

Territories within "globalisation": on a tripod

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Territories Within "Globalisation": On a Tripod

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Every day, events show that no territory escapes these three planetary processes called globalisation, internationalisation and worldwide development. Hence the importance of understanding them and describing their consequences.

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We define **globalisation**, a normative dimension, as the set of political decisions aimed at establishing regional market agreements and/or a unique, worldwide, one. These political decisions reduce the segmentation or heterogeneity of markets by lowering or suppressing tariff and regulatory boundaries between territories.

The commitment to this globalisation process can be dated to 1994. In that year, it was decided that world trade, previously governed in parts of the world by relatively loose GATT agreements[1], would henceforth be coordinated within the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Since then, the WTO has extended its influence worldwide, with the adhesion of previously communist economies, such as China in 2011, Viet Nam in 2007 and Russia in 2012.

Globalisation is implicitly inspired by Montesquieu, who thought that the natural consequence of commerce is to bring about peace[2]. It implies that local economies are no longer enclosed within political borders coinciding with those of their States because of, for example, the lowering or suppression of tariffs and the harmonisation, at least partly, of their trade arrangements.

We define **internationalisation**, a geographic dimension, as the use of a set of techniques and processes making exchanges of goods, services (including information) and assets, and the flow of people between territories all over the world, quicker and more extensive.

Internationalisation means that the fall in cost and time of transporting goods and people has significantly lowered the break-even pricing of both products and labour, and also that the transport of information is instantaneous and has a negligible cost.

We define **worldwide development**, a practical dimension, *stricto sensu,* as the actions of businesses aimed at responding to specific demands, everywhere and without any particular differences of deadlines or prices; these actions necessitate the implementation of entrepreneurial strategies adapted to the evolving background of globalisation and internationalisation.

Worldwide development forces firms, whatever their size, from the individual entrepreneur to the transnational companies, to "think global" because their providers, their customers or their competitors may be, or come from, anywhere in the world.

These three processes transform the way in which territorial strategies must be conceived. They call for adapted responses, summarised in the table below[3].

(Translation: Sylvie Vanston)

1. *General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade*, signed for the first time in 1947.
2. *De l'esprit des lois*, 1748.
3. Cf also Wackermann, Gabriel (editor), *La mondialisation*, Paris, Ellipses, 2006; *La France : aménager les territoires*, Paris, Éditions Ellipses, 2008; Dumont, Gérard-François, « Territoires et potentialités de développement », *Relief*, n° 41, 2013.

The Tripod of Territories Within "Globalisation"

	Globalisation	Internationalisation	Worldwide development
Origin	Political decisions	Technical progress	Firms' strategies adapting to globalisation and internationalisation
Caracteristics	Reduction of the economic barrier character of borders (via the free flow of goods, services, assets, and sometimes people).	Reduction of time-space between territories and of the cost of exchanges.	Strategies which imply taking into account all the markets of the planet and which can also be defined by the need for refocusing, flexibility, externalisation, B2B cooperation...
Consequences for territories	A world where all the territories (including metropolitan ones) are multi-peripheral, as they depend in part on a body of decisions made somewhere else in the world.	Integrating into network structure in order to optimise the access to every kind of communications. Using the springs of the numerical revolution.	Need to "think global" in order to "act local" efficiently.