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E16 - Living Cities

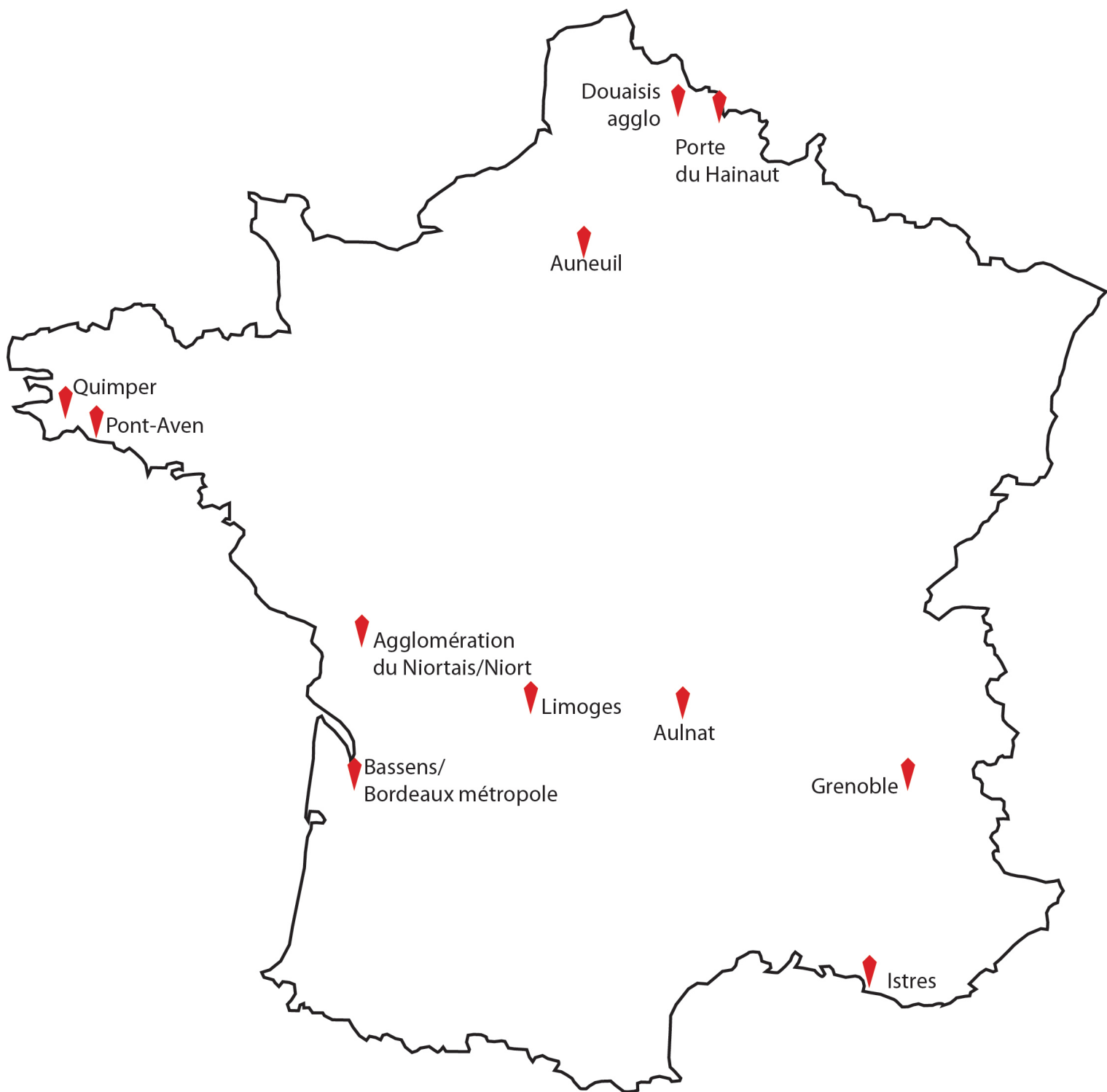
# GRENOBLE

## BETWEEN LIVING SLOPES AND INHABITED MILIEUX

(EXTRA)ORDINARY BASTILLE, RABOT IN TRANSITION

Site brief





# SITES, IDEAS, AND MORE!

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Europan is once again presenting 11 sites in France for the 16th session, based on the theme Living Cities, Metabolic and Inclusive Vitalities.

For more than 30 years, European has provided an opportunity to experiment with new ways of thinking and creating cities, and the themes regularly address major issues at the heart of their relevance.

It left nobody in any doubt that the word LIVING is at the center of debates, works, research, and that considering the progressive extinction of this world, little by little reached by a dominant human civilization of exhaustion of the resources and the otherness. And as soon as we position ourselves in this thematic, the horizon of the revitalization is huge, and the work to be carried out on the scale of these perspectives.

We often use the term European « competition » when we should be mentioning the overall original process which continues to demonstrate its capacity to adapt. First of all, the sites are identified and then analyzed in collaboration with the various players, starting with the theme and exploring these themes in situ. The meetings, visits and films, and the proposition of articulation between site and theme allow the candidates to reexamine and question them.

The proposals submitted by the teams are once again part of a long and very rich process that will lead in one way or another to a recognized experimentation, that of ideas, encounters, expressed possibilities, and re-expressed questions. The follow-ups will continue the elaboration of a living urban and architectural thought, in evolution and in active transformation.

The theme Living Cities reflects the urgency of thinking differently about human lifestyles, with a heritage that is sometimes fraught with consequences but also very rich: the prospects for renewing, recycling and transforming modes of production associated with a thought of the living are immense.

The European process makes it a unique ongoing event because, like a philharmonic narrative, it allows young generations of architectural and urban designers to speak out and then to be commissioned. European allows them to tell us that we are sometimes wrong, that there are other ways of thinking, of doing things, and of projecting themselves into the future.

This theme Living Cities, after such a particular year of pandemic, is dedicated to them.

EUROPAN FRANCE





# EUROPAN 16 THEME : LIVING CITIES

## CREATIVE PROCESS-PROJECTS TO REGENERATE INHABITED MILIEUS

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In the conditions of the Anthropocene –a new bio-geological period where human activities on the global scale have a destructive impact on life on earth– how to face climate change and inequalities? How to imagine other possibilities to inhabit the planet Earth?

The European 16 topic focuses on living cities as a new paradigm, in which new kinds of synergies can be considered between the environmental, biological, social, economic, cultural and political dimensions. This paradigm leads us to think the space in terms of co-evolution and interactions, and to work with regenerative project dynamics, combining metabolic and inclusive vitalities.

