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*The Sharing economy in the test of time:  
derives and limits of the phenomenon*

*Final-year dissertation submitted by:*

**Clément Rigaudeau**

*Thesis tutor:*

**Emmanuel Renaud**

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## Glossary of terms and abbreviations

According to the online Collins Dictionary:

**Out-sourcing:** the act of subcontracting (work) to another company

**Crowdfunding:** the funding of a project by a large number of supporters who each contribute a small amount

**Swap or swap:** to trade or exchange (something or someone) for another

**On-demand:** as soon as requested

**Think tank:** A group of experts who provide advice and ideas on political, social or economic issues

**Decentralisation:** to reorganize (a government, industry, etc.) into smaller more autonomous units

**G.A.F.A.:** Google; Apple; Facebook; Amazon

**P2P:** Peer-to-peer

**B2P:** Business-to-Peer

**MOOC:** Massive Open Online Course

**Telecommuting:** The use of home computers, telephones, etc., to enable a person to work from home while maintaining contact with colleagues, customers, or a central office

**Co-evaluation, co-programming, co-writing, co-design, co-manufacturing:** The act of sharing the process of doing something. As example, for carsharing, the driver has to grade the quality of the passenger and in return the passenger grades the driver. It is called the co-evaluation.

## Abstract

Nowadays, the sharing economy is partially disrupting the classical economic model. Each individuals of the society, not only in developed regions as North America and Western Europe, is affected directly or indirectly by this new phenomenon which seems to be limitless in term of expansion. The collaborative economy raised and evolved in parallel to the technological progress of Internet which has been the principal lever of the phenomenon with other economic and societal drivers.

Accelerated by the severe global financial crisis in 2008, the sharing economy took advantage of the social and economic changes necessary to recover from this crisis by avoiding the same mistakes. Consequently, both companies and consumers should be able to take profit of the opportunity by adapting themselves to these notable changes.

## Introduction

“What we share is at least as important as what we own; what we hold in common is at least as important as what we keep for ourselves; what we choose to give away may matter more than what we charge for. In the economy of things, you are identified by what you own – your land, house and car. In the economy of ideas that the web is creating, you are what you share...” R. Belk (2014)

Russell Belk, Kraft Foods Canada Chair in Marketing, lays the foundations of the changing society in his paper on “Sharing Versus Pseudo-Sharing in Web 2.0”.<sup>1</sup>

And this is confirmed when looking at the *Planetoscope* counter<sup>2</sup>, indicating that collaborative consumption represented in 2014, 20 billion euros, or 540 euros each second, including 2.7 billion Euros of revenue generated by the individuals themselves. According to the same source, the market of the sharing economy could weigh 268.5 billion euros by 2025.

Indeed, from housing to the use of carsharing or through music or funding, there is only few areas that escape from what this new movement is bringing. It goes in so many directions that it is difficult to predict where it will end and how it will transform the society. This revolution is the sharing economy.

However, the concept have been discussed seriously in the recent years and the findings that have been made do not fully permit to come to an end concerning a unanimous definition of what the sharing economy is. This large subject, have been deeply studied by few searchers, besides, there is also a quite small amount of articles on the matter. This is even more confirmed regarding writings on the evolution of the sharing economy especially in the scale of France. This lack of information can be considerate as the main limits of this research.

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<sup>1</sup> BELK R. (2014). *Sharing Versus Pseudo-Sharing in Web 2.0*

<sup>2</sup> Planetoscope. (2014). *Chiffre d'affaires de l'économie collaborative*

The principal aim of this thesis is to try to lay the frontiers of the concept by analysing the disruptive effects that the phenomenon is causing to the French economy and society. The time has come to understand the potential as well as the limits of such a new economic model. Whence the following problematic that will be the central theme of this research:

**To what extent the sharing economy, supported by the development of Internet tools has disrupted the French market economy and the whole society operations?**

In pursuance of providing elements of response to this problematic, we defined three hypotheses that will lead us all along this exploratory paper:

**Hypothesis 1:** The sharing economy, by using potential present interstices of the classic economy, partly changed the consumption practices of a particular population stratum by meeting society changing values.

This collaborative consumption's trend is becoming more and more popular among the French society, and present in the economic landscape. The aim of the first hypothesis is to assess how the concept emerged, whom are the concerned people and why they are involved in such a movement.

**Hypothesis 2:** The sharing economy is mainly affecting the services sector, with Tourism as spearhead of the movement, by convincing people to avoid most of the time the use of intermediaries.

The improvements in the internet tools has led to a massive disintermediation in the services structures. Nowadays, because the customers have an easier access to information, products and services, they are more willing to act and consume by themselves challenging the service provided by certain intermediaries.

**Hypothesis 3:** The overall French social function that considerably evolved from simple customer to "prosumer", imposed to rethink the whole legal and fiscal framework.

The last hypothesis states that the social function has noticeably changed and these societal modifications had led to legislation structure's misunderstandings that constrained the French government to rethink its legislation.

Conductive to confirm, invalidate or nuance those hypotheses, the dissertation will be structured in three chapters. Below, you will find a brief overview of the plan:

### **Chapter 1: The hatching and the rise of the Sharing economy in the late 2000s**

The first theoretical part of the project will be dedicated to the apprehension and the whole architecture of the notion. Another goal is to understand the sharing economy drivers that conducted the phenomenon to its place today.

### **Chapter 2: The ideology's economic and social disruptive consequences in France**

The second part of this thesis is focusing on the comparison between the sharing economy model and the dominant economic structure. Besides, the disruptive consequences of the sharing economy from the both consumer and corporate views. Lastly, the main critics of the sharing economy will be developed with the legal and fiscal current framework.

### **Chapter 3: Analysis regarding a study on the place and impacts of the sharing economy in France**

The third and last part of the research is devoted to analyse, the place of the sharing economy in the society and economic landscape, through a study conducted on the French citizens' behaviour facing the concept and supplemented by an interview conducted by Anne Turcaud, a Tourism professional who is the C.E.O. of the travel agency D'Click Tours Passion as well as member of the executive committee of the Bus transportation's branch of the company.

## **Keywords**

Sharing economy, collaborative consumption, exchange, community, Web 2.0, people, platforms, economic transition, capitalism, technology, individuals, corporations, prosumer.

# Chapter 1: The hatching and the rise of the Sharing economy in the late 2000s

## 1.1 A definition attempt

A multitude of searchers and economy experts are trying to give an explanation or at least a definition of what the sharing economy is. Besides, the exact signification is still blurred because of the complexity of the concept itself. Benita Matofska (2016), specialist in the field of collaborative consumption ensures that “The Sharing Economy is a socio-economic ecosystem built around the free allowance of human, physical and intellectual resources. It includes the shared creation, production, distribution, trade and consumption of goods and services by different people and organisations.”<sup>3</sup> This quite clear definition based on the fact that obviously, sharing is the key word of the phenomenon can be considered as too simple and too large for other collaborative economy experts.

B. Matofska, always through her article named: “What is the sharing economy?” have gone deeper in the concept itself. She certified that “A Sharing Economy is a sustainable economic ecosystem comprised of the following ten building blocks” such as “People, Production, Value & Systems of Exchange, Distribution, Planet, Power, Shared Law, Communications, Culture, and Future.” According to her, the assemblage of these complementary elements should conduct to the success of such an innovative model. The study of the author on this subject will be deeply analysed in the section concerning the values that this innovative economy is supposed to spread.

However, what if the “sharing economy” was only a global term which was hiding numerous complexities within it? That is what R. Botsman (2015) defends ardently. The expert distinguished several denominations within what she calls the sharing economy. Indeed, she separates it in four different appellations registered under the same banner. First of all, she presents this economy as an “economic system based on the utilisation of underused assets or services, for free or for a fee, directly from individuals.”<sup>4</sup> In this definition, the author does not use the word “organisation” as clearly as B. Matofska did, assuming that people are at the base

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<sup>3</sup> MATOFSKA B. (2016). From: “The People Who Share”: *What is the sharing economy?*

<sup>4</sup> BOTSMAN R. (2015). From: “Fast company”: *Defining The Sharing Economy: What Is Collaborative Consumption—And What Isn't?*



of the system based on the customer-to-customer exchanges. Besides, she pointed the role of “underused” goods or services that can, from her point of view, represent earnings for the owners. Without the customer’s agreement and motivation to share, the whole structure is compromised. Moreover, and it is where the word “sharing” takes all its sense, Russell W. Belk (2007) associates sharing with “the act and process of distributing what is ours to others for their use and/or the act and process of receiving or taking something from others for our use”.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the author assumes that the collaborative economy is based on a win-to-win process that benefits to both parts of the exchange.

### 1.1.1 What the concept embraces

To confirm the plurality of the delicate definition of the sharing economy, E. Luyckx and D. Masset (2014) suggested several terms that could be identified inside this economy: outsourcing, co-evaluation, co-programming, co-writing, co-design, co-manufacturing, crowdfunding, information sharing, collaborative distribution, material and immaterial sharing, expertise sharing, resources sharing, experiences sharing, collaboration services, citizens associations or communities.<sup>6</sup>

Each one of these composed words (the most technical ones defined in the Glossary of terms) have their own place and they are all unified by the fact of sharing. The aim of the authors was to demonstrate how large can be the collaborative economy by quoting the multitude of terms which could be assimilated to the movement. However, the list is not exhaustive, and all these elements will be in all likelihood soon joined by others.

According to R. Botsman, assisted by R. Rogers (2015) in their work: “Defining the Sharing Economy: What is Collaborative consumption-and what isn't?”, there are three different kinds of Collaborative consumption practices. They considered that: Product service systems, Redistribution markets and Collaborative lifestyles were each of them variants interpretations and practices marked within the whole wording “sharing economy”. Let’s first define the three structures in other words:

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<sup>5</sup> BELK R.(2007). *Why not share rather than own?*

<sup>6</sup> LUYCKX E. & MASSET D. (2014). *L'économie collaborative, une alternative au modèle de la compétition.*

**“Product service systems”:** They basically permit to transform products in services. The structure aims in replacing the fact of selling a material good in the fact of selling the usage of a good. This approach comes closer to the functional service economy or functional economy. D. Bourg and N. Buclet (2005), in an article, define it as, "the substitution of the sale of the property itself to the sale of the property use"<sup>7</sup> Blablacar could be a great example to demonstrate the structure of product service systems.

**“Redistribution markets”:** These market places permit to the customers to dispose of their “old” goods that they don’t need any more by selling, swap or giving them to other users. The redistribution markets are based in a Customer to Customer process which are represented by web platforms as Ebay or Leboncoin.

**“Collaborative lifestyles”:** This last structure is the one which represents the most the sharing spirit that is the main value conveyed by this economy (deeply discussed in the point 1.2.4). This system involves the sharing of resources, goods, time and knowledge. The link is made by private individuals, which is not always a for-profit association. Couchsurfing.com is clearly registered in this movement, permitting to its users to have a look on all the free sofas or rooms owned by other users.

Taking into account the predominance of sharing and the central role of the motivations of the consumer itself, advanced by the last authors, this new economy should simply operates properly without any exterior help. However, Caroll & Romano (2011) make their own pertinent contribution suggesting that Internet platforms and more generally the Web 2.0 “refers collectively to websites that allow users to contribute content and connect with each other”.<sup>8</sup> From this point of view, the numerical advances were the last key, mixed with the sharing spirit motivated by the customers, to permit the economic concept to born, keep up and carry on. The technological advances will be developed later in the section dedicated to the enabling environment of the birth of the sharing economy.

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<sup>7</sup> BOURG D. & BUCLET N. (2005). From: “Futuribles”. *L'économie de fonctionnalité. Changer la consommation dans le sens du développement durable*

<sup>8</sup> CAROLL E. & ROMANO J. (2011). Your digital afterlife: When Facebook, Flickr and Twitter are your estate, what's your legacy?

### 1.1.2 The whole sharing economy family

Afterwards, to go deeper in the interpretation of the concept, R. Botsman (2015) starts from the global definition to explain what could be registered in the sharing economy family. She considered the following terms as part of this family, ensuring notwithstanding that they could have a different meaning, thus another interpretation: the collaborative economy, the collaborative consumption (term introduced by Ray Algar in the magazine: *Leisure Report* in 2007) and finally the on-demand services. She maintains that the functioning of “collaborative economy” is encouraged by the development of decentralized marketplaces and networks which permits, on one hand, the customers to find what they want and on the other hand to rent goods or sell services without having to pass by one or several intermediates.

Moreover, R. Botsman (2015) joined the theory of Carroll & Romano by ensuring that the “collaborative consumption” could not exist without the emerging Internet platforms where you can, in few clicks, rent, swap or share what you want in the easier way. Finally, she also insists on the singularity of the “on-demand economy” based on “Platforms that directly match customer needs with providers to immediately deliver goods and services”.<sup>9</sup> The on-demand economy finds its particularity in the instantaneity of its offer. The surplus value of it stays in facilitating the delivery of foods and services where and when the customer wants it, reducing the intermediates. It’s the raise of disintermediation. This is what start-ups as Deskbeers or Washio are proposing, which have made from their instant services, their own added value.

### 1.1.3 The initiator “peer-to-peer” concept

Frederic Mazzella (2016), initiator of the collaborative movement, is co-founder of the former French company Blablacar, which relates drivers and passengers with the simple aim of reducing costs for both. He figured out several factors that are indivisible from the concept of this economy: The sharing of goods, time, money, content and knowledge.<sup>10</sup> According to F. Mazzella, these five criteria are directly linked with the existence and the success of this economic innovation, which according to the author, increases the resource optimisation and the buying power of the customers. This statement comes to reinforce the obvious central role

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<sup>9</sup> BOTSMAN R. (2015) From: “Fast company”. *Defining The Sharing Economy: What Is Collaborative Consumption—And What Isn't?*

<sup>10</sup> MAZZELLA F. (2016) *L'inéluctable ascension de l'économie du partage.*

of sharing, approved by the previous authors. However, the existence of the carsharing company Blablacar and other actors of the collaborative consumption could rely on the simple being of peer-to-peer networks which assist the progress of this new model. Undeniably, the interaction and mutual exchanges can be considered as the cement of the sharing economy, backed by Web 2.0 platforms. To go further, the peer-to-peer has been initiated in the last 1990s by, inter alia, Shawn Fanning who created the first “peer-to-peer” application: Napster. The aim was to give the unlimited access of music (shared by other application users) for who will join the network.<sup>11</sup> R. Nieva (2013).

The peer-to-peer networks emerged with the evolution and technological advances of Internet. Once again, the term is quite recent. Nevertheless, R. Schollmeier (2002) gives a great and concise explanation of the concept: “A distributed network architecture may be called a Peer-to-Peer network, if the participants share a part of their own hardware resources. These shared resources are necessary to provide the Service and content offered by the network (e.g. file sharing or shared workspaces for collaboration). They are accessible by other peers directly, without passing intermediary entities.”<sup>12</sup> Assuming this global definition of peer-to-peer networks advanced by the author, by the way specialist in communication networks, the users become the actors of their networks and they can assume two roles, both providers of information and requestors of content. The concept could not work only with receivers or neither only with senders of information. This method is far away from the traditional model of client/server where there is only one sender for several receivers.

Finally, these different points of view on what the concept is and what it covers are each of them going in the same way. The term “sharing economy” does not have, as of today's date, any universal agreement on its definition. Nonetheless, we noticed that the customer role is the triggering factor of this economic revolution based on sharing initiatives supported by Internet tools. Consequently, the consumer becomes inevitably a “prosumer”, Alvin Toffler (1980), who is able to both produce and consume as a micro-entrepreneur.<sup>13</sup> Then, the customer becomes an actor of the global economic system of its country, at his own scale. This term will be discussed deeply, later in the theoretical part of this study.

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<sup>11</sup> NIEVA R. (2013) *Ashes to ashes, peer to peer: An oral history of Napster*.

<sup>12</sup> SCHOLLMEIER R. (2002). *A Definition of Peer-to-Peer Networking for the Classification of Peer-to Peer Architectures and Applications*.

<sup>13</sup> TOFFLER A. (1980). *The Third Wave*

## 1.2 The enabling environment of the movement



Figure n°1: The three market forces drive the collaborative economy  
Source: Jeremiah Owyang, "The Collaborative Economy"

Henceforth, let us return to the precepts of the notion, the economic and social context in which it was born. Several factors can explain the birth of the sharing economy and we will focus our explanations on three large components of the latter, which, in summary come from technological advances provoked by economic changes mixed with the will power of the customers, driven by modifications of behaviours towards consumption.

That is what J. Owyang (2013) is trying to explain in his work on the collaborative economy featured by the Pwc cabinet. He identified "three market forces"<sup>14</sup> which led to the sharing economy that are represented in the figure below and that we will dissect in the next sections, separating each one of them. According to his research, the collaborative consumption have been motivated by technological, economic and societal drivers.

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<sup>14</sup> OWYANG J. (2013). *The Collaborative Economy*

### 1.2.1 Technological necessary improvements

As explained previously through the section regarding the “peer-to-peer” system, the complexity and the limitless development of the sharing economy had been facilitated by the technological advances that emerged through Internet, Carroll & Romano (2011)<sup>15</sup>. J. Owyang embraces, in the same work, “Social networking, mobile devices, platforms and also payment systems” to characterize the improvements on the matter. Without the access to all these interacting platforms linked with the Web 2.0., the sharing economy would not have the success and the significance that it has today. To reaffirm and prove the importance of Internet Networks development, from 2006, Y. Benkler (2006) speaks about “a system of production, distribution, and consumption of information goods characterized by decentralized individual action carried out through widely distributed, nonmarket means that do not depend on market strategies”.<sup>16</sup> The whole work of the author aims to analyse to what extent the technological information permits to increase means of collaboration that can lead to profound changes in the economy as well as the society.

