongoing social upgrading of the area, conceived as improving its name and as a potential asset for future job applications. Therefore, several other dimensions overlap in employment discrimination, such as skin colour, name, gender and social background.

Schools are a central stake for most families, because of their outcome for social mobility. They firstly appear as an arena of encounter for very diverse children and parents, but school choices produce and reproduce an incremental segregation of children in terms of class and skin colour, especially at the secondary level. This self-fulfilling process reinforces both the negative reputation of the neighbourhood and the difficulties faced by young working-class inhabitants and children of migrants to achieve social mobility. School policies are thus perceived as threatening the sustainability of diversity inside schools. So, large fractions of pupils progressively escape the local public schools and sometimes the neighbourhood itself, reproducing inequalities in education and social mobility.

8. Perceptions of public policies and initiatives

8.1. Introduction

Although diversity is not an official category of French public action, area-based policies aim to favor social integration and social mix to reduce "territorial inequalities" (see Escafré-Dublet and Lelévrier, 2014). The City Policy and the Urban Renewal programs target disadvantaged and "priority" neighbourhoods, of which the areas of study are a part. Socio-economic actions are implemented through the neighbourhood local management while the Great Urban Project of "Paris-Nord" aims to diversify housing stock and regenerate former industrial activity spaces. Local initiatives for social cohesion and economic performance are handled by non-governmental organizations that receive financial as well as technical support from the Paris Department of City Policy. Social housing landlords, public employment agencies or community centres are also involved in these policies.

This chapter discusses residents' perceptions of these indirect diversity-related policies and their expectations. What do they know, think and expect of such policies and initiatives? The fieldwork shows that their perceptions, interests and priorities vary depending on their social capital and resources, their individual trajectory and personal engagement into policies, politics and associations.

8.2. Perception and evaluation of existing policies and initiatives: what do residents know?

The residents perceive the visible physical changes involved by housing and urban planning policies but have a much more limited knowledge of socio-economic arrangements. Social mixing, meaning ethnic-racial mixing, is one of the key issues they talk about, questioning the effects of housing diversification and social action on social cohesion.

Urban regeneration policies: a visible change

Almost all of the residents speak about the broad urban regeneration policies. They are aware of the changes without knowing exactly which policies are concerned. Most of them see in a positive light the evolution of transportation which will improve daily lives and work commutes. Nevertheless, a male inhabitant (R50, Unemployed, settled when born in 1970, French with parents born in North-Africa) expresses a more nuanced view about the high-speed train line, addressing diversity issues. He outlines the risk of conflicts between young gangs coming more easily from the suburbs.

Yes, it is fine the new transport but I imagined that... People if they come from the suburban areas, the mess it could be... So, I hope not but I think about it. In a way, it is very good for people working but not for people fighting and settling scores... I don't know if this would be nice... the gang war I told you about before with the arrival of the "banlieues", it could cause trouble.

R50, 45, Unemployed, Settled in 1970, French (Parents born in North-Africa).

The opinions and interests of residents with regard to public action vary depending on their level of commitment to local and political life. Some of our interviewees, especially migrant newcomers, do not want to give an opinion or judge public action. They lack access to information but also wish to keep a low profile, in some cases to avoid trouble related to the uncertainty of their legal status.

I cannot tell. Politics... I have nothing to do with it; it is far from me... I cannot speak about it. First I am not able to read, why get involved in politics? It is not interesting.

R15, F, 64, Unemployed, settled in 2003, Moroccan.

Social mixing through housing diversification: an asset but a failure

Social mixing policies matter to interviewees and are debated from several different viewpoints. New housing developments are visible and some households have moved into them. Moreover, social mixing is currently a hot political topic enhanced by the recent terrorist attacks in France.

One opinion is in favour of "mixing" to avoid concentration and its alleged negative effects. For this man engaged in local associations and locally elected, social mixing through housing diversification is better than concentration and has positive effects by maintaining diversity.

I am against stupid discourses like: "You create a park and of course all that it will attract are bobos, which will change the area". So what? Does it mean that we should let it remain shit and then we will be sure that we don't "boboïse" the neighbourhood? [...] The fact that all the new dwellings were social housing... Elsewhere, we built in the same building twenty dwellings and ten are ordinary social housing (PLUS), five are intermediate rent level social housing (PLS) and five are lower rent level social housing, so we create social mixing naturally... That's all and that's what keeps this area popular and multicultural.