### METABOLIC VITALITIES

Metabolic vitalities go beyond the nature-culture combination, allowing the European projects –mixing architecture, urban design and landscape architecture– to identify and to negotiate with an ensemble of transformations taking natural elements into account –like water, material flows, energy...– which are all part of the life cycles. These new relations generate inhabited milieus. These milieus are considered as complex ecosystems generating flows (with entries and exits) and in constant evolution. Developing such cyclic processes leads the design process to minimize the environmental footprint and the consumption of non-renewable energy, and to promote new forms of dwelling.

Metabolic vitalities encourage design processes on different scales. The recycling competence, the enhancement of organic or energy material, the adaptation to climate change, the integration of nature and biodiversity are as many metabolic vitalities that European 16 sites should trigger to allow their own transformation into ecosystems between nature and culture. To be rewarded, the projects should translate this metabolic dynamic in their proposals.

### INCLUSIVE VITALITIES

Urban environments are facing increasing inequalities and conflicts produced by invisibility, exclusion, marginalization, and inaccessibility to housing, to work, to education and to public services. To fight against these social fractures, inhabited milieus should become places where new inclusive policies and practices are

supported.

Inclusive vitalities put on the foreground modes of doing that can support territorial justice articulating social and ecological concerns. Issues of accessibility to public infrastructures and to housing should get a predominant role, promoting conviviality. Taking care of living environments could promote inclusion by transforming marginalised spaces into places of exchange, co-learning and biodiversity. This could allow new inclusive narratives of inhabited environments across scales and generations, promoting new forms participatory democracy.

When choosing the sites, when defining the programmatic frames that come with their evolution, and when judging the participants' proposals, European 16 will emphasise on the consideration of the inclusive dimension of the inhabited milieus.

## CONCLUSION

If we want to face these social and environmental emergencies, we have to address new creative and responsible project dynamics, which should be able to reconnect with the cycles and rhythms of the living nature, associating metabolic and inclusive vitalities.

The European 16 sites should therefore consider these two dimensions in their transformation goals. How can the project spatialize and, at the same time, spare resources, common goods, recycling processes, hybridisations, sharing and the different temporalities ?

This is the question raised for European 16.

EUROPAN EUROPE

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\*See also : Contributions to the theme Living Cities :  
<http://www.euopanfrance.org/publications/single/38>

# GENERAL INFORMATION

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**SITE REPRESENTATIVE :** Ville de Grenoble

**ACTOR(S) INVOLVED :** Ville de Grenoble, Ville de La Tronche, Ville de Saint-Martin-le-Vinoux, Grenoble-Alpes Métropole, Conseil Départemental de l'Isère, CROUS, Région Auvergne Rhône-Alpes, Parc Naturel Régional de Chartreuse et l'Agence d'Urbanisme de la Région Grenobloise

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**TEAM REPRESENTATIVE :** Architect/Urbanist/ Landscape architect

**EXPECTED SKILLS REGARDING THE SITE'S ISSUES AND CHARACTERISTICS:** Architecture, urbanism, landscape and all skills at the candidates' discretion.

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**COMMUNICATION:** Promotion of the projects after the competition: publication of a catalogue of the results and national exhibition

**JURY – 1<sup>ST</sup> EVALUATION :** With the participation of the site representatives

**JURY – PRIZE SELECTION:**

Selection of three projects per site. With the participation of the site representatives

Reward: the rewards are granted by the jury independently of the sites: Winner (12.000€), Runner-up (6.000€) and Special Mention (no reward)

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**POST-COMPETITION INTERMEDIATE PROCEDURE:**

- Meeting with sites representatives and 3 selected teams, organized by European France in Paris at the beginning of 2022
- On-site meeting with sites representatives and 3 selected teams organized by cities and partners from January 2022
- Assistance and consultancy to the cities and partners, also their collaborators, for the implementations processes, by European France.

**MISSION GIVEN TO THE SELECTED TEAM(S) FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION:**

Study and project missions for the development of the strategic proposals resulting from the competition on mutable sites. Encouraging an operational and/or architectural contract with associated clients.





THE BASTILLE IN ITS TERRITORIAL CONTEXT: A FRAGMENT OF AN URBAN MOUNTAIN IN THE NORTH OF THE ISÈRE

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M2

Source : IGN

# CONNECTION WITH THE THEME “LIVING CITIES”

## SITE ISSUES RELATING TO THE THEME

Often described as a rocky spur perfectly aligned with the historic centre of Grenoble, the Bastille, an urban mountain fragment that forms connections between the river (Isère), the massif (Chartreuse) and the buildings of the plain (Grenoble urban area), nevertheless remains a space that is psychologically remote from the entities it overlooks. A place of culture (Musée Dauphinois, etc.) and of heritage (military with the fortifications, of industry with the old Vicat cement works and of biodiversity with many remarkable species, some of them endemic), of symbolism (with the “bubbles”), and of iconic leisure activities relating to nature (via ferrata, tree climbing, hiking and running), but also an inhabited place (the Esplanade neighbourhood, the Rabot hall of residence and faubourg Saint-Laurent), the Bastille is simultaneously a sanctuary, a totem and a living space, to the point that it embodies the multiple “Alpine” representations of the cité dauphinoise. However, this ignores the fact that even today the site remains hard to access, that it is punctuated with large derelict spaces and that, more globally, it suffers from the absence of a project with the capacity to showcase its built heritage, to initiate new ways of inhabiting, to practise and imagine the slope, while cultivating the richness of its natural heritage and its biodiversity. By proposing this study site and more particularly its intermediate stratum, consisting in particular of the Rabot hall of residence, Grenoble municipality and its partners are placing the problem of the living city from the start within a perspective that relates equally to geography and landscape, to urbanism and ecology.

The Bastille is often considered only along a north-south axis that is quite symptomatic of 20th-century urbanisation dynamics, a reading reinforced by the line of the cable car that links its summit to the city, spanning in the process both houses and river. This ignores the fact that there are two other sides, with the commune of Saint-Martin le Vinoux to the west and La Tronche to the east, differ significantly in their character. It also ignores the fact that it is organised in strata (the river stratum, the intermediate stratum of Rabot and the upper stratum), where interrelations are few because of the lack of access, the paucity of visitors and the absence of legible and reasoned habitability. Moreover, while it is true that there are several significant projects underway to regenerate the lower level – the renovation of the riverbanks, the projects for the Esplanade and the Scientific Peninsula – no global vision for the site has emerged. From this point of view, the prospects for the development of the Rabot hall of residence (linked with those of the former Dolomieu and Alpine Geography Institutes) constitute an opportunity for a project that genuinely combines urban and ecological objectives in order to consolidate the role of the living world from a dual metabolic and inclusive perspective.

