

DERRIÈRE LES APPARLNCES

#3

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The country where the Queen seems to be **a car**

Exploring the complex
relationship with mobility
in the rural area of
Champagnole-Nozeroy



In rural areas, the car appears to be the queen of mobility. By taking a closer look, this dependence reveals more complex realities. Behind this massive car use lie needs, constraints, and aspirations often overlooked: high usage costs, people without licenses (and/or car available), difficulties in driving due to various reasons (health, fears...), and residents who are increasingly asking for economic, practical or ecological alternatives.

In 2020, Keolis conducted a study in the Champagnole-Nozeroy area, in the Jura region, which highlighted these contradictions and revealed that far from resisting change, residents are waiting for more solutions to rethink their daily travel.

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DESIGNING TOMORROW'S MOBILITY

To understand the habits and needs of its residents, the study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches by distributing surveys, conducting semi-structured interviews and organizing focus groups. This approach enabled to explore current mobility behaviors, as well as the expectations and frustrations of residents regarding the existing transportation options while considering the diversity of living areas (urban and rural areas).

In the area, around 25% of trips are work-related, while a significant portion (40%) involves shopping, hobbies or family visits (20%).

The car: expensive and ubiquitous...

At first glance, the study shows that the car is perceived as the main mode of transport. Residents describe it as a vital tool to navigate in an area with long distances and infrequent public transport.

... not for everyone, not all the time...

This observation conceals a more serious reality. The rising costs of car use, the ecological impact, limitations due to age and the lack of driving licenses leads more and more residents to claim alternative solutions.



"Here, without a car, you can't do anything. Everything is far away."

Marc, 47



"We each have a car. Otherwise, balancing work and family life would be impossible."

Marie, 39



"Expenses from gas and maintenance make the car a financial abyss. Many would prefer more frequent buses."

Sylvie, 52



"I don't drive as much as I used to. I'd love to be able to do my shopping by bus, but the timetables don't match."

Luc, 60, retired

Looking at the traffic flow, the car seems to be the queen. Yet, in the area studied, 10% of households don't own one, and 20% in the municipality of Champagnole (INSEE). One car can't meet all the needs of the household, especially considering the youths, who make up about 10% of the community's population.

Surprise: while the car seems to be the faithful partner of the majority, qualitative interviews revealed mixed feelings towards it. Finally, regardless of household car ownership, reliance on cars is burdensome:

1. Multimotorized: these are often families where each adult has a vehicle, mainly to go to work. They make regular commutes, mostly home to work, but express frustration over rising car costs.

"We both work with different schedules. With just one car it won't be possible, but it's expensive." Francois, 42 years old."

2. Single car households: These families own just one vehicle, often for economic reasons. They rely on the car but share it among several users, which limit their mobility.

"We have just one car. I use it to take the kids to school, but my husband takes the bus to go to work when he can." Sophie, mother of three.

3. Non-motorized: these include young people without licenses or elderly people without a car, who depend on public transport, carpooling or family support. They are the ones who ask for more alternatives.

"I don't have a car and can't afford one. I rely on my parents or neighbors to help me with my shopping." Pauline, 27, single mother.

A desire for change, through quality alternatives

The replies collected during the study reveal not only frustrations related to car dependence but also a growing demand for alternative mobility solutions. While many people see the car as essential, they admit that they would use more sustainable alternatives if they were available and reliable.

"I bought an electric bike and use it more and more, but there should be more bike paths." Lucie, 30

"I used to do everything by car but with age I drive less and less. More frequent

buses, especially to go to the city, would be a real solution." Paul, 66

These testimonies illustrate a desire for change, especially among young professionals and retirees (about 30% of the population), two groups for whom the car is seen more as a constraint than a freedom.

One of the highlights of this study is how car use costs influence travel habits. Nearly 70% of the respondents say that gas prices and vehicle maintenance burden on their monthly budget.

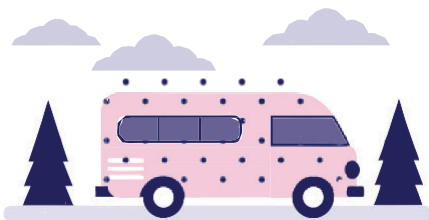
This fact is even more striking in a context where incomes are mostly lower.

Meanwhile, the ecological impact of the car is more and more considered, especially by younger generations and environmentally friendly residents. Many of them would be willing to change their habits if eco-friendly and affordable options were available.



"Each tank of gas costs a fortune. With the kids and our jobs, we try to pay attention to our trips, but it's not always possible."

Élodie, mother



Solutions for mobility needs in rural areas

Several approaches emerge to rethink mobility in areas like Champagnole-Nozeroy. Residents are looking for car alternatives, but these must be suited to their daily needs and the area's geography.

1. Strengthen local public transport: Residents express the need to improve bus services and not just during school periods. For example, implementing services that fit with work schedules early in the morning or late in the evening highlights the importance of developing an express bus network. With LIRIS (Regular Interurban Connection) Keolis supports areas meeting these demands.

2. Develop on-demand services: On-demand services (with reservation or not) are popular among the elderly, single parent families and teenagers, for whom daily travel can be a real challenge. Keolis is the leading French operator for on-demand services, offering various tailored services to meet all the needs of the citizens

3. Develop carpooling: carpooling is already established for some types of trips (long journeys, leisure) but it could be more structured, especially for commuting.

4. Promote green and electric mobility: developing bike lanes and parking, and encouraging bicycle use could provide a credible alternative for short-distance travel. According to ENTP 2019, in rural areas, about 2/3 of trips are less than 10 kilometers.