R40, M, 63, Arabic teacher and deputy mayor, settled in 1976, French.

Many positive discourses on social mixing clearly refer to an ethnic and racial mix. The policy of populating social housing is considered part of the concentration process. Some African migrant families demand to have fewer “Blacks” in order to avoid the stigmatization from which they could directly suffer.

We should mix the families, one should not put the Blacks here and the Whites there. Blacks, Arabs, Jews, we are all the same, it is necessary to mix. The building, there, there are Whites but more Blacks than Whites. It is not normal! When the Whites begin to leave it is not normal! I don't agree. We should mix.

R11, F, 37, Unemployed, settled in 2001, Ivorian.

Conversely, the old white residents of the social housing estate Michelet (Flandre) outlined the increasing “black” population in their buildings as part of an increased sense of distance from the neighbourhood.

Back in the past they put a lot of French people and nowadays... lots of them move because they get... they don't enjoy the environment, they do not like the area. And they put again foreigners, Blacks... There are no longer any French people who move into the social housing block... So that's why now we feel like strangers.

R38, M, 80, Retired foreman, settled in 1976, French.

Negative opinions on mixing are grounded on two main issues related to the impact of these policies on social cohesion. First, some of the households living in the mixed new housing developments highlight an experience of separation more than encounters, as in other research which refers to “parallel lives” (Camina and Wood, 2009).

There are two entrances, it is the same hall but with two doors... It could be dangerous to mix people (sarcastic) [...] On the left side, it is social housing, on the right side private rental housing. [...] I find it symbolically ironic. You construct a building with private and social housing but you still create two separate doors with a double security system. So, you mix but... [...] It is not necessarily lived as a boundary ... but indeed you do not encounter them.

R05, M, 38, Project manager in a suburban municipality, settled in 2012, French.

Others point out the negative outcomes of the ongoing social upgrading process of parts of the area of study, fostered by local commercial and housing policies. In particular, they fear for the lively atmosphere of these neighbourhoods, the opening of new shops and bars being perceived as increasing the ethnic and social division between newcomers and former residents.

Social, economic and cultural action: how to avoid social and ethnic division?

Except those who are directly involved or targeted, residents are largely unaware of social and community neighbourhood policies. The City Policy is only identified by managers and participants of local initiatives supported by these funds or by those who are working in the social field.

Those who have heard of a particular action or who have been involved in local initiatives express a positive perception. The arrangements focused on employment, school and community participation are the most well-known, such as the Neighbourhood Maintenance Corporation, shared gardens or social centres. They outline the positive outcomes of these initiatives for the integration of ethnic minorities.

White former inhabitants indicated their concerns with the aims of social and cultural action referring to ethno-racial categories. This woman who has lived for 47 years in her neighbourhood perceives social action as providing for the “Asian community”. She condemns what she considers as a social injustice.

For instance, at the City Hall, every year you can go on trips partly paid by the social services [...] So there, the Asian pass before. That's what the lady at the city hall told me. Asians first. When I asked why, she said that she was ordered to take them first. I think this is unfair, we paid, we worked all our life for social benefits and now they tell us we don't have the right! I said it is not normal and it makes me quite upset.

R18, F, 82, Retired employee, settled in 1969, French.

8.3. Policy priorities proposed by interviewees: what do residents want?

Unsurprisingly, residents pay more attention to and are more concerned by forms of public action that impact their daily life and environment: housing access and maintenance, property, safety, employment, and nuisances from street uses. These are their priorities.

They all agree on the need for more affordable housing in Paris and are concerned about the broad risk of gentrification, questioning their own capacity to stay in the neighbourhood. This area is still ethnically and socially diverse but urban policies risk boosting the gentrification process leading to a more homogenous area with fewer minorities.

The second common expectation is with regard to youth (*les jeunes*). On the one hand, they demand from police and social landlords more regulation of delinquency, nuisances and conflicts. On the other hand, they expect better care of all young people to ensure their integration through education, professional training, anti-discrimination policies and cultural activities.

Interviewees consider some large public spaces of the neighbourhoods, like green spaces or cultural facilities as potential places for encounters between different groups of various ages and diverse lifestyles for diverse uses. Public action could strengthen diversity through urban layouts, or events and actions that favour a more diverse access to these places. *Jardins d'Éole*, a park created within the urban regeneration project, is already well-known. A youth educator regrets the invasion of this park by drug dealers and consumers and calls for a more diversified use of the place.

