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Four Scenarios for Ecological Transition

The ADEME Foresight Exercise *Transition(s) 2050*

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Given the looming climate emergency and heightened European ambitions for carbon neutrality, the schedule for ecological transition in France is now very tight. In this context, a number of foresight exercises have been undertaken in recent years to stoke the debate and provide decision-makers with the food for thought needed for implementing a transition strategy compatible with the country's decarbonization objectives.

ADEME (France's Ecological Transition Agency), an inter-departmental public body that has been coordinating foresight thinking on the French ecological transition for more than 10 years, published its last exercise on the subject — *Transition(s) 2050* — in late 2021. This article reminds us of the context and methodology of that exercise, the fruit of two years' work and collaboration. It lays out the four typical — coherent and contrasting — scenarios proposed by ADEME for taking France toward carbon neutrality by 2050. These are: 'Frugal Generation', 'Territorial Cooperation', 'Green Technologies' and 'Restorative Paris'. Conceived for mainland France, these scenarios are based on the same macroeconomic, demographic and climate data, but

they take distinct paths and reflect very different societal choices. It is now up to the political decision-makers to choose the path that seems most appropriate and acceptable to them, keeping in mind that each scenario forms a coherent whole (one cannot 'cherry-pick' from within the four), and that, above and beyond the 2050 target date, the intermediate stages are crucial (particularly 2030) and, lastly, to meet these intermediate targets, that it will be imperative to take action to modify demand — and hence to change ways of life and consumption.

The Railways — Engine of Future Mobility in Europe?

Catherine Vieilledent

With the Green Pact that was launched in 2019 and the 'Climate Package' of 2021, the European Union has shown great ambition on the environmental front, particularly with its goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 and intermediate aim of a 55% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Some sectors are of particularly strategic importance here, beginning with transport, since it is the leading greenhouse gas emitting sector in the EU (more than 25% of the total). To decarbonize this sector, the main emphasis has to be on public transport and modes of transport with the lowest emissions. Among these, railways have pride of place but receive insufficient support

from European investors and politicians. With the European Year of Railways ending in December 2021, Catherine Vieilledent shows here how European railways policy has evolved over recent decades, and how rail has fallen behind when it could play a lead role in the Union's environmental strategy. She stresses the advantages of intra-European rail transport (for both passengers and freight) and the importance of re-balancing modes of transport (with the aim of encouraging a modal shift). In so doing, she is arguing for the completion, as soon as possible, of the trans-European rail network, a key element in 'sustainable resilient mobility' on the Old Continent.

The Balkans and Europe: Convergence and Diversity

Max-Valentin Robert

Following the publication of the article comparing Russians' values with those expressed in Europe in the European Value Study (EVS) surveys, *Futuribles* rounds off this comparison of value-systems on the European continent by offering insight into the populations of the Balkan states. In the particularly tense geopolitical context prevailing as this issue goes to press (mid-March 2022), analysing and understanding how the values of Europeans are developing in different parts of the continent, seeing whether they are converging and supporting the democratic views predominant in the European Union, provide essential evidence for deciphering future developments and reactions to events.

Drawing on EVS data from the 2008-2010 and 2017-2020 waves collected in Albania, Bosnia, Macedonia, Monte-

negro and Serbia (Western Balkan countries involved in a process for integration into the European space), Max-Valentin Robert examines the views of their populations on the European Union and the notion of 'Europeanness' and their degree of adherence to democratic values. Though many values and criteria for membership of the general European family converge with the opinions found in EU states of long standing and in the Central and East European countries that joined in 2004, it also seems to be the case that adherence to the European democratic system is partly down to resentment (in reaction to the failures of their own institutions) and that it doesn't exclude a benevolent attitude toward some more authoritarian alternatives. All in all, if the values of the Balkan populations show significant convergence with those of the populations of EU member states, the trend remains to be confirmed over the long term, as it is tested by current and future developments...

