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Physical Distance, Social Proximity and Unemployment.

KORSU Emre and **WENGLANSKI Sandrine**, Assistant Professors at the Université Paris Est – Marne-la-Vallée - Université Paris Est - City, Mobility, Transport Laboratory (LVMT) – UMR INRETS 9403
19, rue Alfred Nobel, 77455 Marne-La-Vallée Cedex 2, France

Since the 1980's, in the western countries, unemployment has become a major concern for all workers but especially for those from lower-classes who suffer far more from high unemployment rates than any others. Economics and sociology of work have provided key theoretical explanations to this social inequality that characterizes unemployment risks distribution. However, as of mid 1960's, urban economics and sociology had also developed researches in Anglo-Saxon contexts questioning the role of urban framework in unemployment level dissimilarities.

Two urban factors are likely to contribute to unemployment levels, and specifically to the recurrent unemployment of lower-class workers whom resources to handle space constraints are less extensive. On the one hand, the current of research referring to the "spatial mismatch hypothesis" points the finger at the weakness of job accessibility, for some categories of workers, caused by an increasing disconnection between home and work places in the city. On the other hand, the "neighbourhood effects" scientific literature accuses the residential segregation to be responsible for part of the joblessness as it concentrates poor people in poor neighbourhoods and thus contributes to create a social environment which produces negative effects in terms of integration in the labour market. Both hypotheses, each referring to one type of urban factor, seek to test and measure the actual existence and weight of social costs to space configurations and compositions.

Anglo-Saxon social sciences have generated an important body of empirical researches relative to urban factors impacts (Gordon *et al.*, 1989; Kain, 1992; Ihlanfeld & Sjoquist, 1998; Marpsat, 1999) but French background has hardly yet. Marpsat & Laurent (1997), Choffel & Delattre (2003), Gaschet & Gaussier (2003) and Gobillon & Selod (2004) are the principal contributions to this type of analysis in France.

Our paper presents the results of a study conducted on the Parisian region and based on data and methods complementary to previous researches. It proposes to assess the role of space in lower-classes unemployment risks and thus to explore the relation between social and spatial positions.