They asked me and I participated and gave some proposals on the Jardins d'Éole. My idea was that this is a big park ... There are activities on certain parts but we should strengthen that, to get the maximum... Old people, for instance, they will play chess on little tables, you can see that in Barbès. The more it is occupied, the less the users and dealers will stay. So nowadays this garden is little occupied; when we are going there, there are no families, no kids, just drug users and dealers, and that's a pity.

R10, M, 33, Youth educator, settled when born in 1981, French (Parents from Mauritania).

Cultural amenities, like an ancient cinema that has been renovated by the municipality (Louxor, very close to Goutte d'Or), could also be arenas for promoting diversity. The perception of the activities of *Centquatre*, a multidisciplinary artistic centre inaugurated in 2008 in Flandre, is nuanced. For the most anchored inhabitants it is clearly a place oriented toward newcomers and middle/upper-class inhabitants of other Parisian districts. However, others noticed a change in the uses and an opening to a more diverse public.

Lots of dancers come [to the Centquatre] from everywhere, but they only let them train in front of the entry stairs. Most often they do hip-hop, these kinds of dances, and it seems to me that this is not a good recognition of hip-hop as an art. On the other hand, they invite other artists, not even from the neighbourhood, who occupy rooms for one month, two months, to make creations with very limited success... And I think this is a pity.

R10, M, 33, Youth educator, settled when born in 1981, French (Parents from Mauritania).

We always said that it was for the "bobos". Only the rich get access to culture... [...] However it has changed. Because I think that people protested loudly enough to be heard and then the first manager left and the director changed. And it is more open to the neighbourhood and to people who live there... At least we meet them regularly, we make proposals... As soon as there is something interesting going on they come, they propose to us while before it was not like that.

R08, F, 62, Building caretaker, settled in 1989, French.

Still, residents also call for more urban management to ensure cleanliness and safety in the neighbourhood and the buildings, echoing the lack of proximity of neighbourhood management, highlighted by research on deprived neighbourhoods (Bacqué et al., 2005).

8.4. Conclusion

Among the more visible urban regeneration schemes there is particular sensitivity to transportation improvements, the green spaces, housing diversification and public facilities. Even if the most politically engaged assert the needs for social mixing, most of those who have experienced it in housing and public spaces express a more nuanced view on the outcomes.

To a certain extent, our interviewees outline the main issues and contradictions of neighbourhood policies. First, a lot of money and energy is spent on urban policies while associations get little support and/or funding to implement integration policies. Second, housing diversification should be privileged instead of pushing out low-income people and minorities or concentrating them more in certain spots inside social housing. Third, the social-mixing value is difficult to achieve without avoiding an enhancement of social and ethnic divisions.

Through these policies and initiatives, perceptions strengthen ethno-racial categories and divisions, underlying social divisions between "rich" newcomers, so-called "bobos", and "poor" local inhabitants. The key-issue for residents could be summarized in terms of "safety", "affordability" and "accessibility", more than in social-mixing or integration policies.

Many more neighbourhood initiatives are top-down rather than bottom-up in France, with public financing supporting NGO's and public services (Saurugger, 2007). Nevertheless, interviewees are aware that subsidies to NGOs working in the social sector have slowed down despite their usefulness in these types of neighbourhoods. Broadly speaking, these inhabitants are more ready to engage with resident groups dealing with daily life and the "living together" (*vivre-ensemble*) than in formal local policies (Scott et al., 2012). The presence of some open-minded and civically engaged people from diverse ethnic backgrounds can be seen as a pull-factor for solidarity and social regulation.

9. Conclusion

Defined as "the presence of a number of socio-economic, socio-demographic, and ethnic groups within a certain spatial entity" (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013), hyper-diversity does not appear as a determining factor in interviewees' decision to settle in the area of study. Their main reasons to come are largely connected with housing affordability and accessibility and with the central and attractive location of Paris. Diversity thus appears more as an outcome of the local housing market than as a pull-factor for settling in the area.