South Caucasus: Turmoil and Prospects

Anton Eichberger

Completing the comparison of value systems on the European continent begun by Pierre Bréchon and Myriam Désert's article on the values of the Russian people, *Futuribles* offers an insight here into the populations of the states of the South Caucasus, also based on European Values Study (EVS) surveys. As our readers will be aware, there are two parts to the Caucasus region: North Caucasus (Chechnya, Daghestan etc.), which is part of the Russian Federation, and the South Caucasus comprising three independent countries (with some territories

disputed) between the Black and the Caspian Seas. It is the values expressed in these three countries – Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan – that Anton Eichberger compared with those of Western and Eastern Europeans, particularly with regard to the European Union and nationalist sentiment.

After reminding us of the conflicts and tensions that have affected the South Caucasus for decades, Eichberger shows the disparities that exist between these countries in terms of nationalism. If national values emerge as essential – and distinctly more marked than in Western or Eastern Europe – the nature of that nationalism varies, being at times closed and identitarian (Azerbaijan or Georgia) and at others more oriented toward shared ways of life (Armenia). Something similar applies with the attitude to immigrants, Armenians and Georgians expressing more compassion than Azerbaijanis – and even than Europeans. In these areas, the weight of history and the relationship with Russia remains influential, as is evidenced in particular by the distinct openness of Georgia toward the European Union, though this is something which might be cooled to a substantial extent by the war Russia began against Ukraine in 2022.

fuel strategic thinking so as to meet future challenges in this area.

Subject to overfishing, climate change and multiple other anthropic disturbances, marine socio-ecosystems are changing rapidly and the fundamental ecosystem services they provide to human societies (such as the exploitation of natural resources, environmental regulation through marine biodiversity etc.) are at risk. However, integrated computational models enable us, as this article reminds us, to understand these socio-ecosystems better and anticipate how they will change within the framework of scenarios for the evolution of climate and human societies. The projections using these models are worrying and show that climate change could lead to a drastic decrease in seafood production. There is an urgent need, then, to develop and implement the ecological transition strategies that would enable us to ensure the co-viability of ecosystems and human societies. As Olivier Maury stresses, putting the development of science-based scenarios at the heart of governance and public policy-making could enable us to build these strategies, at all levels of the global fisheries governance system, and to translate them tactically to adapt to the rapid changes our oceans are facing.

Modelling and Forecasting Marine Socio-Ecosystems

Foresight for Purposes of Governance

Olivier Maury

Continuing the series on the future of the seas and oceans begun in *Futuribles* journal in July 2020, Olivier Maury lays out the importance of the studies and tools aiming to model marine 'socio-ecosystems', in order to

Europe, France and Multi-tier Governance

Jean-François Drevet

Following the territorial reform begun in 2014, marked by the move from 22 to 13 regions in 2016 and by the development of 'inter-communality', France has seen the number of its local administrative authorities fall a little; it nevertheless remains among

EU member states with the greatest number of territorial units. Despite efforts at simplification, of which Jean-François Drevet reminds us in this article, advances have come slowly and the present fragmentation of decisional levels does nothing to simplify governance for citizens. Similarly, even if the institutional development of the European Union (by 'baby steps') has made it possible increasingly to delegate some member-state competencies to the European level, the decision-making process (particularly the requirement

for unanimity in some key matters) also has a cost, not only in terms of efficiency but also of image. With the Russia-Ukraine conflict, as with policy toward Turkey some years ago, the limits of the system are showing, as is the need to strengthen the EU's decision-making capacity, so that it can react more quickly and nimbly. New institutional developments are essential for this, in the direction of greater federalism; as a consequence, France will very definitely have to reconsider its choices at all levels of its governance structures. ■

***Futuribles* is a bimonthly independent transdisciplinary policy oriented journal (6 issues a year), also available in electronic form on the *Futuribles* website.**

Its objective is to provide its readers with a better understanding of contemporary societies dynamics, those facts, ideas and trends shaping their medium and long term possible futures.

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