Moreover, this type of new businesses also gives interest to online payment platforms. J. Owyang, in “The Collaborative economy” found that “27 of the 30 top sharing start-ups rely on online or mobile payment systems tied to credit cards”. This is interesting for both customers and companies which facilitate the fact of paying. Moreover, it dematerializes the act of paying. Thus people are more willing to pay online, they become more confident with the process. Ultimately, the Web 2.0 and its technological improvements, asserts itself to a fundamental actor of the increasing movement. The following sentence summarizes well the previous point of views: “Technology now makes the act of renting a car from your neighbour a really smooth experience”, “The Economist” (2010)<sup>17</sup>. As transition, below will be analysed the motivations extracted from the economic context which favoured the widespread power of the sharing economy.

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<sup>15</sup> CAROLL E. & ROMANO J. (2011). *Your digital afterlife: When Facebook, Flickr and Twitter are your estate, what's your legacy?*

<sup>16</sup> BENKLER Y. (2006). *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*

<sup>17</sup> From: “The Economist”. (2010). *Peer-to-peer car rentals Collaborative consumption*

### 1.2.2 Economic motivations

Likewise, the collaborative consumption had also been motivated by economic factors. As quote before, there is a causal link between the crisis of 2008 and the birth of some businesses linked with sharing economy and collaborative consumption.<sup>18</sup> As explained in this article of “The Economist” (2013), the global crisis which disrupted the economy of the whole world had a serious negative effect on the buying power of people and more generally on their ability to own their assets. Collaborative consumption appeared timely in a context of almost mandatory consumption restrictions, some families were searching to save money, destabilised by the crisis and its effects on the growth of inequality.

Always supported by the article of “The Economist” (2013), aftermath the crisis, people started being aware of the economic potential of what they already possessed. Thus, they should have the opportunity to monetize it by sharing, giving the access of their own possessions to other users.<sup>19</sup> Theory advanced and supported by L. Gansky (2010) who used “the mesh” to define the giant network inseparable from collaborative consumption. To go further, the author states that companies based on the sharing model can, through the social networks “define and deliver highly targeted, very personal goods and services at the right time and location” which is giving to these businesses a certain competitive advantage on other companies using “classic” technics. The demand of the customers is changing and the current economic actors need to find how to meet their expectations.

### 1.2.3 Societal and environmental drivers

Finally, this economy results as well in the awareness of the resources exhaustion and the growing increase of the world population.<sup>20</sup> The environmental factor is one other main motivations for the development of the sharing economy. This theory had been predicted by G. Hardin (1968) in his article “The Tragedy of the Commons”. The author describes the urgency of the situation that future generations will have to face. Indeed, the environmental questions represent one of the biggest current concerns that needs to be faced straightaway and in a

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<sup>18</sup> From “The Economist” (2013). *All eyes on the sharing economy*

<sup>19</sup> GANSKY L. (2010). *The Mesh: Why the Future of Business is sharing.*

<sup>20</sup> HARDIN G. (1968). *The tragedy of the Commons*

sustainable manner.<sup>21</sup> This is what Steven Cohen (2015) tries tirelessly to prove in his article excerpted from the “Huffington Post”. He ensures that the awareness of people has rebounded significantly in the last decade and that each actor of the society is now conscious that everyone has to play its own role in the establishment of a sustainable and lasting economy.

Lastly, there is another social element which could justify the success of the model that is the return to community values, which preach the importance of social interaction, facilitated by a sharing based economy. Indeed, this innovative economy is considered for some specialists as a flashback in term of human values, modelled on the actions of our ancestors whom gave advantage to a form of primitive collaborative consumption by bartering, swapping what they had, in a peer-to-peer structure, only missing the outstanding network that Internet is offering today.<sup>22</sup> Supported by the work of J. Panet-Raymond (2015) who investigated on the changing values of the society brought by the tendencies of sharing.

Likewise, Thierry Crouzet (2007) states on the end of the individualism.<sup>23</sup> In his article, the specialist of new technologies ensures that the Internet tools provide “the ability for everyone to weave new connections and emerge from the stalemate individualistic. It is federating communities.” The author brought another proof showing that the basements of social values are deeply changing, reinforced by the profound economic and environmental evolving contexts cited before.

Finally, Jeremy Rifkin (2011), in an interview given to “Le Monde”, explains how the mentality and the behaviour of the society is metamorphosing. In this interview, he took as example recent tragedies as Fukushima on the eleven of March 2011 which provoked the alliance and the birth of a new kind of international and global solidarity, that he considers as crucial for the next challenges the whole world will face. The author, in this interview, finally describes the societal changes and he considered people as an “Empathic Civilization”<sup>24</sup>. An empathic new way of thinking which links people together, by helping, supporting each other.

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<sup>21</sup> COHEN S. (2015). From: “The Huffington Post”. *The Growing Level of Environmental Awareness*

<sup>22</sup> PANET-RAYMOND J. (2015). From: “L’itinéraire”. *L’économie collaborative : un retour vers des valeurs de partage et d’entraide ?*

<sup>23</sup> CROUZET T. (2007). *La fin de l’individualisme*.

<sup>24</sup> RIFKIN J. (2011). From: “Le Monde”. *Une empathie nouvelle gagne l’humanité*



## 1.3 What the sharing economy represents

As seen before, the sharing economy has a tough and complex definition. This last section of the first chapter will finally help us to take a big picture of what this movement involves in terms of values firstly and then, this part will analyse the number and the roles of each actor of the Market, through the study of Benita Matofska: *What is the sharing economy?*

### 1.3.1 The values conveyed by the sharing economy

Hereafter, the values advocated by this economy will be thoroughly and precisely developed. First of all, we saw previously that the movement had been motivated by technological, economic, environmental and societal drivers. Indeed, the sharing economy should conduct values directly related to these three association of ideas.

First of all, one of the main values of the sharing economy is the access to the goods or services without the obligation of owning. Botsman & Rogers (2011) also stated that this economy model should conduct to economic and spatiotemporal gains: "These systems provide meaningful environmental benefits by increasing the efficiency of use, reducing waste, encouraging the development of better products and mopping the surplus created by overproduction and overconsumption"<sup>25</sup> (translated from French). They explained that the profit of the sharing economy results in the fact of increasing the capacity of use of underused products. This economy wants to avoid the surplus caused by the overproduction by giving the access to goods or products that are not used as 100% of their capacity.

Indeed, the concept embroils to reduce the waste of any underused products and this is clearly going in the sense of environmental aspirations that the whole world has to take into consideration nowadays. From this point of view, this theory aims to support the transition for a sustainable and durable economy through another innovative type of consumption which could not reduce the fact of consuming but the way of doing it, without being obliged to buy, buy and buy again. This is possible thanks to new means of consuming brought by this model as renting or swapping for example.

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<sup>25</sup> BOTSMAN R. & ROGERS R. (2011). *What's Mine is Yours. How Collaborative Consumption is Changing The Way We Live*

Secondly, there is another great value transmitted by this different economic model which is the growing increase of population human beliefs and return to human, solidarity and sharing values., However, E. Ostrom, 2009's Nobel Economy Price stated that "only the actors cooperation can permit to compel obedience to shared assets" (translated from French). In this sentence, the author assumes that the sharing economy can only functions if its actors, the consumers and the platforms, where collaborative consumption is involved, both act in a climate of respect and mutual confidence.

The secret of all the platforms & market places of the sharing economy lies in the degree of faith that the customer will have when he will access the website. This organisation is well respected by the majority of the businesses engaged in this market. Indeed, these companies followed a simple framework composed of four elements, whose two of them are directly precisely associated to the fact of reassuring and win the trust of future customers: "A precise description of goods or services" and a "member-based grading" C. Bouleau (2015)<sup>26</sup> which permits, as well as ensuring a great level of assurance for the customer, to avoid and eliminate any fake offer. This grading finally permits to regulate the market by the comparison between goods or services providers. These two fundamental ingredients provide all the necessary features for him to feel convinced and sure about the liability and the quality that this platform can afford him.

### 1.3.2 The ten building blocks of this innovative system

To resume globally the aim of such an innovative economic system, B. Matofska (2016), always in the same work<sup>27</sup>, states cleverly on "ten building blocks" which characterized the ingredients that the sharing economy needs to operate as best as possible. We can clearly identify in these blocks the global values carried and assumed by the sharing economy. They will be developed and explained in other words below:

**People:** Sharing economy is a "People's economy". Whether they are co-owners, employees or customers, as cited before, they are in the heart of the collaborative consumption process. They are present both in the organisational and developmental levels of the supply

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<sup>26</sup> BOULEAU C. (2015). From: "Le Monde". *Economie collaborative: cette start-up pourrait être le Blablacar ou le Airbnb de demain.*

<sup>27</sup> MATOFSKA B. (2016). From: "The People Who Share" *What is the sharing economy ?*

chain. Besides, the constant exchanges and the direct approach between the actors of this model reinforce the sharing and human values advocated by the concept itself.

**Production:** Production is linked with the previous block. Simply, the production can be carried out by all the participants of the sharing economy. Once again, it tends to be profitable to the changing function of people in the real economy. Anybody who want it can make one's contribution to the society by offering his services or by putting his assets in the sharing market where other persons would be able to take profit of his goods.

**Value & Systems of exchange:** This block results in the act of avoiding wastes by reallocating them where they could be needed. The valuation of underused assets served as a strong argument towards desired economic transition through environmental questions. Moreover, the system of exchange is preconized as it makes the transaction easier between owners who want to give the access to their properties and for users who want to take profit of underused assets of owners.

**Distribution:** "Shared ownership models such as cooperatives, collective purchasing and collaborative consumption are features of a Sharing Economy" This economic movement is built on resources redistribution. Linked with the production, it serves as giving the opportunity to profit of unproductive and useless ownership. However, the distribution process avoid any third party, the contact his direct between the provider and the beneficiary person which reduces consequently the time between the transactions.

**Planet:** The environmental value of the sharing economy set the connection between "value creation, production and distribution". These features are managed by the "people". The life cycle of the products is extended thanks to the willingness of people who take seriously in consideration the future of the planet. The members of the society can actually use sharing economy's systems to reduce the wastes. The constant reuse of the products are obviously preserving the nature and give credit to the concernment of safeguarding the environment.

**Power:** The sharing economy also redistributes the cards concerning the consumers, companies and governments power. As well as giving the access to a virtual ownership for the users, it's also giving the access to power. People become "active citizens", if they want it, they can surely influence both their living and working environments. Lastly, the author also states that thanks to this circular economic system, the inequality could be reduced powered by the increasing fair acts and human believes.

**Shared law:** As explained earlier in the thesis, the concept stands on a trust system where the customer and the supplier define on the same base and resulting with a mutual agreement the rules that they will have to respect. Besides, each resource sharing form has its own policy provided by users. The process of agreeing on laws and policies that will rule the model markets is democratic. Each one of us is allowed to get a word in that can be accepted or rejected by the rest of the mass.

**Communications:** The communication mechanism allows all the sharing economy participants to share and take advantage of the mass of information and knowledge which turns communal. Thanks to the internet platforms, the interaction between the actors is facilitated. The author additionally reminds that the access to a high education is also favored by the structure of communication whether it is public or private. Accessibility is the essence of sharing economy's communication anatomy which grants the users to "share more".

**Culture:** What the economic movement results in human believes. The fact of sharing is putting the people together. It consists in the mix of people from different horizons, social classes and the diversity of the data base of people is a core value of the collaborative consumption. The commercial interaction of such diversified group of people give the opportunity to anyone to assert himself. Lastly, in the heart of the concept, the entrepreneurship is glorified. Everyone can become an entrepreneur.

**Future:** The structure of the studied economy seems to be promised to a long-term success, which fits with the economical, technological and environmental aspirations of the future societies. The sharing economy bring high hopes willing to an economic transition based on a sustainable development that could be able to tailor its shape year by year.

B. Matofska gave us with these ten blocks a great "big picture" of what the sharing economy truly is. Moreover, she necessarily underlined the main values conveyed by this economic trend. Even if it is difficult to put barriers and frontiers to the concept, it needs to be understood for the second part of the thesis where we will deeply analyses the consequences of such a model on the real economy, supported by studies and figures from authors whom already addressed the case of this economy.

This first part helps us now to see more clearly what can represents the sharing economy and its supposed borders. To conclude and make the transition to the second part we will mention the latest book of **Jeremy Rifkin**, the main defendant of the current collaborative consumption: "The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, the Collaborative Commons, and the Eclipse of Capitalism ". Its title briefly summarizes the hopes placed in this movement. Lastly, the second theoretical part of this work will be destined to analyse and discern the corollaries which resulted from the increasing collaborative consumption's trend.

## Chapter 2: The ideology's economic and social disruptive consequences in France

### 2.1 Relation between collaborative consumption organisations and “classic” market economy

Generally, this chapter aims to understand the disrupting effects of the growing collaborative consumption in both French economy and society and this first part will be dedicated to discern the relation between the classic market economy and the so-called sharing economy.

Firstly, “Classic” businesses may not be the exact right word. However, the idea of this part is to confront the two systems, to understand what makes the collaborative system different from its ancestors but also what sharing organisations took from the businesses which used to work in the traditional way. In an interview gave for *The Express*, Antonin Léonard (2014), founder of the “think tank” website Ouishare.com stated that “The possibilities of these new practices are huge, and their economic, social or environmental, is considerable”<sup>28</sup>. According to the young author, the impact of such a new model could be seen in various fields.

#### 2.1.1 Disparities in the comparison of Classic market and sharing economy

According to G. Valette (2014), from the second part of the 20th Century, everything was going in the way to destroy the social links between citizens. Indeed, the governments and the multinationals, in a trend of globalisation were building and introducing huge areas to give a faster and greater access to the consumption. Besides, the author speaks about the engaged disappearance of the “intermediate places” between personal and professional life which aimed to exchange, share and socialise with others.<sup>29</sup>

Still in accordance with the last author's reflexion, time has arrived to invent new alternatives spaces to rebuild the social links. Moreover, the “virtual spaces” brought by the sharing economy permit, at least, to create public spaces where there is a direct link between citizens aiming to basically share services and/or goods. This “virtual proximity” is biased in

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<sup>28</sup> LEONARD A. (2014). From “The Express”. *L'économie du partage rebat les cartes*

<sup>29</sup> VALETTE G. (2014). From “Le Monde”. *L'économie du partage, nouvel eldorado du capitalisme?*

favour of the horizontal process, in brutal comparison from the vertical architecture of the classic market places. This network development allowed the resurrection of an economy of "virtual proximity" based on the exchange.

D-J Rahmil (2015) recently approved the thesis of G. Valette by stating that “The collaborative economy has always displayed its fight against hyper consumption and its rejection of the so-called classical economy (which including the means of production that are planned and standardized, with a vertical distribution) considered as aging, and the consumer society as a whole”<sup>30</sup> The author once again pointed out the incompatibility of the two distinct formats by insisting on the vertical way of functioning of the still dominant classic model. The authors confront, in turns, the contrasted ideologies.

Finally, the figure below is taken from the work of W. Van Den Broek (2013) who represents summarily the main particularities concerning Production, Distribution, Exchanges and Consumption<sup>31</sup> of each structure that will be developed hereafter.

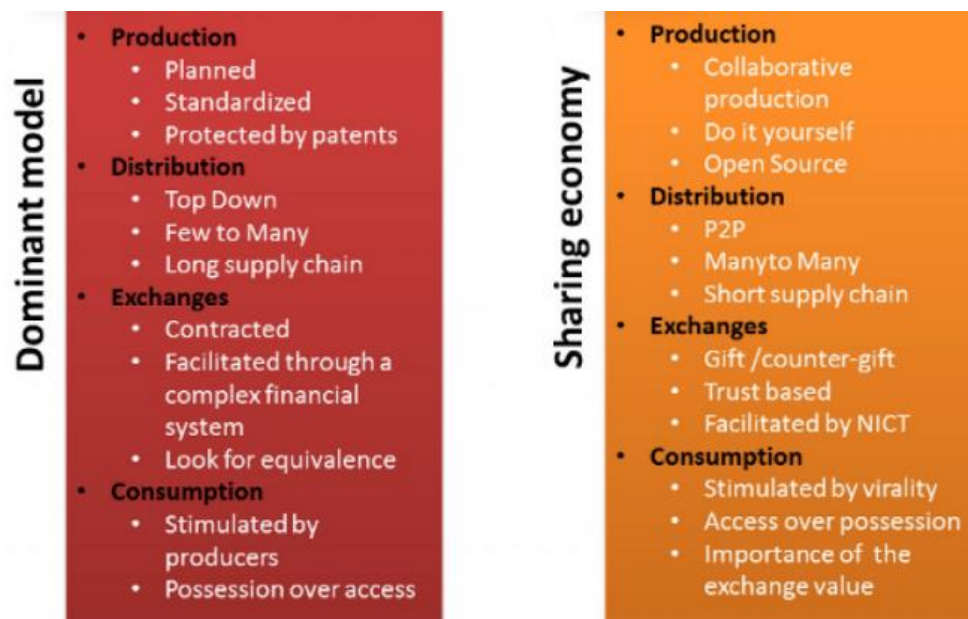


Figure n°2: The sharing economy vs. the dominant model  
Source: William Van Den Broek “The sharing economy vs. the dominant model”

<sup>30</sup> RHAMIL D-J. (2015). From: “Orange”. *Le collaboratif, nouvelle forme d’économie ou perturbateur de l’économie ?*

<sup>31</sup> VAN DEN BROEK W. (2013). From: “Deskmag”. *The sharing economy vs. the dominant model*

The author chooses to separate in 4 main areas what can be considered as the “market economy” structure of, on one hand the sharing ideology and on the other hand the dominant model that we also called previously the classic market economy. The market economy aims to coordinates the offer and the demand on the market place.