To sum up, when the Bastille is explored from east to west and/or from bottom to top, it reveals new perspectives in which it is possible to read both the historical strata and the diversity of its inhabited milieux, of its ecology and of its landscapes, but also a whole cluster of places of culture, of memory and of legacy. Both strategic and operational, the ideas developed by the candidates should connect multiple scales (from the wider territory to the local) and distinct projectual timeframes. They will also need to employ methods of intervention that are appropriate to the diversity of the environments.





**LA BASTILLE (SOMMIT STRATUM), A PLACE OF DAY AND NIGHT ACTIVITIES**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P14

photo credit : Ville de Grenoble

## THE SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS OF THE MUNICIPALITY AND ITS PARTNERS

Depending on the scale, a project for such a site requires very close attention to the following three points:

- The Bastille acts as a green lung very close to the dense core of the city, the gateway to the Chartreuse Regional Natural Park: it provides both a breathing space and piece of urban nature accessible to the people of the city and the region, but also a fantastic site for discovery and education around the quality and changing status of the city's natural heritage. In fact, the Bastille is a place to observe the effects of climate change, a "lookout over the Alps" that in 2005 was placed on the national ZNIEFF (natural area of of interest for ecology, fauna and flora) list because of the richness of its ecology, and of its fauna (more than 200 different species identified, some of them endemic) and flora (more than 500 plant species identified), a richness that has long been an object of study by the local scientific and naturalist community. As a result, to visit this site is to become aware of the need not just to preserve it, but to prepare the ground for future improvement.
- The slopes offer a space of discovery and leisure for all: The Bastille is a place of life and multiple uses that attracts a diversity of populations. It is a place of culture, of sport, of leisure and of discovery accessible to all. Thanks to the cable car that links it to Grenoble city centre, it also offers exceptional vistas over the three mountain massifs (Chartreuse, Vercors, Belledonne). This means that it attracts not just tourists and conference goers, but also families, friends, students, children and adults, young and old. According to the cable car operator, it receives more than 300,000 visitors a year. To complete the picture, other, less familiar and more secret activities have also developed here, both in daytime and at night (integration days, night walks, festivals, etc.). Inhabiting the Bastille therefore raises questions about the coexistence of human presence and the natural environment.
- The Rabot is a place and a living milieu in transition: At the heart of the slopes of the Bastille, the Rabot hall of residence awaits a new future, in terms both of uses and changes to its built fabric. One of the priorities of the site is to restructure this "intermediate terrace" by working on its relationship with the slope and with the contour lines while offering a new kind of habitability. Undertaking a project like this necessarily requires an approach based on both partnership and participation.





**VIEW OF THE RABOT AND THE OLD BARBILLON (INTERMEDIATE STRATUM) FROM THE CURRENT HUBERT DUBEDOUT SQUARE.  
PHOTO TAKEN BY THE FAMOUS GEOGRAPHER RAOUL BLANCHARD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY.**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P15

Source : Collections Musée Dauphinois

# BACKGROUND

## TERRITORY, GEOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE

Located on a plain surrounded by three mountain massifs, Grenoble and its territory maintain a strong relations with both urban and mountain spaces. The Bastille is one of the sites that form this connection between the mountain and the city at the southern end of the Chartreuse massif. Located on the ridgeline of Mount Rachais, it connects the three valleys that form the plain of the Grenoble conurbation and symbolically extends along the Lesdiguière axis, the spinal column of the region's development. This promontory is a very ancient place of passage, used in particular to avoid the floods and marshland of the plain. The earliest site of human settlement in the vicinity of Grenoble, it offers a vista over the wider territory. This territory was shaped by its relations to the mountains, but also by the development of its relations with water. The latter is both a source of richness and of risk, which had to be taken into account in the urbanisation process. It is also a resource, and one that is particularly rare on the lower slopes of the Bastille.

## CULTURAL, ARCHITECTURAL AND URBAN HERITAGE:

A strategic route between France, Italy, Savoie and Dauphiné, the region is dotted with military forts that dominate the plains. The Bastille is the most “urban” of the “seven forts” that ring the city of Grenoble. These defensive structures, which were never put to the test of war, present problems of reappropriation, a mix of advantages (sound, well preserved structures, stunning views over the region) and constraints (mainly relating to access). Apart from the 15th-century keep, one of the oldest buildings in Grenoble, the buildings – most of them erected in the 19th century – are characteristic of the forts designed using the Séré de Rivière system. They are protected as Historic Monuments, as are most of the ramparts that frame the site.

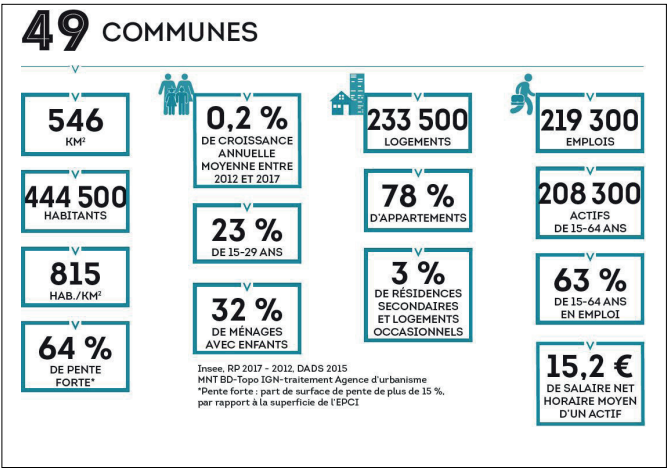
In the 1950s, a “university acropolis” project was created for the Rabot site, only part of which was completed. The presence of the university influenced the uses of the site from the 1960s to the early 2000s, leaving a legacy of two fine but now abandoned buildings: the former Dolomieu Institute (dedicated to geology) and the Alpine Geography Institute (IGA), for which projects are finally under consideration today. Until 2024, the university residences of the CROUS (regional education administration) also remain as a reminder of this plan for a university acropolis overlooking the city.