"Diversity" (*diversité*) is not a term frequently used in interviewees' descriptions of their neighbourhood, as it was not a category of public action in the policy makers' discourses (Escafré-Dublet et al., 2014). The inhabitants use the adjective "*populaire*" to describe the neighbourhoods of study and the term "mix" (*mixité*) to describe the heterogeneity of the population. "*Quartier populaire*" refers to the specific atmosphere of traditional migrant and working-class areas, busy, full of life and still disadvantaged. Mix connotes multiple dimensions of social distance such as educational level, occupation, wealth, nationality, religion, skin colour or sexual orientation. When they speak more precisely about the "others" they see and encounter in the neighbourhood, three main categorizations related to diversity stand out. First, in contrast with the "colour-blind" approach of French urban policies, interviewees refer to religious and ethno-racial categories that distinguish between "Blacks" and "Whites" or construct groups such as "Arabs" or "Africans". Second, often mentioned is the social category of "bobos" which refers to the middle-class group of newcomers. Lastly, the generational category of "young people" (*jeunes*) is used as a label for disadvantaged, young, male inhabitants of a migrant background, overlapping age, class, skin colour and gender. These categories of diversity refer to three features of the study areas which include a concentration of diverse ethnic communities, an ongoing gentrification process and a dominant "masculine" occupation of public spaces.

The role of social and residential trajectories

Beyond this broad view, one of the key findings of the study is the role of social and residential trajectories in shaping and varying with time through residents' experiences and perceptions of diversity.

We identified four types of households which highlight the diversity of lifestyles in the area and explain housing choices as well as the degree of familiarity with diversity: 1/ highly-educated, young and mobile students, artists, migrants and workers under 35 at the beginning of their trajectory; 2/ low-income single parents and migrant families with few resources and with trajectories featuring many constraints but leaning on bonding capital and community networks; 3/ middle-class newcomers in the middle of their life course; 4/ older residents, with low and mid-level incomes or pensions, who settled in the area decades ago.

Positive or negative perceptions of diversity are embedded in social and residential trajectories. Interviews highlight the difficulty of considering diversity as either a pure asset or liability for inhabitants of “diverse” neighbourhoods. Positive perceptions are mostly expressed by middle-class newcomers and migrants: the former appreciate the feeling of “traveling” in their own neighbourhood, while the latter enjoy its vibrant character and wide-ranging culinary items, all of which enhance their feeling of being at home. The daily transmission of experiences, knowledge and know-how is proclaimed as a richness that is believed to be lacking in less diverse neighbourhoods (Corbillé, 2013). Negative perceptions are more often expressed by older retired residents whose strong local anchorage appears to be threatened by the rise of new dominant norms of behaviour and self-presentation.

Openness to diversity is thus related to previous personal, professional or residential experiences such as mixed marriages, travels abroad or living in a working-class area in their childhood (Lelévrier, 2013a). For those familiar with diversity, seeking diversity (Blokland and Van Eijk, 2010) can thus be a secondary reason to move to this part of Paris rather than to the well-off districts. Perceptions and practices also vary depending on the lifecycle position and over time: former residents complain more about diverse uses of public space when they get older and retire. The “newly acquired responsibilities of parenthood” (Boterman, 2013) tend to challenge parents’ openness to diversity along their children’s school experiences. The analysis of activities through time and space shows the extent to which “time in-between” (Blokland and Nast, 2014) or inhabitants’ daily routines are also defined by variations in life cycles, lifestyles and personal preferences.

Interviews highlight more generally what we call a process of socialization to diversity through previous trajectories but also through time and throughout neighbourhood life after inhabitants have settled there. The daily cohabitation in local space appears to play a significant role in the production of an increased reflexivity and in providing “public familiarity” (Fischer, 1982) with diversity.

Place-attachment, conflicts and solidarities

Conflicts may arise in relation to uses of public space, due to diverse social norms and lifestyles and manifesting in most cases socio-economic inequalities (overcrowded homes, lack of employment). In particular, respondents emphasized several negative outcomes of the high prevalence of drug trafficking in the areas of study, depicted as creating conflicts and reinforcing feelings of insecurity among certain groups.

However, place-attachment is widespread among interviewees, as suggest the many forms of mutual support recounted by interviewees and a prevailing sentiment that they are better off in their neighbourhood where people are willing to help one another. As Van Eijk (2012) argues, “distinguishing carefully between narratives and practices” highlights the fact that some seemingly banal activities produce interactions between diverse others (i.e. walking one’s dog, engaging in one’s children’s school or going to the market). In particular, the ethnic shops play a central role in the positive perception of diversity while offering a valuable resource for local migrants.