To go further in the reflexion, comparing to the dominant model where the process is clearly organised on the planning, and standardisation steps, the sharing economy uses a collaborative system of production where everyone can bring his own creation, from open origins. Then, a divergence is also observed on the distribution operations. The dominant model results in the “top-down” configuration which represent a vertical operation where the supply chain can be long. Besides, in this method, few companies produce for many customers. The author describes it as a “few-to-many” scheme. In comparison, the collaborative companies prefer conducting a horizontal distribution, where the scheme is more based on “many-to-many” which means more the significant reduction of intermediates and where the supply chain is quite short due to the proximity of the producer and the buyer. To go further in the reflexion, the horizontal system is seen as incompatible with sharing economy<sup>32</sup> according to Eric Luyckx & Delphine Masset (2014) whom stated that the horizontal logic is contradictory with the network-based principles related to the collaborative consumption. They also explain this discordance because of the decentralisation who prevent from taking decisions from a single and same place. Finally, the horizontal model cannot be applied by this new economy idea taking into account the increasing autonomy of people.

Afterwards, some differences are also perceived in the exchange system. Indeed, the dominant economic exchanges are well structured, regulated by laws and supported by currencies. However, in the sharing economy, the exchanges are made by most of the time by two physical entities. They are simplified, the visibility online for the ones who use it correctly is increased. The exchanges are mainly based on trust when the contact could not even exist in the other system where you can make business with someone without knowing him personally. Finally, the last contrast is found on the consumption itself. To make it clear and succinct, in the classic model, the consumption is “stimulated by producers”. Nevertheless, in the sharing economy, the access is preferred over the ownership and the consumption is essentially decided and accelerated by the constant consumers’ interaction, between themselves.

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<sup>32</sup> LUYCKX E. & MASSET D. (2014). L'économie collaborative une alternative au modèle de la compétition



## 2.1.2 The dominant economic model's weight on collaborative consumption's structure

First of all, the differences between the two distinct models explained in the previous part have to be relativized. Numerous authors found close similarities between the capitalistic dominant model and the sharing movement. E. Kolovson (2014) started by demonstrate that the fundamentals of each type of economy is intimately related simply comparing the way it works: “The idea of these companies is to simply make these markets more liquid by allowing people to buy these goods and services directly from each other rather than from an established gatekeeper or intermediary”<sup>33</sup>. The author naturally opened the debate with starting from the bottom of the trend. It is difficult to prove the contrary. Indeed, for him, the collaborative economy did not invent something revolutionary. Thus, the concept could take back few elements of the productivist, monopolistic or capitalistic dominant system. This thesis is also verified and advanced by E. Luyckx & D. Masset (2014) whom found some “recuperations” (interpreted in other words below) that the sharing economy used, and is still using, to enforces and pursues its development:

Concerning the distribution process, each business doesn't really respect the horizontal ideology, because instead of reducing the numbers of intermediates, various companies creating their value from giving the outsourcing job, by the way almost freely, to the customers themselves. Then, pertaining to the end of monopolistic rules, once again, the reality is not the same. Indeed, to be able to be competitive, some actors of the collaborative economy made their own groupings, with the example of crowdfunding, among others, which, for the authors, need mutual help to persevere and exist in the finance sector. Finally, the authors ensure that the ability of sharing any tool in the whole world may cause misappropriations and a sort of flashback regarding the fact that people built their jobs about giving fake evaluations on websites, goods or services.

However, it is important to remind that these principles may not be all fully used by all the organisations built around the sharing economy.<sup>34</sup> Besides, the authors established that with the application of the few recuperations detailed above, “it does not forecast in any case an "automatic" output of the productivist, monopolistic or capitalistic model”.

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<sup>33</sup> KOLOVSON E. (2014). From: “Quora”. *What's the sharing economy? Is it an alternative to capitalism?*

<sup>34</sup> LUYCKX E. & MASSET D. (2014). *L'économie collaborative une alternative au modèle de la compétition*

In another measure, according to G. Valette (2014), the dominant economic model has a fundamental influence in the development of the sharing economy and in the future ways that the movement could take. Indeed, some authors found similarities between the two structures as the last author who certified that the monopole of some collaborative economy's giants can be compared with the monopole of the G.A.F.A. on the world's economy which detained the whole part of the "Big Data" that they are not willing to share with the governments because it's their principal source of revenue. Still according to G. Valette, "Airbnb, Uber, Blablacar or YoupiJob are born in the arms of Google and Facebook",<sup>35</sup> among others, these companies were born to make profit, calqued on the capitalistic system that the G.A.F.A. is mixing with their Big Data to maximize the profit and to keep the control on people and on governments.

These similarities between the two models explained previously are contrasted by some authors whom advanced the theory saying that the sharing economy could be simply considered as an alternative to the capitalist system, based on some equal basics.<sup>36</sup> That is what D. Dyal-Chand defends, among others, in his work named "Regulating Sharing: The Sharing Economy as an Alternative Capitalist System". According to his studies, he revealed that the causality between the two models is quite close as he finally called himself the collaborative economy as the "Capitalist sharing".

Finally, the economy could be seen for some other authors, which takes the last idea a step further, as an overtaking in the history of capitalism. That is what the economist C-A. Schwerer (2015) ensures. According to him, the sharing economy had been absorbed by the classic market economy.<sup>37</sup> He assumes that this growing economy, rapidly saw as a potential alternative to the capitalist system, had been overtaken by the increasing profitability aspirations of the biggest companies which started from this new model. And some of the small companies, seeing the potential of their business growing at that tile took as example the greatest actors as Airbnb, Uber or Blablacar. Nevertheless, we will see in the next part that this theory cannot be proved because there are in the heart of the concept different types of organisations which are not built on a capitalist format.

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<sup>35</sup> VALETTE G. (2014). From: "Le Monde". *L'économie du partage, nouvel eldorado du capitalisme?*

<sup>36</sup> RYAL-CHAND D. (2015). *Regulating Sharing: The Sharing Economy as an Alternative Capitalist System*

<sup>37</sup> SCHWERER C-A. (2015). From : "La Tribune". *Blablacar et Airbnb : le partage est le nouveau stade du capitalisme*

### 2.1.3 The model diversities in the heart of sharing economy

Firstly, according to an article published in “Vie Publique” (2016), a website generated and cautioned by the French government, the sharing economy is divided in two distinct strategies of execution:<sup>38</sup> “Duplicate traditional consumption patterns”. This technique is built on using the resources that people possess (a car, a flat) to propose a deviant offer, without the obligation of the professional step. Besides, it’s easier to access through adding extra services such as mobile applications, evaluation or prices decrease.

“Create a new complementary service to the classic offer”. This business model is the one, inter alia, of the car-sharing (Blablacar in France). It permits to people to go from a point to another using different methods with something else than traditional transport modes. The success of these platforms results mainly in drastic drop of the prices.

Secondly, there is also an essential discordance on the for-profit and the non-profit based businesses. J. Schor (2014) is going further confronting the two last terms but she also insists on the difference between the peer-to-peer and the business-to-peer market structures.<sup>39</sup> For her, the P2P construct companies can earn money on commissions on exchanges. In contrast, the B2P model can earn their money on transactions which means that the act of mutual exchange is alternated by at least one professional structure, acting as part of the dominant market economy. But still from her point of view, the main disparity lies in the profit and non-profit concepts. Non-profit organisations as Wikipedia, swap foods or MOOCs which can come from both a P2P and B2P background cannot be associated with Airbnb or Uber, the latter is evaluated at more than 50 billions of dollars.

Lastly, in the recent years, a trend for migrations from the non-profit to the for-profit model have been observed. J. Schor & C. Fitzmaurice (2014)<sup>40</sup> argued with the example of Couchsurfing which was born originally non-profit in 1999 and that today is present in more than 100,000 cities all around the world.

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<sup>38</sup> From : “Vie Publique” (2016). *L'économie collaborative, un nouveau modèle socio-économique*

<sup>39</sup> SCHOR J. (2014). *Debating the Sharing Economy*,

<sup>40</sup> SCHOR J. & FITZMAURICE C. (2014). *Collaborating and Connecting: The emergence of the sharing economy*

## 2.2 The impact of the sharing economy from the companies' point of view

First and foremost, in one's element from the same article issued from "Vie Publique", in 2014, "70% of French Internet users bought or sold on matchmaking websites between private individuals". This study, among others, clearly demonstrates how much the place of collaborative consumption have been seriously evolved in the consumption patterns. The next part will be focused on identifying who have been damaged, and the reaction of the concerned businesses. Lastly, we will pose the legislative scenery.

### 2.2.1 What sectors are the most affected in France?

The reports concerning the affected sectors in France were not enough complete or relevant to include them in this part. That is why we will start with a world overview of the touched sectors. According to the article released in "Think with Google" (2015), a section of the search engine dedicated on the reflexion of "trends" subjects, four sectors were dominants in the worldwide collaborative consumption: "Finance; with 23%; Transport with 23%; Accommodation with 18%; and Retail with 18%, (assuming that the remaining 18% involved the whole Others".<sup>41</sup> We cannot ensure that this structure is exactly representative of the French even if as reported by the article, the trend seems to be more or less equal anywhere in the world as the growing models are implementing themselves everywhere mainly thanks to their Web 2.0 headquarters.

Anyway, basically, thanks to this last research, we could considerate the transport and accommodation, which could be embraces in the tourism sectors as the most damaged. Especially in France, a report published in "Tourmag" stated that "tourism has widely contributed" in the development of the sharing economy and its new lifestyles".<sup>42</sup> The article informs us that 11% of the French said that they could opt for a "share stay" (versus 5% in 2013), turning towards Blablacar or drivy for they transport means and with HomeAway or Airbnb for their accommodation type. We can clearly notice that French people are using more and more new ways of consumption, notably for their holidays, and that is why the Tourism sector stays one of the most disturbed by this collaborative movement.

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<sup>41</sup> From: "Think with Google". (2015). *Comprendre l'économie de partage à travers les chiffres*

<sup>42</sup> From: "Tourmag". (2015). *Tourisme collaboratif : 11 % des Français partiront en séjour "partagé" en 2015*

### 2.2.2 The answer initiated by some “classic companies” In France

This part of the thesis needs to be started by a pro-French issue concerning the intern lobbying acting against the innovation to protect the traditional economy. In an article released by Arnaud Dassier (2014)<sup>43</sup>, we can read that Arnaud Montebourg, at that time what we can translate by “Minister of productive recovery” announced in 2013 that “We need to slow down innovation to protect the old businesses”. This statement has not missed to make react international governments with most of the time a huge stupefaction. Still according to this article, the political lobbying carried on by French biggest corporations, overtaken by the fast-changing environment imposed by sharing start-ups, is always based on the same topic: “the unfair competition” whose they estimate suffer. These influent and powerful actors of the French economy are frequently well listened and supported by the French government.

In addition to this first reaction, some traditional companies also try to react rapidly to the already cited not to miss the curve established by the growing collaborative consumption. In his “Innovation and strategy blog”, G. Villon de Benveniste (2015) outlined the main answers proposed by French companies.<sup>44</sup> For example, he reported that the MAIF (French insurer), invested in *Koolicar* (which put in relation car renters and car owners) to walk into the insurance part of the collaborative consumption.

Furthermore, the SNCF (French railway group) partly changed their overall strategy seeing the growing rise and interest of the French customers for Blablacar. They are actually trying to catch up their delay by, among others, the purchase of 75% of the capital of *Ouicar* (same functioning than *Koolicar*).

Finally, still at the French scale, other consequent businesses as Boulanger, Leroy Merlin or Mr Bricolage are trying to diversify their offer in order to attract a new target customers, in accordance with C. Chandès (2015)<sup>45</sup>. She observed that “aiming to concurrence objects renting between private individuals platforms as *Zilok*”, these influent companies now offer to their clients the possibility of renting DIY or gardening equipment.

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<sup>43</sup> DASSIER A. (2014). From: “The Express”. *Uber: la France va-t-elle rater le virage de l'économie du partage?*

<sup>44</sup> VILLON DE BENVENISTE G. (2015). From: The innovation & strategy blog : *Comprendre l'économie collaborative*

<sup>45</sup> CHANDES C. (2015). *Comment le capitalisme va croquer l'économie du partage*

## 2.3 The societal effects on French citizens

In the French paper « Le Figaro », two journalists declared that French people are more and more willing to invade the “sharing platforms” to “A journey from Paris to Arcachon by carsharing for 40 euros, three times cheaper than by train. Overnight homestay in a nice apartment in Rome at the unbeatable price of 50 euros. Or a typical lunch for 10 euros cooked by a beach neighbour”.<sup>46</sup> Thanks to their research, we can state that the sharing economy surely increased the concurrence in various domains and the next two subparts will be dedicated to understand whom are the people involved in the movement.

### 2.3.1 What is the concerned public?

We formerly defined what could be the motivations of citizens to take part in the collaborative system. From now on, to estimate the typical profile of the concerned public, we will summarize what appears in the recent study made by Fing and Ouishare (2015). Firstly, on the collaborative patterns of the French citizens, the main part of sharing economy multi players, whom used to access the different possibilities offered by the collaborative consumption, seems to be young people between 25 to 34 years old.<sup>47</sup> Besides, the study suggests that they usually provide both production and consumption. In comparison, the category of the people between 35 and 64 is more able to be provider (drive a car, rent apartments), than consumer.

Moreover, still in accordance with the same work, the typical profile of sharing economy users is rather urban than rural. The report also informs us that urban people are a way more represented in the multi players. Finally, concerning their socio-demographics characteristics, the classic profile tends to occupies intermediary to senior professions, nevertheless, the most present collaborative participants are situated in a range of revenues which is less than 2500 Euros.

However, this study has to be relativized because it had not been performed on a representative sample of the French population and cannot be presented as an absolute and scientific truth.

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<sup>46</sup> REFAN B. & RUFAUT L. (2013). From: “La Figaro” *Voiture, logement, services : le Net réinvente l'économie du partage*

<sup>47</sup> FING & OUISHARE. (2015). *L'Enquête « Je partage ! Et vous ? »*

### 2.3.2 The “prosumer” emerging trend

Merely quoted in the point 1.1.4, the notion of “prosumer” was born in 1980 with Alvin Toffler in his work named “The Third wave”. The author anticipated 30 years before (even when the web was not existing yet) what was going to happen in a considerable measure. To go further in the prosumer notion, he distinguished 4 types of prosumers,<sup>48</sup> explained in other words below.

Primarily, there is the “professional/consumer” who has enough expertise in a precise domain to legitimately claim for a corresponding professional offer. Then, the “producer/customer” steps in the architecture or the customization steps of their purchases. Thirdly, the “producing/customer” produces his own creations that may be destined to be sold. Lastly, the “proactive/consumer” is the most advanced type of prosumer. He is theoretically able to anticipate future problems related to consumers, businesses and market places as well as fixing the current complications in the three last matters.

The advent of the combination between production and consumption is no more a futurist idea nowadays. The phenomenon had been confirmed by J. Rifkin (2014) who states that “A growing legion of prosumers is producing and sharing information, not only knowledge, news and entertainment, but also renewable energy, 3D printed products and online college courses at near-zero marginal cost on the collaborative commons.”<sup>49</sup> According to the author, the prosumer has a different role and a different approach. In the word “prosumer” there is the “pro” of production and “sumer” of the consumers. The key idea is to find the good balance between being a producer and a consumer.

Finally, the section above thanks to the study of Fing and Ouishare is also confirming the changing faculties of the simple customers. As illustrated in the enquiry, the “prosumer” trend tends to be mainly conducted by people between 25 and 34 years old. Indeed, on the whole respondents whom ensuring that they were participating to at least 3 collaborative practices, 42%, were aged between 25 and 34. In addition, among those who claimed to participate in at least 4 collaborative practices, the percentage rises to 46%.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> TOFFLER A. (1980). *The Third Wave*

<sup>49</sup> RIFKIN J. (2014). From “The guardian”. *Capitalism is making way for the age of free*

<sup>50</sup> FING & OUISHARE. (2015). From: L’Enquête « Je partage ! Et vous ? »

## 2.4 The critics and the legal framework of the sharing economy

After seeing earlier some of the negative presages through the rapprochement with the capitalist model proclaimed by some authors in the developed from the side of traditional companies regarding the supposed unfair competition, we will finally go deeper, through these two last subparts, in the analysis of what are these critics and how the French government is trying to regulate the market.

### 2.4.1 Overview of the critics assimilated to the concept

C. Mouzon (2015), in an article from the French web magazine “Alternatives Economiques”, categorized two main blurred and quite closed subjects that have been elaborated from the sharing economy: The VAT and the taxes system for the companies on one hand and on the other hand concerning the taxes declaration for private individuals.<sup>51</sup> About the first theme, she made the comparison between the transport and accommodation sectors. The professionals of the latter sector need to pay corporate taxes, social security contributions, and collect VAT. Indeed, in France, the individuals whom rent their house from Airbnb or their service and car via Uber are subjected to another fiscal regime, including the use of Cheques for Universal Employment Services (CESU) or the statute of auto-entrepreneur with its own advantages that

Regarding the taxes declaration for private individuals, once again the lines are blurred as reported by the author. In France, the renting via Airbnb is legally considered exactly as a seasonal location which imposed to declare any rental period to the town council and to collect the tourist tax or resort fee. French regulations exist, but the flexibility of such a new way of consuming compromises the implementation of them all.