A geological and natural site marked by significant human intervention, the Bastille (and in particular the Rabot) form part of a historical legacy characterised by successive uses and re-appropriations. Moreover, the site is also part of a cultural space that is important at wider territorial scale: the Musées Dauphinois, archaeological remains, mountain troops on the slopes, district (St-Laurent) of galleries and Casemate premises at its feet, but also emerging alternative cultures (Street Art) that have appropriated the abandoned buildings of the former IGA and Dolomieu premises.

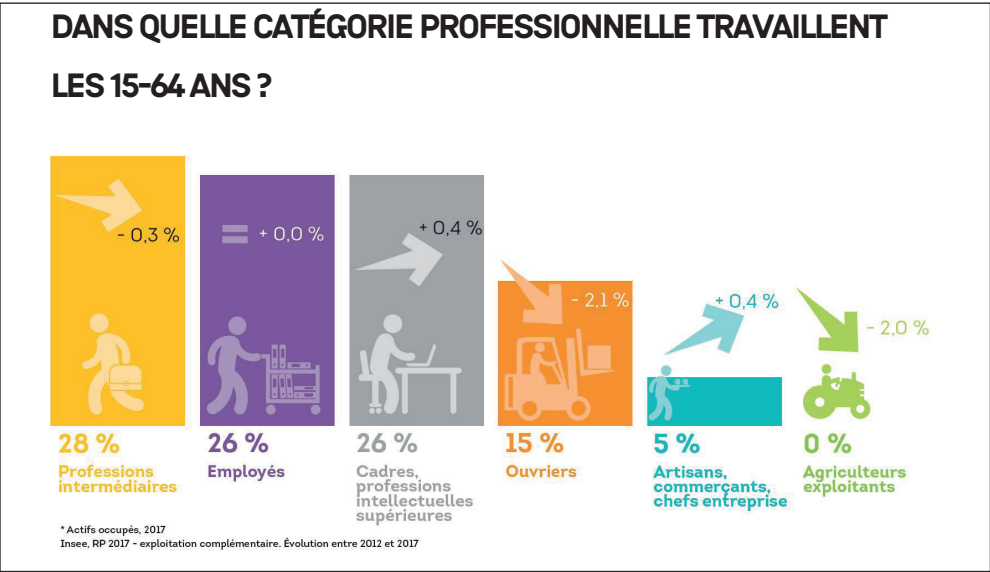
# SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DATA

(DATA-VISIONS AURG)

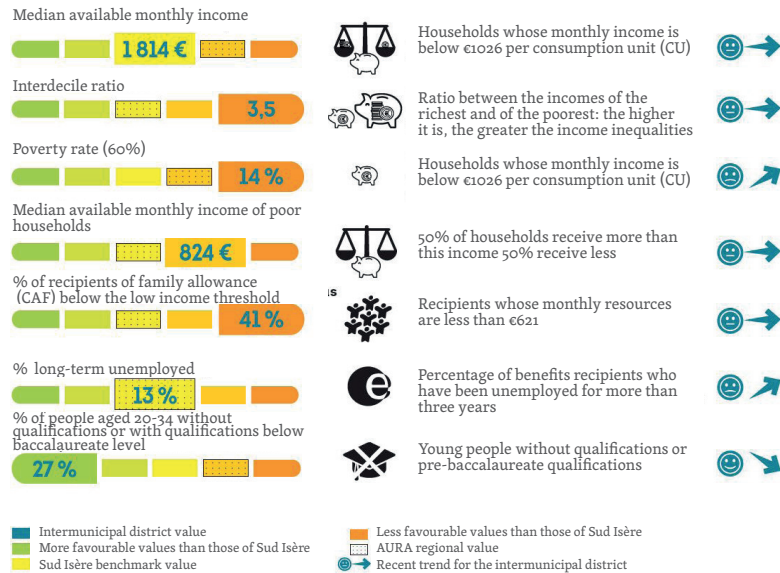
The Grenoble metropolitan region covers an area of 546 km<sup>2</sup> and is home to 445,000 people, giving a population density of 800 people per square kilometre. Grenoble, the main city, with a population of 160,000, covers an area of 18 km<sup>2</sup>. 60% of its population is under the age of 40, and one in five inhabitants are students.



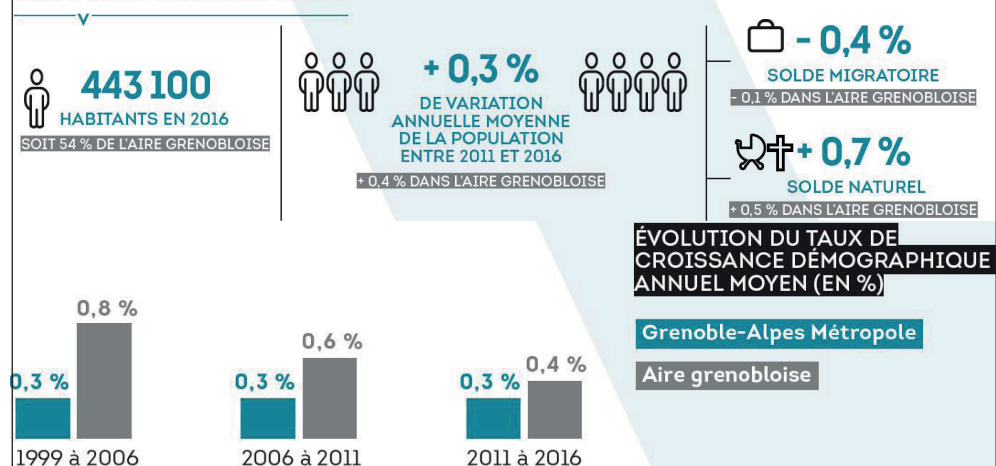
*	0.2% average annual growth between 2012 and 2017	233,500 dwellings	219,300 jobs
444,500 inhabitants	23% aged 15-29	78% apartments	208,300 working age inhabitants aged 15-64
815 people inhab./km2			
64% steep slope	32% households with children	3% second homes and occasional dwellings	€15.2 net hourly wage



\* Category of occupation among people aged 15 to 64  
Middle managers/ Office workers / Executives, knowledge workers / Manual workers / Small business owners / Farmers



## DYNAMIQUE DÉMOGRAPHIQUE



443,100 inhabitants in 2016 i.e. 54% of the Grenoble area	+0.3% average annual population variation between 2011 and 2016 +0.4% in the Grenoble area	-0.4% net migration -0.1% in the Grenoble area +0.7% natural balance +0.5% in the Grenoble area
		Trained in average annual demographic growth (in %) Grenoble-Alpes Métropole Grenoble area
0.3% 0.8% 1999 to 2006	0.3% 0.6% 2006 to 2011	0.3% 0.4% 2011 to 2016