A local working-class legacy and the perception that people of similar immigrant background help one another convey a neighbourhood culture of solidarity. Family, community and neighbourhood ties produce trust and familiarity which further produces a sense of belonging and safety, if you are from the place. These historically working-class neighbourhoods of Paris

appear still to be a place of public familiarity, with bonding ties providing sense of belonging (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001). However, the young male working-class inhabitants of non-French origins (*les jeunes*) embody the ambivalent dialectic of conflict and solidarity, as their visible presence in public and semi-public spaces tends to be associated simultaneously and paradoxically to disorder and delinquency as well as to the lively and safe character of the neighbourhood.

As one neighbourhood is not equivalent to another, it is important to emphasize differences within the area of study. Even if adjacent and relatively similar in the social and cultural heterogeneity of their population, Flandre, La Chapelle and Goutte d'Or do not share only common features. More precisely, the settlement and urban planning history of Goutte d'Or and Flandre contrast significantly. Whereas migrants' presence has been an historical feature of Goutte d'Or, the massive settlement of international migrants is more recent in Flandre. An area typical of French urbanism of the 1960s and 1970s, its preponderance of social housing projects has seen more lately the arrival of a culturally heterogeneous population. Conversely, a tradition of immigration has shaped the identity of Goutte d'Or (Toubon and Messamah, 1970), as exemplified by the vitality of Château Rouge, a "Little Africa" attracting customers from the whole metropolitan area (Chabrol, 2013).

Critical discourses on gentrification are more widespread in La Chapelle and Goutte d'Or, whereas critical discourses focus more on public housing policies and a perceived increase in people of African and North-African backgrounds within social housing in Flandre. Very interesting is to note that in both cases a desire of preserving diversity underlies those critical discourses. More generally, it is above all the concentration and the predominance of any one group which concerns the inhabitants we interviewed.

They outlined some paradoxes and ambiguities of diversity. On the one hand, interviewees' sometimes attribute conflicts to differences in lifestyles, norms and values (such as ethnic, religious and generational differences); however, interviewees' activities convey trust and solidarity along these lines. Young mobile groups and middle-class families are seeking diversity but the encounter with "others" often ends at the door of the secondary schools for their children (Butler, 2003; Oria et al., 2007). However, a desire to preserve diversity as well as minor and innovative forms of redistribution among newcomers and former inhabitants, migrants and non-migrants soften the picture of tensions and "parallel lives" (Camina and Wood, 2009).

Social mobility, social capital and school segregation

From an employment perspective, providing inhabitants with bridging social capital that they cannot find in their own networks appears to be an efficient way to foster social mobility. Associations and social centres play an important role in forging those connections, all the more useful as neighbourhood reputation is perceived to hinder job opportunities for working-class inhabitants, especially when they have an immigrant background. This observation sheds a new light on the positive reaction of low-income dwellers towards the ongoing social upgrading of the area, perceived as improving the local reputation and possibly future job chances. However, other dimensions overlap in employment discrimination, such as skin color, name, gender and social background, calling for ambitious anti-discrimination programs.

School is another central concern related to social mobility and social cohesion in our interviews. Most parents believe there are positive outcomes for their children to grow up in diverse neighbourhoods and local preschools and primary schools appear as an arena of encounter for children and parents of diverse backgrounds and lifestyles. However, parents' school choices

produce and reproduce an incremental segregation of children in terms of both social class and skin colour, especially at the secondary level. This self-fulfilling process reinforces the negative reputation of the neighbourhood and the difficulties faced by young working-class inhabitants to achieve social mobility. School policies and the socio-spatial hierarchies of the school market are perceived as threatening the sustainability of diversity inside schools (Oberti and Rivière, 2014). Large fractions of pupils progressively flee the local public schools and sometimes the neighbourhood itself, reproducing inequalities in education and social mobility.