However, a non-exhaustive list of adjacent economic and societal discussions have been grafted around the two main problematical elements. One of the most debated is the discord around the employment. Legal or illegal? Taxable or not taxable? Creative destruction regarding employment? Questions that resulted in the early 2016 to a strike organised by taxi drivers from the Parisian area, which led to the withdrawal of UberPoP in the region of Paris. They were claiming that Uber was destroying employment with its practices which was for them legally subject to doubts. In an article published in “Vie Publique”, several new forms of

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<sup>51</sup> MOUZON C. (2015). From: “Alternatives Economiques”. *L'économie du partage, levier de la transition écologique ?*



employments appeared.<sup>52</sup> From the article’s perspective, the sharing economy is thus responsible of hybrid employment forms such as delivery salaried, employees through franchises or again temporary working contract. This hypothesis is confirmed by the figure below originated from an INSEE study, the French national statistics bureau, and extracted from an article of J-C. Simon (2015):<sup>53</sup>

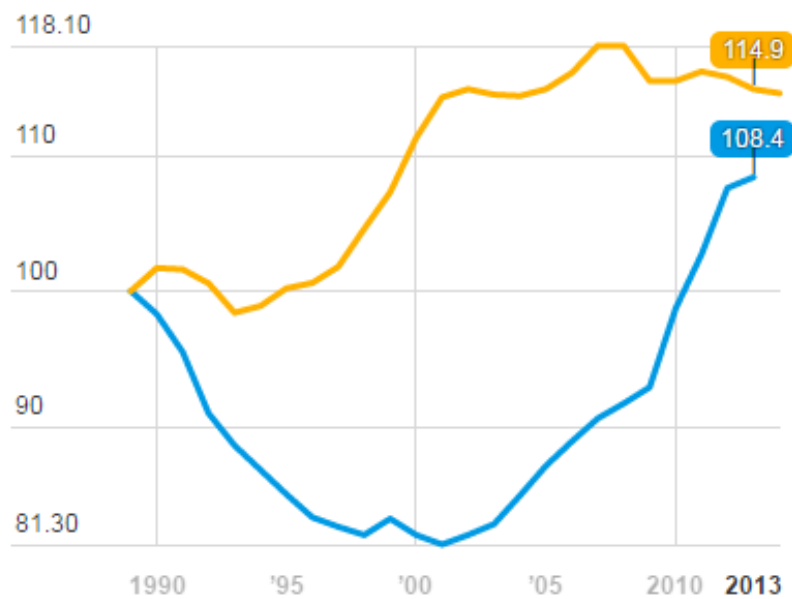


Figure n°3: Evolution of the merchant employees & non-employees in France  
Source: Jean-Charles Simon “Les mirages de l’économie du partage”

From a 100 index grade basis dating from 1989, excluding the agriculture, the author distinguished that the two opposite employment forms had adopted totally different evolutions through almost 25 years but that in 2013, the two indexes were quite close. Only 6.5 points separated them. Besides, we can also notice the huge increasing from the early 2000s of the non-employees evolution.

In addition to that, D. Demailly & A-S. Novel (2014) ensured that “the environmental impact is less obvious than it seems”.<sup>54</sup> Even though truly highlighted by early entrepreneurs of the sharing economy and more often by the proponents of this concept. Indeed, it is difficult

<sup>52</sup> From: “Vie Publique”. (2016). *L’économie collaborative, un nouveau modèle socio-économique*

<sup>53</sup> SIMON J-C. (2015). From: “La Tribune”. *Les mirages de l’économie du partage*

<sup>54</sup> DEMAILLY D. & NOVEL A-S. (2014). *Économie du partage : enjeux et opportunités pour la transition écologique*

to give a very general appreciation of the environmental effects regarding the number of various models, and for such varied goods and services. The ecological transition tool represented by the collaborative consumption is thus challenged by this hypothesis.

On another measure, the status of the worker is blurred with the sharing economy. We will take the example of Deliveroo. In an article written by J. Bonneau (2016)<sup>55</sup>, we observed that a self-employed status is required to work within the company as a cyclist-delivery man. Of course, this status is interesting for Deliveroo as they are not obliged to provide an insurance to its French workers. Besides, the self-employed persons are less subject to government taxes. But these two characteristics have also some bad propensities. Indeed, the workers, being not insured by the company, have to pay for themselves if they have a problem in the period of work. Moreover, Deliveroo is thus not taxed as other companies because actually they don't have employees for that, the self-employed persons facture them services of delivery.

Finally, another author is going a step further the two last ones also stating that the ecological transition tool is questioned. Actually, C. Mouzon (2014), speaks about the so-called rebound effect, in the same article already mentioned two pages before. She explained that consuming differently does not automatically means consuming less. By the banal example of “choosing to adopt car-sharing practices to save money for a flight to Indonesia”, she demonstrates where can be found the “rebound effect”, meaning that the first utility of car-sharing, which is in this example case saving money, aims to another motivation which is saving money in order to be able to pay for a flight.

On the side of traditional sectors of the economy, competition rules and taxation is needed to ensure equity between the various players and fight against social dumping. On the consumer side, the legislative regulation could render transparent the safety of consumers and assess their rights.

#### 2.4.2 French government law regulations' attempts

First of all, J. Gadrey (2013) proclaimed in an article from “Alternatives Economiques” the necessity of take on the responsibility for the transition by the consumers themselves which could be profitable to each protagonist of the economy, consumers, corporations and governments. The author insist of the role that has to be played by the citizens to step in the

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<sup>55</sup> BONNEAU J. (2016). From “20 Minutes”. *Ca gagne combien un livreur Deliveroo?*

financial and technological control.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, he is overbidding by criticizing J. Rifkin stating that the latter totally omitted to concentrate on the central financial point.

Hereafter are represented some of the major response elements that the French government in the latest years brought in the economic scenery. But first, F. Pinta (2016), expert in the corporates digital transformation gives us factual illustrations<sup>57</sup> of what are the problems related to the lack of proper regulations. For example, “an individual who sold technology assets on the net worth of 200 euros per month over a period of two years was regarded by the judges as a trader”. Because of the lack of threshold, in this case, we face with legal uncertainty and a problem of adaptation of global taxes that is redundant in the French legal system.

Concerning the transport sector, and especially the Uber disruption, “The Express” (2014), related that, in the same year, the Parliament finally adopted by a vote of the National Assembly, the proposed law on taxis and transportation of cars with drivers, proposed by the ex-Minister Thomas Thévenoud.<sup>58</sup> The text aims to resolve the conflict especially by including the prohibition for the car with drivers (Uber) to be identified by the customers directly from their smartphones.

Nonetheless, in agreement with an article from “Le Figaro” (2015), a report of the French Finance Committee of the Senate advocated that revenue resulting from the collaborative economy have to be “centralized and transmitted automatically to the tax authorities”<sup>59</sup>. Besides, it is also written that this law will takes place only for the revenues of more than 5000 Euros. Moreover, they also want to fight against the VAT issue (“European sites using more than 100 000 Euros in revenue in France are currently expected to register with the tax authorities and pay the French VAT. But very few do.”), the Senate likewise proposed to withhold it at the source to avoid any fraud. Nevertheless, these texts are up to now still under discussion and elaboration.

Basically, P. Terrasse (2016), produced so far the main work on the subject. He had been missioned to write a report by the Prime Minister E. Macron on the sharing economy which is still studied by the French Assembly & the Senate. The author came up with 19

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<sup>56</sup> GADREY J. (2013). From: “Alternatives Economiques”. *Jeremy Rifkin, le gourou du gotha européen*

<sup>57</sup> PINTA F.(2016). From: “Affiches Parisiennes”. *Le droit face au défi de l'économie collaborative*

<sup>58</sup> From: “The Express”. (2014). *Le Parlement a définitivement adopté la loi Thévenoud sur les taxis et les VTC*

<sup>59</sup> PLUYETTE C. (2015). From : “Le Figaro”. *Le Sénat propose de taxer les revenus de l'économie du partage*

principal ideas to regulate the market, organised in four main themes. Below, the objectives of these propositions will be summarised in other words below.<sup>60</sup>

The Platforms transparency: Protect competition and consumer free choice by requiring platforms to view the details of the price and the classification criteria. Check the notice asking the platforms to make price details and evaluation criteria clear. Note the platforms according to the loyalty of their offers, the operating practices of personal data, and the fiscal attitude of the platform. And finally inform clearly the responsibilities, rights and duties of consumers.

Work and working rights: Start the convergence of social protection of employees and independents by improving the self-employed social protection. In addition, the report proposes to take into account the activity on a collaborative platform as a validation of skills. The report also proposes that platforms providers have to clearly state their conditions for a possible consumers' exclusion linked to their rating. Finally, the platforms should engage in social and/or professional organisations as well as encouraging training actions as Heetch which organizes their own continuous and free training.

Platforms and users tax system: Ensure the contribution of platforms to the French public duties by curing the existing law outlined above. Clarify the doctrine of the tax administration on the distinction between income and cost sharing. Answer to the recruitment difficulties by developing "the great school of digital" which has just approved its first training. And lastly ask the platforms to automatize the process of social and fiscal procedures.

Sharing economy democratisation: As reported by P. Terrasse, the collaborative economy's incorporation in digital inclusion policies could and would help to integrate all the ages' strata of the French population. He likewise submitted to create an observatory to examine the phenomenon and to be able to anticipate the future that goes along with the promotion of collaborative experimental territories. Lastly, he outlined the necessity to promote and secure the telecommuting.

This report should have been included in the Macron law of 2015, the French Prime Minister, but the law project on digital innovation will not emerges anymore according to the latest daily information.

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<sup>60</sup> TERRASSE P. (2016). *Rapport sur l'économie collaborative*

This second theoretical part firstly lays the foundation of the differences and the similarities between the model of collaborative consumption and the classic dominant economic structure. We observed then deeply the whole consequences of such a phenomenon in the society, including the increase of non-employees workers. These changes provoked undoubtedly the reconsideration of the sharing economy's potentialities. The third part of this work will help us to illustrate & interpret the hypotheses that naturally appeared through the flow of researches and findings that have been previously expounded.

## Chapter 3: Study on the place and impacts of the sharing economy in France

### Methodology

The subject of this dissertation is focusing on one particular phenomenon which is the sharing economy, and its overall effects on the French economy and society. In order to be the most representative and relevant as possible, my study is mainly supported by a quantitative research targeting the French citizens and especially the sharing economy's participants.

The survey, named "The place of the collaborative economy in the economy and the French common opinion" is logically concentrated on the consumers which are at the heart of the sharing economy's model. They have various genders, ages and socio-professional categories. This was best way to obtain an overview of how French people were behaving concerning the collaborative consumption. The sample is however limited because of not being representative of the whole population. I administered the following questionnaire in an empirical sampling method (not probabilistic) for cost reasons and in order to make feasible this research. I also choose this method because I did not have a sampling frame.

The questionnaire itself contains 23 questions on the subject, spread over 3 sections, one generalist called "Introduction to the sharing economy" and two others named "supplier section" and "consumer section". Lastly, at the end of the survey, 3 socio-demographic questions had been posed to the respondents. Concerning the different types of questions, there is a mix of multiple choices, scaled and open ended questions to measure customer preferences, behaviours, facts and opinions, giving first a wide range of various facts to analyse and second an interesting and varied inquiry. The survey is also limited to 27 questions to make sure it is quite quick and easy to answer and to keep the respondents attracted all along the way of answering. Besides, this questionnaire is created through Google Forms, one of the easiest and clearest online platforms to create surveys Finally, I decided to launch the inquiry firstly via Facebook (young public regarding my age and the age of my friends, generally between 18 and 30). Secondly, I also choose to launch it on LinkedIn, where my network is older, not to only have the perspective of a public between 18 and 30years, which are mainly students, but also the point of view of relatives and professional contacts. This survey had been conducted from the 17th to the 24th of March 2014.

This work have generated 141 answers which is linked with a spreadsheet providing percentages and tendencies of respondents' behaviour in an Excel file. Within these 141 returns, 5 of them were invalid maybe due to misunderstandings regarding the “supplier” and “consumer” sections. The 5 inoperative respondents may have done the same mistake which is quoting “consumer” at the question 6 and answering to enquiries of the “supplier” section.

Lastly, I decided to build my analysis in three parts corresponding to each hypothesis, composed of both univariate and multivariate analysis of questions taken from each section of the survey. These hypotheses have been already announced in the introduction and will be briefly repeated below.

Ultimately, to complete my questionnaire full-bodied around the French citizens' behaviours, and to give a point of view more from the businesses side of the concept, I decided to conduct a semi-structured interview destined to a Tourism professional who is able to give me his thoughts from the inside. These open-ended questions will provide me more materials in order to investigate on my hypotheses which are interested to areas affected by the trend of collaborative consumption. Then, the interview will also informs us towards the actual and projected legislation imagined by the French government to promote coexistence of all economic actors, the individuals as well as the corporations.

#### Reminder of the hypotheses:

**Hypothesis 1:** The sharing economy, by using potential present interstices of the classic economy, partly changed the consumption practices of a particular population stratum by meeting society changing values.

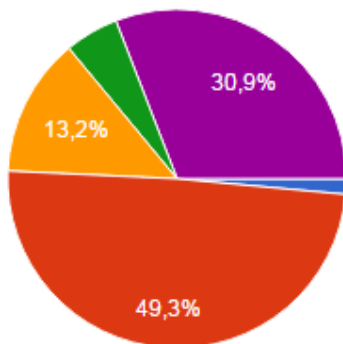
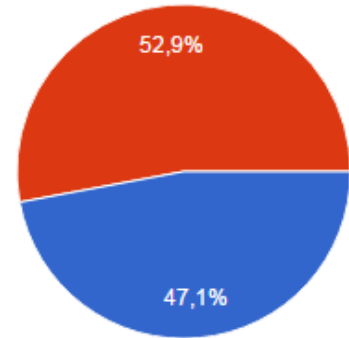
**Hypothesis 2:** The sharing economy is mainly affecting the services sector, with Tourism as spearhead of the movement, by convincing people to avoid most of the time the use of intermediates.

**Hypothesis 3:** The overall French social function which considerably evolved from simple customer to "prosumer", imposed to rethink the whole legal and fiscal framework.

## Socio-demographic characteristics

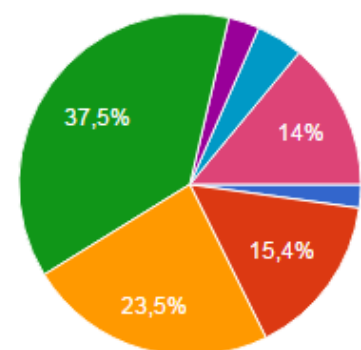
This short part below aims to determine whom the respondents of the survey are regarding their gender, age and current social situation:

Concerning the gender, the inquiry had been conducted by a larger part of women, than men. Indeed, 52,9% of the respondents are women, they were exactly 72. However, 47,1% of men answered to this study, they were 64.



Then, the age of the respondents directly depends on the platforms and means used to reach them. The inquiry had been conducted by a larger part of 20/25 people, they represent 49,3% of the whole with 67 persons. The people of more than 40 years are also well represented with 42 entities (30,9%). 18 of the remaining respondents are between 26 and 30(13,2%). Finally, 7 respondents (5,1%) are between 31 and 40, and 2 are between 12 and 19 (1,5%).

Lastly, the most current social situation, in this enquiry, is the student status, with 51 respondents (37,5%). The employees are also well represented with 32 entities (23,5%). Then, two social status turn around 15% which are the senior managers (21, with 15,4%) and the pensioners (14%). Finally, three current social situations are not that much represented: 6 of the respondents have intermediate professions (4,4%). 4 of them are workers (2,9%). Finally, 3 of them are artisans/merchants (2,2%).





## 3.1 The changing consumption has arrived

This first part of the analysis aims to investigate on the first hypothesis which affirmed that the sharing economy, by using potential present interstices of the classic economy, partly changed the way of consuming of a particular level of the population by meeting society changing values. In order to give response of answers to this hypothesis, we will deeply scan the questions number 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 17, 18 and 20.

### 3.1.1 The main facts

First of all, we can clearly determine with the two first answers that the sharing economy is not present everywhere and in each stratum of the population. Concerning the first question, 28, 7 % of the asked persons said that they were not aware of the new model (e.g. see Figure 4). However, the percentage decreased to 21, 3% of the respondents that are not involved in the collaborative consumption (e.g. see Figure 5). We could conclude that these numbers prove that the sharing economy is still not fully integrated to the French society.

Concerning the question 3, about how they participate to the collaborative consumption, the respondents are 68, 9% practicing carpooling or carsharing which is the most represented used service. The section which includes “bartering, buying or selling online material and/or immaterial assets” and the other which embraces “renting from material goods (Accommodation, Transport, DIY ...)” complete the podium with, in turns, obtained 62, 3% and 59, 4% of the suffrages, outperforming the particular services (24,5%) and the 17% of the Crowdfunding (e.g. see Figure 6).

To confirm the attraction for the collaborative consumption that people have, we can inspect the questions 8 and 17 which are focused on the satisfaction of the respondents. The question 8 stated that, from the side of collaborative consumption’s suppliers, 84, 5% of them would agree to the question: “Are you satisfied of this experience?” whose 57, 8% of them strongly agree to the latter (e.g. see Figure n°10). From the side of the consumers, the ratio decreased to 75, 9% with 41, 3% whom fully agree (e.g. see Figure n°19). If we mix it, respecting the numbers of respondents, the satisfaction rate is of 78, 5%. This amount shows briefly that the success of the sharing economy may not be universally acclaimed even if the rate, nearby 80%, also proved the success of the model evidenced by a major part of the users.

### 3.1.2 The trend advocated by a young audience

According to this study, the actors of the sharing economy tend to be quite young. In fact, 59 of the respondents whom said that they are involved in the collaborative consumption have 25 or less than 25 years old, which represents 55, 1% of the all respondents. And in this study, this is not the only correlation which proves that the young public is more aware and concerned by this huge economic movement.

To go further in the analysis regarding the age of the respondents, to determine the concerned echelons, we can see that not everybody is aware of the term “sharing economy”. 39 of the respondents are not familiar with the wording. Surprisingly, the 20/25 are well represented in numbers, 19 of them, which represent 28, 4% of them. In comparison, the +40 are the most represented because 15 of them said that they are not aware of it which represents 35, 7% of the whole group of respondents whom have more than 40. Besides, regarding the second question, almost 52% of the respondents whom said no to this second question have more than 40 years old. Then, the upper age level could be considered as the less involved in the movement. However, 9 people of more than 40 years old whom answered no to the 1<sup>st</sup> question said in the second one that they take part in the collaborative consumption (60%). Finally, we can also consider that some of them are just not aware of the wording even if they are involved in.

Besides, to reinforce the idea that the young users are more involved in the sharing process, we can put in relation the age of the respondents with the third question, asking in which ways the users take part in the collaborative consumption.