## MAP OF THE PATHS AND TRACKS OF THE BASTILLE

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M2

Source : [www.bastille-grenoble.fr](http://www.bastille-grenoble.fr)

## MILIEUX: HUMAN AND NONHUMAN

Once the floods and wetlands had been brought under control, the plain opened up to urbanisation, subsequently propelling Grenoble to a position as one of the cities with the greatest demographic growth, particularly in the aftermath of the Second World War. The history of Grenoble is also marked by social progress and its development has relied heavily on the trio of university/research/industry. The companies located in the area have been a source of significant scientific innovation, and have also attracted many foreign researchers. The urbanisation of the late 1960s was marked by experiments such as that of Villeneuve, an iconic “social utopia” of the era. Today, with 8600 inhabitants per square kilometre, the city of Grenoble’s population density partly reflects the city’s sustained pursuit of urban renewal policies. In fact, this highly urbanised region, nestled between its massifs, offers little free space and nature at the level of the plain.



**THE BASTILLE, A PLACE FOR NATURE RECREATION, SPORT AND CONTEMPLATION**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P16, 17, 18

Photos credits : Naïm Ait Sidhoum (haut), Ville de Grenoble (bas)



# STUDY SITE

The Bastille is a topographical event, a rocky punctuation point in a remarkably flat and well irrigated plain. Visible from a (very) long way off, it is not strictly speaking exclusively a part of Grenoble (within the municipal boundaries), nor entirely natural or urban, but fundamentally metropolitan in the central place that it occupies in local collective representations and practices. A green breathing space located at the gateway to the dense city, this foothill of the Chartreuse massif has been and is still a reservoir of resources (natural, military, industrial, recreational, biodiversity, etc.), whose exploitation would successively punctuate the main phases of its development and the development of the Grenoble urban area as a whole. This geographical, cultural and social interconnection with Grenoble's urban centre distinguishes it markedly from the other mountain massifs adjacent to the metropolitan region. With its history, its location and its natural and man-made features, the Bastille now constitutes an open-air observatory of past, present and (undoubtedly) future changes in the cité dauphinoise, in Grenoble. Indeed, this is why the site was named a "totem" location for the events that will take place in 2022 as part of "Grenoble, European Green Capital" year. Also, as it is outlined, the perimeter of the study site encompasses not only the Bastille but also its urban pedestal. It partly encompasses the tramline route, runs through the dense fabric of the old town, joins the railway station in the west with the future metro-cable station of Saint-Martin-le-Vinoux, climbs to the north up to Mont Jalla (a gateway to the Bastille from the plateaux of the Chartreuse massif) and descends again to the east beyond the fortifications, on the slopes of the Tronche, before returning to the plain to meet up with the meander of the green island near the Teaching Hospital. Demarcated in this way, this first study perimeter asks (at least) two questions of potential candidates in the European competition:

- (1) How to conceive the transformation of the Bastille in a single movement and, more generally, its relationship with the summits of the Chartreuse massif that dominate it, the Isère River which delineates its contours and the urbanised plain that it overlooks? How to tackle its urban connections, its main thresholds and access points?
- (2) What project could most effectively express its distinctive character as an "urban mountain"? What can be done to connect together local practices, leisure and tourism, neighbourhood habitability and the protection of nature? How to encourage local populations and visitors to develop everyday practices here, while at the same time protecting this exceptional mountain environment located in the heart of the city?

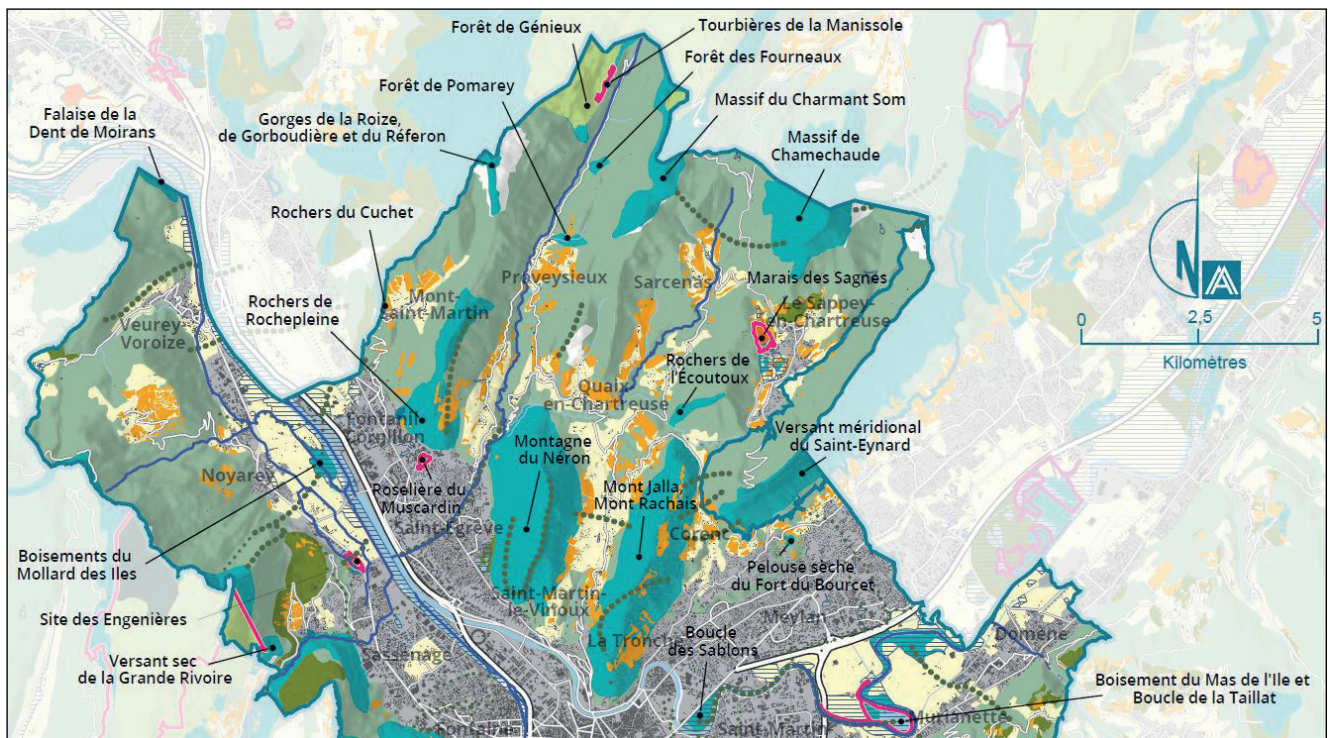
In answering these questions, the candidates will need to think about how the site is embedded in its multiple environments, as well as the different dimensions of the relations of scale that characterise the place (from the domestic sphere to the wider territory, from local space to the monumentalities of the topography, and the architectural and heritage objects that punctuate the slopes of the Bastille). Indeed, a projection of the future of this site will entail an examination of the relationship between the city of Grenoble and its landscapes and the biodiversity that characterise them. However, the task is also to work on (re)accommodations with the geographical components (plain, slope, subsoil), the hydrographic and cultural components, and the social and living features that underpin the identity and urbanisation of the Alpine city.