As highlighted by recent comparative research on the cases of London and Paris (Benson et al., 2015), social mix at school tends to be valued by middle-class parents in Paris, who often regret having to leave the local school. Contextual elements have thus to be introduced in order to understand their choices, at the heart of a metropolitan area where the school market is extremely competitive and hierarchical (Oberti, 2013) and in a country where diplomas are decisive in shaping professional trajectories (Van de Velde, 2008). Here again, parents from all social and ethnic backgrounds express their desire to preserve diversity in local schools all along the school path, more than a real desire to avoid diversity. Nevertheless, large fractions of the more well-off children progressively enter private schools or public schools located outside the neighbourhood. This social and ethnic segregation shapes the social networks of children and parents, an outcome that should be more seriously taken into account by school policies and more broadly by diversity-oriented policies. Whereas French studies demonstrate negative neighbourhood effects on school performance in deprived areas (Goux and Maurin, 2007), our analysis suggests a positive neighbourhood effect on socialization to diversity. This could be harnessed as an educational outcome in itself by evaluating the impact of social and ethnic diversity in schools on life trajectories and openness to “others”.

Toward an increased participation?

Improvements of social housing estates, degraded private housing and industrial derelict zones (i.e. *Jardins d'Éole*, a public park located along the railways separating the 18th and 19th districts) are looked upon favourably. Such operations are considered proof of the investment of public and private actors in the neighbourhood's development and rehabilitation.

However, respondents expect employment, educational and anti-discrimination policies more than physical and urban improvements. They regret the fact that while money is invested in urban renewal, associations and social initiatives receive decreasing support and/or funding. They also claim for more attention to the everyday life and forms of social regulations of the diverse but also deviant uses of public spaces (i.e. safety, cleaning, mediation of conflicts). In our areas of study, social centres and schools are crucial places for social interaction and cohesion and could be more formal partnerships of the city contracts.

This gap between inhabitants' priorities and public policy aims is not new (Lelévrier, 2004). There are high hopes for the new Urban Renewal and City Policy programme focused on deprived neighbourhoods and implemented since 2014 to achieve its objective of better considering social needs and favouring a more diverse participation of inhabitants through compulsory “citizen councils” with real decision-making power (Bacqué and Mechmache, 2013).

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Appendix: List of the interviewed persons

Interviewee	Age group	Gender	Position in household	Ethnic group (or region/origin)
1	31-45	M	Lives in partnership	British
2	31-45	F	Married, one child	French
3	31-45	F	Lives in partnership, one child	French
4	31-45	F	Lives in partnership	French
5	31-45	H	Lives in partnership	French
6	18-30	F	Lives in partnership	French
7	18-30	H	Lives in partnership	French
8	61-75	F	Divorced, lives in partnership, one child	French
9	31-45	F	Widowed, two children	Moroccan
10	31-45	H	Married, one child	French, parents born in Mauritania
11	31-45	F	Married, four children	Ivorian
12	31-45	F	Married, three children	Malian
13	46-60	H	Married, four children	Cameroonian
14	46-60	H	Single	French
15	46-60	F	Single	Italian
16	61-75	F	Twice divorced, three children	Moroccan
17	61-75	H	Married, children and grand-children	Senegalese

18	>75	F	Divorced, one child	French
19	61-75	F	Divorced, one child	French
20	61-75	F	Single	French
21	18-30	F	Lives in partnership	Chilean
22	61-75	F	Civil union, one child	French
23	31-45	F	Separated, two children	French
24	31-45	F	Lives in partnership, two children	French
25	18-30	F	Lives in partnership, one child	French
26	18-30	H	Single	French, parents born in Senegal
27	31-45	F	Divorced, four children	Malian
28	31-45	F	Single	Tunisian
29	31-45	F	Lives in partnership	Costa Rican
30	31-45	H	Lives in partnership	French
31	31-45	F	Married, one child	Spanish
32	18-30	F	Single	Malian
33	18-30	F	Single	French, parents born in Cape Verde
34	31-45	F	Lives in partnership	French
35	61-75	F	Unknown	Algerian
36	61-75	F	Unknown	Tunisian
37	31-45	H	Married, three children	French, parents born in Marocco
38	>75	H	Single	French
39	61-75	F	Separated, one child	French
40	61-75	H	Single	French

41	18-30	F	Single	French, parents born in Togo
42	61-75	F	Separated, one child	French (French West Indies)
43	31-45	H	Single	Algerian
44	46-60	H	Married, one child	French, parents born in Germany and Algeria
45	46-60	F	Married, four children	French, parents born in Algeria
46	61-75	H	Married, three children	French
47	31-45	F	Single	French
48	46-60	F	Married, two children	French
49	31-45	H	Divorced, two children	French
50	31-45	H	Divorced	French, parents born in North Africa