Lastly, the study of the social status of the users related with these first questions gives a proof that the involvement of each stratum of the population could be also due to the social position of them. In point of fact, we can remark in the second asked question that the senior managers and the pensioners represent together more than 68% of the users not implicated in the collaborative consumption. Finally, in the analysis of the question 3, we noticed that on the 46 respondents whom stated that they were embroiled in 3 or more collaborative practices, 25, thus 55% of the whole have 25 or less. Moreover, in this whole, the 26/30 represent 28%, which let few space (assuming that in this section there is no one of less than 20 years old) to the people whom have more than 40 (17%).

### 3.1.3 A movement supposed to unify people through current values

This last part of the first section is concentrated on the reasons and the motivations why people are more and more enmeshed with the collaborative consumption. The questions 4, 9 and 18 will help us to determine what the context is, from the opinion of the respondents whom tend to be participating to the sharing economy. Firstly, the question 4 distinctly outlined the motivations of the collaborative consumers. Indeed, on the 107 respondents whom partake in the sharing economy, 91 of them (85%) claimed that the financial aspect was one of their main factors to change their ways of consuming (e.g. see Figure n°7). The podium is completed by the practicality (54, 2%) and the comeback to human, sharing values with 52, 3%. Last but not least, the sustainability/environmental protection factor is claimed by “only” 37, 4% of the respondents which reinforces the hypothesis that the economic context is more taken into account than the quite urgent environmental context.

Furthermore, the high-satisfaction rate seen previously is corroborated by the open-ended questions 9 and 18. These latter have a poor percentage of answers, respectively 15 and 21 of people expressing the issues they had with some collaborative practices. Besides, 17 of them expressed real issues they faced. On this particular point, the sample is way too short to analyse and thus externalise on precise statements.

Finally, the 20<sup>th</sup> question comes to reinforce the inequalities at the heart of the sharing economy. Indeed, for the respondents, the place of Internet tends to be crucial. In numbers, 87, 5% of them said that the Internet platforms were important for them to access to the collaborative consumption. Moreover, 55, 8% of these people said that it is extremely important for them (e.g. see Figure n°21).

To summarise, this study helped us in this first part, to understand that factually, the consumption is changing. However this generality is contrasted because each part of the population is not fully concerned by the movement. According to the study, the people whom have more than 40 are less involved than the Youngers, thus we could state that the most aged part of the French population could be considered as neglected by this well-connected model (Carroll & Romano, p.14). The technological asset of the sharing economy is completely disrupting the old and classic way of doing business of traditional companies. These new companies took the opportunity at the right moment to innovate, supported by the Internet canal that was, today at least, under exploited.

These results are additionally joining what Fing & Ouishare advanced in their inquiry (p.30), which proved that the sharing economy had raised and is growing mainly thanks to a young receptive audience. The fact that they live in a difficult context (J. Owyang, p.13) is forcing them to find answers for their own future and we observed that saving money is one of their credo, theory advanced in an article of “The economist” in 2013 (p.15). Besides, 1 out of 2 respondents take into account the societal and environmental factors predicted by Hardin (p.16) in the “Tragedy of Commons”. Lastly, this study confirmed us the overall contentment of the consumers and the providers of collaborative practices, above the sharing economy banner, proved by the high level of satisfaction (80%).

## 3.2 From the businesses' point of view

This second part of the analysis aims to examine thoroughly the potential of the second hypothesis which attested that the sharing economy is mainly affecting the services sector, with Tourism as spearhead of the movement, by convincing people to avoid most of the time the use of intermediates. Consequently, to obtain response of answers to this hypothesis, we will go through the questions number 7, 14, 15, 16, 19 and 21.

### 3.2.1. The sectors privileged by the partakers

First of all, the questions 7 and 16 help us to understand what are the preferred services proposed on one hand by the suppliers and on the other hand the favoured services of the consumers. The early main observation is interesting. When we cross the answers of the 2 questions, we realise that 3 services are predominant according to the answers we get. Indeed, the ranking of the suppliers' most proposed services is as follows: 1: Carsharing (42, 2%); 2: Through bartering, buying or selling online material and/or immaterial assets (31, 1%); 3: Renting from material goods (Accommodation, Transport, DIY ...) with 20% of the respondents (e.g. see Figure n°10).

In comparison, from the consumers' point of view, the carsharing is still first with 46 suffrages (44, 2%). Furthermore the podium is completed by the same elements of the suppliers' answers. The only differentiation is that they are inversed. In fact, "Renting from material goods" come to the second place with 32, 7%. And "Bartering, buying or selling online assets" is third with 15, 4% (e.g. see Figure n°18). We finally observed that in each of the 2 questions, the other possible choice of answers, even mixed, represent less than 8%.

Likewise, the question 15 comes to fortify the significant influence on accommodation's changing trends which impact the whole Tourism industry. Actually, 58 respondents on 102 answerers said that they passed through homestays, like Airbnb (50%) and via Couchsurfing (6, 9%). Especially, couchsurfing could be considered as the ancestor of Airbnb, which gave a proper framework to the vacation rentals, online. These two practices emerged from the sharing economy context and particularly in the Tourism field. However, the answers have to be attenuated because they also show that a large part of the population is still using the "old" canals to book their vacation accommodation. Actually, they represent 43, 1% of the respondents (e.g. see Figure n°17). As a wink to our first hypothesis, on the 58 whom have passed through collaborative practices, 30 have less than 25 years old. (51, 7%).

### 3.2.2 The disintermediation is set off

The expertise and the main advice role of intermediates as travel agents for example are thus questioned. In this section, questions 14, 19 and 21 will assist this hypothesis. First of all, the 21<sup>st</sup> question is asking if the users give importance to the evaluations that are set by previous users on platforms as Airbnb or Blablacar. Indeed, 69 respondents on 86 said that they do care about these evaluations, grading (80, 2%). The main reasons were: 1. Have an idea/opinion of the user/renter/driver (38, 3%); 2. Avoid bad surprises/scams (17, 4%); 3. For a question of security, confidence or quality (17, 4%). Besides, few answers were contradictory but it's representing less than 5% of the whole. Some stated that these evaluations were trustful and others said that they do check the evaluations but being careful and trying to delete fakes. The major part of the answers are a great proof that this evaluation-based system could be declined as an alternate of the service and expertise of the intermediates.

In the same way, at the question “Would you be willing to repeat the experience?”, both suppliers and consumers showed their agreed approbation. The most pertinent number is on the side of consumers whose 96, 2% of them would repeat their experience (e.g. see Figure n°20). We could conclude that they were mostly satisfied with what they have for what they have paid, a proof of well-functioning even without professional intermediates.

To sum up, the analysis of these 3 first questions is reinforcing the fact that generally, the services represent the most land of actions of suppliers and consumers of the sharing economy, leaded by two sectors: the tourism in general and the transportation, as quoted by an article of “Tourmag”(p.28). Lastly, we cannot get side-lined regarding the backward step concerning the old trend of bartering which affirm more and more its central place in the sharing practices.

At the end, we notice that, generally, users would not need the intermediates anymore if they are willing to give their confidence to other individuals. They may ask themselves in the extreme cases this question: “Is it fair to pay more for almost the same service?” We could ensure, regarding this study, that sharing economy platforms is succeeding bringing people in constant relation through a peer-to-peer model and generating mutual confidence. The revolution of disintermediation, brought by collaborative consumption is on the right path (Botsman, p.11). Obviously, the businesses considered as intermediates are directly attacked and they are forced consequently to rethink their strategic operations.

### 3.3 The resulting consequences on the legal framework

This third and last part of this study analysis will concentrate our researches on the third hypothesis which stated that the overall French social function which considerably evolved from simple customer to "prosumer", imposed to rethink the whole legal and fiscal framework. In order to confirm or not our last hypothesis, we will deeply examine the questions number 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 22 and 23.

#### 3.3.1 Spurred on the rising prosumer tendency

In order to evaluate and confirm or discredit the "prosumer" accession by the French population, we will concentrate the following reflexion on the part of the respondents whom consider themselves as suppliers and consumers, involved in the collaborative consumption. First of all, we observed in the 5<sup>th</sup> question the predominance of being consumer rather than supplier in each practice (e.g. see Figure n°8). The most blatant example concerns the "Renting from material goods" where the consumers represent 62 persons comparing to only 13 suppliers. This trend is confirmed in the question 6. 57, 9% of the whole said they only are consumers (e.g. see Figure n°8). Nonetheless, we can also clearly notice the raise of "prosumers". Indeed, on 107 answers, 41 assured that they are in the act of supplying as well as consuming (38, 3%).

Having analysed the consumer section above, we can now have a look on the supply side which is the second key parameter of the term "prosumer". The supplier's section concerns 45 respondents. 4 of them said that they considered themselves only as suppliers. This first observation demonstrates that there is still a huge gap for French citizens to fully become kind of a "professional" actor of the sharing economy. On the whole respondents, even the ones whom does not take part in the collaborative consumption, 30, 1% are "prosumers", which means more or less one third of the totality.

Firstly, the 10<sup>th</sup> question regarding the income for the suppliers is quite disparate. 50% of the answerers said their revenue related to collaborative practices was between 0 and 50 € per month. The other 50% are separated in 4 major categories (e.g. see Figure n°12): 18, 2% said they get between 50 and 130 €; 11, 4% between 130 and 250 €; 9, 1% more than 500 €; 6, 8% between 250 and 500 €, (and 4, 5% for others). We may conclude that even if the majority is earning between 0 and 50 €, some others can have a consequent income at the end of the month. To go further, if we cross some results with the question 6, we realize surprisingly that

the 9, 1% of the respondents whom said they earn more than 500€ per month are not only suppliers, they are all “prosumers”. Even if the sample is quite small, we can surely state that it is not a requirement to be only a supplier to make more than 500 euros a month. However, the question 12<sup>th</sup> teaches us that most of the respondents don’t think they can live only with these revenues. Only 15, 5% of them ensures that it is possible, however the majority, 73, 3%, think it is impossible (e.g. see Figure n° 14). Lastly, 11, 1% does not have opinion on this particular question.

Whence the question 11<sup>th</sup> which asked them if they would agree to report these incomes to the French government. Only 17, 8% of the suppliers’ section answerers that they agree to declare these revenues, but 75% of them earn less than 130 euros in a month. However, we cannot make a general statement saying that the ones whom earn less are more willing to declare their revenues because inside the 66, 7% whom said No to declare their revenues (e.g. see Figure n°13), 80% earn less than 130 €. Finally, 15, 6% of the whole does not pronounce on this question. Moreover, thanks to the question 13<sup>th</sup>, a last topic comes to our mind. Is French collaborative suppliers’ consider themselves as employees under the yoke of businesses or associations? The general opinion tends to answers No (82, 2%).

### 3.3.2 The Sharing economy’s necessary legal new order

The subtlety of the sharing economy is in how to consume. We saw previously in the theoretical part some of the critics of collaborative consumption, notably with the status of self-entrepreneur used by many companies sharing, p. 34. The next questions 22 and 23 are articulated around the collaborative consumption and the capacity to live from the resulting savings from the customers’ side.

Indeed, we observed in the question 22 that half of the respondents are aware that their new collaborative practices do not reduce their overall consumption (51%). However, 7, 7% do not have an opinion on the subject and the rest (41, 3%) of the respondents think they consume less (e.g. see Figure n°22). This shows once again how blurred the contours of the sharing economy are. Even the users themselves do not agree on one answer to the question: “Do you think that you consume less with collaborative practices?” Moreover, the question 23 is bringing to light the economies that consumers could do with this type of consumption (even it can be hard for them to precisely assess them). The savings they are making are quite poor for most of them as identified in the study: 40, 2% of them saved between 0 and 30 €; 35, 3%



between 30 and 80 €; and 14, 7% between 80 and 150 € (e.g. see Figure n°23). Thus, 75, 5% of the respondents evaluated their savings at less than 80 euros per month. A clear regulation could also permit the consumers to clearly identify what they can win from the collaborative consumption, which is currently missing. This analysis based on the two last questions asked to the respondents is reinforcing the idea that a clear legal and legal framework is essential for a proper and fair functioning as well as the sustainability of such a model. Prosumer status needs to be clarified and businesses & consumers must be able to evolve in a safe and legal environment.

As a brief overview of this last point, we could conclude that even with the rise of “prosumers”, it is generally hard to live only with these revenues are savings that are not always clearly identified. We can additionally say that in the mind of the respondents, we may think that collaborative practices are still seen as undeclared casual work that does not need to be declared to the government. This subject stays taboo in France and that is why a clear legal framework would be welcomed in order to fix rules that will be interesting and convenient for the consumers as well as the government.

Lastly, the government will have to anticipate the difficulty to change the mores of French population whom could be reluctant regarding a move from an undeclared casual work to a legal and declared work. For most of them, these practices are still an “extra” which could increase noticeably their purchasing power.

### 3.4 Tourism professional interview

As Tourism is the most affected sector by the sharing economy (“Think with Google”, p.28) I thought it could be great to have the opinion of a Tourism professional to reinforce the relevance of this thesis and to analyse a business’ point of view which is facing the economic context every day. Anne Turcaud gave me the chance to ask her my questions through a semi-structured interview which had been made in French and directly translated in English by myself. We will analyse the words and opinions of Mrs Turcaud expressed in the whole interview transcribed in the Annex 4.

Through the 8 questions asked to Mrs Turcaud, we obtained a great overview of the challenge for travel agencies to face the sharing competition in a Tourism environment. I understood and noticed few different things that will be develop below respecting the structure of the questions:

**Did you really feel that the "sharing economy" effect from your companies’ point of view? Can you give some concrete examples?**

Yes there is an impact on the Tourism industry, the interviewee said that she is seeing it mainly thanks to her friends and clients, and not especially in the company’s numbers. She gave the example of a friend who had been scam in Amsterdam. Besides, she outlined the general trend of shorter holidays for clients and less grouped travels. According to her, clients want more privacy, from the accommodation to private guiding in cities.

**What is your added value? The reason why your clients go through you for their holidays that are not found in "sharing economy" business-type?**

Secondly, she expressed the added value of such companies as hers. She separated it in 3 groups: The professional expertise (advises through identification of needs and wants); The customer service (short procedures, people are sure to have someone in the other side of the telephone); and The responsibility (insurance). In her words, she think that sharing economy’s businesses cannot provide such advantages as well as her company does. She took the example of the Icelandic volcano where 3 of her clients were involved and were by chance insured by her company.

**Is your customer base sensitive to the new ways of travelling that this economic model brought? From your point of view, are they truly economical?**

People are aware of the new ways of traveling, of course, at each age. The role of her agency is to make your customers think they will have the guarantee that they don't have passing by Airbnb for example. "For our customers, as this way of travel is fashionable, they start to ask for it and sometimes go to it without our analysis... without comparing and without knowing exactly what can be found..." Computer reservations systems or Global Distribution Systems (GDS) are brought by CEDIV Travel, a Travel Agent Network to face the competition. She is insisting on the economical motivations which for her are at the base of the pyramid. Nonetheless, she starts at the end of this question arguing for a fair legal framework.

**Do you think Tourism is the main affected area? Why?**

She thinks that Tourism is the main affected area. "Formerly travelling was exceptional, dangerous, and expensive", now people are used to travel, always searching for small prices in every destination. Cutting the costs is the key. This democratisation of the "trip" and the cultural mix of societies helped for her the sharing economy to develop itself in the Tourism industry.

**How do you evaluate the government reaction/implication to regulate the French market economy?**

She thinks that the fact that French presidential elections are impacting the way how the government deals with the sharing economy, scaring to become unpopular. She highlighted the reluctant example of Uber which made a lot of noise in France. She said that the minimum had been made to permit, at least, the cohabitation between professional taxis and Uber. She insisted on the fact that the government should take example on other European countries to be the most credible as possible in a European view (she took the example of the interdiction of Airbnb by the mayor of Berlin).

**Do you have in mind measures and legal modifications brought by the government in the recent years, which directly impacted your business?**

She regrets the lack of regulation especially in the Tourism sector. She said that indirectly, they are in competition with individuals whom rent their houses, transportation or meals without the same government implications and taxes. And this is unfair.

**Have you or will you change the way you work or communicate as a consequence of the rise of collaborative consumption, to stay competitive?**

Yes, thanks to her travel agent network (CEDIV Travel). Notably with a future agreement with Bedycasa for example. Concerning the communication, she insisted on the fact that they have to maintain their high expertise level and the fact that the company comes from a local, family background.

**Do you think that the “sharing economy” context will conduct to a global disintermediation that could make the intermediates fully disappear?**

Referred to Mrs Turcaud’s words, people always need to be reassured and they will be able to feel guaranteed passing by a professional agency. She gave another example of a friend who made the wrong decision, acting hastily. For her, people will always want the professionalism and councils of well-advised persons. That’s why she thinks the disintermediation cannot be total. She remembers us that low-cost companies at the beginning did not care about travel agencies and now they are working closely with them. However, she stated that agencies as hers will have to adapt to the current market to stay competitive and stay in the run. She counts on the travel agency networks to help them to take the right bend.

Generally, we understood that things are changing slowly in the Tourism sector thanks to partnerships between travel networks (CEDIV) and collaborative businesses (Bedycasa). Nonetheless it is just the beginning and sharing companies may not see directly the interest for them regarding such collaborations. The interviewee think that it can take the same way as the one of low cost companies ten years ago. These companies had disregard the travel agencies and nowadays they have special branches of their companies dedicated to travel agencies. The interest for them is to lock onto a new clientele supported and faithful to these travel agencies. One solution could be to go through a plant that offers housing via private homes but which has tested, approved and which ensures quality follow-up.

Furthermore, a probable rapprochement could be due to another reason, the fact that travellers need to be reassured and through the examples gave by Mrs Turcaud, we notice that most there will be scams or malfunctions of the model, the most people may prefer passing by travel agencies represented by professionals. The services that these latter can give will always convince part of the population. Lastly, these are the reasons why she thinks that her kind of intermediate businesses would stay unavoidable.

## Conclusion

Following the three chapters developed previously, we are henceforth able to give an objective view regarding the sharing economy and evaluate the three hypotheses that have been suggested at the beginning of this paper.