**VIEW FROM THE CITY ON THE INTERMEDIATE LAYER OF THE RABOT. TO THE WEST, THE CITÉ UNIVERSITAIRE, TO THE EAST, THE BUILDINGS OF THE FORMER DOLOMIEU AND ALPINE GEOGRAPHY INSTITUTES ON THE SAME LEVEL CURVE**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P19

Photo credit : Ville de Grenoble



**LA BASTILLE, CONTREFORT GRENOBLOIS DU MASSIF DE CHARTREUSE**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M3

Source : AURG

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

On the Bastille, it is near the Rabot that we find the original site of human settlement in Grenoble, on the slopes of Mount Rachais, a route sheltered from the flooding of the Isère River. A strategic site, for centuries it was a point of passage for travellers, a major gateway into the Alps. As the left bank of the river became urbanised with the draining of the plain, the right bank gradually became an inhabited slope, which even today stands still slightly separate from the dynamics of the city centre, maintaining something of a suburban ambience. Between the mountain climate (Mont Jalla, 635 m and Mont Rachais, 1,050 m) and the south side of the slope with its Mediterranean vegetation, the Bastille site hosts a variety of milieux and a mosaic of wooded and rocky habitats, dry meadows, escarpments and cliffs. It is a concentration of biodiversity, with a remarkable number of species, both of flora (almost 500 plant species identified) and fauna (more than 200 known species), some of which are rare in the department or even the region. Moreover, the Bastille is structured by a system of ramparts that follow the contour lines and are relatively integrated into the topography. The verticality of the hill and the horizontality of the buildings are matched, although a large proportion of this architecture is camouflaged by vegetation.

Located in immediate proximity to the city, the Bastille experiences strong human pressure (in 2010, more than 14 million people had travelled on the cable car since it was commissioned in 1934). Today, it is the leading tourist site in the Isère Department, with 317,000 cable car tickets sold in 2018. In summer, 60% of the visitors who come to the place are from abroad, and outside the summer season 60% are local. With access via the trails, around 700,000 people are estimated to visit the Fort du Rabot site every year. So reconciling this multiplicity of uses with the protection of monuments, species and habitats is a priority in the effort to maintain the ecological and historical value of the site. Finally, the Bastille is exposed to numerous potential risks (landslips, stormwater, landslides, rockfalls from the cliffs and built structures, cave collapses, fires) which are becoming increasingly common. Since 2004, 165 structures have been reinforced to prevent serious risks.





**THE ICONIC BUBBLES OF GRENOBLE, A LINK BETWEEN THE CITY CENTRE AND THE BASTILLE FORT**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P20

Photo credit : Ville de Grenoble

**VIEW ON THE URBANISED PLAIN FROM THE FORT OF THE BASTILLE, A REAL OBSERVATORY**

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P21

Photo credit : Ville de Grenoble

## ONGOING PROJECTS AND DYNAMICS

In the absence of an overall programme, a number of projects have been completed or are underway in the perimeter:

- **The riverbanks:** on the right side of the river, the banks were upgraded in 2012, converting a roadway into a promenade area for strolling and relaxation. Since 2015, four citizen initiatives have been implemented to maintain this rapprochement with the water (climbing wall, footbridge for joggers, riverside benches, artistic and educational biodiversity walking trail). Discussions are underway about extending these improvements to the left bank and over a longer distance.
- **The cable car project:** between now and 2024, an urban cable car will be connected to the metropolitan public transport system. This will carry people across the Drac and the Isère and the 6 stations will link together the municipalities of Fontaine, Grenoble and Saint-Martin-Le-Vinoux in just 15 minutes.
- **Mikado Park:** a metropolitan landscape development project connected to the confluence of the Isère and the Drac in the municipalities of Sassenage, Fontaine, Saint-Martin-le-Vinoux and Grenoble. The key idea is to create a network that highlights and links the existing natural and recreational spaces of different kinds (parks, riverbanks, waterways, etc.).
- **The Esplanade:** a regeneration project for the north-western gateway to the city at the foot of the Bastille, which converts a road site into an extensively planted urban neighbourhood, i.e.: 3 new urban parks (some 7 ha of green spaces), 850 new dwellings, and almost 2000 m<sup>2</sup> of additional shops.



## FR-GRENOBLE-C-M4

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## EXPECTATIONS

Despite its multiple qualities, the presence of exceptional natural and patrimonial resources, and despite the variety of ways that it is enjoyed by the inhabitants of Grenoble and other visitors today, the Bastille suffers from the absence of a unifying narrative for its future. In these circumstances, what can be done to elicit a project that will help to renew its image and practices, while maintaining its distinctiveness? Which of its features can be exploited as the basis for a developmental and managerial narrative for a public asset like the Bastille?

Among the main issues that the candidates will need to consider, the question of the future identity of the Bastille site appears central. So the project ideas will need to find original ways of reconciling, connecting or choosing between the dualities that define this site: protected space/crowded space, inhabited space/visitor space, natural space/anthropised space, sanctuary space/experimental space, educational space/play-recreational space, idling space/sports space, alternative space/institutional space, accessible space/prohibited space, intimate space/communal space, local space/global space... And ultimately urban space/mountain space?

While it is probably not desirable that the Bastille should become a theme park or a protected reserve, or conversely an ordinary zone for urban development, the candidates will need to consider the practices, to design the changes, to devise the functions which, in the future, will foster the deployment of lifestyles that match the developments of our transitioning societies and the priorities of the living world.

