

[Content Types](#) [Subject Collections](#)

English

Journal Article**The farmer, the worker and the MP**

The digital divide and territorial paradoxes in Switzerland

Journal	GeoJournal
Publisher	Springer Netherlands
ISSN	0343-2521 (Print) 1572-9893 (Online)
Issue	Volume 68, Number 1 / January, 2007
DOI	10.1007/s10708-007-9055-2
Pages	83-92
Subject Collection	Earth and Environmental Science
SpringerLink Date	Wednesday, May 16, 2007





Luc Vodoz¹✉, Mark Reinhard¹✉ and Barbara Pfister Giaque¹✉

(1) Communauté d'études pour l'aménagement du territoire (C.E.A.T.), Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL), Suisse, EPFL ENAC INTER CEAT, BP – Station 16, CH-1015 Lausanne, Switzerland

Published online: 16 May 2007

Abstract The territorial dimension of the digital divide is usually considered as a phenomenon that penalizes the peripheral regions, especially in terms of regional economic development. Taking into account the territorial networking of ICT (Information & Communication Technologies) infrastructures—particularly high-speed networks—provides what is probably the principal reason for such a perception. This is particularly true considering that the most-peripheral regions and those with the smallest population densities are also the poorest in terms of ICT infrastructures. In Western countries, however, the digital divide is no longer the result of network-related problems. Nowadays, the issue of the skills required to adequately exploit the potential of ICT is at the forefront. Yet this evolution is likely to lead to an inversion of the inequalities between the centre and the periphery, as populations without such skills—recent immigrants, the unemployed, the illiterate, people with little education or on low incomes and other socially marginalized people—are generally concentrated in urban centres. Consequently, the priority for reducing inequalities of access to ICT resources is no longer the provision of high-performance ICT infrastructures for peripheral regions, but rather the implementation of continuing education and social action policies within the urban centres.

Keywords Social integration/exclusion - Territorial inequalities - Infrastructures - Skills - Switzerland

This article takes up and refines the argument developed in Vodoz and Reinhard 2006.

✉ **Luc Vodoz (Corresponding author)**

Email: luc.vodoz@epfl.ch

URL: <http://ceat.epfl.ch>

✉ **Mark Reinhard**

Email: mark.reinhard@epfl.ch

✉ **Barbara Pfister Giaque**

Email: barbara.pfister@epfl.ch