**Hypothesis 1:** The sharing economy, by using potential present interstices of the classic economy, partly changed the way of consuming of a particular stratum of the population by meeting society changing values.

Collaborative consumption means sharing, solidarity and practicality for all of its users. The core of the system is to make the life easier for consumers as well as providing them quality products and services. In an ideal world, this sharing economy would help the whole world to reduce its ecological and environmental impact as well as giving more purchasing power to its citizens. In its implementation, the collaborative consumption businesses exploited ways that the “classic” economy was not using or was not using all of its potential. The biggest sharing companies only transposed what was existing before on a citizen level, easily accessible through cleverly built Internet platforms. The base of the concept is to make people profit about underused assets of individuals through a peer-to-peer exchange on these platforms which represents the potential of the Internet underused by classic businesses.

However, as proved previously, the utopic vision of the sharing economy is contrasted by some factors. Indeed, the first and the bigger one is that the movement does not concern all the individuals. In France and anywhere else. The main reason of that is coming from the foundations of the sharing model itself which is linking citizens, whether they are consumers and/or suppliers: The Internet platforms. We noticed through the questionnaire that the oldest part of the French citizens could be considered as a bit forsaken due to their difficulties to take part in the new technological features that are crucial to access to certain collaborative practices. Lastly, other factors could explain why some stratum of the French population are not fully involved in the sharing economy. Indeed, the place of living (urban or rural) and the revenue are two of them, nonetheless, they are more difficult to clearly assess depending on the various current values and aspirations of the people concerned. There is one recommendation that could be made for sharing businesses’ because the rural, non-connected and older people represent a great part of the population and they should not be ignored. There is one great example of a sharing organisation, in France, which tends to spread its influence everywhere for everyone,

even in the most remoted areas: *La Ruche qui dit oui*. (Translation: The beehive who says yes) The aim is to regroup the products of local agriculture producers in a centre, where people can come to pick up the products they will have chosen previously online. The French-based organisation had open more than 700 hundreds “beehives” in Europe whose 600 are in France.

**Hypothesis 2:** The sharing economy is mainly affecting the services sector, with Tourism as spearhead of the movement, by convincing people to avoid most of the time the use of intermediates.

Regarding the theoretical part, we understood that the services sectors are the most directly affected sectors, such as transportation with Uber, Blablacar and Tourism with Airbnb and Couchsurfing. However, thanks to Rachel Botsman, we remarked that other industries could also be impacted, although in an indirect way. This would be caused by the new trend that discredits the fact of being owner completed by the economic context in which it is increasingly difficult to access to ownership. Indeed, supported by the study, both consumers and suppliers said that their most used practice was carsharing. Then, the rental of material assets as accommodation for example came right after the last transportation new practice which proved once again by numbers the theories advances previously.

Secondly, the interview of Mrs Turcaud helped us to walk into the Tourism industry where strategies of travel agencies are actually being rethought in order to stay competitive in front of new young actors of this constant growing market. The principal “issue” that intermediates as travel agencies inter alia have to face is the so-called disintermediation which is disrupting the services area. People, by being involved in the collaborative consumption are more and more reducing the supply chain process. The concerned actors tend to preconize the direct contact with local producers or individuals whom, in their opinion, propose an identic offer compared businesses like intermediates. Thus, the central challenge of services’ intermediates is to make thinking and prove that their professionalism, network, and knowledge will always be helpful to book holidays for example. Indeed, thanks to the obvious misconceptions of online platforms, there is no risk 0 for being scammed online and the lack of guarantee is playing in favour of classical businesses. We are here speaking about the online evaluation systems which, on one hand contribute to the success of the collaborative consumption for more transparency but on the other part are not reliable at 100% because of the ability for anyone to write fake comments including announcers.

Lastly, the interviewee also told us about few friends' and clients' bad experiences with sharing practices which prove that the model is certainly destabilising the economic system in place but that "old" companies are still preferred in a certain extent by some citizens for their professionalism and the guarantee that they bring. There is a part of recommendations that we could express for such intermediates in the Tourism sector but also in the whole services area. Those intermediates should take into consideration what the sharing economy can bring them in terms of a new proper strategy that would unify around them people whom want changes. People whom want to believe in a new economic system, based on individuals, for individuals. They do not want to still be considered as a simple client, a customer who only consumes a product or a service at the end.

Finally, concerning the disintermediation, in my opinion, the phenomenon has to be relativized regarding the attachment of a certain stratum of people to intermediates in order to facilitate them the work. Moreover, I think that there will always exist people who prefers to pay something more to have the guarantee of the services. After all, agencies could be dedicated to control the reliability of individual's offers and they could work closely with the existing intermediates. This possibility advanced and envisaged by Mrs Turcaud could be an interesting option to use all the potential of the sharing economy mixed with the knowledge and professionalism of some intermediates.

**Hypothesis 3:** The overall French social function which considerably evolved from simple customer to "prosumer", imposed to rethink the whole legal and fiscal framework.

We saw through the theoretical part that more and more, people are feeling that they can be both consumers and producers of their country's economy. Alvin Toffler predicted this huge societal movement more than thirty years ago. Citizens had partly taken the power. As a concrete proof, we noticed in the study that 38, 3% of the respondents claimed they are prosumers. They have the choice to decide about how they consume and who they can be. Only consumers, producers or both.

Driven by the challenging economic environment, French citizens seem to have monopolized this innovative business model that matches new aspirations, supposed to be more conscientious towards humans and the environment. High hopes had been placed in this new economic model.

Nonetheless, certain deviations and model malfunctions forced the French authorities to seriously walk into the subject, and in particular on the status of worker which thereby evolved too. The status of non-employees, in various forms, exploded, as shown in Figure 3 p.33. It has become increasingly used by collaborative companies as Deliveroo which for example are charging “its” auto entrepreneurs for the services made.

Furthermore, from the companies’ point of view, the legal and tax system was different, sometimes for companies whom were proposing the same service. Indeed, in France, Uber had been targeted by the French government caused by the taxi drivers whom claimed the unfair competition they were suffering.

The function of the French citizens has to correspond to the current legal framework in order to protect both companies and individuals from illegal, devious and unfair practices. This is actually one of the main subject of discord in France and we saw in the second theoretical part that the French government is trying, by proposing new amendments to lays proper frontiers to collaborative consumption practices. Lastly, other reports should follow in the continuity of the “Rapport Terrasse”.

Thanks to this research, we could basically perceive how sharing economy had evolved in France and the place it has taken in the French citizens’ daily life. This model appeared right in the era of time and seduced a great part of the population. However, we could ask ourselves if first the implementation of the sharing economy itself could fully contradict the high hopes placed by the citizens in this new economic model? And then if this disenchantment could finally leads to the disinterestedness of the main actors of the movement: the consumers?

It is difficult to predict if the biggest sharing businesses can be seriously put in competition with other emerging companies or organisations which would respect perfectly the values primarily conveyed by such a model. At the end, we can also consider that these “sharing mastodons” could have in a certain extent stolen the collaborative economy to the citizens. Moreover, these major groups gave ideas to others, using the sharing economy as a facade to keep the profitability increasing, hallmark of the classical and capitalistic model.

The big sharing groups once surfed on the collaborative wave to impose a significantly different system in terms of implementation. However, some of them keep the basics of the classical economic system expected to be rejected, to install their monopoly. All of this is



contradictory. And when we have a look on the weight of these giants nowadays in France, we realize that we are very far from the economy's basic values of sharing and we might wonder if it is just a marketing pretext.

In parallel, some other websites proclaiming themselves as "free" or promising not to punctuate commissions on money exchanges. The first (among a dozen others) is called *covoiturage-libre.fr*. The slogan holds our attention: "carpooling, a common good". After the creation of an account, by doing some research on specific rides (notably Nantes - Paris, only two results appear, and at a later date ...). We quickly realized that the number of users and therefore the rides' potential is very low. In comparison, on *BlaBlaCar.fr*, 126 announces are available for the exact date I asked.

So should we conclude that it is impossible now to compete with these giants as *Blablacar*? What is certain is that they have the advantage of being the first which appeared on a new segment and as any great brand, they are present in the French landscape whatever their chosen field. The aim of this demonstration is not just to prove that *BlaBlaCar* is part of the great villains of the collaborative consumption among others as *Airbnb* and *Uber*. To resume, this is a basic capitalist start-up, with a successful and clever business model, in terms of profitability.

The dissertation faced several limitations as first of all the sample used for the survey which cannot be considered as a convenience sample of the French population. Another limitation was the relatively poor level of information gathered, linked to the recent chosen subject, which had been a few theorized. The last limitation found related to the thesis is the future uncertainty that somehow restricted the range of exploration.

To conclude, the future of the sharing economy is stippled and the legal framework that the French government will have to impose is the main answer to the destiny of this economic model. As soon as the major texts will have emerged, it would also be relevant to assess the consequences of such modifications, starting by the so-called "Rapport Terrasse", analysed in this paper which will directly impacts the companies' and individuals' practices and rights.

## Annexes summary

Annex 1: Questionnaire in French

Annex 2: Questionnaire translated in English & answers' transcript

Annex 3: Interview's transcript

Annex 4: Index of tables and figures

# La place de l'économie collaborative dans l'économie et l'opinion commune française

Bonjour à tous!

Ce questionnaire vise à déterminer la place de l'économie collaborative dans le paysage économique et social français, du point de vue des citoyens, que vous soyez fournisseurs et/ou consommateurs.

Le questionnaire est entièrement anonyme et prendra entre 5 et 10 minutes à remplir. Merci d'avance pour votre aide précieuse !

Clément R.

P.S.: Les questions qui utilisent une échelle linéaire fonctionnent selon le barème suivant:

- 1: Tout à fait d'accord
- 2: Plutôt d'accord
- 3: Sans opinion
- 4: Plutôt en désaccord
- 5: Tout à fait en désaccord

## Introduction à l'économie collaborative

1- Les termes d'économie collaborative ou économie du partage vous sont-ils familiers? \*

- Oui
- Non

**L'économie collaborative englobe, selon A. Léonard " covoiturage, logement chez l'habitant, circuits courts, éducation en ligne, financement participatif".**

Ces modèles sont utilisés par AirBnB, Blablacar, Uber, MyMajorCompany, Le Bon Coin, Deliveroo ou encore Washio pour les plus connus en France

2- Estimez-vous prendre part à l'économie collaborative? \*

- Oui
- Non / Merci de vous diriger vers la question n°24

3- De manière générale, comment contribuez-vous à l'économie collaborative?

- Via le covoiturage
- Via le troc, l'achat ou la vente en ligne de biens matériels et/ou immatériels
- Via la location à partir de bien matériels (Hébergement, Transport, Bricolage,...)
- En faisant appel ou en proposant des services particuliers (repas à domicile, pressing, chauffeur, cours en ligne,...)
- Financement participatif
- Autre : \_\_\_\_\_

4- Quelles sont les raisons qui vous ont poussé à adopter ce modèle pour certains de vos choix de consommation?

- Le côté financier
- L'aspect développement durable / sauvegarde de l'environnement
- Le retour aux valeurs humaines, de partage
- Le côté pratique
- Autre : \_\_\_\_\_

5- Pour les pratiques collaboratives ci-dessous qui vous concernent, merci d'indiquer ci-si vous êtes plutôt fournisseur ou plutôt consommateur.

	Fournisseur	Consommateur
Covoiturage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Troc ou vente de biens en ligne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Services particuliers (repas à domicile, pressing, chauffeur, cours en ligne,...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financement participatif	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Location à partir de bien matériels (Hébergement, Transport, Bricolage,...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6- Vous considérez-vous plutôt comme fournisseur ou consommateur?

- Fournisseur
- Consommateur
- Les deux

## Section Fournisseur

### IMPORTANT

Si vous avez coché la case "Consommateur" à la question n°5, merci de vous rediriger vers la "Section Consommateur" en cliquant sur "Suivant" en bas de cette page.

Si vous avez coché la case "Les deux", merci de bien vouloir remplir la "Section Fournisseur" ainsi que la "Section Consommateur" qui suit.

Si vous avez coché la case "Fournisseur" à la question n°5, merci de remplir cette section.

7- Laquelle de ces pratiques collaboratives ci-dessous avez-vous le plus proposé?

- Location à partir de biens matériels (Hébergement, Transport, Bricolage,...)
- Covoiturage
- Troc ou vente de biens en ligne
- Services particuliers (repas à domicile, pressing, chauffeur, cours en ligne,...)
- Financement participatif
- Autre : \_\_\_\_\_

8- Etes-vous globalement satisfait de cette expérience en tant que prestataire?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Tout à fait d'accord	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Tout à fait en désaccord

9- Avez-vous rencontré un ou plusieurs problèmes suite à cette expérience? Si Oui, quel type de problème(s)?

Votre réponse

---

10- A titre indicatif, à combien s'évaluent vos revenus mensuels liés à l'ensemble de vos pratiques collaboratives?

- Entre 0 et 50€
- Entre 50 et 130€
- Entre 130 et 250€
- Entre 250 et 500€
- Plus de 500€
- Autre : \_\_\_\_\_

11- Etes-vous enclin à déclarer ces revenus à l'Etat Français?

- Oui
- Non
- Ne se prononce pas

12- Estimez-vous pouvoir vivre de vos revenus liés à l'économie collaborative?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Tout à fait d'accord	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Tout à fait en désaccord

13- Vous considérez-vous comme employé par les entreprises et/ou associations par lesquels vous proposez vos services et/ou produits?

- Oui
- Non
- Ne se prononce pas

14- Seriez-vous prêt à réitérer l'expérience?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Tout à fait d'accord	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Tout à fait en désaccord

## Section Consommateur

15- A titre indicatif, quel était le type de logement que vous avez utilisé pour vos dernières vacances/dernier weekend?

- Hôtels, Augerbes ou Résidences de vacances
- Logement chez l'habitant rémunéré (AirBnB entre autres)
- Couchsurfing

16- A quel service ci-dessous faites vous le plus appel?

- Location à partir de biens matériels (Hébergement, Transport, Bricolage,...)
- Covoiturage
- Troc ou vente de biens en ligne
- Services particuliers (repas à domicile, pressing, chauffeur, cours en ligne...)
- Financement participatif
- Autre : \_\_\_\_\_



17- Etes-vous globalement satisfait de cette expérience en tant que consommateur?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Tout à fait d'accord	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Tout à fait en désaccord

18- Avez-vous rencontré un ou plusieurs problèmes suite à cette expérience? Si Oui, quel type de problème(s)?

Votre réponse

---

19- Seriez-vous prêt à réitérer l'expérience?

- Oui
- Non
- Ne se prononce pas

**La plupart des organisations collaboratives utilisent un site internet et/ou une application pour faciliter l'accès aux services et l'interaction entre fournisseur et consommateur.**

20- Sur une échelle de 1 à 7, à combien estimez-vous l'importance de ces plateformes Internet?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Très important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Pas important

21- Prenez-vous régulièrement en compte les évaluations des utilisateurs sur des sites comme Blablacar ou Airbnb? Pourquoi?

Votre réponse

---

22- Estimez-vous consommer moins avec ces pratiques collaboratives?

- Oui
- Non
- Ne se prononce pas

23- A titre indicatif, à combien s'évaluent vos économies mensuelles liés à l'ensemble de vos pratiques collaboratives?

- Entre 0 et 30€
- Entre 30 et 80€
- Entre 80 et 150€
- Entre 150 et 300€
- Plus de 300€
- Autre : \_\_\_\_\_

## Questions socio-démographiques

24- Vous êtes..? \*

- Un homme
- Une femme

25- Dans quelle tranche d'âge vous situez-vous ? \*

- 12/19 ans
- 20/25 ans
- 26/30 ans
- 31/40 ans
- Plus de 40 ans

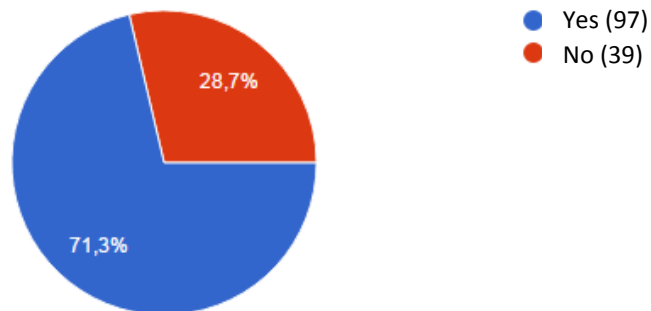
26- Quelle est votre situation sociale actuelle? \*

- Artisan, Commerçant
- Cadre, Chef d'entreprise
- Employé
- Étudiant
- Ouvrier
- Profession Intermédiaire
- Retraité

## Annex 2: Questionnaire translated in English & answers' transcript

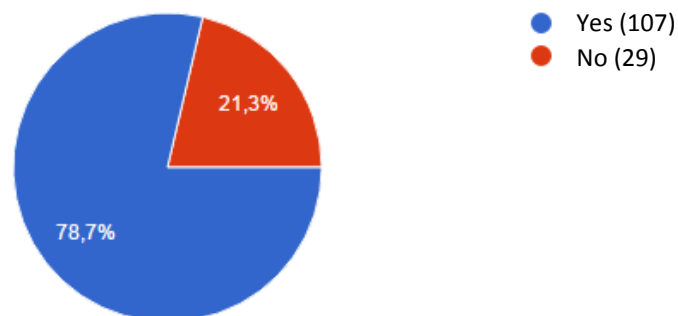
1- Are you familiar with the terms of collaborative economy or sharing economy?