Every summer, as a result of heat waves – which we know will increase in frequency in the coming decades – the Bastille becomes a true place of refuge, a cool space that is much appreciated by the city's inhabitants. The health crisis caused by Covid has only reinforced this status as an urban breathing space, offering places of relaxation, of recovery and physical exercise, an urban lung that can be accessed on foot at any time of day directly from the dense heart of the city. Ultimately, in the light of questions relating to health, education around natural milieux, but also the pleasures of visiting the Hill, whether alone, with the family, for sport or for contemplation, the Bastille offers an exceptional environment, one that is both democratic and ecological, a place whose capacity as public space is still underexploited.





**AERIAL VIEW, CONTEXT, STUDY SITE (RED) AND PROJECT SITE (YELLOW)**  
FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M4

Given these key priorities relating to the reinforcement or renewal of image and practices, there are other prospects that also need to be explored so that the future projects are concretely embedded in this site, both physically and socially:

- Providing access to the Bastille from the plain (Saint Martin Le Vinoux, Grenoble, La Tronche) but also from the slopes of the Chartreuse massif;
- Involving the different actors on the site (around culture, tourism, heritage and industry for the Bastille site specifically, but more broadly actors from the metropolitan region as a whole);
- Opening discussions around project ideas with both the inhabitants of the region and with representatives of the entities that lack their own voice (fauna, flora, water, etc.);
- The phasing of the project, both for permanent changes and for temporary uses (day/evening, week/weekend, seasons, etc.), between ordinary moments and extraordinary moments.

Beyond these requirements, is not the Bastille a unique place to experience our relationship to the living world, but also to observe and study global changes? Can the Bastille not be seen as an observatory of contemporary climate and environmental events where perception through the senses, understanding through measurement, action through experiment, exploration through creativity and sharing through discussion are an invitation to think together rather than separately about the architectural, urban and territorial project, and the plan and goal for a more inclusive ecological society?





**THE BASTILLE, INTERMEDIATE LAYER, PROJECT SITE**  
FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M<sub>3</sub>

# PROJECT SITE

The perimeter of the project site encompasses the contours of the “intermediate stratum” (cf. AURG study in appendix) and more particularly of the Rabot hall of residence, as well as the connective spaces that link it to the lower stratum (banks of the Isère) and upper stratum (summit space) that currently structure the Bastille. This intermediate stratum consists of three terraces divided into public spaces, roads and built structures, a significant proportion of which have considerable heritage value (Rabot Fort, former university buildings, etc.). While the site’s southerly exposure positions it quite naturally as an ideal space for contemplating the plain of Grenoble, its elevated position and geography make it difficult to access (particularly by public transport, and with heavy or even light vehicles, especially as its previously monofunctional nature (hall of residence and living space) did much to isolate this urban fragment from the rest of the city, close as the city is, but also from the nearby slopes. However, the floor area of the existing buildings is very substantial (some 17,000 m<sup>2</sup>) and make it an ideal site for urban renewal, one of the few habitable spaces on the Bastille. Similarly, the terraced layout coupled with the existing distribution of the buildings offers the possibility of development gradients that extend from the dense city to the suspended, natural and steeper sides of the mountain. It is in this context that the City of Grenoble is keen to take advantage of the opportunity of land becoming available, with the planned departure of the CROUS, the body that manages student housing, in 2024, and of the real estate dynamic triggered by the “Babel community” project in the former Dolomieu building, a derelict university site located east of the Rabot hall of residence, at the eastern starting point of the first terrace of the intermediate stratum, in order to capitalise on the possibilities for the transformation of this stratum that the candidates in the European competition might propose. At the heart of the questions over the future of the site stand three major problems: its accessibility (what alternatives to motorised transport?), its habitability (what potential programmes? what forms of mixedness?), and its degree of openness to the city (which populations? what types of use? what timeframes of user presence?).





**RABOT SITE**

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M4

Source : AURG

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

In the past, there was a road that ran through this intermediate terrace, a little less than 100 metres above the banks of the Isère. It provided passage from east to west without exposure to the frequent flooding of the river. This road, which in the past Cette linked the Grésivaudan to the plain of the Rhône became a track, has now almost disappeared. Today, the accesses to this intermediate stratum from the whole of the right bank of the Isère, from La Tronche to Saint Martin le Vinoux, via the Esplanade district currently under construction, needs to be rethought. In this respect, it should be noted that, at the beginning of the 20th century, before the cable car was built providing access to the upper stratum, this terrace was the arrival point for a trail that passed through the brand-new Jardin des Dauphins and functioned as a viewpoint over the city, with an orientation table. So redesigning the horizontal circulations around the whole site, and extending them to the east towards the Dauphinois Museum and to the west as far as the Esplanade and Mikado projects, is a major challenge.

The Rabot Citadel is located on the only access without stairs between the Dauphinois Museum and the summit of the Bastille. The military buildings were converted into a hall of residence in 1952, and student residences were built in 1965. The terraced site thus contains a diversity of buildings which, although built in different periods, are remarkably structured and arranged from the terraces and around the place d'armes parade ground. The IGA and Dolomieu buildings, built in the late 1950s, are four storeys high. These imposing buildings illustrate the principles of Modern Architecture and offer high quality volumes and structures. Their horizontality is a dominant feature of the Grenoble landscape.

## ATTENDUS

All this raises a number of questions: how should this intermediate stratum in general be inhabited, and in particular the Rabot hall of residence – for accommodation (everyday or occasional) and for movement (passing by, passing through, running along), in immobility (staying, contemplating, wondering, stopping, resting), discovery or observation (sharing, meeting, enjoying, learning, explaining and describing the territory, of yesterday, after day, of tomorrow)? Here, the future of the Bastille could be seen as an opportunity to (re)invent the natural urban space of the 21st century, whether with respect to habitability, attendance or accessibility. In this respect, perhaps the Rabot hall of residence (or even the whole of the intermediate stratum) could become a demonstrator, a place where the future is envisaged at the interface between the living world and the urban world, a place whose transformation is guided by its capacity to adapt to change?



**THE CITY OF RABOT, A PLACE OF MILITARY HERITAGE (HERE THE OLD BARBILLON)**

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P52

Photo credit : AURG



**About habitability.** While the Rabot site is one of the key point of transition between the lower tier (banks of the Isère, Esplanade, etc.) and the upper tier (summit fort, Mount Jalla and Chartreuse), a punctuation mark in the slope, the first viewpoint over the metropolis, it is also a large built-up space whose future needs to be considered in terms of both structure and programme. Between partial demolition and total conservation, what project would offer a beneficial reuse of all or part of the existing structure? What are the possible reuses of both the spaces and the materials? What can be done to limit the need to bring materials on to a site that is hard to access? What can be done to regenerate this cluster using its primary resources? While it is obviously important to think about the future of these buildings and terraces, this should not preclude project work at the scale of the entire middle stratum, in particular with the old IGA and Dolomieu university buildings and the east-west connections that are currently either lacking or problematic. For this reason, the competition proposals will need to test mixes of uses and of practices, new forms of mixedness, even original programmatic combinations, etc., and should not hesitate to look at the site as a living laboratory in which everyone will find a place, a role, a niche of expertise to exploit. In short, what forms of emancipatory habitability could be piloted in these places?