(136 answers). **Figure n°4**



2- Do you consider yourself involved in the sharing economy? (136 answers)

**Figure n°5**



3- In general, how do you contribute to the collaborative consumption? (106 answers). **Figure n°6**

A- Via car sharing:

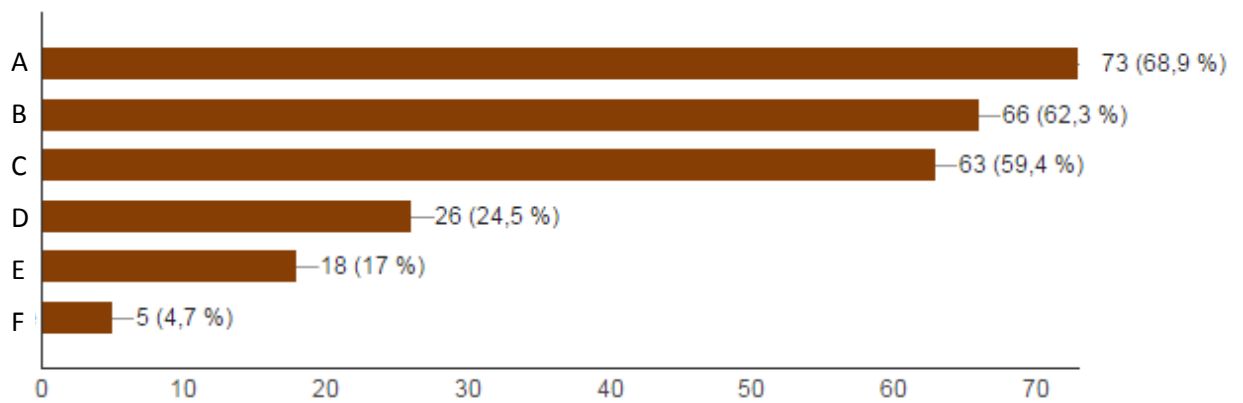
B- Through bartering, buying or selling online material and/or immaterial assets

C- Via renting from material goods (Accommodation, Transport, DIY ...):

D- By using or providing particular services (home meals, laundry, chauffeur, online courses ...):

E- Crowdfunding:

F- Other:



\* Other: 1 Via SocialCar, and 4 whom didn't said how they contribute to the collaborative consumption

4- What are the reasons that led you to adopt this model for some of your consumer choices? (107 answers). **Figure n°7**

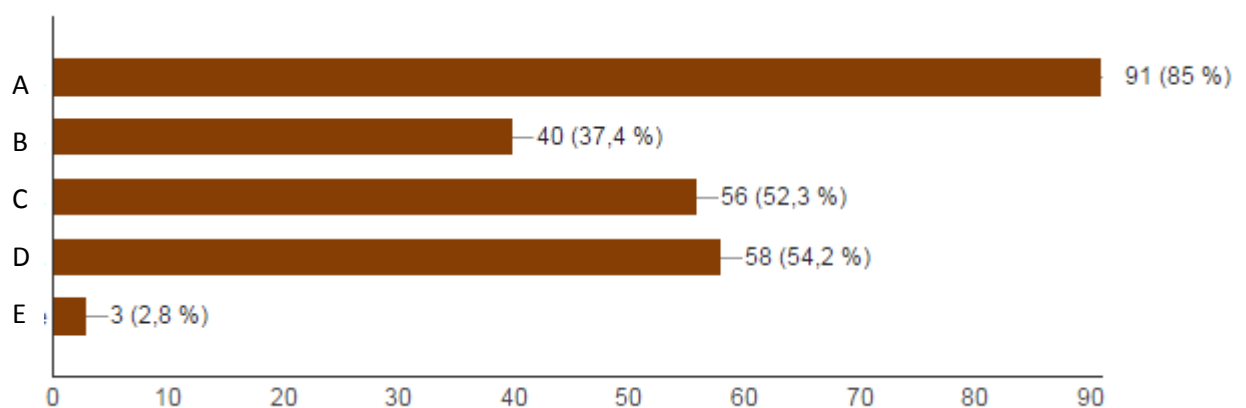
A- The financial aspect:

B- The sustainability/environmental protection interest:

C- The comeback to human, sharing values:

D- The practicality:

E- Other:



\* 2 answers of the section « Other » said that their motivation also came from being upset of having to pass by thousands of intermediaries; the other third said it was to follow the trend.

5- For the collaborative practices that concern you below, thank you to indicate if you tend to be supplier or rather consumer. (107 answers). **Figure n°8**

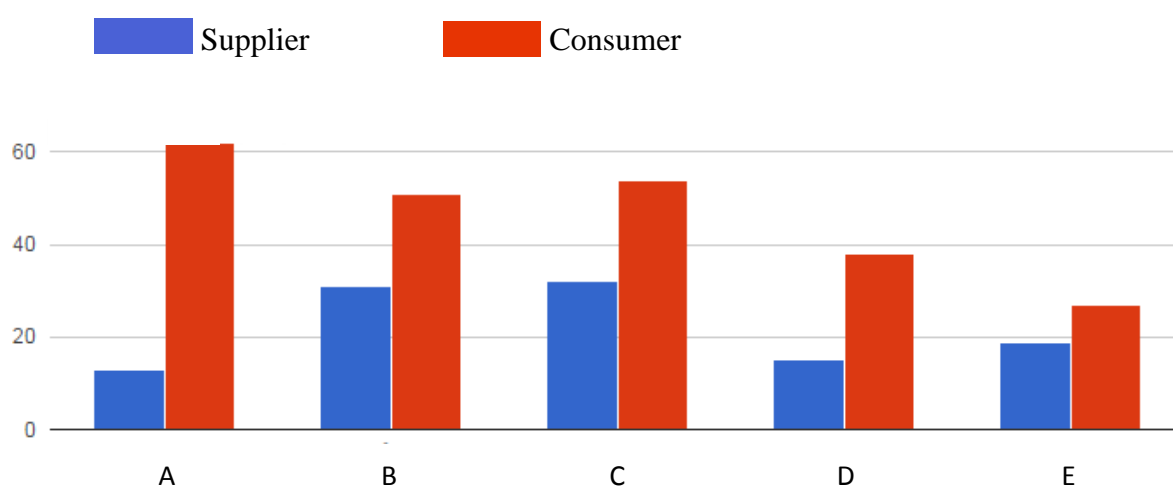
A- Car sharing

B- Bartering, buying or selling online material and/or immaterial assets

C- Renting from material goods (Accommodation, Transport, DIY ...)

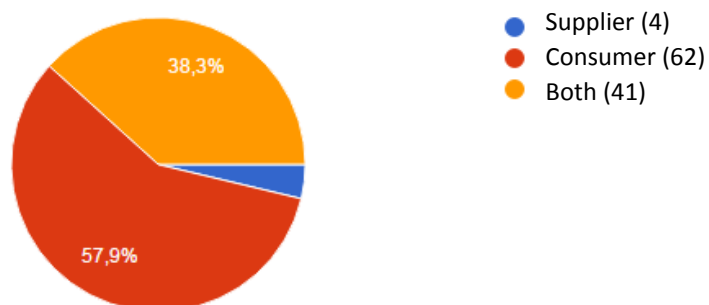
D- Using or providing particular services (home meals, laundry, chauffeur, online courses ...)

E- Crowdfunding



6- Do you consider yourself more consumer rather than a supplier? (107 answers)

**Figure n°9**



## Supplier Section

7- Which one of these collaborative practices below have you proposed the most?

(45 answers). **Figure n°10**

A- Via car sharing

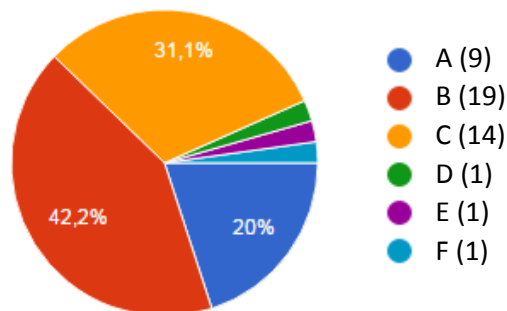
B- Through bartering, buying or selling online material and/or immaterial assets

C- Via renting from material goods (Accommodation, Transport, DIY ...)

D- By using or providing particular services (home meals, laundry, chauffeur, online courses ...)

E- Crowdfunding

F- Other (1: Not specified)



8- Are you generally satisfied with this experience as a service provider? (45 answers) Scale from 1 to 5. **Figure n°11**

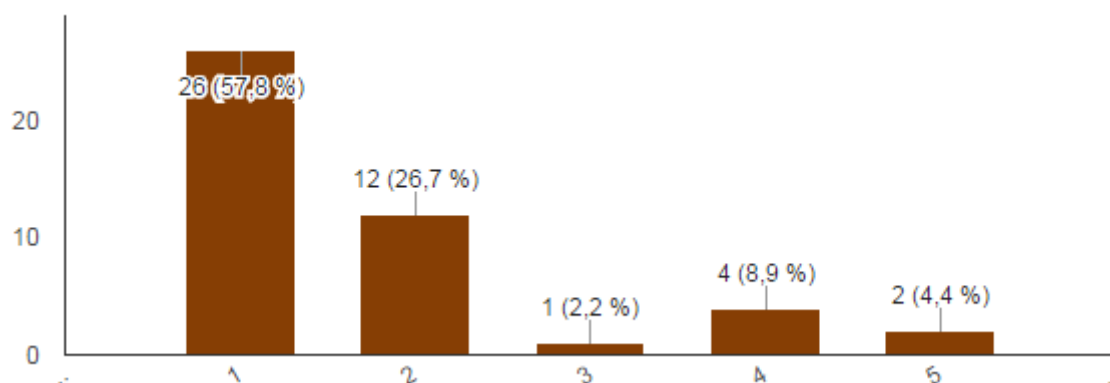
1: Strongly agree

2: Agree

3: Neutral

4: Disagree

5: Strongly Disagree

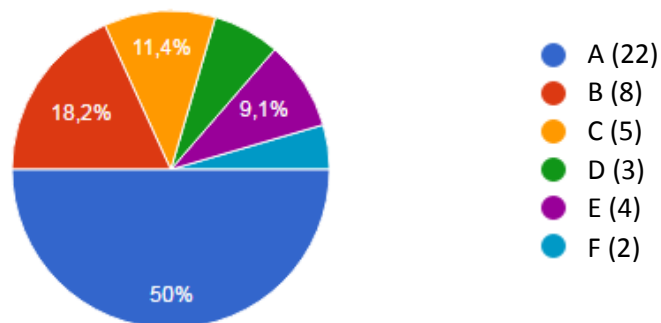


9- Have you encountered one or more problems due to this experience? If Yes, what kind of problem (s)? (15 answers) Open question.

- 7: No (irrelevant)
- 3: Scams
- 2: Late cancelation
- 2: Issues with the check-out (Airbnb)
- 1: Delay (Blablacar)

10- For information, evaluate how much your monthly income is, related to all of your collaborative practices? (44 answers). **Figure n°12**

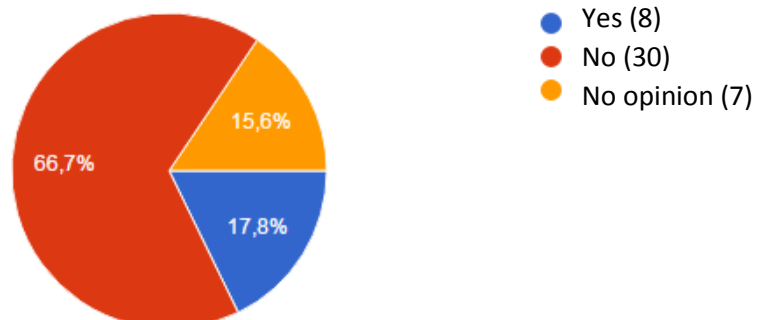
- A- Between 0 and 50€
- B- Between 50 and 130€
- C- Between 130 and 250€
- D- Between 250€ and 500€
- E- More than 500€
- F- Other.



\* The 2 answers in "Other" section said that their revenues were too irregular to assess them

11- Are you willing to report this income to the French Government? (45 answers)

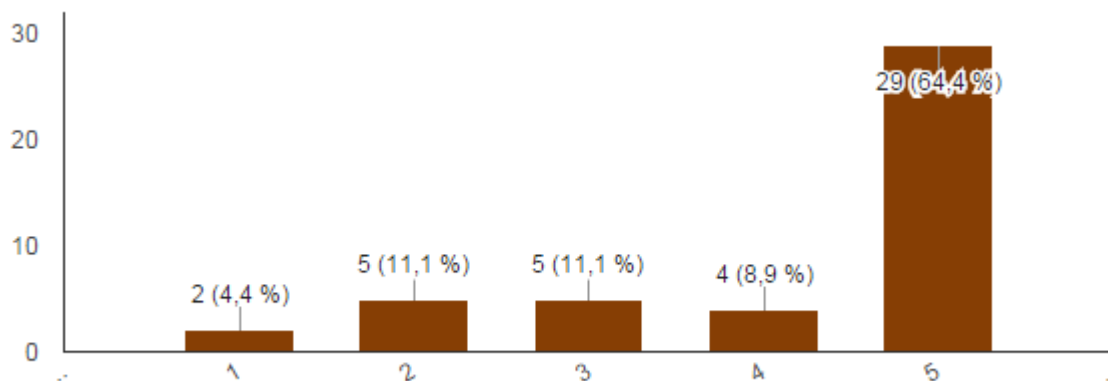
**Figure n°13**



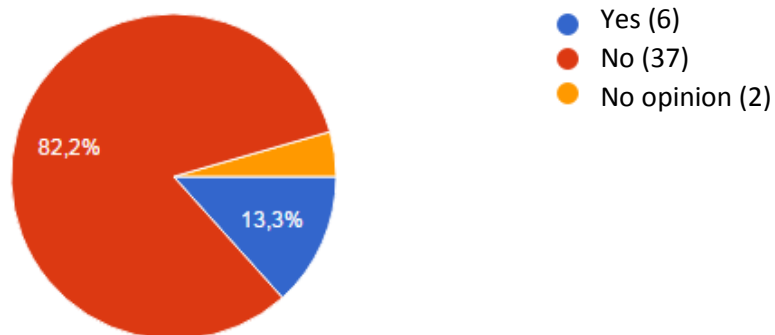


12-Do you estimate yourself being able to live from your income related to the sharing economy? (45 answers) Scale from 1 to 5. **Figure n°14**

- 1: Strongly agree
- 2: Agree
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Disagree
- 5: Strongly Disagree



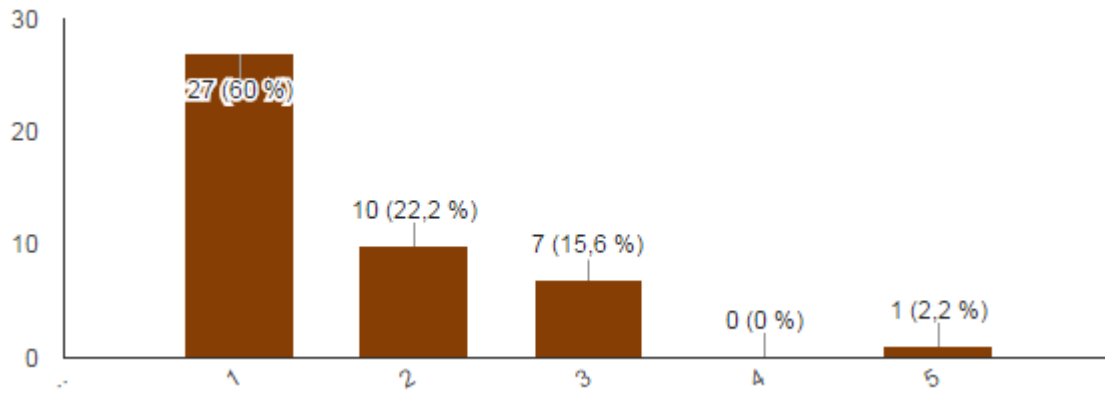
13-Do you consider yourself employed by companies and / or associations with which you offer your services and / or products? (45 answers). **Figure n°15**



14-Would you be willing to repeat the experience? (45 answers) Scale from 1 to 5.

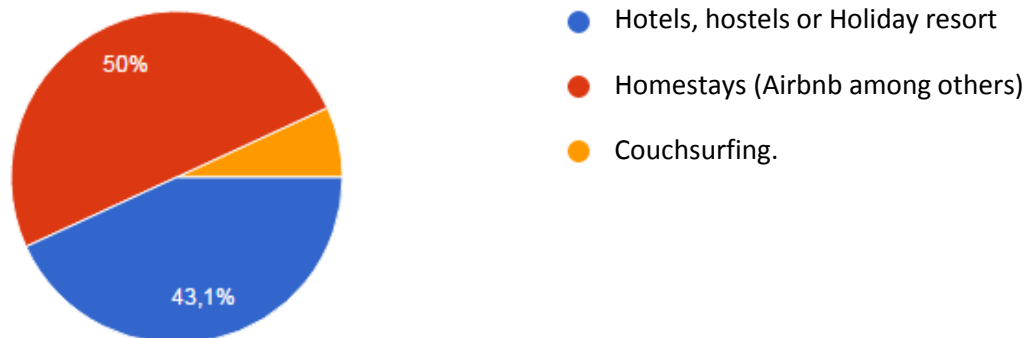
**Figure n°16**

- 1: Strongly agree
- 2: Agree
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Disagree
- 5: Strongly Disagree



## Consumer Section

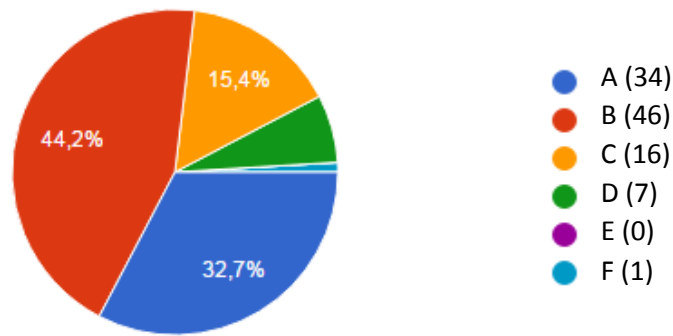
15-For information, what was the type of home that you used for your last vacation / last weekend? (102 answers). **Figure n°17**



16- Which one of the services below do you use the most? (104 answers).

### **Figure n°18**

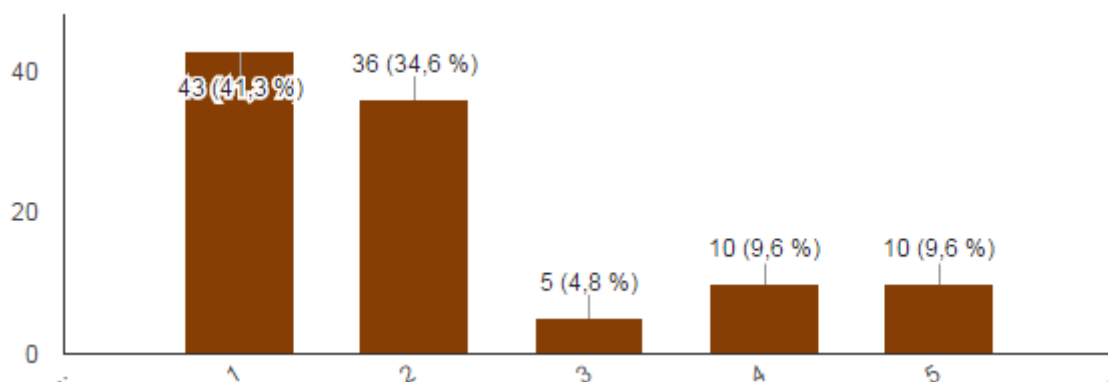
- A- Via car sharing:
- B- Through bartering, buying or selling online material and/or immaterial assets
- C- Via renting from material goods (Accommodation, Transport, DIY ...):
- D- By using or providing particular services (home meals, laundry, chauffeur, online courses ...):
- E- Crowdfunding:
- F- Other: (1: Not specified)



17-Are you generally satisfied with this experience as a consumer? (104 answers)

Scale from 1 to 5. **Figure n°19**

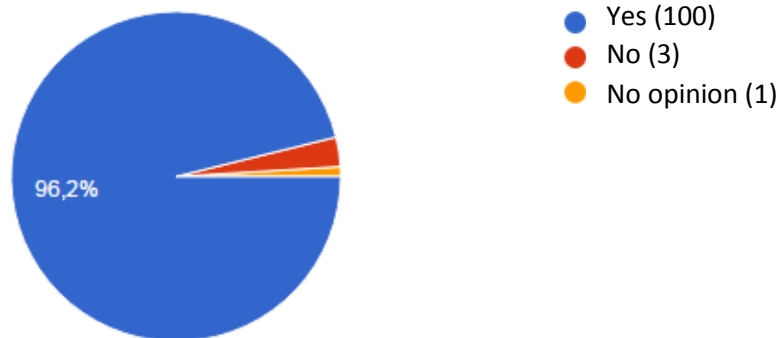
- 1: Strongly agree
- 2: Agree
- 3: Neutral
- 4: Disagree
- 5: Strongly Disagree



18-Have you encountered one or more problems due to this experience? If Yes, what kind of problem (s)? (21 answers) Open-ended question.

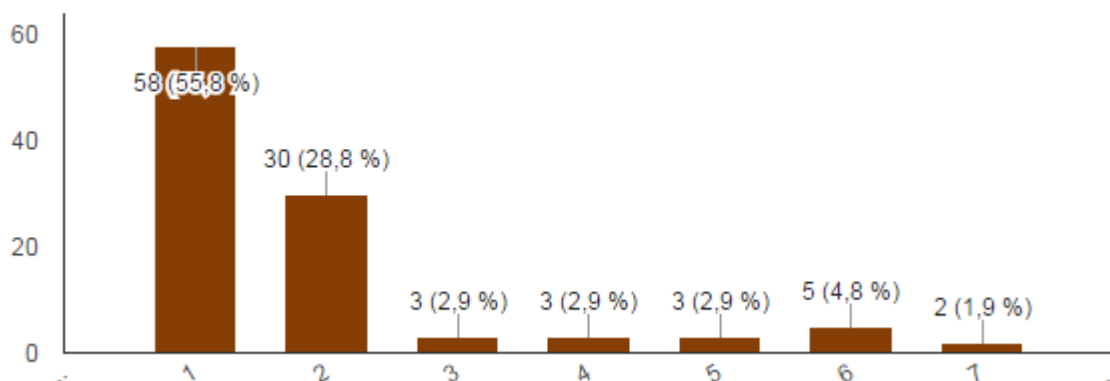
- 12: No (irrelevant)
- 4: Service that does not match completely with the announcement
- 3: Delays on transport
- 1: Late cancelation
- 1: Taxes caused by the Blablacar's purchase by the SCNF (Ed.: False information)

19- Would you be willing to repeat the experience? (104 answers). **Figure n°20**



20-On a scale from 1 to 7, how much do you estimate the importance of these Internet platforms? (104 answers) Scale from 1 to 7. **Figure n°21**

- 1: Extremely important
- 2: Very importance
- 3: Moderately important
- 4: Neutral
- 5: Slightly important
- 6: Low important
- 7: Not at all important



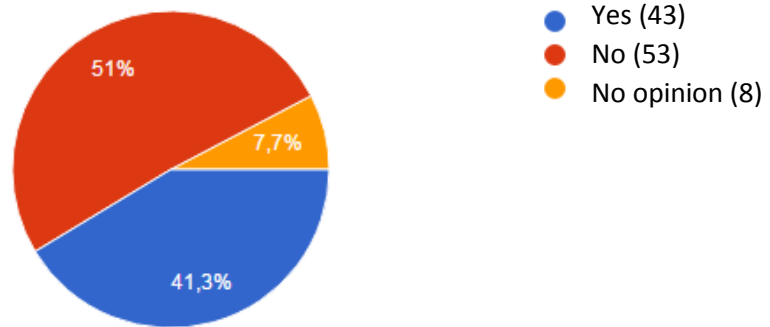
21-Do you regularly take into account the feedback from users on sites like BlaBlaCar or Airbnb? Why? (86 answers) Open-ended question.

18: Just to have an idea of the user

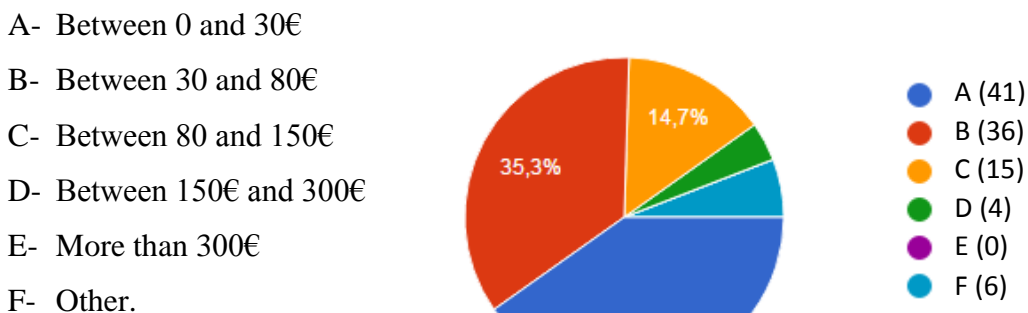
15: To have an opinion about my future renter/driver

- 11: To avoid bad surprises
- 10: For a question of security, confidence and for reassurance
- 10: Yes
- 7: No
- 5: Guarantee of quality
- 4: To avoid Scams
- 2: Yes because the evaluations are generally trustful
- 2: Yes but trying to delete fake evaluations
- 1: Yes because I know that behind the announcement, there is an individual, I don't need to check that with professionals
- 1: Not for Blablacar because it's not relevant, but Yes for Airbnb

22-Do you estimate consuming less with these collaborative practices? (104 answers). **Figure n°22**



23-For information, how much do you evaluate your monthly savings related to your whole collaborative practices? (102 answers). **Figure n°23**



\* 3 answers in "Other" section said that they simply don't know. 2 answers in "Other" section said that their savings were too irregular to assess them. The last answer said that he didn't know because for him, one need = one purchase

### Annex 3: Interview's transcript

**Interviewer:** Clément Rigau

**Interviewee:** Anne Turcaud, Associate Head of D'Click Tours Passion

**Interview Setting:** Interview conducted in the office of Mrs Turcaud. The interview was conducted at 10:30 AM on Wednesday 2 March 2016.

**Affiliation with interviewee:** I worked with Mrs Turcaud for 9 months as Community Manager, from September 2013 to May 2014.

**(Start of the Interview)**

**Interviewer: Did you really feel that the "sharing economy" effect from your companies' point of view? Can you give some concrete examples?**

Interviewee: As a Travel Agent I can say that the "sharing economy" has already started to change our work because of several friend's bad "Sharing economy" reported experiences... That means that they already made their booking without asking me ...which can be bad for my business with a loss of potential customers ...but afterwards it can also be good

Bearing in mind that I must urgently communicate, and my Professional Travel Agents Union must help me to do so and put forward all the advantages of my business and all the advantages to ask for a Travel Agent service.

I must also communicate to tell people that I will soon offer the same possibilities of collaborative travel bookings (Future partnerships with BedyCasa, Vizeat (Private house meals), « Rendez-vous chez nous », etc...), especially for people whom don't want to use some impersonal web sites...

If we can guarantee the same possibilities and researches, the customer will be confident and will prefer to book through us even if there is a commission tax to pay. On the other hand, if we are not able to give the right Travel agent professional "sharing economy" answer... our job will definitively regress.

The best example would be that recently, one of my friend made a booking on his own for a 2 nights stay in Amsterdam ...He wanted to share a private apartment (Cheap and convenient solution for him) and when he arrived saws that there was no address...nothing....Next time he will sure ask me and even if he has to pay for the Agency's commission ... he will be sure to have a good address when at destination...and no waste of time and money...

I must also point out that since 4 or 5 years, there is a big change in French travel agencies: We sell less and less packaged travels (8 days All-inclusive hotels stays) and more and more dynamic packaging... Which are not proper sharing economy solutions but means more liberty and more "tailor made" travels....which can be found in the sharing economy assets. This was originally brought and developed thanks to the "Low cost" travel possibilities (RYANAIR and EASYJET flights development) and this is a consequence of the new way of life with less

obstacles.... People also want to take part of their trip and they don't want to be commanded. I think that all these phenomenon also participate to the birth and development of the sharing economy which is perfect for people who want to be more or less free to organize their travels. So, we noticed since 2 years that we sell more and more flights without anything else instead of complete packagings. We also sell more and more short breaks (3 or 4 days) and week-end trips and less full week hotel stays.

We also have more and more asking for B and B accommodations or private housing & Private guided visits of towns

**Interviewer: What is your added value? The reason why your clients go through you for their holidays that are not found in "sharing economy" business type?**

Interviewee: The first one is the Professional Expertise

The most important in our business is to determinate what is the best choice for our customers. We have to make a professional Expertise to find out their real needs and waits (That some time they do not either know themselves...). So we have to listen carefully because it is like a medicine diagnosis ... it can't be wrong because we have the professional knowledge... and they wait for the best of it.

The second one is the customer service

If people come to us they logically want to be sure to get the right price ... the good diagnostic and service but if something goes wrong.... They want to be able to call us and to get a professional answer as quickly as possible. On the contrary using a web site often means nobody that you personally know on the phone.... Long-time procedures... long time to get somebody ...who, if you call back, is out of office... etc....

And the last one would be Responsibility

On the French Travel agents law side we are responsible for all our sells. If something goes wrong it is our false and we must repair it and give assistance to our customers or make a compensation ... (Even if we only are an intermediate...). Moreover, if they get stuck up somewhere in the world..... We must plan and pay for their safe return as soon as possible!

Another example is in 2010, Eyjafjallajökull volcano made a big mess in the European Sky... so many flights where postponed ... and 3 of our agency customers where stuck up in Los Angeles during 2 days ... so we paid for all their expenses (Hotel, meals, etc.) If these people had bought their travel alone ... They would have had to pay themselves....

**Interviewer: Is your customer base sensitive to the new ways of travelling that this economic model brought? From your point of view, are they truly economical?**

Interviewee: It is the starting for tourism sharing economy but our customers knows about it, they have heard about this on many TV programs ... On the supplier side many people think that they will make easy money (Opportunist people who are ready to share their apartments,

cars, etc...) ... so you must be careful and tell your customers about the challenge and about the facts and figures.

For us that means that we must only use reliable “sharing economy” contacts that are ready to be professionally inspected (TripAdvisor recommendations are not enough reliable and we do not know if it is a true one or a false one .....). Our Travel Agent network (Independent French Travel Agent network called CEDIV TRAVEL) is here to help us and gives us professional equipment to do so: computer reservations systems or Global Distribution Systems (GDS). At present time, CEDIV TRAVEL is also looking for partnerships with some Collaborative operators (Bedycasa, Vizeat, etc...)

For our customers, as this way of travel is fashionable, they start to ask for it and sometimes go to it without our analysis... without comparing and without knowing exactly what can be found....

And sometimes they even did not know that a more reliable professional answer can be found with a good service and a similar price. Holiday is so important today that you do not have time to miss it! And again, for me, the more important question is to suite on the people needs...and to find them. Because many times people don't even know their real needs and waits... so they can make some mistakes if they are not well informed ... or only informed through the web where their waits can be created for them.

When you want to stay in a Spanish Andalusian Resort and you look for an apartment rental, a hotel accommodation is perhaps the best solution for you... why going first on the sharing economy solution ... if it is not your real aspiration... The more important thing is the Travel agent diagnosis

I must also say that there is a change in the way of travelling. Our customers ask for more authenticity ... they don't want to be treated as “usual tourists”.... They want to be responsible and aware of what can be seen as “real life” in a country.... They ask for usual visits (Museums) but also professional visits (Factories, farms, etc...). So we must find them this kind of services closed to the sharing economy.

On the economical aspect, I truly think that the majority of “Sharing economy” solutions are economical because usually you do not have many intermediate brokers between the supplier and the customer ... and on the Web you get an automatically generated head to head competition which may prevent from commercial abuses. But nevertheless this new economy must be governed by a minimum of law in case of problem... which is the hardest to make on a planet size point of view!

**Interviewer: Do you think Tourism is the main affected area? Why?**

Interviewee: Yes I think so because we are in a Tourism civilization world ... everybody wants to discover and take some time out.... The world exploring is very easy with many fast and sure possibilities....



Formerly travelling was exceptional, dangerous, expensive, and only affordable for upper social level categories..... Now it is so easy ... Young people are the good example and are used to go everywhere in the world for their higher education studies....

The cultural mix of the society also means travel increases with many families' trips all around the year and sometimes... all around the world..... So the tourism sharing economy will certainly grow because people need more and more commuting. All these multiplicity travels, which are not only for holidays but for relatives or professional reasons, have a cost and everybody needs to cut the cost of them.

**Interviewer: How do you evaluate the government reaction/implication to regulate the French market economy?**

Interviewee: Complicated to say... we are at 1 year of the presidential elections ... and all important decisions are deferred or postponed... For fear of making unpopular.... Efforts have been made to the Professional taxi to regulate at least the services provided by UBER ... but at least to not remove the work of many UBER drivers who live thanks to that “job”...

Same thing for Airbnb and private housing services with new regulations allowing better monitoring of such services ... but hard to implement because people who propose Airbnb accommodations won't like it and the politics already think about the elections from my point of view. This revenues are sometimes perceived as a simple extra but may become in some cases a real wage.

I think that the government should also take into account what is done or is being done in other European countries at this level in order not to be alone in an uncomfortable position if it is decided for example to harden its position regarding the collaborative economy. See the example of Airbnb in Berlin!

The exchanges should be constructive in order to have a reflection and an overall position for all, both private and professional, to live as well as possible together and do not see this as a battle that would end with a winner and a loser.

**Interviewer: Do you have in mind measures and legal modifications brought by the government in the recent years, which directly impacted your business?**

Interviewee: So far there has been no big change in the laws governing the profession of travel agent and it's boring ... Even if we are only an intermediary, we are also indirectly affected by new trends because anyone can offer such accommodation and meals or transport without the constraints imposed on hospitality professionals catering or transportation. These offers come to disrupting ours. But I think we should adapt rather than waiting a change in the law that would prohibit or restrict these practices. It's our challenge to provide them with guarantee, which is not always the case when they are available online (Many scams regarding apartment rentals, etc. ...). It's the only way in which the public will renew its trust in us ... or will discover us and will appreciate our professionalism.

**Interviewer: Have you or will you change the way you work or communicate as a consequence of the rise of collaborative consumption, to stay competitive?**

Interviewee: Regarding our strategy, yes of course, we will soon use professional sharing economy solutions with the help of CEDIV TRAVEL (Partnerships agreement in progress with Bedycasa and others).

In terms of communication it is obvious that we must put forward our specific family business. As people who propose their bed or table, we must offer our knowledge ... and show them that come to us they will be welcomed at best ... and that by putting in us their confidence, they will soon become part of our family! This is already happening and that is what they like! It will even accentuate and encourage a close relationship with them ... and this is what we can find in the collaborative economy that makes its success.

**Interviewer: Do you think that the “sharing economy” context will conduct to a global disintermediation that could make the intermediates fully disappear?**

Interviewee: No I don't think so... People always need to be reassured.... If they have bad experiences they will look for a safer solution.... They also need a Travel expert ... that is fully well informed and aware of new solutions for him. It can take many hours to lay person for a search ...and it may take a few minutes to a professional

For example 3 weeks ago, I was called by a friend.... He booked through “Bed y casa” and the owner told him to flight on regular Iberia line from Paris to Sevilla. He bought the flights. Not aware of the new seasonal Transavia line Nantes to Faro ... who was of an easier way! When I told him that he had make the bad choice... he said that next time he will surely ask me.

Also, I think that we will always have our place if we adapt and suggest what people are looking for to travel ... whatever their desires are. Currently the trend is towards collaborative services which a priori guarantee greater authenticity of the proximity they emit and a priori less expensive. This requires that the network that we are part nowadays could propose us as soon as possible via appropriate IT tools. We too must mutate ... in order to stick to the market.

At the end, I think that the sharing economy, especially in Tourism industry will need the support and the expertise of travel agents as Low cost companies did 10 years ago. For me it could follow the same model.

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