**About attendance.** While the Rabot site and the whole of the intermediate stratum is at present partly unused, that is not true of the Bastille as a whole, which it should be noted is much visited by the inhabitants of Grenoble, people from the wider region and tourists. The intermediate stratum is characterised by a whole collection of buildings and public spaces that make implicit reference to an original cultural, social and patrimonial history (Grenoble was awarded the label of City of Art and History in 2018). First among these are the museum and cultural spaces, with the national mountain troop memorial on Mount Jalla, the upper fort of the Bastille, the Mountain Troops Museum and Art Centre, the Musée Dauphinois and its sloping gardens, Grenoble Saint-Laurent Archaeological Museum, Casemate at its eastern base and Casamaure at its western base, as well as Grenoble Museum, the old Isère Parliament, the City Theatre, and the Grenoble Cinemathque on the other side of the Isère. There are also clusters of vernacular and working-class dwellings built on the side of the mountain. In addition, there are parks, such as the Dauphins Park, but also a botanical walk around the ramparts, and an incredible variety of trails, ranging from itineraries through the military remains to tracks into the heart of the natural environment. As a result, teams wishing to develop a project for this site will need to think simultaneously about these different entities in terms of a gradient of attractiveness and appeal, considering the gradual increase in altitude and the types of space (natural or built) through which visitors will travel, etc.



**THE RABOT ESTATE, A UNIVERSITY SITE UNDERGOING CONVERSION**

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P53

Photo credit : AURG

**About accessibility.** In topographical terms, the intermediate stratum constitutes both a natural viewpoint (providing a vista over the city) and a succession of terraces, in turn a vista visible from everywhere in the area, but not nevertheless obviously accessible (what route to get there?), nor easily accessible (how do I get there?). That is why the project will need think about creating or reinforcing the physical links between the middle stratum and its immediate environments: to the north, with Fort de la Bastille, Mount Jalla and the link to the Chartreuse; to the west, with the ascent from Parc des Dauphins and Parc Guy Pape, as well as the link to the Esplanade and the town of Saint-Martin-le-Vinoux; to the east, with the chemin des Batteries from La Casemate (CCSTI) and the link to the commune of La Tronche; to the south, with rue Maurice Gignoux, the Chalemont ascent, or the banks of the Isère and, more broadly, the city centre. Without the need for the teams to think about redesigning the spaces around the intermediate stratum – where projects are underway on all or part of the area, such as the Esplanade, Musée Dauphinois, the banks of the Isère, etc. – they can redraw the existing routes, (re)invent new ones, play on their hidden, quasi-secret dimension, or conversely make them clearly visible. That is also why the candidates will need to devise new methods of access that keep cars away from the site. The task is to design the ascents as well as the descents, or indeed the lateral crossings, to invent new forms of mobilities geared to the elevated position and verticality of the site, to foster a variety of practices and rhythms of movement, appropriate to each individual's capacities and offering a quality of sensory experiences and interactions with the landscape.

**By way of an opening,** let us recall that the purpose of the competition for this site is to propose programmatic orientations that derive as much from the potentials of the place as from projections/amplifications of existing or future practices and uses, all against the background of significant climate change. To this end: (1) close attention to the place is desirable insofar as its characteristics offer situations with both rich and varied; (2) attention to the project process itself is needed, whether in terms of involving actors, users and representatives of the living world or else experimenting with different project timeframes; (3) attention to the narrative dimension of the project will help the candidates arrive at a better appreciation of this intermediate stratum and, more broadly of the metropolitan narrative as a whole.



## LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR DOWNLOAD

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### CONURBATION - TERRITORIALE SCALE

1-a PICTURE - aerial picture of the conurbation

FR-GRENOBLE-C-AP1 jpeg

1-b PLAN - map of the conurbation

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M1 ai

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M1 pdf

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M2 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M3 pdf

### STRATEGIC SITE - URBAN SCALE

2-a PHOTO - aerial picture of the study site

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-AP1 jpeg

2-b PHOTO - semi-aerial picture of the study site

Global view

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-AP2\_P1 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-AP2\_P2 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-AP2\_P3 jpeg

Bastille site

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-AP2\_P4 to

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-AP2\_P32 JPEG

2-c PHOTO - ground pictures, showing characteristic elements of the study site

Le Rabot seen from the Isère banks

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P1 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P2 jpeg

Le Rabot seen from the Bastille esplanade

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P3 to

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P14 jpeg

The Bastille leisure area

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P15 à

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P18 jpeg

The site in the city

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P19 jpeg

View from the Marius Gontard bridge

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P20 jpeg

Historical view of the Bastille

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-P21 jpeg

2-d PLAN - study site map

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M3 pdf

FR-GRENOBLE-C-M4 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M1 ai

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M1 pdf

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M2 pdf

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M3 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-SS-M4 jpeg

## **PROJECT SITE - URBAN-ARCHITECTURAL SCALE**

3-a SITE - semi aerial pictures

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M3 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M4 jpeg

3-b PHOTO - ground pictures showing showing charateristic elements of the project site (topography, natural environnement, existing architecture)

Chartreuse building

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P1 à

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P16 jpeg

Vercors building

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P17 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P18 jpeg

Restaurant building

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P19 à

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P25 jpeg

Parade Ground

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P26 jpeg

Official accomodation

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P27 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P28 jpeg

Bycicle parking

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P29 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P30 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P31 jpeg

Esclangon building

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P32 à

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P38 jpeg

Bunker

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P39 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P40 jpeg

Donjon

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P41 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P42 jpeg

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P43 jpeg

Site entrance

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P44 jpeg

Vieux Barbillon building

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P45 à

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-P53 jpeg

3-c PLAN - plan of the the project site

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M1 ai

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M1 pdf

3-d PLAN - plan of the the project site

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M2\_P1 ai

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M2\_P1 pdf

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M2\_P2 ai

FR-GRENOBLE-PS-M2\_P2 pdf



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